



## 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.



## 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.

## 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: - onsite blended 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.



## THE START OF TERM

Of fundamental importance is the health and safety of our staff and student community and it is crucial therefore that we get the start of the term right. Students need to feel comfortable, supported and confident with the new expectations and procedures. We have decided therefore to go for a staggered start which means that different year groups will start on different days. See below for details.

DATE	YEAR GROUP/S
30th August	Yr 7 / Yr 12 / New students
31st August	Yr 13
1st September	Yr 8 / Yr 9
2nd September	Yr 10 / Yr 11

## ARRIVING AND LEAVING SITE

In order to have an orderly start to the day adhering to social distancing measures it is vital that we have a daily staggered start. Students arriving by car must do so at the following times:

- Oryx: 7.20 -7.30am
- Tahr: 7.30 - 7.40am
- Saluki: 7.40 – 7.50am
- Falcon: 7.50 – 8.00am

Students will not be allowed to enter the school building until 7.20am.

It is important to note however that parents are not allowed in the building and 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.

If a student for some reason requires to leave the school site during the day they are not allowed to return to school, however once home they must continue with their blended learning.

Students when arriving on site are to enter the school building via two designated entrances. At these entrances there will be thermal imaging cameras to check temperature and ensure that all students are wearing their face mask. From here, students must go directly to their period 1 lesson.

## STRUCTURE OF THE DAY

It is essential that we continue to provide an exceptional curriculum that meets the needs of all our students aligned with our vision for an inclusive school. Therefore, students will still be taught specialist lessons by specialist staff across a similar 7 period day.

**In Key Stage 3 (years 7-9)** students will be taught in small classes of no more than 14 in one venue throughout the day. The exception of this will be in PE where students will move to our sports facilities and engage in activities that adhere to socially distancing. Such as badminton, table tennis, athletics, fitness etc. There will be no swimming in the first term. Therefore, teachers will move to the classrooms to teach as opposed to students moving to the teacher to be taught. Subjects that are deemed to be more practical in nature will be adapted to suit the learning environment.

In order to ensure that we can maintain health and safety standards and reduce movement around the school, some students in KS3 may be placed in different tutor groups. Students will still stay in their houses.

**In Key Stage 4 and 5 (years 10-13)** students will be taught in larger classrooms with classes of no more than 18 students. Due to the specialist demands of the curriculum students will move after every lesson. However, at the beginning of every lesson before students begin learning, all classroom desks and chairs will be sanitized.

Any movement between lessons will be staggered and there will be a one-way system in operation to ensure we adhere to social distancing. At all times throughout the day, students will be required to wear a face mask whether in lessons or not, unless they are eating or engaging in physical activity during PE.

### Break and lunch times

To minimize the risk of infection we have decided that all students will stay in their classrooms for break times and to eat lunch. If students have bought a lunch from the school canteen, they will be allowed to collect it at a designated time.

### End of the day

To facilitate an orderly finish and exit we have decided to implement a staggered finish, where year groups will leave at designated times. The multi-purpose hall will be staffed and available for students to wait for siblings who may have lessons or after school activities until 3:30pm. Once learning has finished (except for waiting siblings) students must leave the school site.

## SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OF DETERMINATION

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.

We will therefore provide support based on the varying needs of our students. Therefore, students of determination will be supported in a variety of ways. For example:

- A student may work face to face with the teacher with the support of an LSA in the classroom.
- A student may work face to face with the teacher with remote support of an LSA.
- A student may be withdrawn from the lesson and work with an LSA in the inclusion area adhering to social distancing.



## EQUIPMENT – INCLUDING IT

To ensure the health and safety of students and the continuation of effective learning the following equipment must be brought into school on a daily basis.

### Sanitization list

- ▶ Face Masks (at least three)
- ▶ Hand sanitization
- ▶ Wipes
- ▶ Gloves (Optional)

### Equipment list

- ▶ School Bag
- ▶ Mobile learning device (fully charged) \*see below for specification
- ▶ Charger for mobile learning device
- ▶ Earphones/earpods
- ▶ Large water bottle

### Pencil Case

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

### \*All devices must:

- ▶ 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
  - ▶ We highly recommend avoidance of iPad mini's and iPad's because these devices have a very limited functionality on Class Notebook.

