

# MFIS NEWS



## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Alhamdulillah, I am excited to share with you some of the highlights from our School's 2022 academic year, as well as the priorities we have set for the upcoming year.

Last year, we launched a new strategic plan with operational projects that have helped us improve the quality of education we provide to our students. The Niyah Project continues to drive the strategic direction of renewal (tajdid) in Islamic Education. We have defined our educational philosophy and graduate qualities, which guide our teaching practices and prepare our students for success in their future endeavours. We have also implemented a new Behaviour Education program based on a RESPECT Framework, which has helped create a more positive and respectful school environment. Furthermore, we embarked on the journey of refreshing our brand to reflect our school's mission, vision, and values, with the brand story "A Way of Life." We have also taken steps to improve staff well-being by providing common rooms, coffee machines, and other facilities.

On the infrastructure front, we have made significant upgrades to our school facilities, including the canteen, library, and offices at Hoxton Park, new fence at Beaumont Hills, the admin and conference room at Greenacre Secondary, and the kindergarten play area and fence at Greenacre Primary.

Looking ahead to 2023, our top priorities include continuing to develop our Behaviour Education program, with a focus on mentoring. We will also be implementing a Teaching and Learning Framework to ensure that our teaching practices align with our educational philosophy and graduate qualities. Moreover, we will be working on developing our staff's Prophetic Leadership skills and implementing a pilot program for our Greenacre Primary Support Unit to cater for students with the highest needs. We are committed to providing our students with the best possible education, and we are confident that these initiatives will help us achieve that goal. Thank you for your ongoing support of our School. We look forward to another successful year ahead inshaAllah.

Dr Zachariah Matthews



### Vision:

All students of MFIS receive an education that inspires them to achieve their full potential, embrace the future and make positive contributions to the community.

### Mission:

The mission of MFIS is to provide opportunities within an Islamic environment for its students to excel intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, religiously, morally and vocationally, and become happy and successful citizens.

### Motto:

Knowledge is Light and  
Work is Worship

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## Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission provide a framework for making organisations safer for children.

Based on extensive research and consultation, the Standards provide tangible guidance for organisations to create cultures, adopt strategies and act to put the interests of children first, to keep them safe from harm.

### Child Safe Standard 4:

Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account.

All children at Malek Fahd Islamic School are provided equal opportunities to participate to their full potential.

MFIS recognises that children have diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds and may be particularly vulnerable if they are living with disability, exposed to factors such as trauma and family violence.

Malek Fahd Islamic School actively anticipates children's diverse circumstances and responds effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities by providing educational and wellbeing support through individual learning plans, access to resources and counsellor support.

## NIYYAH PROJECT YEAR 2 SCHOOL REVIEW

In November 2022, the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE) from the University of South Australia conducted the Year 2 School Review across the four MFIS campuses as part of the Niyyah Project (Nov. 2020 – Nov. 2023). The purpose of the Year 2 School Review was to assess the impact of the Niyyah Project. The key findings indicated that educator perceptions on the centrality of Islam and playing an active role in shaping the direction of the school have improved significantly and they are optimistic about the School renewal project. Areas for improvement included bringing our parents and students along on this journey of renewal.

### TERM 1 NIYYAH UPDATE

The CITE team continued their engagement with MFIS in 2023. In week 4, of the term, the team focussed on co-developing a Teaching & Learning Framework with the Heads of Departments, Stage Coordinators and Curriculum Coordinators. Followed by professional learning sessions at each of our campuses where all teaching staff were engaged in Assessment Redesign aligned to the School's graduate qualities.



**“Do not cause harm or return harm.”**

**Prophet Muhammad (S)**

## ISAA EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Early this month, the MFIS Principal, Dr Zachariah Matthews attended the Inaugural Executive Leadership Retreat hosted by the Islamic Schools Association of Australia (ISAA) at Al Sirat College in Melbourne. It was an intense two days of workshops, keynote speakers, networking. The retreat was attended by principals and executive leadership teams from over 20 Islamic schools across Australia. It was a wonderful opportunity to further develop the strong collaboration and collegiality amongst the leaders of Islamic schools.



