



Tuesday 11th August 2020

RE: Primary Re-opening Plans

Dear WSO Primary Community,

It is my absolute privilege writing to you all for the first time as the new Primary Principal of WSO. I am extremely excited by this opportunity and I am looking forward to welcoming you all back to school very soon. Some elements of school will initially look different for all of us, however seeing smiles, hearing laughter, and watching our students re-unite is something we as a school have been extremely excited about.

To introduce myself briefly to those of you who do not know me well, my name is Nathan Sadler and I have been at WSO since it opened back in 2011. My initial Year Six class have just finished their first year of university! Over the past 9 years, I have held various leadership positions, being a senior leader at the school since 2015. The last three years I have been the Primary Vice Principal responsible for teaching and learning standards, assessment and innovation. These responsibilities and experiences, as well as a pure love and dedication for WSO, have ensured I am fully equipped and ready to be the Primary Principal. On a personal note, I live here in Silicon Oasis with my wife and three beautiful children, Amelie, Archie and Aurora. My wife is a primary teacher (Mrs Sadler), and both Archie and Amelie will be attending FS1 and FS2 respectively, here at WSO.

The KHDA has approved our re-opening plan and have now given us permission to share our plan with our school community. The purpose of this letter is to give you further guidance with regards to our re-opening plan which is specific to primary students. I will also explain all of the different events taking place this month to ensure as a community we are all ready for the new academic year. Understandably, I am sure you will have many questions which I hope will begin to be answered in this letter.

Re-opening the school will bring various emotions to many people, and we must all respect everyone's differing situations. A huge strength of WSO is the community spirit and how we all work together to ensure your children (our students) are safe, happy and have everything they need to excel as learners and people. I am extremely excited to start the next chapter of WSO's story; it is going to be an exciting one for sure!

I hope all of you enjoy the remainder of your holidays, we look forward to hearing about the summer from your children. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly.

Stay safe, we will see you soon!

Kind Regards

Nathan Sadler

Primary Principal



EDUCATION



Will GEMS Wellington Academy be open in September 2020 for my child?

Yes! WSO will open safely for the upcoming academic year. The educational model for each year group will differ slightly; please see information relevant to each year group on the next page. *Please note, the amount of students in each group follows the KHDA protocols for reopening:*

63. Student ratios will vary depending on the size of the classroom. The school will have the liberty to decide on the number of students per class as long as a safe distance of at least 1.5 metres per child or person is maintained.

64. Provision for students in pre-primary/FS1, KG1/FS2 and KG2/Y1 will require “stable” groups of 10 or fewer children. “Stable” means the same 10 or fewer children are in the same group each day. This group of 10 children must be cared for in a space that cannot be accessed by children outside the stable group.

FS1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FS1 students will have the option to be in school every day • Class sizes will be capped at 20 students, with each class having a teacher and teaching assistant • Students in a class will be split into two stable learning groups of a maximum of 10 • This group of 10 students will have their own classroom, next to or opposite the other group of 10 students • Social distancing of 1.5metres will be followed • Students will continue to have a full FS1 curriculum experience, with specialist lessons including Outdoor Learning, PE and Arabic.
FS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FS2 students will have the option to be in school every day • Class sizes will be capped at 20 students, with each class having a teacher and teaching assistant • Students in a class will be split into two stable learning groups of a maximum of 10 • This group of 10 students will have their own classroom, next to or opposite the other group of 10 students • Social distancing of 1.5metres will be followed • Students will continue to have a full FS2 curriculum experience, with specialist lessons including Performing Arts, Outdoor Learning, PE and Arabic.
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 students will have the option to be in school every day • Class sizes will be capped at 27 students, with each class having a teacher and teaching assistant • Students in a class will be split into four stable learning groups of a maximum of 7 • Two of these groups will occupy one classroom, and will be separated with Perspex dividers. • Social distancing of 1.5metres will be followed • Students will continue to have a full Year 1 curriculum experience, with specialist lessons including Performing Arts, Outdoor Learning, PE, Arabic and Islamic
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 2 students will have the option to be in school every day • Class sizes will be capped at 27 students, with each class having a teacher and teaching assistant • Students in a class will be split into two stable learning groups of a maximum of 14 • This group of 14 students will have their own classroom, next to or opposite the other group of 13 students • Social distancing of 1.5metres will be followed • Students will continue to have a full Year 2 curriculum experience, with specialist lessons including Performing Arts, MFL, Outdoor Learning, PE, Arabic and Islamic