One of the significant changes this year is that most of the work will be administered and recorded online using Office 365 e.g. Teams etc. Therefore, it is imperative that a learning device is fully charged and brought into school every day. Students will have an exercise book for taking notes, but this will be one book across all subjects to minimize the chance of infection.

## 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.

## THE STRUCTURE OF LEARNING

In order to meet the needs of all our learners and the context of every DIS family, we are organising our learning via three distinct groups.

Group 1 – Face to face learning, where the student is in the classroom interacting with the teacher.

Group 2 – Flipped learning, where the student is directed to work on pre-planned learning activities that are explicitly linked to the overall scheme of learning which complements the face to face classroom learning.

Group 3 – Home based online learning, where the student is accessing the face to face learning in the classroom via TEAMS and engaging in the flipped learning at the designated times.

For practical subjects such as Science, DT, Art, Music and PE, students will have access to resources in the face to face sessions at Key Stage 4 and 5.

In order to accommodate this blended approach to learning, we have decided to implement a two-week timetable. The detail of this is shown in the example below:

	Week 1				
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Period 1	Science (Face to Face)	Science (Flipped)	Arabic (Face to Face)	Arabic (Flipped)	PE (Flipped)
Period 2	English (Face to Face)	English (Flipped)	Science (Face to Face)	Science (Flipped)	PE (Flipped)
Break	Break				
Period 3	Moral Education (Face to Face)	Moral Education (Flipped)	French (Flipped)	French (Face to Face)	English (Face to Face)
Period 4	Social Studies (Flipped)	Social Studies (Face to Face)	Drama (Flipped)	Drama (Face to Face)	DT (Flipped)
Period 5	Arabic (Face to Face)	Arabic (Flipped)	English (Face to Face)	English (Flipped)	Science (Face to Face)
Lunch	Lunch				
Period 6	Islamic (Flipped)	Islamic (Face to Face)	Maths (Flipped)	Maths (Face to Face)	Islamic (Flipped)
Period 7	Maths (Flipped)	Maths (Face to Face)	Computing (Flipped)	Computing (Face to Face)	Maths (Flipped)

	Week 2				
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Period 1	PE (Face to Face)	Humanities (Flipped)	Humanities (Face to Face)	Art & Design (Flipped)	Art & Design (Flipped)
Period 2	PE (Face to Face)	English (Face to Face)	English (Flipped)	Humanities (Flipped)	Humanities (Flipped)
Break	Break				
Period 3	English (Flipped)	Maths (Flipped)	Maths (Face to Face)	Maths (Flipped)	Maths (Face to Face)
Period 4	DT (Face to Face)	Music (Flipped)	Music (Face to Face)	French (Flipped)	French (Face to Face)
Period 5	Science (Flipped)	Social Studies (Flipped)	Social Studies (Face to Face)	Science (Face to Face)	Science (Flipped)
Lunch	Lunch				
Period 6	Islamic (Face to Face)	Science (Face to Face)	Science (Flipped)	Arabic (Face to Face)	Arabic (Flipped)
Period 7	Maths (Face to Face)	Arabic (Face to Face)	Arabic (Flipped)	English (Face to Face)	English (Flipped)

All students' timetables will be communicated to them by their tutor on their first day which will be recorded in their TEAMS calendar for the year.

It is important for you as parents that you understand the progress that your child is making throughout the year. Therefore, we will continue to run various parental events to help you engage in your child's learning. However, these will be online and take advantage of the proven success of these last year. We will continue to keep parents up to date with the curriculum coverage via the 'Week Ahead' email communication for all year groups.

## CANTEEN

The school canteen will remain in operation but using the new safety protocols required by the municipality. This means parents will have the option to select, order and pay for a meal plan for their child via the Abela online portal. Your son/daughter can collect the order from a collection point in the cafeteria. There will also be a selection of pre-packaged food for sale, this can be purchased using the cashless system on the student ID which parents can top up from the Abela portal.

# 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 2pm 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

Doug Pettitt  
Head of Secondary  
Deira International School