



18 March 2020

Dear Parents,

Thank you for the positive and supportive feedback we have received from parents in relation to the school's response in trying to deal with the COVID 19 challenge.

I am sure you are all anxious and suffering from information overload, I wish to reassure you that as a school we will do all we can with the resources at our disposal to continue to support your child's learning.

As promised, please find below a letter from Ms Makhan, the Deputy Principal Academics. This will inform you of our plans that have been put into place to support remote learning for our students during the course of the holidays. It is not perfect, nor is it ideal but it is our best attempt at this stage given the circumstances to support the teaching and learning of our students at the International School of South Africa.

Term Dates

Schools closed on the 17th March 2020 for all students.

Our teachers will continue to work until the 20th March completing plans for our online learning to support our remote learning. This has already begun and will continue till the 3rd April 2020.

We will return to school on the 5th May which is the official start date for the beginning of the 2nd term as per school calendar. Boarders will return on the 4th May and the usual transport arrangements will be in place to transport students from Oliver Tambo airport in Johannesburg. This return will cause the least disruption to the beginning of our term assuming all things remain equal.

An earlier return will be interspersed with public holidays. The 27th April Freedom Day is a public holiday, which will be immediately followed by the 1st May - Workers day, which is another public holiday that is observed and respected on our South African calendar. This in essence translates into 2 consecutive long weekends. We would also need a longer midterm during the course of term 2 given the length of the term were we to return earlier.

Whilst the return to normal schooling as early as possible is our desired wish, it would be difficult to predict given the uncertainties that prevail around COVID 19. At this stage the situation remains fluid.

Please be assured that we will communicate with you regularly concerning the way forward. We will also liaise with Cambridge concerning the IGCSE and the AS/A level programmes should any new information be shared with regards to future assessments or examinations.

Reports

Reports will be sent out electronically by Friday the 20th March 2020. This will give you a fair indication of your child's progress this term. The focus of the report is not solely based on assessments given the unforeseen disruption to the term at such short notice, but rather a snapshot of your child's overall progress this term.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

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SECONDARY SCHOOL

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"If it's important to the child, it's important to us."



The Senior Primary School will be producing a 1st term report for the first time to provide written feedback to parents on your child's progress. This will still be followed by parent consultation as we return to school for Term 2.

News from Ms Makhan – Deputy Head/Academics

Term 1 and Term 2 2020

As large parts of the world grapple with the COVID-19 health crisis, we find ourselves facing disruption in our education offering. Hence it is more important than ever to work together in ensuring that we continue to deliver an excellent education to our students. We believe that it is our responsibility to keep ourselves and our staff around us safe in terms of managing the spread of COVID-19, as well as to continue providing value-added service to our students.

We will continue operating at capacity with teachers largely making use of our Virtual Learning Environment, Google Classroom. This enables students to access materials and to operate efficiently and effectively in these unique circumstances.

Workbooks and Virtual Learning Environment

Primary School have issued subject specific workbooks and handouts to all students. Parents are invited to collect the above from Primary School Reception by Friday 20th March, if students have not already received them.

Senior School students have received worksheets and assignment tasks on Monday which includes content coverage until 3rd April. We have already established Google Classrooms for all cohorts. Students are encouraged to join these Google Classrooms in order to access all assigned tasks. Students need to access this platform via their school email accounts and make sure they change the initial prescribed password. Please note that the generic Google email password is: issa@123!

All completed tasks will be assessed on the first day of school by the relevant subject teachers. Alternatively, students also have the option of submitting essay type papers through Google Classroom for their teachers to assess and feedback on. Teachers and students are also encouraged to use Zoom – which is an online conferencing app which features on Gmail.

In Term 2 we plan to conduct make-up classes in all subjects either in the afternoons or on Saturday mornings. We are certain that we will be in a position to ensure that content coverage is affectively addressed in Term 2 with no examination cohort being disadvantaged by closing early in Term One.

Reporting

Reports will be issued whole school on Friday 20th March via email. Primary School Reception will also issue paper copies for parents who require it.

All dates and deadlines for Term 2 will be reviewed accordingly. Ongoing revisions to the academic calendar may well take place in Term 2 once the term commences.

Please find attached a list of useful websites which we are certain will prove useful when students embark on their independent assignments.

Websites

<https://www.khanacademy.org/>
<https://singaporemathsource.com/resources/singapore-math-web-sites/>
<http://www.thesingaporemaths.com/index.html>
<https://www.mathplayground.com/thinkingblocks.html>
<https://www.isingaporemath.com/>
<https://teach.conceptuamath.com/app/tool-library>
<https://www.matholia.com/us>
<https://my.homecampus.com.sg/>
<http://www.cybershala.com/placement-test.php>
<https://www.nasa.gov/>
<https://www.nature.com/scitable/>
www.nrich.co.uk
www.mathsisfun.com
www.bbcbitesize.co.uk
www.educationquizzes.com/ks3-for-students
www.guinnessworldrecords.com
www.cool-reads.co.uk
www.memrise.com
www.wolframalpha.com
www.khanacademy.org
www.codecademy.com
www.bbc.co.uk/programmes
<http://ed.ted.com>
www.funbrain.com
Read some "Horrible History /Horrible Geography/Horrible Science" books and visit this site:
<http://horrible-histories.co.uk/virtual-world>
Read articles about current scientific topics:
<http://www.newscientist.com>
http://architectstudio3d.org/AS3d/design_studio3d.html
<http://www.nga.gov/kids/zone/zone.htm>
<http://www.homeadvisor.com/r/art-institute-chicago/>
<http://artcuratorforkids.com/art-and-math-projects/>
<http://kids.tate.org.uk/games/>

Please feel free to contact relevant teachers, via email, during this period of time. We would like to take this opportunity in wishing our school community a safe and Coronavirus free Easter in April. See you in May!

Communication with the School during vacation time

We request that parents communicate with Primary and High school via email in the following sections:

Primary School – issaprimary@issa.co.za
High School – jrae@issa.co.za

Conclusion

Thank you for your support as we continue to navigate these uncharted waters as a collective, within our homes, school communities, our villages, towns, cities, countries and the world.

Please feel free to contact me if there is anything you wish to clarify by contacting my PA at jrae@issa.co.za

Let us look after each other.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Wells', with a large, stylized initial 'B'.

Bruce Wells
CEO/Headmaster
International School of South Africa