

19th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following our live Parent webinar on the 18th August, we have reviewed the most commonly asked questions and have answered them below.

Please do keep up to date with our Return To School section on our website: <https://www.gemsfoundersschool-mizhar.com/for-parents/reopening-plan-2020-2021/>. We'll keep updating it to include all the common questions we receive from our community over the upcoming weeks.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. If I choose 100% remote learning for my child(ren) instead of face-to-face, can I change my mind (and vice versa)?

We have asked all parents to complete the survey below by Thursday 20th August 2020. The survey will ask you to decide regarding your child's return. Due to the nature of the fixed bubbles, and because of the arrangements we need to put in place due to social distancing. The decision you make is fixed and will be for the **first half term**. **This survey is compulsory for every individual student.**

<https://forms.gle/p3vPBBcXS5WKtaQD9>

Parents must write to the Principal by **1st of October, 26th November, 28th January, 11th March** (2 weeks prior to the start of the next half-term) with their intention to opt for an alternative curriculum model e.g. face-to-face teaching that GFM can provide.

2. Will children doing remote learning be able to interact with children/teachers in the physical building during lessons?

The majority of lessons will be live streamed so that all students will be able to access lessons and teacher support in 'real time'. We will also be providing asynchronous material for students to complete and submit online. Teachers will feedback to students electronically using the systems we have established during distance learning. The students and staff are experienced and confident with the platforms we will be using and we are therefore confident that this will be successful.

3. When will I find out which 'shift' e.g. AM or PM / class my child has been allocated to?

You will be informed who your child's class teacher/group /shift by the end of the week commencing the 23rd August 2020.

4. Will classes be streamed or set?

No. Students will be in the same small learning groups / stable year groups at all times each day.

5. I want to contact someone at school to speak about this. How can I reach you?

Please do call the school: 04 210 355. If you would like to speak to me in person, please email Christine Sanvictores c.sanvictores_gfm@Gemsedu.com or pre_gfm@gesmedu.com who can arrange an appointment.

6. Will the webinar and PPT be available / recorded, so I can view later?

Yes. It will be uploaded on our website: (<https://www.gemsfoundersschool-mizhar.com/for-parents/reopening-plan-2020-2021/>)

7. Why can't my child attend school every day? (Year 2-9)

GFM will be fully adhering to the health & safety requirements as outlined by KHDA <https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Schools-Reopening-Protocol-En.pdf>

Physical distancing requirements allows for a finite number of students in a classroom. Please understand this is new to all of us. We are undertaking something that has never been done before. We have spent this summer researching and reading about other models and speaking with other schools, and we feel this solution is best and safest for our community, your children as a phased reopening of our school

As systems and routines become embedded we will review and update our plans in accordance and compliance to the regulations.

8. If I have children in FS and Yr1, will they be on the same shift?

Yes

9. Are devices required for face-to-face learning?

Yes, from Year 1 -Year 10

10. My child is returning to school after a long period, what support can I provide to help them reintegrate back successfully?

Starting school or starting a new school year can be stressful at the best of times, let alone during a global pandemic. You can make them feel at ease by having an open conversation about what it is that's worrying them and letting them know that it's natural to feel anxious.

Children may feel nervous or reluctant to return to school, especially if they have been learning at home for a prolonged period of time. Be honest – for example you could go through some of the changes they may expect at GFM, such as needing to wear forms of protective clothing like masks.

Reassure children about safety measures in place to keep students and teachers healthy and remind children that they can also help prevent germs spreading by washing their hands with soap and coughing or sneezing into their elbow.

It's important we remind our children about the positives – that they will be able to see their friends and teachers (if they are physically returning to the classroom) and continue learning new things.

Understandably, your child will have many questions about the coronavirus. To support you with your conversations please find below the following links to short videos explaining about how returning school may look a little different with social distancing and the reasons we need to wear masks.

A video to explain social distancing to your children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZNOGQgoD4E>

A lovely cartoon to explain social distancing to children

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBFn3hp05ok&feature=emb_rel_end

A short cartoon explaining why we wear masks to protect ourselves and others.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJlQn1cSfVk>

11. Can students wear face shields?

No. according to the KHDA guidelines, children above the age of 6 must wear face masks.

12. Can we choose shifts or change our children's House?

No. 'Shift'/AM/PM and house allocations have been carefully selected as to ensure siblings are grouped together and that there is an even distribution of students at the school site on any given day.

13. Does 'AM' morning shift have longer learning time than the 'PM' shift?

No. The 07.30 am start time is a staggered time for arrival. Both AM and PM will have the same approximate learning time. As systems and routines become embedded we will review timings and if appropriate update our plans

14. Where will students eat their lunch?

Following discussions with GEMS and the KHDA, the school is encouraging ALL parents to send individual packed lunches with students to reduce the risk of infection. Lunch will be conducted in classrooms with social distancing and strict hygiene rules in place.

15. Will students opting for Online Remote Learning have the same timetable as those who opt for face-to-face teaching?

Yes.

16. What are the school procedures for any suspected Covid cases? What are the schools Screening & Emergency Plan?

Please refer to Page 8 of our readiness to reopen plan:

https://media.gemseducation.com/media/59192/gfm-readiness-reopening-plan-20_21.pdf

17. How will I collect my child's books?

You should have received a letter on how to order books online. We will contact you soon with information on how these will be transported to you.

18. Will I be able to park in the school site, like before?

No, not in the first couple weeks. However, we will be introducing a new system for parents of FS-Year 1 to have access to parking inside the school site. Information will be shared soon.

Pickup and Drop-off information (AY 20-21)



19. Will there be a club or creche facility for FS children, so they can stay until 2.00 pm?

No. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the safety restrictions on the school site this facility will not be available. If this changes we will certainly update you.

20. Please can I have more information on how students of determination will be catered for?

We will make all necessary adaptations and adjustments according to the preferences and needs of our Students of Determination including the provision of transparent face shields for Inclusion Support teachers to use during their lessons to enable lip reading, and sight of facial expressions.

Students of Determination and a parent/guardian can make an appointment with Ms Ashley to begin visiting the school premises to start the transition process and developing school routines for the start of this new academic year. These visits will begin from 16th of August. Please email her directly for an appointment. a.mccarthy_gfm@gemsedu.com

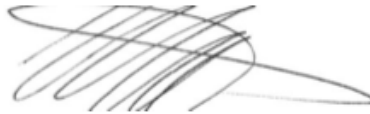
21. If teachers have to wear face masks, won't it hinder learning and understanding of speech?

Staff will be provided with transparent face shields to enable lip reading, and facial expression in some cases.

22. My child is in FS, can I take them to the class?

No. Children in FS will be dropped off at the FS Playground entrance and then supervised to their class by school staff. This is to protect the safety of all of our children and our community.

Yours sincerely,



Akram Tarik
Principal / CEO