



AL DHAFRA news

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2016

ISSUE #1

AL DHAFRA PRIVATE SCHOOL, AL AIN

Dear Dhafra Parents ,
Welcome back and a warm thank you to those whose children joined us on day one – it is wonderful to see everyone so rested and happy after the break. We are all ready to take our school from Good to Great this year and are delighted we will, with you, be taking this journey together.

Teachers have begun the year positively and learning began from the first day; it is excellent to walk around the school and see the high standard of teaching and the eager engagement of our students. Dhafra is indeed a special school which is on the way from Good to Great!

We have new student houses and more activities planned for this year to extend and enrich student learning beyond the classroom. A new timetable for Grades 4-12 means that each period is now 55 minutes long, giving the time needed for more in-depth, critical exploration of topics and for more material to be effectively covered.

We welcome our new Head of Secondary, Mr Brett Girven, who joined us last month and has been a great support in preparing and finalizing the timetable for

the school. He has also helped with assemblies and transitions between classes and the general atmosphere is more calm and purposeful as a result. Brett has analysed our excellent IGCSE and A level examination results – please see his note to you all.

Punctuality is an on-going difficulty in the morning for a minority of students – I do ask you all to leave home in plenty of time to drive comfortably and ensure your children are on time for assembly and their lessons.

My warm regards to you all, from the leadership and teaching team here at Dhafra and on also behalf of the CEO and our Chairman

Margaret
Beresford
Principal





welcome back!

Dear Parents and Students,

WELCOME TO THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR!

It is an honor and privilege to serve yet another year as the Vice Principal in Al Dhafra Private Schools.

With the exception of some student schedule challenges, which we are currently working on, the first week went well, with very good student attendance.

There are many successes to share with you this year including most especially our external IGCSE/AS/A LEVEL results. It is gratifying to see students who I know so well achieving such outstanding results. This fills us with pride and parents must also be thrilled. CONGRATULATIONS!

Setting goals and learning how to work through setbacks positively is a skill that successful adults have mastered. I know that each year every student comes back to school wanting to do his or her best. With this in mind, almost everyone returns each September with a common goal—increased success—or the “I am going to do better this year,” goal.

So to all our students, keep up with the good work, be ambitious and aspire to move forward from **GOOD TO GREAT**. Take every chance and make your learning count. Start to imagine your bright future, when all the doors are open for you. Parents, guardians and teachers - you have a role in this important learning process.

In Al Dhafra, your children are always at the centre of our attention. We are bringing in a new SCF (Students' Competency Framework) approved by ADEC which will help us focus on your children's learning skills. Because our aim is to create and maintain a positive and engaging learning environment for every student, we are intentionally planning many learning enrichment activities for our students to support the development of the whole child and provide leadership learning opportunities for all.

I know that some of you were/ are frustrated by the books and uniforms procedure. We have tried to improve on previous years, but still face many frustrations. We promise that we will always strive to continuously improve, and apologise for any inconvenience caused to you.

Best Regards from Al Dhafra Private schools family to all of you

Mrs. Hala
Omar
Vice
Principal



dates for your diary:

Eid Al Adha Break	Sunday 11th September —Thursday 15th September
GL Assessments	Grade 1—8, Beginning September 25th

Welcome to our new staff

Name— Ms. Shahana Zaidi

Nationality—Indian

I have been teaching for the past 21 years and have been in the UAE for the past 13 years. I worked in The Oxford School, Dubai for almost 10 Years. I then moved to Abu Dhabi and was teaching in GEMS Winchester School. I had



numerous leadership roles. I was the KS2 coordinator and Team Leader for grade 3. My many years of teaching experience have helped me develop asset of beliefs and how I can best help students learn and grow. First, I believe that in order to effectively teach my students, I must know as much about them as possible. I also believe that students should take an active role in their learning. Fostering a positive attitude will make my students happier individual inside and outside the classroom. I am glad to join Al Dhafra as grade 3 Homeroom teacher.

Name— Mr. Bashar Naser

Nationality— Syrian

I have been working as an Arabic teacher for more than 27 years in Syria and the UAE and that has given me a wide experience in working with different ages of students. I enjoy teaching the children and young adults how great is our Arabic language. I spend most of my time in reading books from different cultures I believe that reading is your passport that enable you to visit all the world. I am very happy to join Al Dhafra school and look forward to the journey from good to great!



Name: Mr. Talal Smadi.

Nationality: Jordanian.

Knowledge is far more valuable when shared. Thus teaching is especially important as it imparts knowledge to others. I can still clearly remember that I started enjoying "teaching" at a young age. After I had learned something new, I was always itching to share my new discovery with my companions. While growing up as a high school student my teaching experiences in colleges and international schools have not only helped me to improve my teaching skills, but also have encouraged me to pursue a life-long career in teaching. I enjoy chess and reading history. I look forward to hearing from you all.





Al Dhafra By the numbers...

