



# **GEMS FPS COVID-19 Return to School Plans**

**Academic year 2020-2021**

**KS3 (Year 7, 8 and 9)**

Dear parents of KS3,

I hope you and your child(ren) have had a well-rested summer break and are looking forward to returning (or starting FPS) for the new academic year. It is going to be a pleasure to welcome you back and we cannot wait to see you ALL.

To ensure we return to school safely, please can I ask you to read this document. It provides important details about how we will be functioning when we return. We have worked to ensure that our systems always prioritise your child and maximise their educational experience.

Please do get in touch if you have any questions once you have read this. You will find our contact details at the end of the document.

Many thanks,



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## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

	What is the same?	What has changed?
<b>ENTRY &amp; PICK-UP PROCEDURES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A parent will still be able to bring students to school.</li> <li>A parent in FS1, FS2 or Y1 will be able to drop children to the classroom door.</li> <li>A parent for Y2 and Y3 students can walk children around to their drop off point.</li> <li>Parents will need to wear masks and adhere to school procedures.</li> <li>Parents can only be onsite for 10 minutes.</li> <li>All students and staff will still be thermally screened and temperature checked.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only one parent per child is allowed on site.</li> <li>Parents must not enter school site and say goodbye at the school gate (except for FS and Y1).</li> <li>All of Year 5 will now be dismissed from outside the Primary Entrance.</li> <li>Signage – social distancing and signage has been updated to reflect the 1m expectation.</li> <li>Masks are still mandatory for all students above 6 years of age. However, face shields and transparent masks can be used by specific staff to support children (swimming coaches, teachers of younger age ranges and SEND support).</li> </ul>
<b>SCHOOL VISITS &amp; VISITORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitors will still be allowed on site with an appointment, but only where face to face appointments are absolutely necessary. However, visits from parents are to be restricted where possible to prevent any spread from outside of school to children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School will be able to host parents/visitors for performances and events; however, these will be strictly in line with Covid protocols and with evidence of a PCR test with 48-hour validity or of vaccination.</li> <li>ECAs, school trips and competitive sports will be gradually re-introduced to school in line with Covid protocols.</li> </ul>
<b>SCREENING &amp; EMERGENCY PLANS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isolation rooms and areas will still be in use for suspected cases.</li> <li>School will still contact trace and move students to Distance Learning when they have been in close contact with a positive case.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanitisation protocols have been adapted so that we are adding in and targeting new areas – including changing rooms, additional cleaning for sports facilities and additional sanitisation for resources.</li> <li>We need full, up-to-date details and information for students and parents (phone numbers, emails, medical records etc.) in case of emergencies.</li> </ul>
<b>SCHOOL SET-UP &amp; ARRANGEMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All classrooms will be set up to comply with or exceed social distancing and Covid regulations.</li> <li>Resource sharing will be limited.</li> <li>Bubbles will still be maintained between classes.</li> <li>Screens will remain for now as an added precaution between students, bubbles or groups.</li> <li>All materials and resources will continue to be sanitised between sessions, lessons and use.</li> <li>Prayer rooms, laboratories, kitchens, art rooms will still be allowed.</li> <li>Students can continue to come into school in PE kit on their PE &amp; ECA days to maximise participation time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social distancing has been reduced to 1m and so classes have been rearranged to have students able to work in groups of 3 – predominantly 1.2 meters apart.</li> <li>Cafeterias and breaktime spaces have been reduced to 1m.</li> <li>The auditorium and other spaces such as the 4D sensory room will now be able to open back up for groups. Assemblies will once again be held, alongside performances and events.</li> <li>Student ratios will depend on the designated maximum capacity for each room. The current maximum in any classroom is 27 students.</li> <li>Children in FS and Year 1 will be in bubbles of up to 15 students.</li> <li>ECAs, trips, sports clubs and residential/camps will be re-introduced as part of a phased return in our “safety-first” approach.</li> <li>Libraries are back in use under our safety-first approach to not share resources and continue to decontaminate books after use.</li> </ul>

## **Resumption of operations**

Your child's safety is our primary concern, and we are fully committed to supporting their health, well-being and continued academic development. That is why we will be taking a 'safety-first' approach to the easing of restrictions. Our re-opening plans have been verified by both the KHDA and GEMS Education, and they centre around three critical factors:

- 1) The safety of your children across all age-groups at FPS. We will be adhering to all Health and Safety regulations without exception.
- 2) The wellbeing of your children. We want them to be happy to be back at school, excited to see their friends and at all times feel safe and reassured that FPS is doing everything they can to keep them safe and provide them with a high-quality education.
- 3) To provide an outstanding education that is uncompromised by the changes in delivery. We will ensure that every lesson is supporting the progress of your children whether delivered face to face in the classroom or via our Remote Learning strategy, which achieved the highest rating of 'Developed' by the KHDA during Term 3. Alongside this, schools shall ensure staff presence in the UAE at least (14) days prior to their first day of work to comply with any UAE health requirements (quarantine, COVID-19 tests, etc.).

