

## ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

P.O. Box: 52232, DUBAI - U.A.E.

Tel. : +(971) 4 3370252 E-mail : maryscol@emirates.net.ae  
Fax : +(971) 4 3368119 website : www.stmarysdubai.com



## مدرسة القديسة مريم الكاثوليكية الثانوية

ص.ب. ٥٢٢٣٢، دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة

هاتف : +٩٧١ ٤ ٣٣٧٠٢٥٢ بريد الكتروني : maryscol@emirates.net.ae  
فاكس : +٩٧١ ٤ ٣٣٦٨١١٩ موقع ويب : www.stmarysdubai.com

OUR REF : .....

TRN: 100483609200003

DATE: Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

### To: The Parents of students in Years 5-13 – Fourth update for the extended phase of Distance Learning

#### Dear Parents,

Greetings from Saint Mary's. We would like to offer right at the onset our most sincere prayers for those families of our bigger Marian family that have been affected by illness due to the Covid-19 pandemic as well as other related financial stress and anxiety. We are truly facing extraordinary times that perhaps none of us would have imagined in our lifetime. We would like to reach out to our students and also remind them that while we understand how hard this phase must be for them we would like them to count the many blessings that they continue to receive, mainly the safety and security of family and the opportunity to continue their learning. We have been deeply inspired and touched by the many messages that we have received from a number of students asking us about our own safety and that of our families. We really miss our children !!!

#### **SCHEDULED PLANS FOR THE NEXT MONTH (THE HOLY MONTH OF RAMADAN):**

You will receive the scheduled plans for the next one month along with this update and you will be able to see that we have taken on board much of your feedback in preparing a schedule for the students that is not too overloaded and is in fact more manageable. As per the KHDA directives, lessons during Ramadan will begin at 9:00 am and end at 2:00 pm. We have attached the new lesson timings for you and your children so that they may now follow thee when preparing for lessons. We will still be following the day's time table but we have provided you with a colour coded table to know how the learning for each subject will be delivered. The allocation and requirement of homework has also been spread out so that it is reasonable for students. On addition we have also provided you with the Assessment allocation which has been carefully prepared with a view to continuing analysing attainment and progress but in a way that is not overwhelming for the children. Class teachers will ensure that there are no more than two assessments/quizzes per day and the schedule of these will be sent ahead of the week to you. We are grateful for all your feedback and have used that feedback to achieve a better balance for the children and for you dear parents as well. There is now a colour coded table for students of year 12 and 13 as well based on feedback that we received from the students.

#### **UPDATED PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION TO CLASS TEACHERS:**

In the current crisis our class teachers might need to get in touch with you urgently. We had requested all parents to send an email (one single mail to both class teachers or multiple class teachers if you have more than one child in the school) **EMAIL SUBJECT: UPDATED PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION**. The information required is: Child's name and year group, Mother's current email ID and reachable working mobile number, Father's current email ID and reachable working mobile number. **We have not yet received this information from all parents and it is critical that we receive it without any further delay.**

## **ZOOM GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND PRACTICE OF KEY CONTENT IN CORE SUBJECTS:**

All previous guidelines have been made available in our third update (previous circular). We thank you once again for your collaboration with the teachers in supporting your children through lessons. You too are our special heroes of this phase of Distance Learning and please know how much we appreciate the efforts you continue to make to guide your children with their work. Our teachers continue to conduct assessment for learning in these sessions and these will help to analyse progress and provide some meaningful data for end of year grades. We would like to request all parents to encourage children to practice key concepts in English, Math, Science and Arabic at a pace best suited to you but keeping in mind that these will be crucial to a smoother transition for your child as he/she begins school for the next Academic Year. We of course will do our best to mitigate those natural gaps in learning that will have occurred owing to the current situation but your support in ensuring practice in these core subjects takes place consistently will help your child feel more secure through the mitigation process. It will be absolutely essential at this time that children review and practice work in English, Math, Science and Arabic even from the first term so that key content is well embedded. Parental reminders and monitoring of this practice will be an important aspect in this 'new normal.'

