



31st October 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Welcome back to the new Half Term. It is great to see your children back and ready for what this half term will bring. This week there are some key things to share with you.

First, I hope you managed to tune into our Secondary Awards Evening, which went online on the Academy's Youtube channel, at 7pm, last Wednesday night. If you did not and would like to, I attach the link.

<https://youtu.be/y-aXzC1MUOM>

A message from our CEO

I hope that you are all safe and well and enjoying being back after what I hope was a restful half term break.

Following the survey that was sent out towards the end of the term about returning to school 100%, I wanted to come back to you with a brief update. Of the families that are currently accessing the school in our blended face to face model, 90% wanted the option to return 100%. On the back of this, we have submitted an application to the KHDA about how we make this possible and these conversations are ongoing. As soon as we have confirmation, we will come back to families with how this will work.

I also wanted to take the opportunity to share with you that Somar Mowakket one of the school's senior leaders will be leaving us at the end of this term. Somar has been influential in supporting us to move our Arabic and Islamic departments forward and we thank him for all that he has done for the school and wish him well in his next steps. We will continue to communicate with you in relation to Arabic and Islamic and how we see this area moving forward.

Home-Learning

After surveying parents last half term and with a few weeks experience of Blended Learning completed, we have revised our Home-Learning expectations for all year levels. Please see the attached explanation from our Vice Principal, Daniella Aschettino and her team, who crafted this for you.



EDUCATION

Academic Review Days

The first Academic Review Days of the year are upcoming. These give parents/carers the opportunity to meet with teachers to discuss their child's academic progress, review achievements so far and set targets for the remainder of the year.

On Monday 9 November, the day is for Years 8, 10 and 11 and on Tuesday, 10 November the day is for Years 7, 9 and 12. The Academic Review Day for Year 13 will be 9 December 2020. There will be another Academic Review Day for all students in Term 2, and a third in Term 3.

- The days will each run from 07:30 to 18:30
- Appointments are available with all teachers of your child
- Appointments will be via online video chat and each be 5 minutes long
- Online login in details will be sent to you on Sunday 1 November and the booking system will be live from 20:00 on Sunday 1 November. Detailed instructions on how to log in, make appointments, leave messages for teachers and how to access the video conferences will be sent prior to this. The system used in the past was PTC Wizard. The platform has changed this year so your old login details will not work.
- No students will be on site during the Academic Review Days, all students will be working remotely. Work will be set by all of their teachers for the lessons that would have happened during this time.

Assessments

In the past WSO has had two-week assessment windows where all subjects conduct assessments at the same time. This was useful for knowing the timings of assessments and allowed for simplified planning. But there were downsides to conducting assessments like this. There was a large amount of pressure at certain points in the term, and especially for younger students who are not used to the pressure of formal assessment, there was too much stress. So far this term we have intentionally reduced the pressure from assessment. We have removed the formal two-week assessment windows and departments are assessing using smaller scale more frequent assessments called CFU tasks. CFU stands for Checking for Understanding. For Year Groups who are already on GCSE, A-level, IB and BTEC courses the assessments will remain rigorous, and detailed analysis of the results of these assessments will continue to form the basis of our intervention strategies and curriculum planning.

Any assessment dates will always be communicated to students using Assignments in Microsoft Teams. The details of the timing and format of the assessment will be shared here, as well as links to support materials to help with preparation. As parents, you will also receive information from teachers on the timings of format of these tests. For a lot of departments this will come (or has come) directly from the Head of Department or the class teacher. From next term I will share this with you on a half termly basis.

To reduce the volume of communication you are getting I include a table with this newsletter summarising the assessments that are still to come this half term. You may have already been told

about some, and some more may be added, but they will always be communicated with at least two weeks' notice and all the relevant details shared directly with students to help them manage their own work and prepare well.

Term 1 Reporting

I also want to let you know that End of Term reports will be issued for Years 7 to 12 on 10 December. Year 13 have already received their first report of the year, but the rest of the school will receive reports at the end of this term. For the students who have done the Progress Tests in English Maths and Science they will also receive the results from these in November. If you have any questions on assessments then please contact the Head of Department for the subject in question. If the question is more general, then please contact Rob Curry – Vice Principal.

Remaining vigilant around the Academy

This is general reminder to ensure that our students and families remain vigilant when entering and leaving the WSO site. We have to be careful of the traffic around busy times and ensure that any unusual behaviour is reported immediately. We have many staff members and security guards outside on duty who are always there to help.

Upcoming Dates

Sun 1 November	Parent Engagement Session for Parents of Inclusion students
Tues 3 November	UAE Flag Day
Sun 8 November	ArtsEd Resident Week – West End star Tarinn Callender working at WSO
Mon 9 November	Academic Review Day Years 8, 10, 11
Tues 10 November	Academic Review Day Years 7, 9, 12
Thu 10 December	Reports available for Years 7-12

Kind regards



Andy Kai Fong