## SHAABAN THE MONTH BEFORE RAMADAN

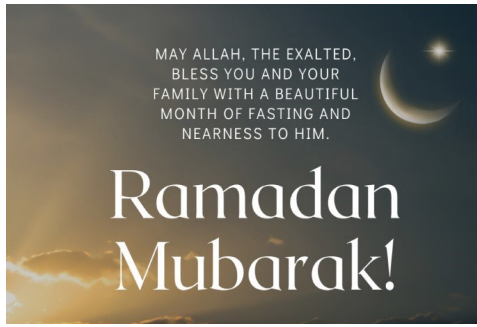
Usamah bin Zaid (RA) said: “I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah (S), I do not see you fasting any month as much as Shaaban. He said: ‘That is a month to which people do not pay much attention, between Rajab and Ramadan. It is a month in which the deeds are taken up to the Lord of the worlds, and I like that my deeds be taken up when I am fasting.’” [An-Nasa’i]

Let's help each other do the following daily:

- Reminder of reciting the morning *adhkar* (remember Allah and recite Quran).
- Reminder of making dua for all Muslims, especially those who are going through difficulty.
- Quranic reflections upon the verses recited to get some understanding.
- Reminder of doing wudu before bedtime and, recitation of Surat al Mulk.
- Increase in bonding with parents since it is a way of showing gratitude to Allah, and a door to Jannah and maintaining the relation with our kinship.
- Increase in voluntary fasts [at least Mondays, Thursdays and the 13th, 14th, 15th of the Islamic calendar].
- Maintaining the sunnah prayers.
- Giving charity (sadaqaat).

Sheikh Khaled, Director of Faith

## RAMADAN—THE BLESSED MONTH



As the month of Ramadan approaches, it's important to understand the significance of this special time. Ramadan is not just about abstaining from food and drink; it's a month of spiritual significance and rejuvenation. Ramadan is a month of spiritual significance and renewal. Fasting during this month allows us to reflect on our actions and focus on our spiritual growth. The Prophet Muhammad (S) said, "Whoever observes fasts during the

month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping to attain Allah's rewards, then all his past sins will be forgiven." (Sahih Bukhari) This hadith highlights the immense blessings and rewards that are available to us during this holy month.

Ramadan is also a time to think about those who are in need. The Prophet Muhammad (S) said, "The one who feeds a fasting person will have a reward like that of the fasting person, without any reduction in his reward." (Tirmidhi) This hadith reminds us of the importance of generosity and compassion towards others, particularly those who are less fortunate. Ramadan is a month of physical and mental discipline. By abstaining from food and drink during daylight hours, we learn self-control and develop a sense of discipline that can carry over into other areas of our lives. The Prophet Muhammad (S) said, "Fasting is a shield with which a servant protects himself from the Fire." (Ahmad) This hadith highlights the spiritual benefits of fasting and how it can protect us from harmful temptations.

Ramadan is also a time for seeking forgiveness and spiritual renewal. The Prophet Muhammad (S) said, "The month of Ramadan is the month in which the Quran was revealed as guidance for mankind, and as clear evidence of that guidance, and as a criterion between right and wrong. Whoever among you witnesses this month, let him fast it." (Sahih Bukhari) This hadith emphasises the importance of reciting the Quran and seeking forgiveness during Ramadan. Ramadan is a month of great value and virtues for Muslims around the world. As we prepare for this special time, let us strive to deepen our relationship with Allah, strengthen our bonds with those around us, and seek the many blessings and rewards of this blessed month. May Allah accept our fasts, prayers, and good deeds during Ramadan. Ramadan Mubarak!

Sheikh Fawaz Kamaz, School Chaplain

## TURKIYE AND SYRIA EARTHQUAKE FUNDRAISER

We are extremely pleased to announce that \$71,004.00 was collected from the Malek Fahd Islamic School community for the Turkiye and Syria Earthquake Appeal. The money will make a significant difference in the lives of those affected by the devastating earthquake by providing much-needed relief and aid. The money was presented to AusRelief representatives yesterday. AusRelief partners with Red Crescent in the affected areas to provide assistance to those in need.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to MFIS learning community who played a part in this fundraising effort. Your support has made a real difference, and we are grateful for your commitment to making a positive impact. May Allah (SWT) relieve the suffering of those affected. May He also reward those who generously give for His sake.



## Online Webinar - Parent Partnership Program

Thank you to all parents who attended the first Principal's Online Webinar held on Wednesday, 15 February. Topics discussed by our Executives included engagement, teaching and learning plan and mentoring children. The webinar was well attended and is an important part of our Parent Partnership Program as our key strategic goal of "Building positive family and community partnerships guided by a commitment to respectful and meaningful engagement."

