

Mesaieed International School



*Our mission is to inspire and empower our students for a great future,
through an innovative and globally relevant education*

Sunday 30th September 2018

Dear all,

September seems to have flown by and I am told cooler weather is on the way, I am expecting autumnal rainfall but I suspect Doha may differ from Manchester!

It was good to meet with parents and students at the early years open evening at Mesaieed, held last week. It reminded me of the importance of early years education in the overall development of children and how this can have such an impact on their life chances. I recall attending a conference a number of years ago where the UK Member of Parliament Frank Field was keynote speaker, he was committed to improving children's lives, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. His quote from the research in the UK was:

"We have found overwhelming evidence that children's life chances are most heavily predicated on their development in the first five years of life. It is family background, parental education, good parenting and the opportunities for learning and development in those crucial years that together matter more to children than money, in determining whether their potential is realised in adult life".

He was referring to family life and circumstances in the UK but I would argue that this emphasis on early years learning and the partnership between home and school is just as vital for our students here in Qatar so it was really positive to see so many families at the school event.

It was also a positive for me to spend some time with the nursery and reception aged children at Dukhan as they explored their new learning environment for the first time. The new school is a great resource for the community and the children were immersed in a wide range of learning through play activities. I asked one student in Year 5 what he thought of the new school, his answer – "I don't like it...I love it!" as an educator that is as good a reply as it gets.

For the newly arrived teachers there has understandably been an element of change and exploration. I have had the opportunity to visit a number of these colleagues within their teaching spaces, it is pleasing to report they are settling well and beginning to develop positive working relationships with the students. They bring with them a variety of skills, abilities and experience and I look forward to the positive impact these will have on student outcomes.

I have also had the opportunity this week to meet with the Principals of other International schools in Qatar who deliver a UK curriculum. It was positive that this group is keen on developing links between schools so that practice can be shared and professional development of teaching staff be encouraged. I will use this collaboration to look for further opportunities for our students and see what can be learned to improve and enhance the provision in our own schools.

I am also interested in developing an Alumni network for ex-QP students, I believe this could provide inspiration for our current student body as well as recognizing the achievements and career success of those students who have moved on. If there are any QP Alumni reading this communication I ask you drop me a line on how you believe such a network would be of benefit. I will be meeting staff and students in schools over the coming weeks to get more information so feel free to drop me an email on d_whalley@qp.com.qa

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