

Dear EC Community

I hope you and your family are well and enjoying the summer, albeit a somewhat unusual one. As you will be aware from previous communication, over the last two months the school has been planning and preparing for a safe return for our students and staff in August. We are very pleased to inform you that we have now received approval from KHDA for our reopening plan.

"Thank you for submitting your School Re-Opening Readiness Plan. We've reviewed your plan, and we're happy to let you know that it meets all the requirements."

Regulations & Permits Commission
Knowledge & Human Development Authority, 2020

In this letter we outline our general educational plan, as well as our protocols and measures to ensure the safety of our learning community. Over the coming days you will also be receiving letters and videos from the Heads of Primary, Middle and Senior sharing more detailed information that is relevant to each specific year group across the school.

WHEN WILL MY CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL?

As per the published school calendar, the first day of school for all students will be August 30 2020. Orientation for new families to EC (Year 1 upwards) and all Yr 7 and Yr 12 students will take place on August 27 2020. More detail will follow in the coming weeks.

WHAT WILL BE THE SCHOOL TIMINGS?

In order to minimise overcrowding at the start and end of the school day, timings will be staggered and different year groups will enter and exit the school through a number of designated entrance points. Heads of School will be providing year group specific information over the coming days. Members of the Senior Leadership Team and Operations staff will be at the entrance points and the temperatures of all students will be taken on arrival at the school.

Anyone with a temperature above 37.5 will not be allowed entry. These students will be taken to a dedicated medical room within the school, where further temperature and medical checks will be made, and families subsequently notified.

Students travelling by bus will have their temperatures checked before getting on the bus and again before accessing the building. Designated and trained security guards will monitor the system throughout the day. A process is in place to manage all students identified with a temperature greater than 37.5 degrees Celsius.

Families are to drop off and pick up at designated areas only in designated timings with no interaction inside the school. (Further details for Primary, Middle and Senior to follow). There will be no access to the school facility by family members or visitors. Family members are given a maximum time limit of 10 minutes in the designated area to pick up/drop off with no crowding, maintenance of 2 meters distance, and wearing masks at all times.

WHAT WILL LEARNING LOOK LIKE?

We are fortunate to have sufficient space to enable all students to be in school, safely, every day (specific details will be outlined by the Heads of Primary, Middle and Senior over the coming days). That said, we will be building on the many successes of our distance learning programme and blended learning will continue to be a regular feature in every classroom.

Bubbles will exist across year groups and within year groups to minimise student movement across the school and risk of cross contamination, but allowing flexibility with older year groups to meet timetabling requirements. Students will remain in their bubble throughout the school day, only leaving their classrooms during PE, Lunch, Arabic A and Islamic lessons. This will be carefully controlled and monitored. (Heads of School will be sharing year group specific information).

Desks will be set at a safe distance apart of 1.5 meters, and physical markings will be used in classrooms to ensure desks remain in the correct locations. Teachers will be positioned at the front of the classroom area, at a minimum distance of 1.5 meters from the front row desks.

All primary lessons will be face-to-face and can also be accessed through Google, SeeSaw and Tapestry. All lessons from Year 6 to Year 13 will be face-to-face and live streamed via google platforms.. We are conscious that some parents may want their children to return to school on a part time basis, indeed, some may prefer for their child to continue with a 100% distance learning programme and our blended model will facilitate this. If this is something you would like to discuss further, please contact the relevant Head of School.

Virtual learning platforms will also continue to be used to collect and assess students' work and to provide feedback on learning.

WHAT PROTOCOLS ARE IN PLACE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY?

The EC Health and Safety team has established a robust set of health, safety and operational procedures and protocols, in order to support the safe reopening of schools. Quality assurance checks will also be conducted to monitor the effectiveness.

Safety markings will be set up throughout corridors, the markings will dictate safe distances of 2 meters. Students will be monitored to ensure adherence. One-way pedestrian flows will be required and will be marked out accordingly.

Until Health and Safety restriction allows greater flexibility, students will eat snacks and lunch within the classroom environment. Tuck Shop will operate a pre-packed lunch service as an option to pre-buy, with no live cooking taking place at school. Students are encouraged to bring their own food from home. Water dispensers are not permitted to be used, hence please equip your child/ren with sufficient water/beverages to last throughout the school day. Sharing of food, cutlery/crockery and water bottles is not permitted.

WILL STUDENTS AND STAFF WEAR MASKS?

Teachers and students above the age of 6 are required to wear face masks. Face masks can be removed during strenuous physical activity. Face shields can be worn for those employees who are in direct contact with students. Parents should ensure that children bring three disposable masks to school per day or at least one re-usable option. It will be the responsibility of the students to ensure that they bring the required number of masks each day and ensure any reusable masks are washed in line with the manufacturer's guidelines.

WHAT TRAINING WILL THE STAFF HAVE BEFORE SCHOOL OPENS?

Our entire team will undergo specific Covid-19 training prior to the start of the new academic year. In addition, teachers will regularly communicate and provide information to students on the associated risks, safe practices and controls. All students will be briefed on this plan prior to the start of the academic year.