## Ramadan Dismissal Times

The blessed month of Ramadan is due to commence around Wednesday 22nd March 2023. From Wednesday, 22nd March, Hoxton Park, Beaumont Hills and Greenacre Secondary students will be **dismissed earlier at 2:00pm**. Greenacre Primary will have staggered dismissal to ease traffic congestion with K-2 students dismissed at 1.40pm from the Primary drop off and pick up area and Y3-6 at 1.50pm from the front of the campus.

For parents of our Greenacre campus, please note that early pickup for school buses can only commence from the beginning of the following week, Monday, 27th March. Supervision after dismissal will be provided for those students catching buses for the three days in the first week of Ramadan.

## Brand Refresh - EOJ for MFIS promotional material

MFIS is seeking expressions of interest from students across all our campuses to audition for a photo shoot for the purposes of being featured in MFIS promotional material including a new school website to be launched in the near future.

Students who would like to audition should seek permission from their parents or carers. This is an exciting time for our school, and we encourage our students to express their interest if they would like to be considered for the audition.

Interested students need to complete the application form sent to all parents earlier this term, attach 3 recent photos and email it to back to [ea\\_principal@mfis.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ea_principal@mfis.nsw.edu.au).

## 2023 School Term Dates for Students

**Term 1**—Tuesday, 31st January to Thursday, 6th April

**Term 2**—Wednesday, 26th April to Friday, 30th June

**Term 3**—Tuesday 18th July to Friday 22nd September

**Term 4**—Tuesday, 10th October to Thursday, 7th December

## Niyah Pupil Free Afternoons for Term 2

**Greenacre Primary** - Monday—15th May

**Hoxton Park** - Tuesday—16th May

**Greenacre Secondary** - Wednesday—17th May

**Beaumont Hills** - Thursday—18th May

## 2022 HSC RESULTS

The 2022 HSC students were affected significantly by the pandemic in their preliminary year in 2021 and the first term of the HSC. Remote learning and school closures meant that students had to adapt to a new way of learning and dealing with distractions, technological challenges, and social isolation. Many students felt relieved to return to the structure and social interaction of face-to-face schooling after an extended period of online learning and feelings of isolation and disconnection.

The school offered 20 conventional HSC courses and 2 HSC compression courses to 164 students across three campuses in 2022. Students performed well in Mathematics, a traditional area of strength. Most remarkably, one student ranked equal first in the state for Mathematics Standard 2 achieving a perfect score. This was the first time any MFIS student achieved a perfect score in any course. Fifteen percent of all Mathematics Standard 2 students achieved a mark over 90% and approximately half achieved a mark over 80%. For Mathematics Advanced, 32% of all students achieved a mark over 90% and 70% achieved a mark over 80%, well above the 49% state average.

All Biology compression students scored in the top 2 bands, with 3 achieving Band 6. Over 30% of students in the mainstream model scored in the top 2 bands.

Results in Biology, Chemistry, English Standard, Food Technology, Physics and Studies of Religion 1 Unit showed better than state averages. Of particular note is Legal Studies which remained a very strong performer with approximately 40% of students achieving marks above 80% and 3 students recording a mark over 90%. The 2022 HSC results demonstrated that many of our top performing students have continued to perform at the highest levels. Our middle group of students were lifted into higher marks and our academically weaker students performed at levels well above expectation.

Our HSC students have achieved outstanding results, and we would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of them. There were 17 students who celebrated their above 90 ATARs by attending the Human Appeal Year 12 High Achievers Awards. The outstanding ATARs include 99.85 from Greenacre, 94.4 from Hoxton Park and 95.9 from Beaumont Hills. We would also like to thank our teachers for their tireless efforts in supporting our students throughout their challenging HSC journey.

Ms Tulin Bragg, Deputy Principal Teaching & Learning

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**“Whoever is kind, gentle, and easy-going, Allah will forbid him from entering Hellfire.” Prophet Muhammad (S)**

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## 2023 NAPLAN

The 9-day test window for NAPLAN this year will start on Wednesday 15 March. Schools have now transitioned from paper-based to computer-based assessments, however, Year 3 students will continue to complete the writing assessment on paper. Online NAPLAN tests provide more precise results and are more engaging for students. One of the main benefits is tailored (or adaptive) testing, where the test presents questions which may be more or less difficult depending on a student's responses. Parents are encouraged to see the types of questions and tools available in the online NAPLAN assessments at the public demonstration site. Students will need to bring headphones with them on the day. Please note that wireless headphones/earbuds (e.g., air pods) are not suitable. Year 7 students will need to ensure their devices are charged. Please contact the Head of Campus if you have any queries regarding the NAPLAN test schedule.

Ms Tulin Bragg, Deputy Principal Teaching & Learning