



REOPENING DIS IN SEPTEMBER

Dear parents,

I would like to extend a very warm welcome back to Deira International School. I hope that you and your family are safe, well and rested. We have now been at the school for a little over a week and have been delighted at the incredibly generous reception we have received from all that are here. The senior leadership teams are now back, and we are all busy preparing for the new year. It is exciting to know that the community will be returning in the coming days and weeks.

We are writing to update you on the plans for re-opening in Term 1 and to provide you with some reassurance on the health and safety measures that will be taken to ensure that you the whole school community is as safe as possible.

Over the Summer break, every school in Dubai has planned extensively for re-opening and submitted a school-readiness plan to the KHDA, which has been rigorously scrutinized to ensure that all possible measures have been taken by the school ahead of the start of the school year.

It is a great pleasure to be able to share some of the main aspects of this plan. This letter will form the start of several communications which will reach you in the coming days so that every member of our school community is very clear on the expectations for the adherence to the new policies and guidelines.

CHOICE OF LEARNING MODEL/WINDOWS

As a result of the extensive facilities at DIS, the we are in a rare position to be able to have **all students** in school, **all the time**, and **throughout the term**. Details of the individual arrangements are below. However, we are aware that, as a result of understandable concerns about the current context, some parents may wish for their children to continue with distance learning. As a result, DIS will be offering all parents the choice of two learning models: - **on site face to face learning and distance learning from home**.

As I am sure you understand, the planning for onsite protocols is extensive. Therefore, we will need to ask parents to choose which model they wish for their children. In addition, once decided the students will need to remain with that model for a period of time. As the situation is continually changing, we know that some parents will wish to change the model for their children. Therefore, we will be providing two occasions during the term for such a choice to be made. As a result, there will be three 'windows' across the term where students will be expected to remain with their learning model choice. The dates are as follows:

- a. Window 1 – 30th August – 24th September
- b. Window 2 – 26th September – 14th October (Half term)
- c. Window 3 - 25th October – 10th December

The school will provide communication in advance of any decisions being needed.

It is important to note that some students may be required to change models as a result of health concerns. Clearly such changes will need to happen in response to circumstances and will not be confined to the windows outlined above. In this situation, we will work with parents on an individual level to ensure students' needs are met.



HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS ACROSS SCHOOL

Throughout the school, new safety protocols will be in place for everyone on site.

- Prior to the start of term, the entire school will undergo a full sanitization.
- On arrival at the site, everyone will have their temperature checked. Anyone with a temperature above 37.5C will not be permitted on site.
- Everyone on site over the age of 6 will always be required to wear a mask, except when eating or taking part in PE.
- Hand sanitizers are available throughout the school and students will be encouraged to use them frequently.
- Social distancing will be in place across the entire site. In common areas this will be 2m. In classrooms, this will be 1.5m.
- Showers and changing rooms are not permitted. On the days where students have PE lessons, they must come to school in their full PE uniform. Students will be informed on their first day which day they have PE. Therefore, PE will not happen on the first day.
- Prayer rooms will be open but operating at 30% capacity.
- Common areas of the school will be cleaned and disinfected on a continual basis. This also applies to frequently used areas/ surfaces such as door handles, dining tables, seat rests, elevator keys, etc.

INDUCTION OF ALL PUPILS

This year, we will hold short induction sessions for all pupils on a staggered basis. The reason for this is to ensure that we assign sufficient designated time to enable pupils to become familiar with their new learning environment and to learn about the ways we must observe health and safety practices. This is essential in ensuring that with a full school, there is a minimized risk of virus transmission and a full understanding amongst pupils of the new expectations and protocols.

30th August 2020

The following pupils will come to school:

- Pupils who are new to the school
- Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (FS1 and FS2)
- Students of Determination by invite only

The Head of Primary, Mrs Gaynor Dale, will hold a short information session for the parents who are new to the school whilst your child attends class.

Details of exact timings will be sent separately.

REGULAR SCHOOL TIMINGS, DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP POINTS FROM 1ST SEPTEMBER

To ensure the smooth management of entry and exit from the school building and campus and to adhere to social distancing protocols, we will be staggering the start and finish times to pupils.