WHAT ARE THE CLEANING AND HYGIENE PROCEDURES?

Our school has conducted a review of all potential frequent touch points, including, door handles, light switches, handrails, taps and washbasins, etc. Increased cleaning and sanitization will be conducted across these areas throughout the duration of the day. A thorough cleaning of the school will be conducted each day by an approved vendor, using approved Municipality chemicals. A thorough deep clean and sanitization of the school will be conducted at the end of each week. Cleaning staff will wear the required PPE for all cleaning activities.

IN THE EVENT THERE IS A POTENTIAL OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE, HOW WILL IT BE HANDLED?

Managing a potential Covid-19 case in school

If a student is suspected of being a positive Covid-19 case, he/she will be immediately moved to one of our isolation rooms in the Primary or Secondary building. Only the school medical and emergency services team are permitted to enter the isolation room, wearing full PPE kit. The students' parents will be contacted immediately by the school nurse and the required authorities will be notified. The school will strictly adhere to the health authority requirements for managing and transferring any suspected cases of Covid-19. All areas which may have been accessed will be thoroughly deep cleaned and sanitized following any suspected cases. These areas will be closed immediately until the deep clean is completed. Tracing will be conducted to identify those who may have come into contact with the student or staff member. Health authority requirements will be strictly adhered to. This may include additional testing and isolation of persons who have come into contact with a positive case.

Managing a confirmed case

A confirmed case could be in the form of a student or staff member. In such cases the person will be in isolation for a period of time - this may be at home or in a medical facility. Upon receiving notification of a confirmed case, a tracing exercise will be conducted by the school. This will identify all other persons who may have come into contact with the positive case.

Any persons who have come into close contact with the confirmed positive case will be sent home from school immediately, with a potential isolation period of 14 days. Further advice from the authorities, including the health authority and education authority, will be required on this aspect. No persons who have tested positive will be permitted to return to school without first providing evidence of a negative test result,

in line with authority requirements. All relevant areas will undergo a thorough deep clean and sanitization exercise.

Communication of a confirmed case

It is important that parents are provided with suitable information regarding confirmed cases within the school. It is also vital that people's individual privacy is maintained. Parents will be notified when there is a positive case to a class member or class teacher. The required procedures will be followed for notifying the authorities.

WILL SCHOOL BUSES OPERATE?

Bus routes will be revised based on the demand of parents wishing to continue to use bus transportation and to accommodate the new staggered start times.

- Maximum of 50% capacity in line with authorities' instruction
- Buses will be disinfected prior to each trip as per RTA/DHA/DM protocols
- Driver and Bus Attendant will wear masks and follow all protocols of COVID-19
- Driver and BA temperature will be checked before the start of the duty and before each trip
- Buses will have sanitizer and first Aid kit will include face masks and gloves
- Buses will have non-contact thermometer
- Temperature of every student will be checked at the time of boarding. Any student with a temperature over 37.5 degrees will not be permitted to enter the bus
- Records of all student passengers and absences will be maintained
- Students over the age of 6 must wear face masks at all times
- Social distancing of 2 meters will be enforced and students will not change seats during the journey.

WHAT WILL BE THE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR FAMILIES?

There will be regular communications over the coming weeks to parents about our reopening plans. Reassuring parents that their children will be returning to a safe, secure environment is essential. In the weeks leading up to the start of term, a number of videos will be released, aimed at easing any anxieties parents or students may have. These videos will also explain very clearly what each child can expect on their return to school - from their arrival to school each morning, their time in class, breaks to leaving school at the end of the day.

The school will continue to keep parents up-to-date with developments through D6, our main communication tool for parents. We will also continue to build on the successes of our distance learning experiences and our use of the website and our social media platforms to further encourage and enhance parental engagement. We will also continue to use Classcharts.

There will be regular newsletters/video messages from the Principal and Heads of School to the community.

The school's leadership team will continue to proactively call random samples of parents from all phases of the school to seek feedback and adapt practice where appropriate.

All important contact details are available on the school website home page and communicated regularly to parents, as was the case during the distance learning programme.

We understand that you may have concerns about the reopening, but I want to reiterate that we are committed to our community's safety and also to providing our learners with an outstanding education. I hope that this letter and the communication to follow from Heads of School goes some way to alleviate any concerns you may have at this stage, but please feel free to come back to us with any questions or concerns you may have. If you wish to come into school to see our arrangements first hand, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the relevant Head of School. We will share further communication in the days and weeks to come.

Finally, our new staff will arrive in Dubai this week. The new facilities are close to completion and looking superb. Our enrollment is strong and we will welcome over 170 new students to the EC family on 30th August. Our Senior Leadership Team has been working throughout the summer to be ready for the start of the new academic year. New teachers will begin their induction programme during the week of August 16 2020; and all staff return on August 23 2020. We are eager to welcome you all back into our wonderful school.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for being a part of the EC family and for your support during these challenging times. We are all looking forward to welcoming you back.

Kind regards

Mark Ford, Principal



Our Values are: Collaboration - Aspiration - Respect - Excellence - Responsibility