

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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مدرسة القديسة مريم الكاثوليكية الثانوية

ص.ب. ٥٢٢٣٢، دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة

هاتف : ٣٣٧٠٢٥٢ ٤ ٩٧١ + بريد إلكتروني : maryscol@emirates.net.ae
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OUR REF :

TRN : 100483609200003

DATE: Friday, 4th September 2020

To: The Parents of students in Years 1-3: DISTANCE & BLENDED LEARNING UPDATE

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. For our little children this is an even bigger puzzle as they wonder why they have to be away from their school for so long. It has been a challenging time for all of us at school as well since we have had to transition into two different learning models. We warmly welcome all those children who have joined our Marian Family this year and we patiently wait for the day when we can all meet face to face. Please go through this update very carefully as it will give you a good insight into how we are moving forward with teaching and learning as well as give you other important information.

SCHEDULED PLANS FOR THE NEXT WEEK:

You will receive the scheduled plans for the next week along with this update. We would like to explain at the onset the rationale for having live sessions in the evening for Years 1-3. The majority of our parents demographic are working parents for whom live sessions in the morning would not work as such young children require an adult's assistance for the technology needed in these live sessions as well as careful monitoring while they are online. However we have balanced this with sufficient learning time in the morning so there is a good balance of curricular hours. You will be able to set a morning routine for your child in such a way that they don't have to wake up too early in the morning but yet have enough time to sit with the work set for the morning hours. We will make sure that all subjects have live lessons from week to week. It must also be understood that key focus will be maintained on the Core subjects.

BLENDED AND DISTANCE LEARNING:

We would like to clarify that even if your child has opted for Blended Learning, all Distance Learning Schedules and plans are applicable to your child as well. We have over 97% of students in years 1-3 who have opted for Distance Learning and even though there may be some elements of work that might be a repetition for the very few who access the school on some days, they MUST attend all live sessions in the evening. Attendance is being recorded per session by each teacher.

BLENDING LEARNING CRITICAL AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE REQUIRED:

If any child who has opted for Blended Learning shows symptoms of Covid-19, they must be kept at home & a diagnosis must be sought from an approved medical practitioner. The parent must email Ms. Lise-Ann on lpinto-smchs@smgeducation.org and inform her of the status and send a copy of a PCR test that has been conducted. In addition in case a child or a parent, sibling or any family member of a child who has opted for Blended Learning, tests POSITIVE for COVID-19, an email must be sent to Ms. Lise-Ann without delay & the child must be kept at home to self isolate for 14 days. These are critical DHA requirements and as the Health and Safety Officer of the School, Ms. Lise-Ann will then contact the parents of any other child who was in contact with the child in question as well as staff members who will also have to self isolate for 14 days as part of contact tracing requirements. ***A PCR Negative test for a child who previously tested positive is also required in addition to the 14 day isolation in order for the child to return to school.***

UPDATED PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION TO SCHOOL & CLASS TEACHERS:

As most parents will be aware, we usually have you fill out a declaration form with key information about your child as well as updated contact information about parents and guardians at the beginning of the Academic Year. This year we will be carrying out this process via Google Forms and we will update you once the form is ready for you to fill. Our last survey left us with a situation having to follow up with a large number of parents who had not filled it out. We would like every parent to understand that this information is critical information required in emergency situations and often related to the health, safety and security of your child and therefore we urge **ALL PARENTS** to fill the Google Form (once we make it available) **ACCURATELY** and **WITHOUT ANY DELAY.**

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

WE WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE THAT THE LEARNING SESSIONS IS STRICTLY BETWEEN THE TEACHER AND THE STUDENTS. All previous guidelines have been made available in our PROCESS MAP and we urge you to go through those carefully. We thank you once again for your collaboration with the teachers in supporting your children through lessons. Our teachers continue to conduct assessment for learning in these sessions and these will help to analyse progress and provide some meaningful data for attainment and progress. 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 returns to school once normalcy returns, whenever that shall be.

