

Dear EC Community

I hope that you all have had a very relaxing and healthy summer holiday, while also feeling eager to get back to school and your learning.

We are happy to inform you that we have received approval from KHDA for our reopening plan and will be back in school from the 30th August. In this letter I will outline the plan for the reopening of the Middle 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 in Year 6 -9, and all students in Year 7, will take place on August 27 2020. More detail will follow in the coming weeks.

WHAT WILL BE THE SCHOOL TIMINGS?

The EC Middle School Day will operate within the normal school day timings.. Students in years 6 to 13 will enter school between 7.30am and 7.40am and will leave school at 3.20pm.

On a Thursday we have an early finish, students will leave school from 12:45pm.

DROP OFF

Parents who are dropping off their children, should drop their child near to their designated entry gate:

- Year 6, 7 and 8 = Primary Gate 1. So parents should drop their child off at the sand beside the primary building
- Year 9 = Field Gate 4. So parents should drop their child off behind the school.

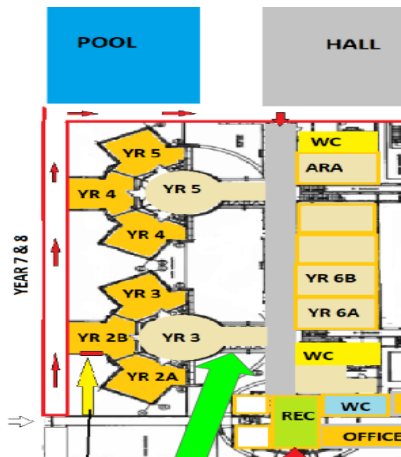
All students must wear a mask to school and will have their temperature checked. Anyone with a temperature above 37.5 will not be allowed entry. These students will be taken to a dedicated medical room within the school, where further temperature and medical checks will be made, and families subsequently 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. When the buses arrive at school, the bus will drop students off near their designated gate.

Students in years 6, 7 and 8 will enter the building via GATE 1, the primary gate. Students in Year 9 will enter the building via the field gate entrance (gate 4).

Year 7 students will be dropped by the Primary main entrance gate, once the student passes through the gate, they will turn left and walk along the pathway towards the

swimming pool. Year 7 students will then enter the Primary building by the back door opposite the sports hall doors.



Entrance here:

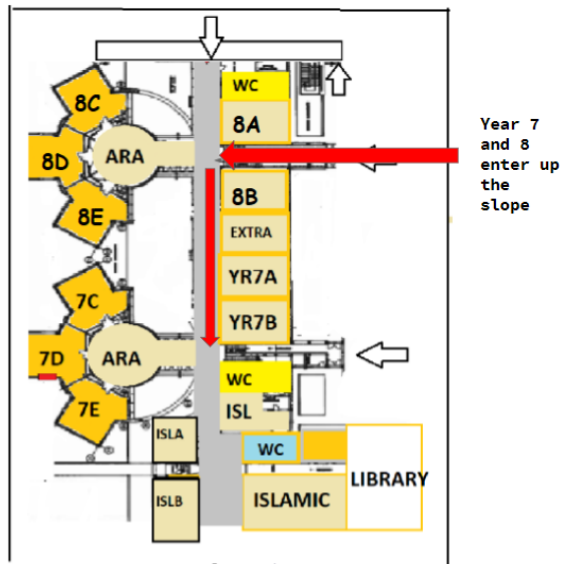




They will then walk directly to their assigned Year 7 classroom, by taking the ramp to the 1st floor, walking down the corridor to the end where the five Year 7 rooms are. Once they have arrived at their classroom, they will not line up, they will go straight in and sit down at their desk.

While walking, all students will maintain social distancing.

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Families are to drop off and pick up at designated areas only at the designated time with no interaction inside the school. There will be no access to the school facility by family members or visitors. Family members are given a maximum time limit of 6 minutes in the designated area to pick up/drop off with no crowding, maintenance of 2 meters distance, and wearing masks at all times.

If you are late, you must report to the Gate 2 security office (the former pedestrian entrance and next to Gate 1 in the Primary Car Park area). The security guard will take your child to the Primary Reception. Note, if the gate is locked, the security guard will be escorting a late student and we ask that you patiently wait outside until he returns.

WHAT WILL LEARNING LOOK LIKE?

We are fortunate to have sufficient space to enable all students to be in school, safely, every day. 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.

Year 7 will therefore be treated as one bubble. They are split into their five form groups, but will mix at lunchtime, PE, Arabic A and Islamic lessons.

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 lessons will be live streamed via google platforms, ensuring that students can access lessons either face-to face or virtually. 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 60% distance learning programme and our blended model will facilitate this. If this is something you would like to discuss further, please don't hesitate to contact myself, or Mr Chaters. However, please note that this would be agreed for a half termly basis.

