



OUR REF :

TRN : 100483609200003

DATE : Saturday, 5th September 2020

To: The Parents of students in Years 4-13 – DISTANCE and 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. 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.

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. Attendance is also being recorded per session by each teacher.

BLENDED 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 and 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 and 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:

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.

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.

REGISTRATION ATTENDANCE:

The daily registration time is **7:10- 7:20am**. Class teachers will post a **DAILY ZOOM LINK** in the **GOOGLE CLASSROOM** and live attendance will be taken during the morning's registration. It is mandatory for every child to be live on camera for this morning registration and this is the attendance that will be logged into SIMS. ***Children who miss this morning's registration for attendance will be marked as ABSENT even if they attend lessons post this session.*** Kindly make sure that every child understands the importance of this morning's registration. It will also be a time for daily morning prayer before lessons begin for the day.

ATTENDANCE FOR LIVE SESSIONS:

Your child's attendance is also 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 for 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 for year 4 students. 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 parents who already have children studying in our school, 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.

DISTANCE LEARNING SYNCHRONOUS & ASYNCHRONOUS LESSONS & HOMEWORK:

We have uploaded coloured tables for different year groups to give you an idea of how we have divided synchronous and asynchronous lessons as well as the allocation of homework. This has been done with a view to managing screen time for the children, balancing homework and having a balance of different approaches to teaching and learning. There is also a Homework Policy that has been uploaded to the school website. Students who are in Board Exam Years must understand that portion and syllabus completion is vital and they must collaborate with their teachers for a successful completion of their course content.

DAILY CLASS GROUP EMAIL:

The class teacher will continue to update parents daily with an easy to follow schedule for the next day as well as any other important school updates and circulars. In addition on Saturdays, parents of children from years 4-11 will receive a weekly schedule of Zoom/ Google Classroom lessons. For years 4-8 we have also created one single spreadsheet that the class teacher will post every evening in the Google Classrooms that will carry all the Zoom meeting codes and links for all lessons for the next day. It will be like one single reference space and will simplify the process for parents and students.

BOARD EXAMS:

Please note that Pearson Edexcel Board Exams fees are due in the month of November 2020. Please keep this in mind as you budget accordingly. We would like to remind all students who will be sitting Board Examinations this year to be very mindful of how a very unique situation unfolded with the previous batch of Board Exam students due to the Global Pandemic caused by Covid-19. In this very unique situation, schools had to send Centre Assessed Grades for students in the absence of Board Examinations. This made many children realise albeit too late the true value of being consistent with their study habits and not waiting until the last minute before exams to prepare and study. Although we do not know if the same situation will present itself and we hope that it won't, it is always best for every child to be **CONSISTENT AND HIGHLY REGULAR** with their study and ensure that they maintain a good level of attainment across all their assessment opportunities.

WELL- BEING :

It is so important at this stage that we keep the well-being of our children as a priority. There will be weekly class teacher sessions in the coming weeks so teachers can engage with the children in a non-academic setting and focus on their well-being. This is a special time for sharing concerns or perhaps focusing on important well-being parameters 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. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with the counsellors via email for any mental health concerns. They will provide you with an appointment time during which you can receive undivided attention through an online meeting.

Secondary Section -Amy Kuriyan- amy.kuriyan-smchs@smgeducation.org

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 through 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 Skiplly App no later than the 30th of September 2020.

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.

GOOGLE CLASSROOM WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS(years 4 & 5) IN VIRTUAL MODE ON FRIDAY, 11TH SEPTEMBER 2020:

We understand that Google Classroom is something new for our students in Years 4 and 5 and therefore we will be organizing live Google Classroom Workshops with the help of our IT Support department on Friday, 11th September 2020. Details of the time slots for your child's class will be sent by the class teacher during the week.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY:

We have uploaded our communications policy and we would urge all parents to please go through it. All teachers email contacts are available in the CONTACTS SECTION of the school website. We believe that most matters and concerns can be resolved by writing in to the concerned teacher and clearing any doubts or queries you might have. For more serious concerns or issues, you are requested to kindly send an email to our Vice Principal, Ms. Lise-Ann who is in charge of Communications. Her email ID is l.pinto-smchs@smgeducation.org Kindly provide your mobile phone contact when you write to her as she might require to call and speak to you. She will apprise the Principal of all related issues that require attention.

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)