WEEKLY LESSON PLANS:

Every Saturday, we will upload the lesson plans for the week so that you will know in advance of the week what your child is going to be learning in the week to come. These plans can be found under the relevant departments on the school website.

SUBMISSION OF TASKS FOR CORRECTION AND TEACHER FEEDBACK:

Subjects scheduled for morning learning MAY have some tasks that require your child to submit work according to a specified deadline. Please make sure that the given deadline is respected and that the completed task is emailed to the teacher from the student's unique email ID. Task documents should be correctly named with your child's full name & correct section. The morning learning tasks that require to be submitted have the date for submission and the subject email IDs.

ATTENDANCE FOR LIVE SESSIONS:

Your child's attendance is marked for each Zoom Session. In case your child has missed a session, you need to email the class teacher and inform him/her regarding the reason for the absence. If this is not done the absence will be marked as an 'unjustified absence' and will be reflected in your child's report card against that particular subject.

SIMS PARENT APP/ ACTIVE LEARN/ ACTIVE TEACH:

Please note that these are still in process and our IT Support will be sending out the invitation and credentials for the same in some time. We will let you know via a circular when that process gets rolled out. Kindly do not email IT support for this at the moment.

BASELINE READING CHECKS FOR NEW ADMISSIONS:

A simple check for age appropriate reading will be conducted for all new admissions from years 1-3. An appointment slot will be communicated to you via the student's school email ID. Kindly ensure that your child is well prepared and ready to display his/her reading skills to an adult for a fifteen minute time slot. Time slots are being fixed between 4:00 and 5:00 pm on working days.

KHDA PARENT-SCHOOL CONTRACT & ADDENDUM WITH LEARNING MODEL CHOICE:

All existing parents will have already received the Addendum with the choice of Learning Model directly from KHDA. If you have not already signed this it is crucial that you do so immediately. Parents of students who have been admitted to St. Mary's this year will receive both the KHDA Parent-School Contract and the Addendum with the Learning Model Choice on the email with which you were registered on the KHDA system. When you receive the same, please do not delay in signing it electronically. ALL PARENTS MUST TREAT THIS AS VERY IMPORTANT AND RESPOND WITHOUT DELAY. For any queries related to the KHDA Parent-School contract, please email Ms. Mary Fikry on arabicsec-smchs@smgeducation.org

DL SECTION ON OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE:

We would like to remind ALL parents to kindly visit the DL section on our school website as we have been updating it with many useful links , documents, vital information for keeping your children safe online, tips on well-being and mindfulness to name a few. We are sure that you will find these useful and we will keep updating this section as often as we can.

WELL- BEING:

It is so important at this stage that we keep the well-being of our children as a priority. There are weekly class teacher sessions so teachers can engage with the children in a non-academic setting and focus on their well-being. This is a special time for story sharing or perhaps singing a song together and helping children socialize virtually with one another. During these times of uncertainty, students and parents are welcome to reach out to the counsellors in the school. The counsellors are here and ready to support you during this uncertain time. We will be providing you with school counselling services in an online environment. Primary Section- Beverly Taliwaga- Beverly.anne-smchs@smgeducation.org In addition, we will be hosting online lessons on topics that are relevant to groups of students. Links for the same will be sent though the usual class email. We encourage you reach out to teachers and classmates in order to stay connected and maintain a positive attitude as we work through this season together.

FIRST TERM FEES:

A reminder to all parents that the First Term fees must be paid in full only via the **Skiply App** no later than the 30th of September 2020.

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 this season. Stay safe and healthy!

STATIONERY PACKS WITH NOTEBOOKS:

Please note that the stationery packs and notebooks that your child usually receives at the beginning of the Academic Year will now be delivered by Iris International when the textbooks are delivered to your homes.

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 this season. Stay safe and healthy!

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)



Some useful links:

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-landing-page.html?WT.ac=p-ra>

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/science/facts-about-coronavirus/>

<https://www.who.int/maternal-child-adolescent/links/covid-19-mncah-resources-care-for-young-children/en/>