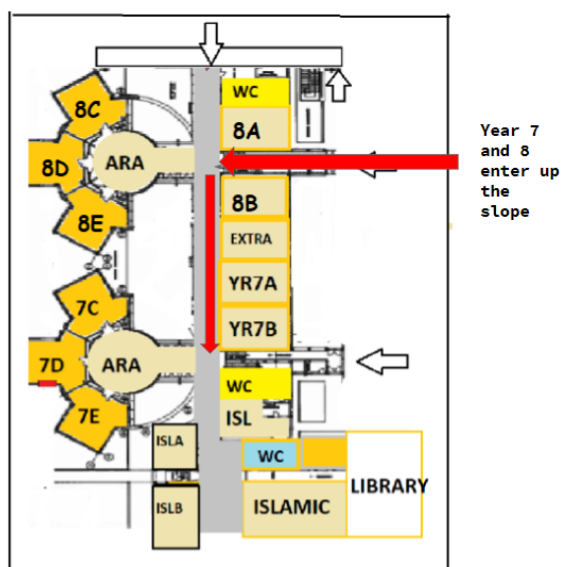
Virtual learning platforms will also continue to be used to collect and assess students' work and to provide feedback on learning.

Please note, Extra Curricular Activities will not run for term 1, unfortunately, this is not possible with the restrictions.

WHAT WILL LEARNING LOOK LIKE FOR A STUDENT IN YEAR 7?

Year 7 will operate within their own bubble. The year 7 bubble will be on the first floor of the Primary building.

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Year 7
and 8
enter up
the
slope

This of course means that the Year 7's will not be in the new building and I fully understand that this may be a disappointment. However, to be able to reopen and welcome 100% of our students back, we need to ensure the year groups are spread out and within self-contained bubbles.

Please note that these plans are temporary and hopefully in the near future we will go back to a normal school day and so the Year 7's will get to fully enjoy the new building. But for the meantime, the students will still have all the required resources and space within the Primary School. However, Year 7's will get to use the new sports hall during PE lessons.

Middle SCHOOL LESSON LOGISTICS

All Year 7 lessons will be housed within their bubble. Specialist teachers will move to teach Year 7 lessons within the Year 7 bubble, rather than the students moving across the school site. Lessons may be 50-55 minutes instead of 60 minutes in order to allow safe movement time for the teachers.

All tables and chairs in classrooms will be socially distanced. Therefore each room will have a maximum capacity - with the current number of students in Year 7, we have more than enough space in the five classrooms. The Primary classrooms are large in size, we have measured out the room and laid out the tables and chairs using the 1.5 meters guidance. We have more than enough seats, tables and space for the current numbers in Year 7.



Some specialist lessons will require some specialist equipment, for example in Computer Science lessons, students are required to use their own device, not the school computers.

PE lessons will still run, we can not do swimming lessons or sports which involve physical contact e.g. rugby. Students are required to wear their PE kit to school on the day they have PE and wear the kit for the whole day.

Students will not line up outside classrooms; they will be trusted to go into the classroom and sit at their designated seat, which will not change. Desks must not be moved, as they placed with the required social distancing. This includes during breaks and lunchtimes.

Toilet breaks can be taken at any time, but students can go one at a time, we can not allow groups of friends all traveling to the bathroom at the same time.

WHAT EQUIPMENT MUST A YEAR 7 STUDENT BRING TO SCHOOL?

Students should ensure that they bring:

1. Their device, headphones and a charger. Lessons will more likely require their use in order to deliver content within COVID restrictions.
2. Any stationary they need, including art supplies.
3. Any textbooks or exercise books that they have been given. Note, these cannot be collected by the teacher and cannot be shared between students.
4. At least 3 disposable, or 1 reusable, masks.
5. Hand sanitiser. It is advised to have a gel and some wipes.
6. Enough water and drinks to keep them hydrated throughout the day. Please note water dispensers **will not** be available in school.
7. Their lunch and any other snacks they need during the day.
8. A telephone in case contact needs to be made with home for collection (however, it must not be seen or heard during school hours).

WHAT WILL A YEAR 7 STUDENT DO AT BREAK AND LUNCH TIME?

