

# Newsletter

**Date: 21 September 2011**

**Issue: 3**

## **News from the Head Teacher**

Dear Parents,

In this 3<sup>rd</sup> newsletter we would like to update you on some school issues and the latest developments regarding the potential new operator of the school.

I hope many of you visited the Ras al Hamra Development presentation in the PDO Club Sports Hall yesterday to get the latest information and high level sketch plans of the proposed new school site.

We are excited about the present plans and we are fully focused on a seamless transition between the present PDO school and the new building: at the moment we are preparing the school for IPC Mastering Accreditation, planning the transition of our Dutch Stream into the International Stream (from August 2012), we are continuing to make Learning as the focus of our school and prepare for some changes in the organisation of the school. We will keep you updated about any new developments.

I would like to thank Mr. Raoul Restucci, Managing Director of PDO, for his continuous support of the PDO School. See attached his latest update.

Groeten, regards,

**Peter Wassink**  
Head Teacher  
**PDO School**  
**Passion for Learning!**

## News from the MD – Mr. Raoul Restucci

Dear PDO School parents, teachers, and colleagues,

On 13 September 2011, we held a PDO School Update session on outsourcing school services and the building of new PDO School premises. Joining me was Musallam Al Mandhry, HR Resourcing, Talent and Omanisation Manager (HRD), and Peter Wassink, Head Teacher (HRP4).

For those parents who could not attend and for our colleagues who have opted to enroll their children in other schools, I want to also share this information with you, directly and not through the grapevine.

At the meeting, we talked about the goal for the PDO School, the potential operators, and the PDO School new building.

### Goal

I re-iterated the Company's vision for the PDO School –

**to provide a fantastic, best-in-class school that will have people 'queuing to get in'.**

The present school has much to be proud of but is not operating at full capacity, and we are working towards building a state-of-the-art school with great learning facilities and bringing in an experienced, top-notch educational operator, so that PDO School does become the chosen school for all our young PDO kids.

As an example of this, we appointed Peter Wassink, an experienced head teacher who has overseen several Shell network schools and brought two schools to Master Level status. Peter has started as Head Master this 2011/2012 school year and is already mapping out how the PDO School will achieve delivery of PDO's vision.

### Potential Operators

At the meeting, Musallam confirmed that proposals with two local operators, the British School Muscat (BSM) and the American British Academy (ABA), were reviewed over the summer and that after significant deliberation, both BSM and ABA were not considered to meet PDO's requirements. We have communicated the results of bids with BSM and ABA, and do sincerely thank them for their effort, time as well as their continuing drive to offer children good education.

As previously communicated, our goal was to ascertain domestic opportunities before potentially expanding to additional operators. We realised that there was a greater chance that the next top-tier local operators would not satisfy all PDO School requirements and would drag out the process, so we approached GEMS and WCL Group, both renowned international educational services companies, requesting their submissions by early September.

Throughout the discussions with ABA, BSM and then the decision to consider other operators, we have not diluted our requirements nor focused on financial targets. I want to reassure parents that any new operatorship would be underpinned by the recruitment and retention

of current teaching staff, and that Peter is working to ensure a seamless transition between our present plans to enhance the PDO School and potential new operatorships in the medium term.

Following endorsement by the PDO tender board, we are now evaluating the technical submission of the [WCL Group](#). GEMS has declined to participate, citing that they are opening their own Cambridge English School in Muscat.

The WCL (World Class Learning) Group is a well-established and highly respected company. Their success is underpinned by a number of integrated activities. They own and operate six schools in the US, one in Madrid and two in Qatar. A number of these schools, particularly in Houston, Al Khor and Doha, already serve the needs of International families and children. They also manage and provide consultancy services to schools, including all Shell operated schools for the past 15 years and which has just been renewed for a further two years. Additionally, they have developed a range of curriculum products, like the International Primary Curriculum which is used by more than 1 400 schools in 66 countries.

The technical, financial assessments and possible negotiations, pending interim tender board support, are envisaged to take four to six weeks, and we will update you on progress. Irrespective of the outcome of these evaluations, our goal and vision remain unchanged and Peter and his team are working to deliver a strong development staircase for current and future children.

