



19 March 2019

NEWSLETTER



Dear Parents/Guardians

Assalamu Alaykum WRWB

I bring to you a special newsletter following the devastating news of the terrible acts of violence in the Mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, that have resonated around the world. The atrocity of the shootings on Friday was such a black day for all mankind. It is hard to comprehend the horror against helpless men, women and children as they began Friday prayer.

Many of the teachers and parents have relatives and friends living in New Zealand. Friends of one staff member, Mr Aniz and Sheikh Musa, cousin to Mr Aiyub Ahmed are victims of the shootings. Sheikh Musa was to have led the prayers at the Masjid Al Noor Mosque in central Christchurch.

Yesterday, Sheikh Fawaz held prayers and made du'a for the victims with students at special assemblies at each Campus. The day commenced for all Greenacre Secondary students with prayers and du'a for the victims in the Mosque. I spoke on each occasion and conveyed the message of unity, peace, calm, harmony and prayer. During each assembly I gave assurance that this very measure is being taken to ensure the safety of the students, staff and parents.

The following is an update on what has been undertaken thus far to support the students and staff. Yesterday, we convened a Wellbeing and Senior Leadership Team meeting and a meeting for all staff across the three Campuses.

Security

We have increased security guards during the school day and evening for each Campus. We have had conversations with Police to increase their presence at each Campus. Police have visited each campus. They are providing regular patrols to all campuses, including morning and afternoon at pick up and drop off time at Greenacre.

Quite coincidentally to Friday's shooting, over the past weeks the Business Manager, Mr Dennis Aktypis and I have been investigating how we can best secure all campuses. To this end we have had conversations with Police, Security Consultants, Traffic Management Experts, local Councils on traffic movement at each campus and IT consultants for the upgrading of the camera surveillance system. The events in New Zealand have prompted immediate measures to be undertaken as mentioned.

Counsellors' support for students, staff and parents

Our four School Counsellors Ms Al-Jamal, Ms Abdulwahed, Ms Masri, and Ms Jamal and former Counsellor Ms Khalaf have spent much time over the weekend in preparing support for students across the campuses. They will be on hand to ensure the best of support for students, staff and parents. I have told students that if they have a need, there are so many they can turn to for support: Teachers; Counsellors, Sheikhs, Homeroom Teachers, Year Advisors, Welfare Coordinators, Heads of Wellbeing and of course the Head of Campus and Executive staff.

Primary Counsellor, Ms Masri has arranged with prominent Muslim psychologist Hanan Dover (Psych Central) and Death and Dying Crisis Counsellor, Mariam Ardari from Muslim Aid who have agreed to offer a session to students, staff and parents at MFIS Greenacre on trauma and grief post the tragic events in New Zealand. The first session will be this Thursday, 2.00 – 3.00pm at Greenacre for Year 6 students. Sessions are being planned for parents the following week.

We will monitor student feelings and support students with our Student Well-Being services as needed. This week, Wellbeing, in conjunction with the HSIE Department Greenacre Secondary will host an **Interfaith Session** with Rabbi Zalman Kastel, Father Patrick McInerney and Sheikh Fawaz for a panel/forum on the importance of breaking down barriers. These are considered essential skills for our students to

develop in the upper ends of secondary, especially as they move towards completing their HSC. Years 11 and 12 will attend and have the opportunity to engage in a Q and A session with the leaders. This is the first of many events to build bridges of understanding with the wider community. Next week Year 10 and 11 girls will visit Brigidine College at St. Ives.

This week we celebrate **Harmony Day**. Malek Fahd Islamic School embraces many races, cultures and languages. In our diversity, we share common values. We value harmony and cultural diversity, both in our School and in the wider community. We want to build on this sense of unity and collaboration to underpin our thoughts and attitude.

Today the School received a number of wonderful gestures of support from the community, businesses, Government and neighbouring schools. Greenacre Baptist Christian Community School delivered flowers. Kellyville High School and Quirindi Primary School (near Tamworth) have arranged to join us in our Harmony Day celebrations at Greenacre and Beaumont Hills Campuses.

Thank you to everyone for your support, care, compassion and prayers during these difficult times being felt by your family and friends in New Zealand and at home.

Kind regards,



Mr Bruce Rixon
Principal