## **Tips to support children during this phase**

We understand that the new changes and starting the school year might make your children feel nervous about a return to school. There is additional, full guidance available on the website in the Return To School section about how to help. Also know that we will be sharing Covid updates, talks, activities and guidance with students to allow them to understand and be a part of the changes. For now, here are a few helpful tips:

- Speak to your children. Let them know that it is natural to feel anxious or nervous about returning to school.
- Have an open conversation about their anxieties and fears about the pandemic and reassure them about safety measures and precautions the schools will have in place to keep everyone healthy.
- Be honest about the changes that they will see at school. For example, the reduction in social distancing does not mean safety measures have gone away. There will still be a need to wear masks, sanitise regularly and keep socially distanced at all times (1m in class and 1m in canteens).
- Highlight positive aspects of returning to school, like being able to meet their friends and learning new things.
- Continuously check in with your children to evaluate their well-being when school begins.

## **BACK-TO-SCHOOL PREP**

**Two schooling options:**

- We, once again, have permission from the KHDA to return 100% of students with our Blended Learning setup.
  - We wish to return as many students as possible to onsite learning in the new academic year.
  - In line with last year, we will be keeping our staggered start and end times, reduced movement around the school and the use of learning bubbles.
  - Some parents will still prefer to keep children at home for medical or personal reasons. We will fully support these families with our Distance Learning offer, which will once again involve the use of live-streamed lessons.
  - For Blended Learning, some onsite students may also access learning live-streamed. This will be on a rotation basis in small groups and is dependent on the number of students returning to face-to-face learning.
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- Blended Learning will only ever be used to protect bubbles and keep safe social distancing where large numbers of students are returning to face-to-face.

#### **Tuition fees:**

- Full tuition fees apply to all students, regardless of attendance and the learning model you choose to access.
- If you are facing financial constraints, reach out to the school's ELT team for advice or support.

#### **BEGINNING AND END OF THE DAY**

- All access points will be designated as either an entry or an exit point to privilege one-way directionality.
- All students will still enter through main entry points where temperature checking equipment will be in place. This includes:

#### **Students entering through Gate 6 from the back of the school site (The Villa entrance):**

- Students move through the gates (storing bikes, etc.). Students proceed to enter the back of B Block (the back of the swimming baths). Students will be temperature checked on entry to B Block and will then proceed to exit B Block and enter the school through their designated entry points (depending on year group).

### **Secondary & Primary entrance – Gate 6 The Villa**

Enter through Gate 6



Immediately, make your way onto site  
and into the auditorium.



### Secondary and Post-16 students entering through Gate 1 (school's Main Gate):

- Gate 1 is designated for Secondary and Post-16 students. After entering Gate 1, students must follow signage into the auditorium for temperature checking. Students will then exit the auditorium and leave via B Block double doors and enter the school via their designated entry points.

## Secondary entrance

Enter  
through  
Gate 1  
(or The  
Villa  
(Gate 6))



Immediately,  
make your  
way onto site  
and into the  
auditorium.



Maintain social distancing, as you enter the  
auditorium, you will be temperature checked

### Further entry details:

- Entry/exit will be staggered to limit crossover between students arriving. The school site will be open from 7:15



am for all students – including those arriving by bus. Timing will be organised so students will be supervised by staff in classrooms as they transition into school.

- Contactless hand sanitisers are available at access points. Large sanitisers are also available for leaders and in offices. Additional automatic dispensers have been installed outside classrooms.
  - Isolation areas close to access points have been set up for students who do not pass thermal screening and need to wait to be picked up by their parent/guardian.
  - Staff will immediately refer students with COVID-19 symptoms (such as cough fatigue, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose and headache) to the school medical team for further screening and isolation as per guidelines.
  - All staff and students (except those with medical exemptions and who are 6 years of age and under) are required to wear face masks at all times.
  - For secondary students, we would like to to ask parents to continue to drop your child off and pick up at Gate 1 (front of school) or Gate 6 (Villa) please.
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- All meetings should take place online. If there is critical need for in-person meeting, this should take place via appointment and be held in dedicated meeting rooms under strict Covid protocols - following safety checks to allow the individual on site, be time restricted, be in a sanitised designated space and with a confirmed member of staff. The room is to be sanitised afterwards and protocols to inform cleaning staff need to be followed.