### **PDO School Design & Location**

I have seen the latest architectural design of the new PDO School and can tell you that it is exciting. Before we begin construction, we want to make sure we secure input from the prospective new school operator.

In the meantime, bulk earth moving began over the summer in order to clear a significant area of land and hill rock that will accommodate the PDO School and other villas, townhouses and apartments. The PDO School will be located where the Sayyala Terrace residential homes are presently located. Please also refer to the Ras Al Hamra Development Project website and communications for additional details.

I hope you can join us at the Ras al Hamra Development presentation, planned 20 September in the PDO Club Sports Hall between 4pm and 6pm, so that you can meet with Peter to address any potential clarifications, secure background on the WCL Group, and review outline plans for the new school.

Regards,

Raoul

## **New Students**

During the second and third week of this year, we have welcomed some more children into our school.

In Pre-Nursery we were delighted to welcome Martine, Tanya, Phuc Thanh, Tahir, Il'ya, Alexander, Ana Sofia, Sami and Nadia. Hayder started in the Nursery class. In P1 we welcomed Georgette, Tahoor and Gabriela. In P2 we welcomed Tara into the class. Our P3 class received Emilia and Abigail, in P5 we had Ryan starting this week. P6 welcomed Lucy and Phuc Trung whilst P7 welcomed William and Vlada.

We hope that all of our new students had a great start and that PDO School become a special learning place for them.

## **Staffing Update**

We are happy to welcome to our team Ingrid van den Berg, who will be taking on the Remedial Teaching position for the Dutch children. She will also be coming into the P3/4 class, to release the class teacher. She will be around on Sundays and Tuesdays.

Helen Rhodes is still waiting for her documents to be finalised. She has her bags packed and is eager to join us. In the meantime her P5 class will remain in the good hands of Mrs. Joice Wassink.

## **After School Activities**

We were happy to start the After School Activities this week, thank you to Claudia Blom and Annemarie van Gelder our After school Activities coordinators. We wish to thank all the volunteers for their time and energy. The activities offered were very popular.

We were happy to receive a message from an eager father who is already thinking ahead for next term. He wishes to start a cricket activity but needs some support from other parents. If you are willing to help with this, we would love you to contact Claudia or Annemarie so that we can have new activity starting next term.

## **Swimming Lessons**

This week the swimming instructors started the swimming lessons and many children were happy to get back into the pool. For swimming the children will be following the ASA swimming programme and the instructions will continue to be in English. This is done to maintain the level of English that the children achieved last year during the swimming lessons as well as being part of our transition. We are trying to find a solution for the children who wish to receive a Dutch diploma and are looking into providing this as an After School Activity. We wish Frouke and the other swimming teachers a good swimming year.

## **PTA**

The PTA has some vacancies that need filling this year, e.g. class parent coordinator and general members. In the near future we will announce the date of the first PTA meeting and hope that some parents are happy to join us to create a strong PTA team.

## **Bus service**

To ensure that we provide a good service to our families who are registered for the bus service we have to remind you of some of the rules that we have in place to ensure the safety of the children. We only allow children who are registered for the bus service to enter the bus and to be dropped off at the parental home or school. We expect all children to be taking the bus service unless an e-mail is sent to Rabia'a (Rabia'a.Rm.Jahdhami@pdo.co.om) and a text message is sent to the bus attendee.

## **HSE - School Car Park Reminder**

Every year it is important to remind parents about the rules in our car park to keep all our children safe! The car park is designed to only drive forwards therefore reversing is not necessary:

- Please ensure that all engines are switched off!
- Children are not left unattended in cars!
- Follow the one-way System. No reversing!
- Drive to the end of the drop-off zone to avoid hold-ups!
- Drive slowly!

## **Important Dates:**

### **October**

8-14 October	Book week
29 & 30 October	Parent teacher conferences

### **November**

5 – 9 November	Mid Term Break
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The Parent Handbook can be found on our website

**Website:** <http://www.pdoschool.org>