School Attendance—Week #1	84%
# of Students	2146
# of New Teachers	17 (<10% change from 2016)

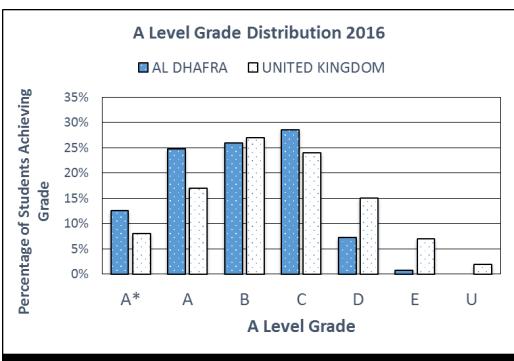


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows that the performance of Al Dhafra's 'A-Level' students exceeded that of the UK, with our students achieving more A* and A grades than the UK, and fewer or no D, E or U grades.

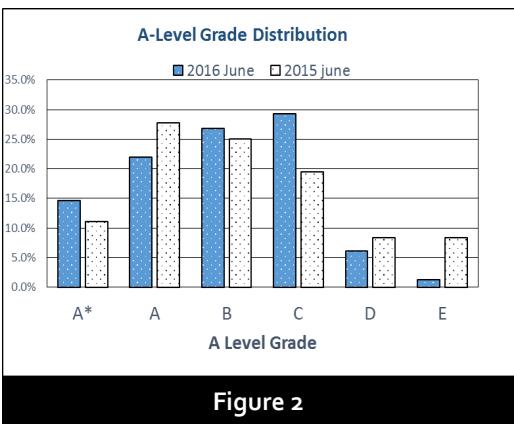


Figure 2

Figure 2 Also illustrates the improvement of teaching, learning and achievement in Al Dhafra Al Ain, with the 2016 students out-performing the previous 2015 students in the A*, and overall A* - C achievement rate.

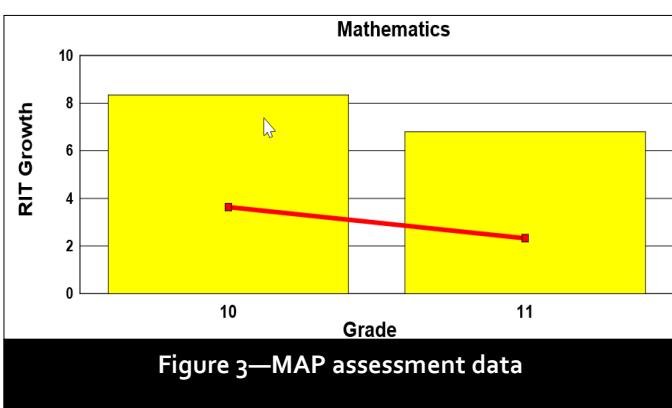


Figure 3—MAP assessment data

RIT Growth

Do not be alarmed! As students get older, it becomes harder and harder to make improvements. This explains the drop in expected achievement from Grade 10–11, they did not get worse, but we expect them to make comparatively less improvement as things get tougher!

Reminders...

Mobile phones must not be in use during school time. Devices which are brought to school should be switched off, and left in the students bag. Phones may be confiscated and held by the School as per the School policy. Please check the school website to check the rules and regulations for mobile phones at school. If a student urgently requires to make a phone call, they should contact the grade level supervisor



Uniform: We apologise for the delay in receiving uniforms, and for this reason have allowed students the first two weeks to ensure they are correctly attired. Following the Eid break, it is an expectation that students will be in the correct uniform. Grade 12 students this year have the privilege of choosing their own, professional style clothing. This should fit with the guidelines published on the school website.

Extended holiday? For those students who have arrived back to Al Dhafra after the opening day, please note that teachers will not have the time to re-teach the content which has already been covered. Students may request the relevant resources or topics, but it is their responsibility to catch up. Please take careful note of the absence policy on the website, as any assessments missed due to unexplained absence are not allowed to be 'made-up'.

Attendance and Lateness: being present in class every day, and being on time are both proven to have a large impact on student learning. **EVERY DAY COUNTS.** Please support your child's learning by ensuring they are present on time, every day at Al Dhafra School. Our admin team will contact you by email or SMS if your child is late/ absent as their safety and learning is our central concern.



al dhafra canteen—new menu...

After receiving a lot of feedback from our students and parents last year, we have contracted new suppliers to provide food for the canteen. The menu is provided below for your information. We believe this contractor provides a better quality product and range of items, and we hope that the students agree. We will be asking the students to give us feedback regarding the menu, and we will share this feedback with you.

Daily Menu Items	
Kofta Beef Sandwich	Hummos with Bread
Kofta Chicken Sandwich	Tandoori Chicken
Cheese and tomato Sandwich	Shish Tawook
Labneh and Zaatar	Falafel Sandwich
Halloumi Sandwich	
Salad 150-180g	
Tabbouleh	Arabic Salad
Chicken Caesar	
Pasta	
Macaroni Cheese	Croissant
Penne Bolognese	
New Items	
Pancakes (2 pcs)	Manakish Zaatar
Grape Leave (5 pcs)	Manakish Cheese
Kebbeh (3 pcs)	
Daily Dish	
Beryani with Chicken	Rice with Meat (ouzi)
Kushari	
Additional Items	
Chicken Pop Corn	Boiled Corn
Balila	Natural Potato Chips