**Start of the day timings:**

<b>Secondary</b>
Y7 arrive 7:45am; 3:05pm.
Y8 arrive 7:45am; 3:05pm.
Y9 arrive 7:45am; finish 3:05pm.
Y10 arrive 7:45am; finish 3:05pm.
Y11 arrive 7:45am; finish 3:05pm.
Y12 arrive 7:45am; finish 3:05pm.
Y13 arrive 7:45am; finish 3:05pm.

**End of the day arrangements and times:**

**Transport safety measures**

- Children taking the bus will be scanned for their temperature immediately when they get on the bus. Anyone with a fever  $\geq 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  will not be allowed entry– parents will be contacted and the child returned to their parent/carer.
- Buses will be running at 50% capacity.
- To use the bus you must register with STS, accept their terms and conditions and Bus Behaviour Code, clear any outstanding fees and pay one month (September 2020) fees to confirm registration.
- No food or drink (other than water) can be consumed on the bus.



- Students must sanitise their hands when getting on the bus, and once before dismounting.
- Only one bus at a time may allow students to descend and enter the school premises. Students should wait inside their bus until all students have disembarked from the previous bus.
- Descending from the bus should be done in an orderly fashion, row by row, and respecting social distancing.
- Each bus is required to have at least one bus monitor to check students' temperatures, dispense hand gel, tend to students who require assistance, and usher them when disembarking.
- Students will be assigned seating, with the same seating assignments maintained daily.
- Students will be temperature checked a second time on arrival at school and before leaving the bus - allowing them to exit the bus and then move across the green, directly to their designated entry points and into class from the back of school.
- For further information, please contact STS.

### **If your child becomes sick – Screening & Contingency/Emergency Plan:**

If a stable case of illness is detected amongst visitors or staff presenting **COVID-19** symptoms (fever ( $\geq 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), cough, body ache or fatigue, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, diarrhea and nausea, headache, or loss of sense of smell or taste) the Medical Team will be contacted straight away to assess the individual and move them to the isolation area.

The CEO, Head of School and MSO will then be informed accordingly. A designated isolation area has been set up in the swimming pool changing rooms, to provide adequate space, sinks, seating and isolation areas should an individual display any symptoms.

In the case of a child displaying symptoms, they will be accompanied by a staff member to the isolation room, where the medical team will support the child and follow the school's COVID identification flow chart. Parents/guardians of the child will be notified immediately and the patient will be referred to hospital to take the necessary action or referred for a PCR test.

Depending on hospital advice or PCR test outcome, any individual displaying symptoms should not return to school until a negative PCR result is obtained.

If the result is positive, and there is a clinical assessment of a probable COVID-19 case, the patient should complete a mandatory 10-day quarantine.

If the result is negative and there is no clinical assessment for a probable case, the child can resume schooling so long as they are symptom-free.

If the result is positive, contact tracing protocol is triggered and the school will work with the DHA to identify any individuals who are considered close contacts of the positive case.

Contact tracing includes any individuals who have been in close proximity of a positive case for longer than 15 minutes. This includes up to 48 hours before the onset of symptoms or the positive PCR test. Any individual who is contact traced, must complete a mandatory 10-day quarantine.

In cases of COVID-19 emergency, the school will follow their endorsed guidelines for emergencies by the school's qualified nurse/ doctor while wearing adequate personal protection equipment. Also, the health and safety in-charge will ensure that the child is accompanied by an adult wearing the full PPE when transported to home or to the hospital. Emergency PPE kits are kept in the medical room and the CEO/Principal's office for the medical staff





and the CEO/Principal and Head of School. Measures for disinfection will be taken as per the guidelines, for the classroom and the school premises used by the child as traced, and the holding isolation room where the staff and students will wait for their transportation.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **Class sizes and grouping/general:**

The school will be split into learning bubbles. Bubbles are arranged in age-specific groups.

Each class within each bubble is kept isolated from other classes in the same bubble.

For KS3, students have been grouped into form groups. As in KS2, our allocated classroom occupancy is 27 for any given lesson. Students will still access specialist equipment and departments (e.g. DT, Food Technology and PE) but they will be kept in determined groups for core subjects to minimise rotation. KS3 students will also be able to access swimming lessons and sports sessions. Details of which will be communicated to you shortly.

At any and all movement points within the day, students are sanitised before leaving the classroom and the classroom is sanitised before the arrival of the next class. Students move through common areas that are sanitised throughout the day by cleaning staff. All students are sanitised prior to moving into their new learning space and the learning space has already been sanitised. This ensures the safe movement of students within their learning bubble. Movement timings are staggered to prevent cross-contamination and the school is fully compliant with signage and social distancing guidance to ensure students remain socially distanced. Leadership and teaching staff have designated duty points where they will be enforcing social distancing and supporting the movement of students in between lesson changeover.

