

29 April 2020

Dear Parents

I hope you are still all in fine fettle and continue to remain positive in these unprecedented times.

I had made an undertaking to contact you again once the Minister had made a pronouncement regarding the opening of schools, but I am sure as you are all aware, that has not yet happened.

In terms of our official calendar, we will therefore return to school on the 5th May as was originally planned, albeit remotely.

As a school we have been working extremely hard on this front. You will receive a detailed letter and schedule from the desk of our Deputy Head of Academics, Ms Yukesha Makhan explaining how this process will unfold. This is new territory for all of us and mistakes will be made in the process, but I ask that we be patient with each other as we try and bring everybody onto the same page.

Lockdown

The lockdown is still pretty much in place with some relaxation as we move into level 4 from the 1st May to allow for some industries to return to work to reactivate the economy.

We had anticipated a partial lifting for schools as well during this phase but I suspect the government has had to rethink its position on this matter. We will keep you informed as soon as government discloses its official position, but safe to say we will continue with remote learning.

The other impact of the lockdown implies that boarders living outside of the South African borders cannot return to school until the lockdown is lifted with flight bans still in place and the same would apply to students living in provinces beyond the North West. As you can see, all this is very difficult to predict but we will continue to provide support for all our students to ensure that their educational programme suffers the least disruption during this time.

Payment of School fees

I have received numerous enquiries from parents about payment of school fees. In my previous letter to parents I encouraged parents to continue paying fees and I am afraid this position has still not changed.

However, I will try and qualify it in this communication.

Coming out of a ZOOM meeting of ISASA (Independent Schools Association of South Africa) yesterday afternoon, where 157 Headmasters were in attendance, the counsel offered that it would be too premature to

commit to passing on credits to parents at this stage, because we have no certainties where the pandemic is heading. Schools run very tight budgets and during this period we ask that parents bear with us.

Whilst trying to be prudent during this period, this cannot always be guaranteed because in some instances costs will rise if we are to remain on lockdown for extended periods of time resulting in unanticipated costs going forward.

The economic impact of the pandemic is affecting everyone around the world and our school is no exception.

In assessing our options to ensure the school remains financially viable by implementing cost cutting measures, there are unfortunately some operational costs that are fixed and are unavoidable. Notwithstanding this, it is our endeavour to ensure when we eventually resume normal schooling activities on campus, the school will be ready to receive your children to continue receiving an excellent education.

What I do wish to ensure parents though, particularly boarding parents, is that rebates will certainly be passed on at a much later stage where reasonable savings have been made. At this point I think it is a bit early to make a call and I hope you would understand the school's position in this matter.

I am also conscious that the lockdown may have adversely affected some of our parents' business during these times and I urge you to approach the office of our Business Manager, Mrs Sadia Soorje on (sadia@issa.co.za) to disclose some of the financial challenges you may be experiencing so that payment arrangements can be put into place to support each other during these trying times.

Parents, I have tried to illustrate best how this pandemic has affected us all. I trust that if we work together, honestly, with integrity and compassion, we will be able to safely navigate and survive these storms together.

Once again thank you for your support during these challenging and unprecedented times.

Stay Safe.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Wells
CEO/Headmaster

Mrs T Tlape
Chairperson BOG