Years 3-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 3-6 students will have a blended educational model of 50% onsite learning, and 50% remote learning from home • Over a 2 week block, students will attend school on alternate days, resulting in 5 full days on site, and 5 days accessing their learning remotely • The onsite class schedule will follow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Week 1: ABABA ○ Week 2: BABAB • Emerald and Diamond classes (Group A) will always be on site on the same days, and Ruby and Onyx classes (Group B) will always be on site on the same days • Class sizes will be capped at 27 students, with each class having a teacher and teaching assistant • For the days that students are on site, their class will be split into two stable learning groups of a maximum of 14 • This group of 14 students will have their own classroom, next to or opposite the other group of 13 students, where the teacher and TA will alternate between the groups • During remote learning days, there will be a combination of asynchronous and synchronous learning taking place, using software including Zoom, MS Teams and Seesaw
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Why do some year groups have the option to be in school every day, whilst others have a 50/50 split between onsite and remote learning?

In order to comply with all social distancing measures set out by the KHDA, it is not possible for us to have all students on site at the same time. The decision to have FS and KS1 on site every day, and KS2 on site 50% of the time, has been made based on the following points:

- During our successful 100% remote learning experience in Term 3 of the last academic year, our older primary students were more able to independently access their remote learning lesson in comparison to our younger students. Their levels of independence, self-direction and resilience were a credit to you all.
- Whereas our FS and KS1 students were able to access and continue their learning during remote learning, generally this placed a great reliance on you as parents needing to support them with the technical elements such as logging in to our software.
- Our successful BYOI (Bring Your Own Ipad) initiative starts in year 3, meaning that all students in KS2 are trained and confident using their own personal device.
- The above points were all general themes that came across in the frequent parent surveys back in term 3, as well as the parent survey that went out in July requesting your thoughts on our reopening.

Even though some year groups will not be on site every day, they will still be receiving a full curriculum that has been judged by KHDA as 'Outstanding' consistently over previous years. In addition, our high quality remote learning provision, which received the top grading by the KHDA during our Distance Learning Evaluation (DLE), will combine with face to face learning to ensure our students continue to flourish.

What if my child has level 3 inclusion support?

For Key Stage 2 students who will be receiving Level 3 inclusion support, the IST team will make individual contact with you with regards to a personalised provision model.

What if I do not want to send my child back to school initially? Will I still be able to receive 100% remote learning? What will it look like?

Every family is facing different challenges during this current time. As a result, some of you are still apprehensive to send your child back to school. If this applies to you, we will of course ensure that your child still receives a 100% remote learning education. What this looks like will be determined by the age of your child and on the amount of families in this position. Therefore, **if you would like to opt for 100% remote learning for your child, please could you fill in the below survey as a matter of urgency, by 3pm on Sunday 16th August**. If you have multiple children that you are requesting this for, please fill in the form separately for each child.

[Click Here to request 100% Remote Learning for September 2020](#)

When will I know my child's class allocation and teacher?

Parents will be informed of their child's class teacher by **Tuesday 18th August**, which is one week earlier than previous years. At the end of the last academic year, our students made choices of which other children they would like to remain in the same class with. We will endeavour to meet the requests of all of our students, however, due to the new KHDA regulations over learning group size capacities, this may not be possible. Our excellent Teachers and Head of Houses will be supporting all students with their transition to their new class and will work closely with families.

When will my child return to school?

For FS2-Year 6, the official first day of school is Wednesday 2nd September. As with previous years, FS1 will stagger their introduction to school, starting with smaller groups attending on alternate days. **All FS1 children will be on site at the same time from Sunday 13th September**. For all parents and students, there will be an opportunity for you and your child to come into school to meet your class teacher between the days of Sunday 30th August and Tuesday 1st September. More information is written further below in this letter.

What will be the daily school timings?

School timings will be modified slightly in comparison to previous regulated times, to ensure the traffic flow of students and parents is reduced significantly. Specific timings for each class will be discussed between teachers and parents during the week beginning 30th August. Timings will be allocated to parents within the time frames below, to ensure all students are not arriving at the same time, allowing for social distancing to take place.

Year group time frames on site (subject to small changes):

Year Group	Start of Day (AM)	End of Day (PM)
FS1	7.45 – 8.15	12.15 – 12.45
FS2	7.45 – 8.15	1.15 – 1.45
Year 1	7.25 – 7.45	1.45 – 2.15
Year 2	7.25 – 7.45	1.45 – 2.15
Year 3	7.25 – 7.40	2.50
Year 4	7.25 – 7.40	2.50
Year 5	7.25 – 7.40	3.20
Year 6	7.25 – 7.40	3.20

Please note: In previous years, Thursday would have an earlier finish time of 2pm for Key Stage 2. To ensure overcrowding does not take place, Thursday will adopt the same timings as Sunday-Wednesday.