Pupils will enter school as follows:

Drop-Off

Oryx house 7:20 – 7:30

Tahr house 7:30 – 7:40

Saluki house 7:40 – 7:50

Falcon house 7:50 – 8:00

Pupils will not be able to enter the school building until 7:20 am.

It is important to note however that parents will not be allowed into the school buildings. Parents are only allowed to drop students off or pick students up unless there is a prior arrangement or appointment made with a member of staff. We fully appreciate the school community's cooperation in ensuring that we comply with these important health and safety protocols.

If a student needs to leave the school site for any reason within the school day, they are not permitted back into school.

Pupils in FS1 and FS2 will enter through the main Foundation Stage entrance

Years 1 – 3 will enter school via the main Primary entrance

Years 4 – 6 will enter school via the Primary café

There will be thermal imaging cameras at all pupil's entry points which will detect temperatures and ensure that all students (Y2-Y6) are wearing face masks.

Pick Up

Detailed plan of FS pick up timings will be sent separately

2:30 – 2:35 – Year 1 Bubble A from each class

2:35 – 2:40 – Year 1 Bubble B from each class

2:40 – 2:45 – Year 3/6

2:45 – 2:50 – Year 2

2:50 – 2:55 – Year 4

2:55 – 3:00 – Year 5

Details of specific pick up points will be communicated separately.

Please note that for the health and safety of all and to ensure that pupils do not mix, being on time for pick up is necessary.

STRUCTURE OF THE DAY

It is essential that we continue to provide an exceptional curriculum that meets the needs of all our pupils aligned to our vision for an inclusive school. Therefore, we aim to continue to provide a structure of day and access to specialist teachers as previously delivered, wherever possible,

Foundation Stage

Pupils will be taught in stable groups of 10. Pupils will not be allowed to mix beyond their groups. Each large classroom will accommodate two stable groups of 10 under the supervision of the class teacher and a Learning Support Assistant. Most of the teaching and learning will take place in the classroom. Pupils will have timetables slots to access the Physical Development Area. There will be a full sanitization of this area after each group. Outdoor spaces will not be open in the first instance. It is not mandatory for pupils to wear masks.

Year 1

Pupils will be taught in stable groups of 10. Pupils will not be allowed to mix beyond their groups. Each class of 20 will be split across 2 classrooms with equal contact with the class teacher and Learning Support Assistant. A blended approach will ensure that the class teacher will teach the core subjects to each group face-to-face. Learning Support Assistants will support learning for the wider curriculum, which will be facilitated and delivered through the Seesaw learning platform.

It is not mandatory for pupils to wear masks.

Years 2 to 6

Pupils will be taught in classrooms with at least 1.5 metres distance between each desk. Social distancing will be observed wherever possible and masks must be worn by pupils and staff.

Specialist lessons will take place in the classroom. Some PE lessons will take place in areas where a 2m space between pupils can be observed. Arabic and Islamic will be taught through a distance learning platform in class under the supervision of an Arabic teacher to support the learning.

Swimming will not take place until further notice.

UNIFORM

The uniform requirements will remain the same for this term. We strongly recommend that students' uniforms are washed daily.

We have changed uniform supplier this year, but it is fine for students to use 'hand-me-down' uniform if this is necessary. Current students do not need to buy new uniform if their current uniform is suitable.

IB students should refer to the IB handbook for uniform/dress requirements.

INCLUSION

Deira International School is proud to be an inclusive school and will continue to maintain its commitment towards an inclusive education for all, including pupils with SEND.

Level 3 Students will continue to be supported fully via their 1:1 support within their class or stable group.

Interventions will take place via an additional group, in the Sensory room where pupils can stay distanced where possible. Intervention groups will be small and will not mix.

External therapists will be allowed to enter the site and work with individual pupils with the permission of parents and with the relevant health and safety protocols in place.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Pupils must bring their own labelled stationary kit, their lunchbox (where appropriate) and a device (Years 1 to 6). Bags are allowed but must be small, compact and must not be trolley-style with wheels.