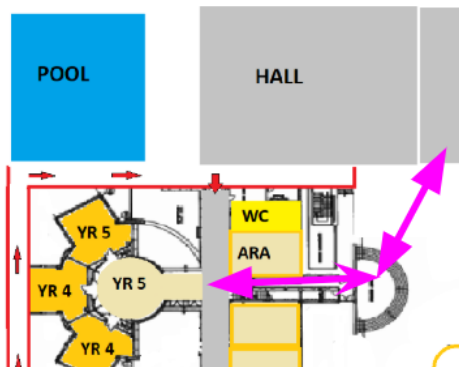
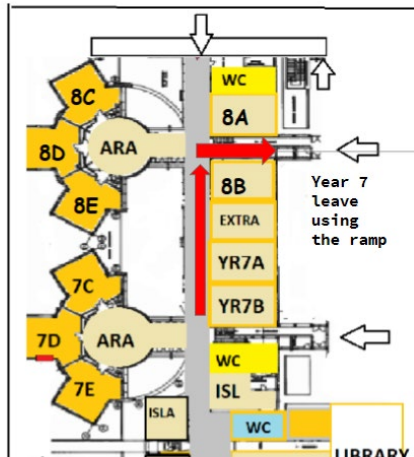
Until Health and Safety restriction allows greater flexibility, students will eat snacks and lunch within the classroom environment. Tuck Shop will operate a pre-packed lunch service as an option to pre-buy, with no live cooking taking place at school.

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.

Students will spend break time in their classroom, in their chairs. Students can eat and talk etc.

Students will eat in their classroom for the first half of lunchtime, in their chairs, students can talk and socialize during this time. The second half of lunchtime will be spent with the rest of Year 7 in the Primary sports hall. During this time the students will walk directly to the area, in single file, with social distancing and will be supervised. Students can socialise, but must not play games that involve any sort of physical contact and everyone must wear their masks.

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PICK UP

All Middle school students will be encouraged to turn on their phones at 3:10 and check to see if their parents have any delay.

Students in Year 6 will exit the building via the primary gate 2, the way which they arrived at 3:15 PM.

Students in year 7 and 8 will exit the building via gate 3 which is by the swimming pool. Year 7 will be allowed to leave at 3:15, while Year 8 will wait till 3:20, so the Year 7's have cleared the building. Year 7 and 8 students will use the slope to go down towards gate 3.

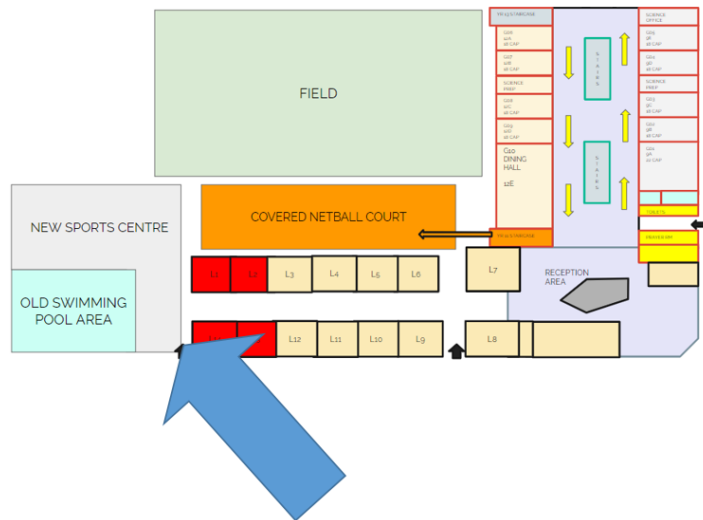
Students in Year 9 will exit the same way they came in, through the field gate 4.

On the rare occasion that a student has an issue with getting home, they will wait in their classroom for their parents to call and then exit as their year group did.

The site must be clear of students by 3:30 pm so that a deep clean and sanitisation for the following day can begin.

Students who will leave using a bus

Students will leave their building with the other students from their year group, but not leave through the gate. The student will then walk across the field towards the following door:



The buses will be parked in the designated bus parking spots, which are within the boundary of the school, just outside the front of the old secondary building (where staff parked last year). The buses will allow students onto the bus once their temperature has been checked and when all the students are on the bus, the bus will leave through the primary gate.

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 who are 6 years old or above (Year 2) 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 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. Before 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. There will be regular newsletters/video messages from the Principal, as well as the Middle School, in order to keep parents fully informed. We will also continue to proactively call random samples of parents to seek feedback and adapt practice where appropriate.

We understand that you may have concerns about the reopening, but I want to reiterate Mr Ford's earlier message; we are committed to our community's safety and also to providing our learners with an outstanding education. I hope that the detail in this letter 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. As mentioned earlier, you will also receive a video that explains the process of arriving at school, being in the building, lessons and lunch times, and the end of the school day. If you wish to come into school to see our arrangements first hand, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

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 into school, all the staff at EC are keen to get back into the classroom and I am sure our students are too. These have been challenging times for us all, but we as a community will make the most of the situation.

If you have any questions or concerns at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me at dsims@englishcollege.ac.ae.

Kind regards,

Mr Daryl Sims