

23rd August 2021

RE: Letter from the Head of Primary School

It is my pleasure to welcome new and returning families to a new school year. July and August have been busy at GEMS Metropole school; adjusting to changes and getting ready for the start of another school year.

The school has had many new enhancements to the facilities, including the upgrading of five outdoor areas to accommodate our new Forest school. The primary library has been redesigned and now has a beautiful outside reading garden and a fantastic indoor treehouse for children to curl up with a good book. Our farm has flourished and shading now allows us to use the farm in warmer weather as well as a bank of new resources to enhance the curriculum.

We continue to make progress towards creating a more personalised learning environment so that we can appropriately challenge each student and facilitate learning through individual interests, passions, and strengths. Students will have the opportunity to develop their leadership through the range of new leadership opportunities throughout the four schools. Teachers have worked hard to enhance our curriculum through masterclasses and extracurricular activities as well as ensure strong links and immersive learning through themed days and hands on practical activities. You will shortly receive an email from your class teacher with a curriculum booklet explaining specific group priorities in more detail.

Important information

Learning Model

We are waiting for further information from the authorities regarding updates to the current regulations, which may affect our learning model. We hope to have all students in school, but if the regulations remain the same as last academic year then this will be the plan.

- FS to Year 5 100%
- Year 6 blended learning 50/50

We will of course update you if and when we receive updates. The plan below will be reviewed at the end of Term 1 *if* it goes ahead as per the above.

Uniform

As you will be aware, we have modified some of the uniform for this academic year. We are working with Threads to ensure that it will all be available as soon as possible, please see the distribution dates



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below for those items not in stock. We understand that for some families this may be challenging to buy in such a short time frame so we will therefore be flexible with uniform until the end of September. Due to covid and late shipping of the new school uniform, students will be able to wear the old PE kit until the end of September. New students and those who have outgrown their uniform will be given permission to wear a plain white t-shirt and plain navy blue short or trousers for the month of September on their PE day.

Items	Available for Distribution
PE POLO SHIRT (ALL 4 Colours)	25-Sep-21
SPORTS HOODIES	25-Sep-21
GIRLS PE SKORT NAVY	25-Sep-21
GIRLS PE SHORTS NAVY	25-Sep-21
Y3-Y6 BOYS HAT NAVY	25-Sep-21
Y3-Y6 GIRLS STRAW HAT	25-Sep-21

Some parents have asked about purchasing the MTS school bag which you will find on the uniform list; this will not be mandatory for the first term, however, we do encourage you to replace your child's current bag with the MTS branded one when a replacement is necessary. Please remember that bags with wheels are not allowed in the school and students in FS1 and 2 should have the Metropole book bag.

Devices

It is vital that all students have an iPad from Y1 – Y6. The aim is that all students with an Apple device will have the e-safety app installed for safety and access reasons, and we will be phasing this in throughout the term. We ask that parents who are replacing student devices which are old/no longer work, do so with an Apple iPad.

PCR Testing before returning to school

Please note that if your son/daughter has travelled over the break, they need to have been back in the UAE for 10 days before coming into school (and be symptom-free), **or** have a negative PCR result from a clinic in Dubai taken within 48 hours of returning to school (if they have been back in the country less than 10 days). No student should come into school if they feel unwell. PCR test results to be sent to: Clinic_mts@gemsedu.onmicrosoft.com

School Day Timings Academic Year 2021/22:

Arrival Procedures	
7.15 – 7.45	Y1 – Y6 Students arrive to school
7.30 – 8.00	FS students arrive to school
Leaving Procedures	
1.00	FS students to buses
12.30 – 1.00	FS collected
2.45	Students to buses
2.50	Year 1 – 4 collected from classroom doors or basketball court
2.55	Y5 & Y6 collected from the basketball court
3.00	Late students collected from canteen

Upcoming Key Dates:

Thursday 26 th August 2021	'Meet the Leaders' virtual session 10am – details to follow
Sunday 29 th August 2021	'New students to Metropole induction' – details to follow on Tuesday 24 th August
Monday 30 th August 2021	Y1 – Y6 students return to school – school bus services resume
Sunday 5 th September	FS 1 & 2 students return to school

GEMS Connect Calendar is now up to date.

My door is always open. Please feel free to email me to discuss any concerns you might have throughout the school year. I am excited for the students to return and look forward to another wonderful year together.

Kind regards,

T. Foster

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Head of Primary School

