

23rd August 2021

Secondary Welcome Letter

Dear Community,

Welcome back to Metropole School, and a warm welcome to our new students and parents/guardians who are joining our Metropole family. I hope you all had a relaxing, safe summer break and have returned feeling refreshed and excited for what the year has in store! I'd like to start by congratulating our Year 11 and Year 13 students on their excellent GCSE and A-Level results for 2020-2021, which show improvement on the results we achieved the year before. This is testament to their hard work and dedication, despite such challenging times. We are extremely proud of our students!

The GCSE and A-Level highlights are:

GCSEs 2020-2021	A-Levels 2020-2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9% Grade 9s ▪ 21% Grades 9-8 ▪ 38% Grades 9-7 ▪ 59% Grades 9-6 ▪ 76% Grades 9-5 ▪ 89% Grades 9-4 ▪ 100% pass rate <p>Top subject performance includes: Music, Spanish, Media, French, Fine Art, Textiles, Biology, and Drama (75%+ grades 9-6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 20% Grade A* ▪ 41% Grades A*-A ▪ 73% Grades A*-B ▪ 89% Grades A*-C ▪ 98% pass rate <p>Top subject performance includes: Art, History, Arabic, Economics, Further Maths, Drama, Media, and English Literature (100% A*-B grades)</p>

We are really looking forward to seeing what our students in the Prep and Senior schools will go on to achieve this year, as they *#discoverleadership*. We are hoping that our students embrace all the opportunities presented to them and showcase the wonderful things they have learnt and achieved. There have been updates to our curriculum and extra-curricular offering to reflect the ethos of the four-school vision and the aims of each school. Our curriculum booklets for each year group will be sent to parents/guardians shortly, which are intended to give you an overview of the subjects and additional activities students will experience. We will be writing to you separately about our Masterclasses, which have been revamped to ensure students feel enriched and are enthusiastic about the activities they choose!

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 and remain optimistic about this, but if the regulations remain the same as last academic year, then this will be the plan for Term 1:

- Year 7: Students in school 100% - mini-learning plaza in the Small Hall where half the year group will be on rotation accessing their teacher virtually. The Head of Year 7 will send the rotation schedule to you.
- Year 8: Blended approach - students in school 50% – rotation to be sent out by Head of Year 8 if this goes ahead.
- Years 9-13: Students in school 100% taught across two rooms by their classroom teacher for LEAD/subjects.

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

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 for you in store by the 25th August. Due to Covid and the 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. Some parents have also asked about purchasing the MTS school bag; this will not be mandatory for this academic year, however, we do encourage you to replace your child's current bag with the MTS branded one when a replacement is necessary.

Devices

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. As for Apple devices, we shall be phasing these in (and any non-Apple devices phased out) throughout this academic year. We ask that parents who are replacing student devices which are old/no longer work, do so with an Apple product. A reminder of devices required:

Year group	Device required
7 and 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - iPad and Keyboard - This can be the same device that the student has used in Year 6 - We recommend you to purchase an iPad Magic keyboard or Logitech Folio Touch Keyboard. Approximate costs for these are between 500 – 1000 AED
Year 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the iPad that was purchased is still supported by the latest iPadOS then it would be more cost effective to continue using the iPad and keyboard set-up - If the current iPad is no longer supported by the latest iPadOS, or the child wishes to move to a full size device, a MacBook can be purchased - No new device expectation unless the device is obsolete and/or no longer supports iPadOS
10 to 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students should be moving to use of a MacBook, which they will use throughout Years 10-13 - The student's current iPad may still be necessary for certain GCSE, A-Level, and BTEC courses. - We appreciate that there may be a transitional period where students move from an iPad to a

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:

7:15am-7:45am	Students arrive to school
7:45am-8:05am	LEAD Tutor time
8:05am-9:05am	Lesson 1
9:05am-10:05am	Lesson 2
10:05am-10:25am	Break
10:25am-11:25am	Lesson 3
11:25am-12:25pm	Lesson 4
12:25pm-1:05pm	Lunch
1:05pm-2:05pm	Lesson 5
2:05pm-3:05pm	Lesson 6
Students are dismissed as per the following: Bus children: 2:50pm; Years 7-9: 2:55pm; Years 10-13: 3:05pm	

Upcoming Key Dates:

Thursday 26 th August 2021	'Meet the Leaders' virtual session 10am – details have been sent to parents
Sunday 29 th August 2021	'New students to Metropole induction' – details to follow on Tuesday 24 th August
Monday 30 th August 2021	All students return to school – school bus services resume

As always, I welcome your feedback - about this letter, or any aspect of your child's experience with us: d.aschettino_mts@gemsedu.com

Kind regards,

D. Aschettino

Daniella Aschettino
Secondary Headteacher

