



## **QATAR FOUNDATION TO OPEN PIONEERING SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM**

*School to Offer Vital Support to Children with Autism and their Families*

**Doha, Qatar, 23 April 2016:** Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is set to open Renad Academy (RA), a school dedicated to children who have been diagnosed with mild to moderate Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This pioneering educational facility, which aims to inspire acceptance, trust and success, reflects QF's ongoing commitment to helping students reach their full potential.

The facility will open later this year and will be officially unveiled on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2016, with registration set to open on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016. The academy will provide an optimum learning environment for young children aged three to five years, and classes will be delivered by highly qualified, specialised faculty and staff.

Ms Buthaina Al Nuaimi, President of Pre-University Education at Qatar Foundation, said: "Autism is the fastest growing developmental disorder in the world. The key to progress is early intervention and creating a solid support structure for children to grow. QF's Pre-University Education has a crucial role to play in society, and we are committed to providing excellent education and services for children with ASD. Our aim is to help prepare the students for adulthood, equipping them with the necessary confidence and skills for the future."

Dr Muhammad Waqar Azeem, Chair Department of Psychiatry Sidra Medical and Research Center, Chair of National Autism Working Group, Vice Chair of WISH Autism Forum, and a member of the committee working on the establishment of the school, said: "Renad Academy will be a state-of-the-art school, serving children with Autism and their families. This institution will address a major need in Qatar, and it represents a step in the right direction for the advancement and inclusion of the whole community."

"Furthermore, Renad Academy aims to help children with ASD reach their full potential, so that each child learns the skills needed to integrate into the community and become productive members of society. It is an honour to be involved with this project; it is a true example of close cooperation between QF Pre-University Education and Sidra Medical and Research Center," Dr Azeem continued.

Ms Sherri Miller, Director of the Renad Academy, said: "I am very excited to lead this project in Qatar, and I am certain that this academy will blaze the trail for future schools to support children with Autism further. Not only will we run a dynamic and exciting curriculum, but we will also provide an outreach centre to bring training and awareness to the community. Parents and caretakers will receive intensive training so they are better able to build relationships with their children. We also hope to partner with universities and hospitals in Qatar, like Sidra, to bring support to families and increase the understanding of the condition in Qatar."



Parents of young children with ASD who are interested in enrolling their child in the school are invited to attend a parent's information meeting. For more information or to register for this event, please call 4454 2106.

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### **Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential**

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. QF was co-founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Qatar Foundation's Chairperson. QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>