Stationary List:

- Pens
- Pencil/ Rubber
- Ruler/ Sharpener
- Highlighters
- Maths Equipment (Calculator/ Compass/ Protractor)

Devices:

We recommend devices (Y 1-6) that have the following features:

- Have a camera
- Have a keyboard (attached or detachable)
- Be fully compatible with Office 365 Apps
- In order to use the device to its full educational potential, it is highly recommended that:
- A stylus is provided for tablets for writing and drawing (digital inking)
- There is both a front and rear camera for taking photos
- The device runs Windows 10

LUNCHTIMES AND BREAKS

Pupils will remain in class during lunchtimes and breaks until further notice. The school canteen will remain in operation but using the new safety protocols required by the municipality. Parents will have the option to select, order and pay for a meal plan for their child via the Abela online portal. The meal will be delivered packaged with a safety seal at breaktime to be consumed in the classroom.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE EVENT OF A SUSPECTED INFECTION?

The school is prepared for any eventuality and we have rehearsed the process should an infection be discovered.

If an infection is suspected on site:

If anyone on site is found to be displaying any of the symptoms of Covid 19, this will immediately trigger a three-stage response, as follows: -

1. Isolation

- The person will be immediately taken to isolation in a designated "Isolation Room" in the school clinic.
- If symptoms are detected when arriving school, the person will not be allowed onto the site but will be taken from outside the school to the back gate and then into the isolation room.
- Once isolated, the medical team will conduct an initial investigation to establish the severity of the case. The team will be in full personal protective equipment.

2. Reporting

- Parents/guardians will be notified immediately and asked to come to school. Head of School will also be immediately informed.
- If the case is deemed to be sufficiently serious, an ambulance will be called. The patient will be accompanied by an adult wearing full PPE when transported to the hospital. Contact with parents will be maintained throughout.
- If a patient is deemed to have stable case of illness with a mild respiratory illness the DHA hotline number 800342 will be contacted, as is a mandatory requirement. This will then be referred to hospital for their advice.

3. Protection

- Anyone suspected of contracting COVID-19 will be required to take a PCR COVID 19 test before returning to the school. The test result will need to be reported to school clinic before being permitted to return.
- If the test is negative and the patient displays no symptoms, then the person can resume school.
- If the test is negative but symptoms remain then the person will be required to complete a 14- day quarantine.
- If the test result is positive for COVID 19, the person will have to stay at home or hospital as advised by their doctor. The patient can report back to school only when they receive medical clearance and have finished 14 days of isolation and are fever-free for last 3 days without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- If the result is positive, the traced contacts of the patient will be established and informed. All will be required to complete a 14-day period of quarantine.
- All areas the patient has been present in (classroom, isolation room, waiting areas for transportation used will undergo deep cleansing and disinfection

If an infection is suspected outside of the school premises

- If a member of the school becomes aware, they have been in contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID 19, they are required to report this to the school. In addition, they are not to report to school and must get tested for PCR.
- If tested is negative they should remain in quarantine for 7 days from the day of exposure to the infected individual.
- If tested positive, they should complete a 14-day isolation and will be allowed to return to school once they have a DHA/medical clearance certificate and Negative PCR test.

We hope this has answered many of the questions that you have and that you know have a clearer picture of how the school will operate from the beginning of term. Over the next few days there will be further information sent out, including videos of what the students can expect to see and experience.

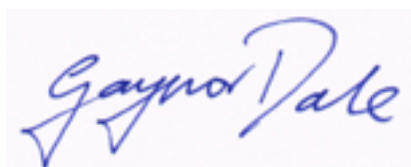
As well as this, we will be hosting an online 'Meet the SLT' opportunity. This will take place on Tuesday 18th August at 1pm and will provide an opportunity to answer any further questions you may have. Please do pencil this into your diaries. Details of how to join will be communicated at the start of next week.

Things will be different this term, but we are working to ensure all our community remains safe and well, and all pupils are able to continue to thrive at school. We hope you have a wonderful weekend. Please do keep an eye out for further details over the coming days.

Yours faithfully,



Simon O'Connor
Director
Deira International School



Gaynor Dale
Head of Primary
Deira International School