

Thursday 10th September 2009

A very warm welcome back to Al Ain English speaking School to all our returning families and a very warm welcome to our many new families.

We are more than pleased with our examination results this year. They reflect the hard work and excellence of our students and teachers and all are to be congratulated. Of course there are always students who wish they had worked harder and those who for whatever reason are not on form on the day. However, by and large we have an excellent set of results.

In our I/GCSE 53% of our students achieved B or above, 35% achieved A or A* and 72% A* to C pass. These are results that any school would be proud of and considering that we are non-selective for I/GCSE these are exemplar results.

At AS Level 28% of our students achieved A; 46% achieved B or above and 71% A to C pass.

At A2 Level 27% of our students achieved A and we had a 39% pass rate.

As you will remember from my letters last year, AAESS now requires 5 A* to C passes at IGCSE in order for a student to be selected for our sixth Form. I feel that in order to achieve at a reasonable standard in Year 12 and 13, students need a sound foundation on which to build. This year we have 60 students entering Year 12 and we are looking forward to a very successful year for them all.

This year Sixth Form students are required to be at school from 7.50 to 2.40 each day. We have improved facilities for our Year 12 and 13 students and will be keeping a close eye on their study habits.

The internal shape of the day has changed this year. We now have six 55 minute periods in the day and an extended lunch time. This will facilitate more in-depth learning in classes and more opportunity to see teachers and for clubs at lunch time. Because of this, and because our students undertake 10+ subjects at I/GCSE, we have gone to a two week cycle in our timetable. All students have their timetables for Week A and Week B; there are notices prominently displayed around the school and notices on our website.

Later in the year we will be looking at our whole I/GCSE programme and will be inviting parents to attend discussion groups on what is the optimal number of I/GCSE for our students to take.

Year 10 timetables are still being modified. We have been able to provide 96% satisfaction on student choices this year. Please be patient with us while we sort out the remaining 4 %.

The new building is gradually taking shape and classes are now running in our new classrooms. The Hall and Secondary Drama Studio will be coming on line soon. It is disappointing that the Sports Centre is not open but I can assure you that everything is being done to get this on line as soon as possible.

I would like to draw your attention to the notices posted on our notice boards and on our website with regard to the HINI virus. If you are in any doubt or confused about what action to take to safeguard the school then please contact me at school.

I have the pleasure of welcoming several new teachers this term.

Ms. Attfield is our new Head of MFL and will be teaching Spanish. Ms. Aurora is taking over as ILN Coordinator and will be building up our new ILN Centre to service all students with individual learning needs whatever those might be. Ms. Court is a new addition to the English Department. Ms. Donovan has a very busy year ahead as Head of P.E., working with Primary School P.E. to bring the new sports block on line. Mr. Jubaji is joining our Islamic department. Mr. Rowley is a new addition to the Geography department and as Key Stage 4 coordinator will be responsible for Years 10 and 11.

You will all have noticed Mr. Evans, the new deputy Head who has already established a high profile out and about the school at lunch and breaks.

Mr. Evans is working to generate our new Extra Curricular Activities programme which will be published after Eid. Please make sure that your son or daughter signs up for at least one activity per week.

There is a surge of very positive energy around school at the moment. Our students have taken the first week in their stride. I am delighted to have such high powered teachers joining our already strong team and am looking forward to taking the school to even greater heights with them.

May I wish you all a calm and peaceful weekend.

Sincerely –

Mareve Kilbride-Newman M.A., NPQH
Head of Secondary.