For Distance Learners or students accessing Blended Learning in a Blended Learning Plaza, lessons will be live streamed so that all students will be able to access lessons and teacher support in 'real time'. The students and staff are experienced and confident with the platforms we will be using and showed great maturity using them last year. Therefore, we know we can rely on this system and that it will be accessible and successful for all students. **Years 7 – 9: Microsoft Teams**

### **Transition Areas:**

- School has carried out an inspection of the premises and planned a circulation map of the campus (see website for entrance and exit details). Each Mini School has published their own information for students on how to enter and exit school.
- One-way circulation has been privileged and marked through floor/wall markings. Paths are clearly marked throughout school to support social distancing, minimise crossovers and control student movement around school.
- Easy-to-understand signage (signs, arrows, colour signals in line with GEMS policy) has been ordered and installed throughout school at agreed, designated points.
- Bottleneck areas have been identified (entry to classrooms, entry to bathrooms, entry into narrower hallways, etc.). Here, signage is in place to demarcate queuing and social distancing. Access to these areas is also timed and staff have been allocated duties to man these areas during changeover and support social distancing.
- Timings for breaks have been adapted to limit crossover between classes and to minimise congestion in hallways and other circulation zones. Primary break and lunchtimes will initially, until the weather cools, take place in the classrooms. These will be supervised by the class teacher and the class teaching assistant. Secondary will have fixed spaces allocated around school that are set up with social distancing but also to give the chance to socialise.
- Classroom doors will remain open when possible (i.e. unless a fire hazard) to increase ventilation, entry/exit flow and avoid touching of door handle/knob, etc.

- *Students of Determination will be provided with clear guidance, differentiated as appropriate, to ensure the safe movement of themselves and others around the school site. Adaptations to the protocol may be required to meet any specific needs of the individual; however, these should not result in increased risk to themselves or others.*

### **Blended Learning**

For KS3, in the instance where a class size might exceed 27 due to returning Distance Learning students or additional enrollments, small groups of students will work in groups with an additional staff member outside the classroom or access the lesson from one of our dedicated Blended Learning Plazas.

### **Students of Determination**

- Students of Determination will be fully supported when they come back to school. As students join back individual plans will be put in place for those students who need extra help and guidance. Students with Learning Support Assistants will still be fully supported by their Learning Support Assistant.
- The school aims to keep students in the common learning environment as much as possible but depending on need. We will also supplement this with access to live lessons alongside personalised provision in other dedicated spaces where it will enhance and support learning.
- Intervention Classes will keep students in their learning bubbles. Support will be delivered both in class and out of class. All intervention and support will maintain social distancing guidelines.

### **Classrooms:**

Classrooms will be set up according to the following standards:

- Hand-gel dispensers have been installed across school. They are outside every classroom and contactless for Primary, and outside every classroom and manual dispensers for Secondary.
- Teachers will also have access to smaller dispensers to carry on their person at all times, and there will be additional, portable, manual dispensers in every classroom, which staff can use (wearing PPE) with students.
- A sanitisation kit will be made available to every teacher in every classroom. This will include a box of disinfectant wipes. Dispersal disinfecting sprays and disposable wipes will be placed on every teacher's desk (and regularly stocked). These will be used at the start and end of every lesson to disinfect all seats and tables.
- Workstations will be arranged so that students are socially distanced. This has been reduced to 1m. However, in almost all of our classrooms and with our seating arrangements, students are 1.2m apart.
- The removal of reading corners and reduced furniture and furnishings in classrooms – in line with KHDA requirements.
- Shared tables will be demarcated so that it is clear where students should be seated.
- Students have separate storage and equipment for their personal use.
- Physical see-through barriers/partitions will be used in classes and larger spaces (i.e. the auditorium, converted cafeterias, converted gym/dance studio).

### **Lunchtimes:**

**Secondary – KS3 and KS4** there will be a mixed approach where students eat in designated areas separated by social distancing, but with the opportunity to talk and safely socialise with peers. This will include Primary and Secondary cafeterias, libraries, classrooms and the auditorium.

### **Food and Beverages:**



- Following discussions with GEMS and the KHDA, the school is asking parents to send individual packed lunches with students to reduce the risk of infection for the time being. We are working on plans to re-open access to Slices and prepared food on site. This will not be for all year groups at first, and so we will communicate this directly with effected year groups. Catering facilities will continue to be reviewed every half term.
- KS3 – students will also keep their belongings in the classroom.