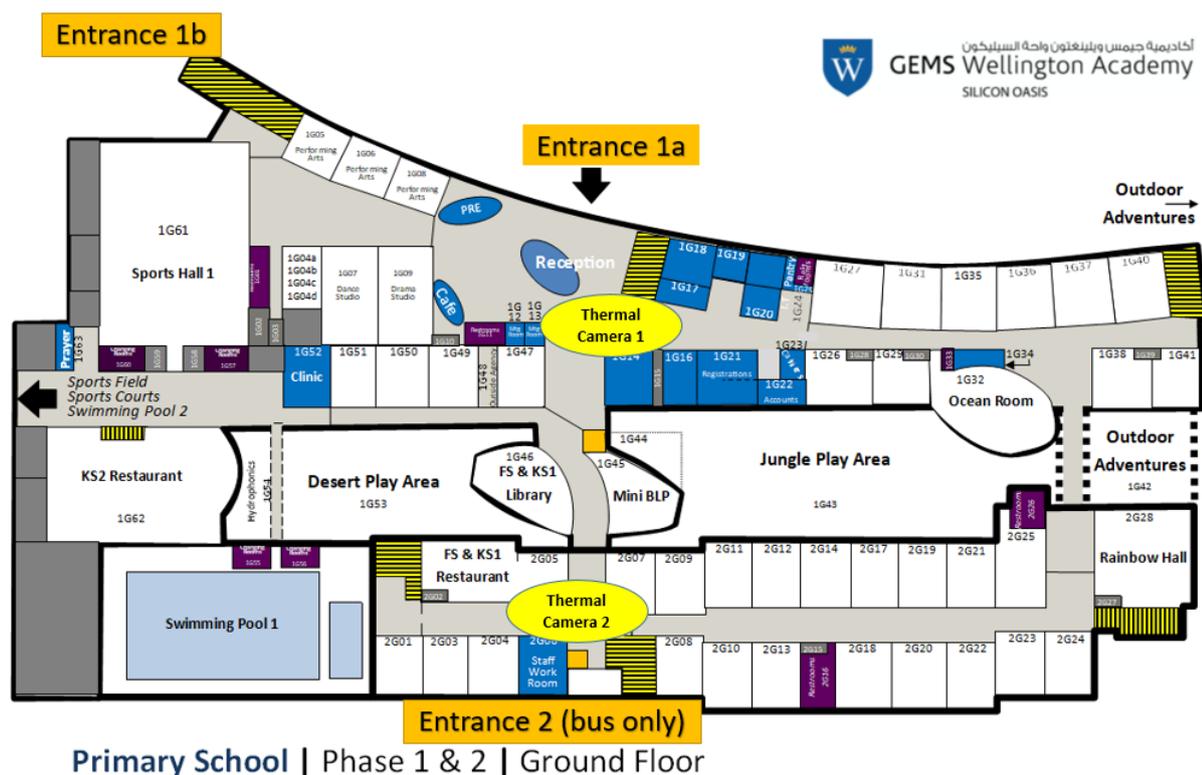
Remote learning Timings for Key Stage 2:

Year Group	Start of Day (AM)	End of Day (PM)
Year 3 and 4	7.45	2.50
Year 5 and 6	7.45	3.20

How will my child enter the school building?

For FS1-Y2 only, one adult will be able to accompany a child directly to their classroom, following a one-way traffic system. Adults will have no more than 10 minutes to enter and exit the school on drop off and pick-up time with no crowding, maintenance of a 2 meters distance, and wearing masks at all times. KS2 students are not allowed to be accompanied to their classroom by their parent, and must independently make their way to their classroom once entering the school building. The leadership team and other members of staff will be on the corridors to support students to follow the safety guidelines and find their classroom safely.

Primary students may enter the school site through entrance 1a or 1b (see map below). For students who will take the bus to school, they will enter the school building through entrance 2 which cannot be used by non-bus students. All other previous entrance points will not be accessible. On entering the building, every student and adult will be temperature checked by walking past thermal camera 1 or thermal camera 2 (see map below). During Student induction (W/B 30th August), parents will be informed of the quickest, most direct route that students need to take to get to their classroom safely. There will be one-way corridor traffic during the beginning and end of the school day.



