

## 5 YEARS OF GEMS CIK

# Celebrating a milestone of global

By Ritah Mukasa

**G**EMS Cambridge International School Kampala (CIK) is part of the GEMS Education Global network, the largest K-12 education provider in the world. GEMS has been operating since 1968 and now with over 300 schools in 20 countries, it aims at providing 'quality education to every young person'.

Our world-wide network of 300,000 students allows learners to interact in a collaborative global learning environment with other GEMS schools, through exchanges and modern communication.

GEMS CIK teaches the national curriculum from pre-foundation stage to Year 13. It is passionate about offering each student every possible chance to succeed and discover their talent.

To do this, the school provides a diverse range of learning, enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities appropriate to each student's unique stage of development in preparation for university or the workplace.

Our beautiful campus located on Plot 102-104 in Butabika a Kampala suburb, has world-class amenities, that help us offer an amazing international education. With unparalleled access to sports, performing arts and culture, science and technology, our learners experience a stimulating and supportive environment — surrounded by learning, inspiration and opportunity.

With over 35 years of association with GEMS and involvement in the field of education, Dr Farooq Ahmad Wasil, with PhD specialising in education, is currently the global CEO, Affordable Schools. He has been honoured with the prestigious National Teacher Award by the Indian ministry of human resources. He received the award from the former president of India, Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, in 2005.

He was awarded the GEMS Fellowship in January 2006 and also listed as one of the 100 world's greatest leaders 2015 – Asia and Gulf Co-operation Council for his contribution to the sector. In May 2016, he was honoured for outstanding service in education at the UAE school education leadership conference.

A published author and a columnist, Wasil brings a wealth of experience to GEMS CIK.

### Education philosophy

Wasil reckons education to be a great leveller, hence advocates focus on the 4Es (educating, enjoying and engaging, empowering, enriching).

### Educating

He believes that our children must be empathetic to societal causes and concerns both at the local and global levels and groomed and nurtured into thinking individuals that possess professional edge combined with a strong value system grounded in our heritage.

### Enjoying and engaging

Wasil's own experience as a practicing educator compels him to mandate that education must be an enjoyable and engaging process, both for the learner and facilitator. To



**Dr Farooq Ahmad Wasil, Global CEO Affordable Schools**

this end, he approves continuous professional enhancement through training and workshops as well as enabling the latest methods in pedagogy, including the use of technology.

### Enriching

He recommends cultivation of an informed and updated team that is able to think, act and feel responsibly through enriching experiences that are connected to life; in the process of education.

### Empowering

Wasil feels that children and youth when neglected leads to the decay of the nation. It is in the classroom that the destiny of the nation is shaped. Empowering this segment through education, especially via scholarships to the talented, needy and marginalised students, as also enabling healthy bodies and minds through fitness, sports and subsidised medical facilities for regular health checks will go a long way in the creation of a developed nation.



**Brenda Mutesi, Parent Relations, Enrolment and Marketing Manager**

GEMS CIK subscribes to four core values, which are leading through innovation, pursuing excellence, growing by learning and global citizenship.

Our vision is to be the first choice school among families seeking high quality international learning experience for students of all ages.

Opened in September 2013 with 80 students, we are proud to have moved this far, a reason we celebrate the success. Over the years, our population has grown to 380 students including 55 boarders. However, this has not been a one-man effort, but a team of dedicated and diligent people this world class institution has been blessed with. The staff at GEMS CIK dedicate time and energy to every child. Over the last five years, the school has gained a reputation for being a caring and friendly education community.

We attribute the credit to students, parents, teaching, non-teaching staff, well-wishers and the school administration.



**Nigel Barrett, Head of Primary**

In what other job could you be part of a staff pantomime, where one moment you are helping the Year 2 solve the mystery of a missing chocolate cake before working with the early years foundation team to design a new playground followed by a trip to a safari park with the Year 6 students and return to watch a musical theatre performance?

Working with children is a privilege the staff members at GEMS primary enjoy every day.

A broader and more varied skills set is an important consideration in the 21st century. We have been working hard to provide educational experiences here at GEMS CIK for each children to have a variety of experiences, which engage, challenge and develop both their knowledge and skills.

We have developed the curriculum to relate to the real world, while helping children understand the 'WHY' of education. All the year groups engage the children through creative 'HOOKS' to begin each learning theme. From spending the day as pirates to gardening, comparing a taxi to a school bus to working with live chickens, the list is endless. Without the hardworking teachers, teaching assistants and learning support assistants, it would be impossible to deliver such an enriched experience.

Another focus within the primary school is the importance of enjoyment. If a child enjoys what they are doing, they will stay engaged, work hard on whatever they are completing and their learning will be sustained through their own drive.

We look to involve parents through a variety of opportunities for the children to share their experiences, strengthening community links, continuing to focus on excellence in academics, embedding technology to enhance the learning experiences.

We will do all these while working hard to know each student and provide them with the feedback, challenge and support needed for progress.



**Benjamin Green, Head of Secondary**

GEMS CIK is a fast-growing secondary school where students achieve success across the entire academic curriculum and beyond.

With good teaching and learning every day, our students are making more progress than at any point in our short history. The school is characterised by an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere, where students are cared for by a well-qualified international staff.

Exam results exceed world averages in most subject, giving our students access to pathways that take them to the next level.

Every student has an academic tutor responsible for their pastoral care. They also have access to counselling services to identify their strengths. We build a personalised curriculum to meet the needs of every student. Similarly, our values focus on showing respect for others, being ready to learn and working hard.

As a result, students thrive in the classroom and enjoy a range of programmes including sports, music, arts and enrichment that help to educate our young people for a happy, healthy and future.

At GEMS we offer an inclusive model of education for all our students from foundation stage through to high school.

In our fifth year of operation, we have expanded our learning support provision many times over. Our students attend most lessons with their mainstream counterparts. However, some interventions are conducted within our department. The learning support department now occupies two classrooms and one huge multi-purpose intervention space. We also have a sensory room and English is an additional language (EAL) classroom. Math, English and health and well-being are our main areas of focus as we believe with these supported, children can go forward to learn other subjects.

We are confidently enrolling children with more complex needs such as autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or global developmental delay.

Such students are appointed a learning support assistant to work with them for part of or all day. All our staff are trained professionals with specialisms in areas



**James Ohagen, Inclusion Manager**

such as, high school mathematics, literacy, EAL, counselling, occupational therapy, dyslexia and behavioural difficulties.

Our mainstream students and the wider school community accept these classmates as their own and this enhances the caring nature we have at our school.

We understand that every child has something to offer. We share society with an increasingly diverse community. Our school reflects this diversity to equip all our young people for the future.