## **LINKS FOR SESSIONS ZOOM:**

One change that will come into effect is that we have now asked teachers to post the zoom links in the children's Google Classroom. This will avoid bulky emails with many links to follow and is a safer and more secure way to send the link. At the beginning of the week, parents will continue to receive a schedule for the week with annotation against each subject with regards to a Zoom session or a Google Classroom session and now in addition Assessment schedules.

## **ATTENDANCE LINK FOR THE NEXT MONTH:**

Since lessons begin at 9:00 am from the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, the mandatory daily attendance link will now be available from 8:30 to 9:15 am. We would like to stress here that while most students have been very regular, it has been a disappointing experience to constantly have to remind some parents and children about the necessity and importance of logging in the daily attendance via this link. Children who do not register their attendance through this link will be marked with an unjustified absence for the day. Please email your child's class teacher in the event of a prolonged absence due to any medical reasons so that we may log in the absence as justified.

## **RETURNING STUDENTS FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021:**

As you all know we usually send you a circular around this time of the year regarding your child's return to school for the next Academic year. This year we will be sending you the circular via a Google form that can be accessed by a link that we will post on the school website and also send to all the SIMS Parent Apps. Kindly make sure that you use the UNIQUE EMAIL ID of your child to complete this form and please do your best to have it filled out no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2020.

## **RAMADAN KAREEM:**

As we begin the Holy month of Ramadan we prayerfully wish that your heart and home be filled with all the blessings of The Almighty. May the true spirit of the Holy Season bless one and all with the virtues of tolerance, patience and God's perfect peace. May these special prayers and fasting bring hope to those who are sick and are suffering in the time of this Global Pandemic. Ramadan Kareem to all our families and God's most abundant blessings for each and every one of you.

## RAMADAN READING CHALLENGE FOR YEARS 5-8:

We would like all our students from years five through eight to read one book (fiction) during the month of Ramadan. It would be nice to encourage children to pick a book that focuses on the key values of kindness/ tolerance/ patience/ honesty/ integrity etc. Children MUST then write a short book report as creatively as they can and ( a typed word document that is colourful with pictures too ) and submit it to their English Language Teachers in the Google Classroom after Eid.

## RAMADAN SHORT VIDEO CHALLENGE or DIGITAL PHOTO JOURNAL FOR YEARS 9-13:

This special month of prayer and fasting is the perfect time for our teenage students to reflect on the positive aspects of these challenging times. As young adults, we are sure that as they reflect they will realise that despite the fluidity of the situation there has also been something positive for each one of us to take away from this quiet time. To this end, we would like to ask our students of years 9-13 to create a short video (2 minutes maximum) or a thirty day photo journal, both titled 'POSITIVITY IS THE KEY'. Children must keep in mind that any material used must in no way be offensive/ derogatory/ racially derogatory or violate any of the moral and social codes of the UAE. Work must be creative and original. We will inform them in due course about how these are to be submitted.

We would like to thank all of you, dear parents for your continued support and collaboration and above all for your prayers during this most challenging time of our lives. Let us continue to hold one another in prayer and be hopeful for better days ahead. We assure you that we shall keep you up to date with all important information as we journey through our Distance Learning Programme. Stay safe and healthy!

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph  
(Principal)



### Some useful web links for parents:

<https://qz.com/1823522/how-to-help-pre-teen-kids-in-a-coronavirus-lockdown/>

<https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/18342699.things-children-coronavirus-lockdown/>

<https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/life-under-lockdown-practical-tips-un>

<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/featurephilia/story/5-productive-things-students-can-do-during-coronavirus-lockdown-1662772-2020-04-03>

<https://www.khaleejtimes.com/citytimes/parenting-in-the-time-of-covid-19>

<https://staceymdesign.com/blogs/blog/15-activities-for-your-teen-or-young-adult-during-lockdown>