How will school support me if I have siblings at WSO?

We fully understand that for families where there are more than one child attending WSO, this becomes logistically more challenging. Previously, our sibling club has involved mixing classes which we will not be able to do due to our COVID safety measures. Therefore, we are re-designing our sibling provision. Please be assured that we will be offering provision to support families with siblings at drop-off and pick-up. Further details will be shared with parents shortly.

What protocols are in place to ensure the safety of our learning community?

Any student with a temperature of 37.5, or above, will not be allowed entry into school. These students will be taken to a dedicated medical room within the school, where further temperature and medical checks will be made, and families subsequently notified.

The GEMS health and safety department has established a robust set of health, safety and operational procedures and protocols, in order to support the safe reopening of schools. Quality assurance checks will also be conducted to monitor the effectiveness.

Desks will be set at a safe distance apart of 1.5 meters, and physical markings will be used in classrooms to ensure desks remain in the correct locations. Teachers will be positioned at the front of the classroom area, at a distance of 1.5 meters from the front row desks.

Safety markings will be set up throughout corridors, the markings will dictate safe distances of 2 meters. Students will be monitored to ensure adherence. One-way pedestrian flows will be required and will be marked out accordingly.

Students from the same learning group must adhere to 1.5 meter safe distances, students from different learning groups must maintain 2 meter safe distances.

Schools will operate pre-packed lunch service, with no live cooking taking place at school. Students are to bring their own food from home. Water dispensers are not permitted to be used, therefore students must bring a sufficient supply of water, this is particularly important on PE days.

Will students and staff wear masks?

Teachers and students above the age of 6 are required to wear face masks. Face masks can be removed during strenuous physical activity. Face shields can be worn for those employees who are in direct contact with students. It is suggested that students bring two disposable masks to school per day or one re-usable option. It will be the responsibility of the students to ensure that they bring the required number of masks each day and ensure any disposable masks are washed in line with the manufacturer's guidelines.

What training will the staff have before school opens?

All staff will undergo specific Covid-19 training prior to the start of the new academic year. In addition, teachers will regularly communicate and provide information to students on the associated risks, safe practices and controls. All students will be briefed on this plan prior to the start of the academic year.

What are the cleaning and hygiene procedures?

Our school has conducted a review of all potential frequent touch points, including, door handles, light switches, handrails, taps and washbasins, etc. Increased cleaning and sanitization will be conducted across these areas throughout the duration of the day. A thorough cleaning of the school will be conducted each day by an approved vendor, using approved Municipality chemicals. A thorough deep clean and sanitization of the school will be conducted at the end of each week. Cleaning staff will wear the required PPE for all cleaning activities.

In the event there is a potential or confirmed COVID-19 case, how will it be handled?

Managing a potential Covid-19 case in school

If a student is suspected of being a positive Covid-19 case, they will be immediately removed to the school isolation room. Only the school medical and emergency services team are permitted to enter the isolation room and full PPE must be worn when entering the room. The students' parents will be contacted immediately by the school doctor and the required authorities will be notified. The school will strictly adhere to the health authority requirements for managing and transferring any suspected cases of Covid-19. All areas which may have been accessed will be thoroughly deep cleaned and sanitized following any suspected cases. These areas will be closed immediately until the deep clean is completed. Tracing will be conducted to identify those who may have come into contact with the student or staff member. Health authority requirements will be strictly adhered to. This may include additional testing and isolation of persons who have come into contact with a positive case. Each school will have a detailed medical procedure plan in place,

which will detail the emergency procedures for each school. This will be developed in consultation with the GEMS Senior Medical Supervisor and school medical teams.

Managing a confirmed case

A confirmed case could be in the form of a student, staff member or contractor. In such cases the person will be in isolation for a period of time, this may be at home or in a medical facility. Upon receiving notification of a confirmed case, a tracing exercise will be conducted by the school. This will identify all other persons who may have come into contact with the positive case.

Any persons who have come into close contact with the confirmed positive case will be sent home from school immediately, with a potential isolation period of 14 days. Further advice from the authorities, including the health authority and education authority, will be required on this aspect. No persons who have tested positive will be permitted to return to school without first providing evidence of a negative test result, in line with authority requirements. All relevant areas will undergo a thorough deep clean and sanitization exercise.

Communication of a confirmed case

It is important that parents are provided with suitable information regarding confirmed cases within the school. It is also vital that people's individual privacy is maintained. Parents will be notified when there is a positive case to a class member or class teacher. The required procedures will be followed for notifying the authorities. A detailed GEMS medical manual has been developed and the manual complies with UAE health authority requirements.

