



Wesgreen

International School

Work insures success...

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Dear Parents,

As we work through our second week of remote learning, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for helping us make this new experience so positive. I have been delighted to receive so many messages of support about our approach. At the same time, we know that there are always ways in which we can improve, so do keep sending us your thoughts.

A Wesgreen survey is below which can be completed in Arabic or English:

<https://forms.gle/W7YGRUaJU3dSa9Ee9>

This is especially important with the news last night from the UAE Cabinet that the Remote Learning is now going on until the end of this Academic Year. The health of the Nation is our number-one concern, but the reality of this isolation is going to be hard for many of you, including the teachers themselves.

This morning, I have seen a tweet from Dubai's KHDA that may be useful: "Some teachers are parents, but not all parents are teachers. Dominic Watts is hosting a free webinar to help parents develop a positive attitude, so they can help themselves and their children." March 31 at 8:30pm WebEx: bit.ly/2WVLCOq. You will need to download the conference App, WebEx, so please give yourself a little bit of time before, if interested.

As a school we will need to work closely with you to ensure the e-learning we deliver is:

1. **Manageable for you and your families** whilst looking at workload; range of subjects and priorities; lower levels of independence for younger students; shared devices; limited resources at home such as printer, ink, paper; limited time due to work or supporting several children.
2. Leading to **good-quality learning** for students so they are ready for September back in school.
3. Allowing us to **assess the students' learning** regularly without the traditional 'end-of-year' examinations.
4. Allowing opportunities for the **students' wellbeing** and for them to feel they are **part of a class** still.

We are conscious that **excessive screen time** can be an issue for students, which we need to consider going forward. We need to consider the **positive wellbeing of parents and the teachers** too – many of which are trying to manage remote learning for their own children as well as teaching yours.



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I shared some of this on my Video Blog 2 at the weekend but to summarise so far:

Week 1 – Phase 1

- We set up systems on Edmodo and it gave a chance for staff, students and parents to learn;
- We learnt how to add voice and video to PowerPoints to push learning forward;
- We trained staff on Zoom and did our first live trials in the Secondary and Primary.

You Said... We Listened...

- **You asked for all PowerPoints to have teachers' audio as a minimum.** This was done from Day-2
- **Primary and KG parents felt there was too much in a day.** Expectations were reduced in Week-2.
- **You have asked for more live lessons that are engaging to students.** This week there are several live lessons a day and PowerPoints with voice narration to help students during the tasks.

Notes & Acknowledgements

- The Edmodo Wall can get busy especially if you are accessing it later after a number of lessons;
- Teachers have been trained how to ‘pin’ their work, so it stays as the first item on the wall. Also, we are presently training staff to use **ASSIGNMENTS** to post work so that it is away from the main wall;
- Helpful training videos were shared by one of our University Parents: **Thank you.**

Week 2 (Going live - Phase 2)

- We have started delivering more live lessons. We are learning new problems and solutions every day, so we request you to be patient. We are now making sure that students are all on mute unless answering questions and shared whiteboards are turned off so students can focus on the teacher.
- We have found a way to save the videos of the live lessons so parents can access them at any time. This involves accelerating the launch of the GEMS Phoenix Classroom System that staff, parents and students will need training on. We are aiming for these live videos to be available next week.

Communication Channels

- The main office are using D6, Email, Video blogs
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZS0mWjU-5grFmis565k9IQ?view_as=subscriber
We have had a wonder 9200 views in 10 days. New videos to come soon.
- The education teams are still sending planning through D6 as usual, so some questions in Primary about, “when are the live sessions?” are on the weekly plans being sent out in D6. I appreciate we now have Edmodo as another platform, but this is just for student communications.



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- One parent has said that with four children, handling many platforms for communications while working from home is just too much to manage. We are listening and behind all of this getting ready to reduce all communications to the GEMS CONNECT APP and the new VLE Platform PHEONIX CLASSROOM along with the Edmodo. The video of the live lessons will be placed within the new PHEONIX CLASSROOM space. A training for SLT is taking place this week and for all staff it is scheduled for early next week –with the aim that all videos will be available sometime next week.

Attendance

We have been extremely pleased with the high engagement levels of students. Worth celebrating are Primary and Girls' Secondary Schools with a **daily attendance around 93%**.

- Primary – Please 'like' the class-teachers' early morning comment or short morning video. This may change as we go 'live' more often but for now it is the 'like' to register.
- Secondary – Form Tutors have an attendance page for all secondary class. They must 'like' it when they go online. This can be in the morning or whenever they are accessing their learning. This is also a wellbeing space for students to ask for support and guidance either privately or in the wall stream. Please note Form Tutors DO NOT go into lessons streams to check if students are working. They only mark attendance on the Form Page.
- At 8:45am each day, Class and Form Teachers review the attendance through the above two methods and send the data to be put on the School Attendance Tracker for the DAY BEFORE. So, at 8:45am Tuesday 31st March data will be sent for Monday 30th March. This gives all day for students who are not accessing the live learning due to shared devices.

Technical issues

If there are any technical issues, then please remember that our support number is: 0521070255

We know that this is a challenging time for all of us and that many in our school community will be dealing with issues. We are deeply grateful for your continued support and want to remind you that we are here to support you as well.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Dey
Headmaster