

Aplomado Investments & Fenton Whelan Real Estate (AFW) and GSM Middle East to launch a super-premium, British international School on Qetaifan Island North, Qatar

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LONDON, 28th May, 2024: Global Schools Management (GSM), which owns over 165 schools, and educates over 45,000 students in the United Kingdom, Middle East, United States of America and Africa has announced that it has partnered with Aplomado Investments and Fenton Whelan Real Estate to launch a super-premium international school on Qetaifan Island North, Doha. The school will offer both the UK and IB pathways and cater for up to 1600 students and is set to open in September 2026.

Qetaifan Island North is located off Lusail City, Qatar and is designed to be Qatar's future iconic destination. The island spans approximately 1.4 million sqm, and features waterfronts, pedestrian friendly streets, living gardens, luxurious hotels, and entertainment attractions that make it a modern community with a unique design that is inspired by the rich culture and nature of the region.

The island represents a new way of life, as well as a symbol of the vision of the future of Qatar. The new Qetaifan Island North's Waterpark – Meryal - recently soft opened to the public, along with the Rixos Premium Qetaifan Island North Hotel. The island is owned by and being developed by Qetaifan Projects Co. which is wholly owned by Katara Hospitality.

The neighboring districts on the mainland near Qetaifan Island North are experiencing a significant rise in the relocation of residents and commercial entities from the heart of Doha city. GSM's new international school will cater for this trend with its premium offering.

The new international school will set the benchmark for world class facilities in Doha on its 30,245 sqm plot. It will feature a 700-seat auditorium linked with the school's Performing Art Hub, a 50-metre Olympic size swimming pool, watersports directly accessible from the school to the canal, food technology and hospitality programs directly linked with the industries on Qetaifan Island North, and a range of community facilities that will be accessible on weekends.

The school will also seek LEED accreditation as it is committed to energy conservation, reduced water usage, and a minimised carbon footprint.

The Qatar National Vision 2030 is ambitious and clearly sets out the long-term vision for economic, environmental, and human capital development in the country.

Commenting on the launch,

"We are delighted to announce the development of a comprehensive educational institution that covers all educational stages, from kindergarten to high school. This initiative is part of a series of steps aimed at developing an integrated community that caters to the needs of our valued investors and property owners," stated Sheikh Nasser bin Abdulaziz Al Thani, Head of Business Development at Qetaifan Projects. He added, *"This strategic step is expected to stimulate investments in Qetaifan Island North significantly. We are excited about this development, which perfectly aligns with our master plan goals for Qetaifan Island North which is designed to prioritise the interests of owners and investors by delivering a project that comprehensively meets all their needs."*

Jeremy Bussey, CEO of Aplomado Investments stated: *"Through our partnership with GSM, we strongly believe that we are positioned to contribute towards the realisation of Qatar's vision with our plans to establish a high quality, premium international school on Qetaifan Island."*

The announcement underscores GSM's expansion strategy in the GCC region. Speaking on the launch,

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Mr. Ron Packard, founder of GSM said, *“Our school will become the destination school of Doha. With our track record of academic excellence, and knowledge of the region, we see this school as an opportunity to shape the next generation of Qataris, and expatriates who will attend the school.”*

Professor Ralph Tabberer, the former Director General of the UK education sector and now Vice Chairman of GSM Middle East is set to Chair the school and ensure the highest standards of British education are embedded in the curriculum. Commenting on launch, Professor Tabberer stated *“We look forward to establishing a leading British curriculum school in Doha that challenges young people to step out of their comfort zone at every opportunity. Our approach and ethos will enable young people to develop the character traits required to be successful in a dynamic world that demands agility and an entrepreneurial mindset.”*

Safanad and GSM announced initial investment of US\$200 million in the region's education sector at the Future Investment Initiative (FII) 6 in October 2022, shortly after announcing the acquisition of BBD Education, a premier provider of professional education services and management for the growing schools' market in the GCC. The Group recently acquired Crown Private School in Ajman, a UK curriculum school that has seen a healthy growth of students since the COVID-19 pandemic.

GSM owns the International School of Berne, the premium international school in Switzerland that offers the IB Curriculum. The school's graduates attend the very best Russell Group and Ivy League universities around the world each year in addition to leading universities in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, and the Group is set to bring this expertise to Doha to educate the next generation of innovators and leaders.

Shaun Robison, CEO of GSM Middle East, added, *“In our experience, master developments attract high net worth families who want the very best for their children, and who seek like-minded families who share their values. Our school will blur the boundaries of learning as we blend industry specialists with highly qualified teachers and collaborate with our partners on Qetaifan Island so that our children get real world experiences as part of the curriculum.”*

End of Release

About GSM: GSM holds a vision of providing world-class education across the MENA region. Dedicated to preparing young minds for the future, GSM strives for excellence in every educational endeavor.

www.gsm.education

About Plomado Investments: At Plomado Investments we're all about innovation. We are driven to invest in the development of cutting-edge projects with the most promising futures and original opportunities. Each of our projects nurtures the expansion of important industries whilst also yielding profitable results. www.aplomadoinvest.com

About Ron Packard – Chairman of GSM

Ron Packard is the CEO and Founder of GSM. Ron is a well-known educator, entrepreneur and visionary as well as the author of the highly regarded and reviewed book *Education Transformation*. Ron was previously the long time CEO and Founder of K12 Inc. He oversaw the growth of K¹² from just an idea to almost one billion in revenue, making it one of the largest education companies in the world. During his tenure, revenue compounded at near 80%. Before K¹², Ron was the Vice President of Knowledge Universe and CEO of Knowledge Schools, one of the nation's largest early childhood education companies. He was also instrumental in the successful investments in Learn Now, Children's School USA, Leapfrog, TEC, and Children's Discovery Center.

Ron also worked for McKinsey & Company and for Goldman Sachs in mergers and acquisitions. Ron has received the Education Industry Association's James P. Boyle Entrepreneurial Leadership Award. Ron previously served on the Department of Defense's Education Advisory Committee. Ron has been featured on nationwide radio and television shows and magazines, including Bloomberg TV, Forbes, and the Washington Post to name a few. He holds a B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley and an M.B.A. from the University of Chicago, both with honors.

About Professor Ralph Tabberer (Vice Chairman of GSM)

Ralph Tabberer is an expert educator with more than 35 years experience in the school sector, in higher education and in government. He was Director General of Schools in England between 2006 and 2009, a post where he was responsible to PM Tony Blair for the development and performance of 23,000 primary, secondary and special schools in the UK.

Ralph left the UK civil service in 2009 and moved to the Middle East to join the international private school operator, GEMS, as COO, CEO and Chief of Schools. In 2012, after a highly successful period steering GEMS through the recession and preparing it for further growth, Ralph established the first of his own businesses.

Ralph is a graduate of Cambridge University and a qualified teacher. In the New Years Honours list of 2009, Her Majesty The Queen invested Ralph as a Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (CB) in recognition of his services to teacher training and to schools. He is a visiting professor at the Institute of Education, University College of London and an Honorary Professor at Warwick University.

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