Dubai Media Office Champion GEMS Health & Safety

GEMS education schools across the UAE are looking forward to welcoming students, teachers and parents back to school in September, with all the necessary health and safety measures in place. [Click here](#) to watch the latest video from our GEMS CEO, Dino Varkey, from the Government of Dubai's Media Office

Will school buses operate?

Bus routes will be revised based on the demand of parents wishing to continue to use bus transportation and to accommodate the new staggered start times.

- All temperatures are taken at the pick-up points and any cases will be documented and notified to the relevant parties
- Daily records will be maintained
- Bus' will be disinfected before and after each use
- Adequate signage will be placed inside the bus
- Procedures are in place should a child display signs of COVID 19 while in the bus
- Marking will be on the seats for guidance

Please view the STS Health and Safety Bus video for your reference by [clicking here](#)

What will be the communication channels for families?

WSO will ensure that we remain in constant communication with our families during our re-opening and throughout the academic year. Where possible, we will provide documents or transcripts of our communication in additional languages for parents where English is not the primary language. Our communication channels will include:

- **Email** – Our Parent Relations Executive (PRE), Michelle Purnell, will continue to send formal letters written by the Senior Leadership Team when new information is ready to be shared
- **Seesaw** – Once the school year has started, our teachers will be setting up their class Seesaw pages which will be used to communicate between teacher, student and parents throughout the year. If you are new to Seesaw, please download it on your devices by [clicking here](#)
- **WSO News** - The weekly document will continue to be shared by our PRE
- **Video updates** – The Primary Leadership team will continue to give regular video updates to parents, which was a successful addition to Term Three last year.
- **Parent Meetings** – meetings between parents and teachers/leaders are to take place virtually where possible, or can take place face-to-face if the need is critical and has been arranged by appointment only. No walk-in parent meetings can take place.
- **Monthly one-to-one communication** – Every family will be contacted by a member of the education team on a monthly basis, via phone call or zoom meetings

How can I follow social media for more updates?

There will be frequent updates on our various school social media channels. If you haven't already, please do follow the below channels!

Instagram

Handle	Web link	Content
@gemswso	https://www.instagram.com/gemswso/	Official Instagram account for the whole Academy
@primary_principalwso	https://www.instagram.com/primary_principalwso/	Updates given by Mr. Nathan Sadler, the Primary Principal
@secondary_principalwso	https://www.instagram.com/secondary_principalwso/	Updates given by Mr. Andy Kai Fong, the Secondary Principal



Handle	Content
@GEMS_WSO	Official twitter account for the whole Academy
@WSO_Primary	Updates given by Mr. Nathan Sadler, the Primary Principal
@WSO_Secondary	Updates given by Mr. Andy Kai Fong, the Secondary Principal
@CeoWso	Updates given by Mr. Kevin Loft, our Academy CEO/Principal

facebook

Website	Content
https://www.facebook.com/GEMSWSO	Official Facebook page for the whole Academy

What happens next?

Over the course of this month, we will be continue to update you with information and parental engagement events that we encourage you to participate in.

W/B 16th August – Year group Videos

Videos are being created by our school leadership team to help show families what it will be like coming back to school. The links for these videos will be emailed to parents and will also be posted on social media channels.

19th/20th August – Live Q and A with the Primary Leadership Team

We are pleased to invite all of our parents to year group specific Zoom Q and A sessions with our Primary Leadership Team. During each 1-hour session, members of the leadership team will give an overview of what school will look like on our return, including face to face learning and remote learning. To attend these

sessions, parents must register for the event in advance by clicking on the link below. If you have children in multiple year groups, you are welcome to sign up to more than one session. To ensure your questions are answered, please write your questions on the form below that you would like to be answered.

Date and Time	Year Group
19 th August – 9am	FS1
19 th August – 10am	Year 1
19 th August – 11am	Year 3
19 th August – 12pm	Year 5
20 th August – 9am	FS2
20 th August – 10am	Year 2
20 th August – 11am	Year 4
20 th August – 12pm	Year 6

[Click Here to sign up for a live session with our Primary Leadership Team](#)

W/B 23rd August – Year group full re-opening documentation shared with parents

A detailed year group specific document will be shared with families before school opens, outlining all specific details and support needed for our families to feel confident and safe returning.

30th August/31st August/1st September – One-to-One parent consultations before reopening

Teachers will be contacting parents at the end of August to offer one-to-one parent consultations, prior to reopening, which will take place the W/B 30th August.