

MUIZENBERG JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Principal: Mr. V. Erfort

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Dear Parents, Guardians and Staff

After weeks of speculation about the return of learners to school, the Minister of Basic Education announced on Tuesday, 19 May that learners' return to school would be phased in; starting with grade 7 on 1 June. Dates will be announced for the phase-in return of other grades in due course. Please ignore the speculation on social media; no dates have been communicated to schools regarding the return of the other grades.

The School Management Team, Support Team and Administrative Team have been hard at work preparing for the return of our learners and the rest of the staff. Plans have been put in place to create a safe and comfortable school environment for everyone. Measures have also been put in place to direct curriculum delivery and to ensure that the academic needs of all learners are supported as well as possible, given the current circumstances.

Creating a safe school environment

In order to create a safe environment and to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, our Access Control Policy has been amended to allow access to the school grounds to staff and learners only. Individuals who visit the school for business purposes will have to wear a face mask. Visitors would have to be screened and have their temperature measured and they would have to fill in a visitors' register.

All learners and staff must wear a face mask while on school premises.

The school will follow a strict screening procedure to ensure that the spread of the virus is mitigated.

Learners' and teachers' hands will be sanitized when they enter the school building and classroom and whenever they leave the classroom.

Hand soap and sanitizer are available in all the ablution facilities.

Entry to the school grounds

Staff will enter the grounds through the After Care or through the motor gate and then report to the screening area in the After Care where their hands will be sanitised and screening will take place.

The school gates will be unlocked at 7.30am for the learners who will access the grounds through the Park Road gate. In order to ensure social distancing, they will form two lines: along the wall adjacent to the pool and along the wall adjacent to the pedestrian gate.

Staff will be on duty at the gates to sanitise learners' hands as they enter the grounds. They will then be directed to various screening areas where they will be screened before being allowed access to the school buildings.

Once the learners have been screened they will move directly to their classrooms; accompanied by the teacher in charge. During screening, the learners' temperature will be measured and recorded and a 5 –questions screening questionnaire will be administered. This process will take place **every morning** between **7.30am and 8.00am**.

Late –comers will have to report to the reception area. On arrival, the child will be screened and then be allowed to go to his/her classroom. Parents, please ensure that your child arrives at school on time.

Isolation area

Individuals who present with COVID-19 like symptoms or a high temperature (above 38⁰ C) will not be allowed into the school building. These persons will be accompanied to an isolation area to facilitate management of the situation. Learners may wait there for a short period while arrangements are made for their parents to collect them from school.

Parents, please do not send your child to school if he/ she is ill. Make it a habit to do a quick check (for Coronavirus-like symptoms) of all family members before they leave home and to measure their temperatures if possible. Learners who take ill during the school day will also be sent to the isolation area where they will be supervised by a staff member. The school is dependent on the cooperation of all parents to collect their children from school as speedily as possible, if they are called on to do so. Your child's health and safety should not be endangered by unnecessary delays.

Personal Protection Equipment

The school has procured all the necessary Personal Protection Equipment and sanitizing materials that are necessary in order to ensure a safe school environment. In addition to this,

the WCED has provided sanitizing bleach, hand sanitizer, gloves for the support staff and infrared thermometers for use during screening.

While WCED has undertaken to provide all learners and staff with two face masks, they are requested to wear their own masks to school until such time that masks from the WCED are delivered. **No one will be allowed to enter the premises without a mask.**

Sanitizer and soap dispensers were installed in all toilets some time ago. These will be topped up as needed and learners and staff will be encouraged to maintain good hand hygiene. Hand sanitizers will also be available upon entry to the school and at each classroom. Parents, please provide your child with their own sanitizer so that they can sanitize their hands whenever they need to and especially when using public transport.

Teachers will wear face masks and/or face shields when interacting with the learners and other staff members.

Cleaning of the building

Our support team did a thorough job of cleaning the school building when they returned to school. In addition to this, a service provider was called in to deep clean the facility. The school has a comprehensive programme for cleaning and sanitizing the building every day.

Social distancing

When learners return, classes will be split to ensure compliance with social distancing measures. Learners' seats will be adequately spaced and measures are in place to ensure that proper distancing is maintained when learners move around the school, use the bathrooms and have their breaks. As an extra measure, learners will not move between teaching venues. The teachers will move.

Social distancing protocols will apply to staff as well. These protocols must be observed in the staffroom and other common areas.

Academic programme

Teachers will provide learners with a new timetable when they return. Plans are in place to ensure that teaching resumes at a point where all learners can be accommodated. No learner will be left behind. Support measures will be in place for those learners who need help. Since the return to school for other grades will be phased in, the school will continue with remote teaching. As more grades return, the school will embrace a hybrid of face-to-face teaching and remote teaching.

In order to assist parents and learners, hard copies of worksheets will be made available in the coming days. Teachers will liaise directly with parents to make arrangements for the collection of work.

School attendance

The Minister of Education was adamant that all learners will be expected back at school. Concessions will only be made for learners who have comorbidities that prevent them from attending school. In such cases, medical evidence must be presented to support the learner's absence from school. The WCED will provide schools with more information in this regard shortly. Please note, if a child genuinely cannot attend school because of a serious medical condition, the school will ensure that the learner gets his/her work and support from his/her teacher.

Furthermore, the Minister emphasized that parents had to choose whether to send their children to school or to register them for homeschooling. A learner who is absent from school for 10 consecutive days for no valid reason, will be deregistered.

The golden rules

You can make sure that you are safe and healthy by following these golden rules:

- Separate yourself physically from other people by staying away from people as much as possible and by staying home if you are unwell.
- Observe social distancing at all times (1,5m metres from others) and do not shake hands, hug or have any other physical contact with others.
- Practice good hand hygiene. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to sanitize your hands.
- Practising good hygiene by coughing or sneezing into your elbow or a tissue and then put the tissue in a bin and wash your hands immediately.
- Use a cloth face mask to cover your nose and mouth. Don't touch the mask after you put it on.

Other important information

Please note that due to COVID-19 regulations, the school tuckshop will not be operational.

Learners must be collected immediately after dismissal time because the school buildings and grounds will be closed for cleaning and sanitizing. The shelter-area will not be operational and all learners will be dismissed at the Park Road gates.

In order to facilitate good hygiene and to allow for the washing of school uniforms, learners will be allowed to wear their winter uniform on one day and their sports uniform on the next day.

Finally, I want to assure all parents that safety protocols will be strictly monitored and that our staff and the SGB will do everything possible to provide a safe and healthy school environment for your child.

Thank you for always supporting our school and for the huge effort you've put into supporting your child's learning during the past 8 weeks. We are facing a huge challenge, but with your continued support and cooperation we will certainly prevail.

Best wishes to all our families who will be celebrating Eid this weekend.

Warm regards

Vernon Erfort