



MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF SAFA BRITISH SCHOOL

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21ST MARCH 2018 AT 1:00PM

Present:	Louay Khatib	Director	(LK)
	Sameer Merchant	Director	(SM)
	Zara Harrington	Principal	(ZH)
	Dana Barto	Parent	(DB)
	Sabana Shaikh	Parent	(SS)
	Jarryd Smith	Parent	(JS)
	Qaiz Sedki	Community Member/ Educationist	(QS)
	Carole Ansell	Teacher	(CA)
	Parveen Ghandour	Teacher	(PG)
	Stephen Duckitt	Principal SCS	(SD)

Apologies:	Leanne Fridd	Head Teacher SCS Primary	(LF)
Minutes:	Sarah Sidey		

1. Welcome

SM welcomed everyone to the meeting, which is the first meeting of Term 2. The meeting was held later than normal in the term due to the management changes that were implemented in Term 2. SM invited the Board to be extremely open with regards to asking hard questions and holding the management team as well as the new Principal so that there is an extremely high level of accountability.

2. New Members

SM introduced Zara Harrington, Principal who has been in post for 4 weeks. Zara comes with an extremely strong background being the Vice Principal and Head of Primary at Wellington International School, as well as having a strong headship experience in UK.

SM welcomed Mr. Qaiz Sedki (see attached CV) who is a member of the local community. Mr. Sedki has been involved in education in the UAE with his family opening one of the earliest schools in Dubai, that was opened over 30 years ago.

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3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 26th September 2017 were agreed.

4. Principal's Report

ZM welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared the recent article in which she features in Which School Advisor – Inspiring Women in Education

<https://whichschooladvisor.com/uae/school-news/inspiring-women-in-education-zara-harrington-of-safa-british-school>

ZH discussed her Principal's report which is set out in KHDA format (4.1-4.6 below):

4.1 Student's Achievements

- Assessments are currently being conducted through a range of tests that match the scheme of work.

The focus in Term 3:

- Moderation of standards both internal and external in all core curriculum areas.
- Pupil progress meeting to be held with parents and a steering committee with parents set up.
- Re-launch and embedding of Learning Gears – ZH explained the Learning Gears in further detail (see attached).

SM asked ZH how information will be communicated with parents in a timely manner. ZH explained that staff have been consulted on this matter and a survey will be completed over the next 2 weeks. The results of the survey will be shared with the parental committee and implemented thereafter.

4.2 Student's personal and social development and their innovation skills

- Look Smart, Think Smart, Act Smart - ZH reported on a new initiative – and shared the winning designs of the recent 'design a logo' competition (see attached).
- Increased peer led learning across all year groups making the most of leadership and learning. CA is working on timetables to ensure opportunities are not missed.
- Year groups are being challenged for attendance and punctuality in assemblies each week.

The focus in Term 3:

- Re-launch attendance policy to parents, this is reiterate the school's strong commitment towards punctuality and attendance
- Increase Moral Education
- Re-vamp student prayer rooms – to ensure children are taking pride in their prayers
- Global Youth Service Day
- Commencement of Safa Green Curriculum – Curriculum map with sustainability goals (attached) will match global goals with year groups which will be embedded into the children from a very early age.

4.3 Teaching and Assessment

- Planning re-formatted and now ready to share with wider staff body.
- Assessment re-mapping
- Student voice – work toward year 6 prefects being more active, identify natural leaders.
- Professional development on the use of data to drive learning.

The focus in Term 3

- Become more active members of British Schools in Dubai.
- Embed further Learning Ladders.

4.4 Curriculum

- Curriculum re-mapped including progression.
- Many theme days have taken place this term including Happiness Day and World Book Day which are always successful and enjoyable for all.
- ZH explained Safa Cinema concept.
- ZH gave an example of how the curriculum is mapped (see attached).

The focus in Term 3

- Increased curriculum offering art, drama, dance and sustainability
- ZH gave an overview of Helena Knight, dance teacher who has offered her voluntary services 1 day per week in term 3 (CV attached).
- Will be reviewing curriculum in response to data.
- Increased assessment opportunities on soft skills.

4.5 The protection, care and guidance and support of students

- ZH reported on the recent Health and Environmental Inspection carried out with Naleem (facilities management) and his team. Points actioned have been completed 100%.
- ZH carried out on-site training with STS (outsourced bus company).
- One to One mentor meetings have been conducted with Emirati students and their parents and have been a great success.

The focus in Term 3

- Re-configuration of entry and exit to the site during the holidays including the re-siting of the security officer closer to reception.
- Re-configure start and end of day procedures.
- Upgrade of 'Julia's Garden' – astro-turf will be delivered over the holidays and repairs will be carried out to the steps.
- Ongoing upgrade of learning environment – discussion followed on the importance of upgrading the learning environment and a suggestion was made to document the transformation, which will prolong the benefit.
- Development of playground leaders – boys tasked with zone areas
- Focus on sub-group intervention – the proficiency code in the Principal's report was discussed in more detail and ZH stressed the importance of the link team having the resources available for EAL children.

4.6 Leadership and Management

- ZH highlighted the Professional Development courses that the PLT had attended in the last 4 weeks. The PLT will run twilight sessions for staff to learn from the PD sessions attended.

The focus in Term 3

- Embed leadership matrix to ensure clear accountability and opportunities for growth.
- Re-organisation of line management.
- Introduce performance management and increase professional development.
- Update and quality assure self evaluation of the school.
- Increase parental involvement.
- Reconfigure communication channels to parents.
- Reconfigure reporting to parents.
- Staffing update:
 - 12 staff leaving
 - 2 returning to UK
 - 1 retiring
 - 2 taking up promotions elsewhere
 - 7 moving to another Dubai school
 - Staff employed for next academic year all from 'Very Good' or 'Outstanding Schools': Jumeirah Primary School, GEMS Wellington International School, Sunmarke, Wellington Primary School, Dubai British School.

5. LK thanked ZH for her overview.

SM explained that at the time of inspection SBS moved up a rating however now wish to take it to 'Very Good'. Board members role is to challenge the management as a parent and external community member. At the next Board meeting there will be an opportunity for Board members to ensure that all of the above is implemented, holding all accountable and pushing the school forward.

SM will authorize Learning Walks in Term 3 when all will be invited into the classrooms to attend classes. Invitations will be sent week commencing 8th April 2018.

DB asked how the Learning Gears are implemented and ZH gave an overview.

Discussion followed on assessments. 'Learning Ladders' will be the assessment programme for the future. SD explained that SCS has introduced 'Learning Ladders'. It is a very clear system which the children understand and is proving successful at SCS. It was also noted that 'Learning Ladders' are launching an Islamic and Arabic component.

LK asked ZH to highlight priority areas as a new Principal that she will be focussing on to have a positive impact on student learning. ZH said that Curriculum adaptation is the most important area. Discussion followed on the curriculum and how changes will be implemented. ZH said the current curriculum does not offer enough learning skills and opportunities to demonstrate skills.

DB asked about the lack of music activities this year and it was noted that a new music teacher has been appointed for September. ZH reported on a recent trial morning assembly at 7:30am for the whole school. Moving forward it will encompass music with arts and drama.

Discussion followed on Arabic and Islamic lessons and the challenges that they bring. All agreed that it is a challenge faced throughout the Dubai.

6. Any Other Business

There were no further questions and the meeting closed at 2:30pm.