



MALEK FAHD ISLAMIC SCHOOL

ABN: 41003 864 891

KNOWLEDGE IS LIGHT & WORK IS WORSHIP

www.mfis.nsw.edu.au

9 April 2020

End of Term Update

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Assalamu Alaykum WRWB,

Welcome to the last week of Term 1. What an extraordinary ride it has been as we journey the path of uncharted territory during unparalleled times. COVID-19 has certainly made its mark on the world, including our School. In just nine short days, the school has moved from one of traditional classroom learning to learning using virtual platform in the home. Teachers had to significantly change their way of teaching, including the preparation and delivery of lessons, to adapt to what might be termed as 'the new norm of learning'. Teachers undertook special training to meet these new demands. I could not be more proud of the staff for all they have done to adjust their teaching techniques and learn new technology. Unlike other schools, at MFIS we have undertaken the transition without a break of pupil free-days. Many of our staff are parents with children at the school. They have juggled the preparation and delivery of lessons whilst also attending to the educational needs of their child at home. I thank each and every teacher and staff member of the School for all they have undertaken to achieve remote learning.

Students and parents have had to make significant adjustments to their daily routine, learn and adapt the new way of the teaching of content. I wish to express my thanks to parents for their patience as we continue to work on the development of the delivery of lesson content and homework. I confirm that lesson material and homework has been sent to every child. Please ensure that your child has completed the work, is attending to online sessions and returning work for marking. Work can be submitted by Microsoft Teams or email to the class teacher. The email address of each teacher has been placed on the School website. Parents are asked to email teachers directly if there are concerns for a particular subject.

Mr Hamper, Deputy Principal (Teaching and Learning) has sent an update on the latest on the HSC to Year 12 parents. The letter has been uploaded onto the School website.

Avoiding Complacency

I have serious concerns for complacency with students. It is not easy to change from an environment where students are even more required to be a 'self-starter' and self-motivate towards their studies and homework. It is important and essential to set a good routine and keep to it. School starts at 8.30am for Secondary students and 8.45am for Primary students. It is important to follow the daily timetable and attend the online sessions for teacher delivery of lessons.

During the week I had to send a text to Year 12 parents requesting they ensured their child was up and ready to begin classes at 8.30am. Students were not logging into Microsoft Teams and missed valuable virtual lessons. It is very important that Year 12 students complete the practice examinations papers. I urge parents to assist the School with continual checking with their child that they have undertaken and completed the work that has been set and that the work that is required to be marked be returned to their class teacher.

Wherever possible the School has maintained the **normal routine** of lessons and meetings. Staff at each campus have regular briefings. There are regular meetings for coordinators, Heads of Campus and Executives. Yesterday, I had a full staff meeting with 260 staff, using the virtual platform of Microsoft Teams. Staff are maintaining the teaching timetable.

Throughout the week the Homeroom or classroom teacher has been in contact with students in their care to check in and see how the child is going. Parents have commented positively on this level of communication. Students have

enjoyed hearing a familiar voice at the other end of the telephone. Hearing a familiar voice has been welcomed by students and parents. I remind parents that each Homeroom Teacher will be making weekly calls to every child that is in their Homeroom Class.

Attendance

NESA have put out guidelines for marking student attendance while undertaking home schooling. It is important the school following NESA expectations. All students from Year 7 to 12 must log into Microsoft Teams each day. This will record attendance of students. Teachers of students from Kindergarten to Year 6 will be telephoned during the week for parent comments on their child's attendance to school work.

Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams has been set up for all students from Years 3 to Year 12. During the coming holidays the IT department will be setting up Microsoft Teams for students from Kindergarten to Year 2. So, from the commencement of Term 2, all students will have access to Microsoft Teams.

Devices

I understand the need for students to have a device at home to undertake remote learning. The school has provided access to devices to families at a ratio of 1 between 3 children. We are now looking at the potential of reducing this to a ratio of 1 between 2 students and eventually a device for each child. We are looking at options to realise this aim. It may still include iPads and laptops. As we progress this aim, more information will be forthcoming in the near future. Parents are reminded that any student issued with a student email will have access to Microsoft Office 365 for free. A **device survey** will be emailed to all parents in the coming days. It will be an interactive survey to complete online and submit. The purpose of this survey is to understand the number of devices in each household so we can understand how best to meet the education needs of each family.

Financial support

The School Board is aware of potential hardships parents may be experiencing. The Board Chairman's most recent Board Update included a reduction of school fees for Term 2. We appreciate the efforts of those families who continue to pay their fees. Parents who may be experiencing financial difficulties are asked to contact me or the Business Manager, Mr Dennis Aktypis for confidential discussions.

Wellbeing Support

The MFIS Counselling Department is there to support students and their families. We know this may be an increasingly stressful time for families, especially with school holidays and Ramadan approaching. The MFIS Counselling team would like to direct families towards the **attached** MFIS Parents Contact List which includes some useful parenting and mental health services and resources that may support you over the holiday break or when dealing with challenging circumstances. Of note is the free Islamicare Parent and Youth Hotline Service, 1800 960 009 (available 9am-midnight). Please find some excellent parent and student tip sheets and other resources on the MFIS website.

With the move to remote online learning and increased social connections having to be made via online platforms, and the added concerns for online safety, the Counselling Department has summarised some tips suggested in the COVID-19 Global ONLINE SAFETY ADVICE for parents and carers (please see **attached**) and noted some additional resources such as the [Behind the Screen in Quarantine - Free LIVE Online Program](#) and https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=2852026774905555&ref=br_rs (an Australian Muslim FB forum, focusing on combating digital pornography, with upcoming sessions on the 11th, 15th and 18th of April).

If you would like to make a counselling referral for your child or get in touch with a school counsellor, please email:

Greenacre Secondary: counsellingGS@mfis.nsw.edu.au

Greenacre Primary: counsellingGP@mfis.nsw.edu.au

Hoxton Park: counsellingHP@mfis.nsw.edu.au

Beaumont Hills: counsellingBH@mfis.nsw.edu.au

NSW Health has very useful website on COVID-19 with helpful information in multiple languages: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/covid-19-resources.aspx>

Our Board member, Dr Fariha Dib, a General Practitioner with 12 years of experience in Sydney has shared some helpful health and safety advice with the community in a podcast on One Path Network <https://onepathnetwork.com/mumsontherun/>

Parent and student tips:

- Students must attend to the work set and submit back to the teacher. If students are working with Microsoft Teams, the work can be submitted through this platform back to the child's teacher. Work can always be saved and emailed back to the class teacher: Kindergarten to Year 10;
- Secondary students must be ready to start lessons by 8.30am; Primary student's day starts at 8.45am;
- Secondary students must follow the timetable;
- Year 12 students must complete and return practice HSC examination questions.
- Year 7 to 12 students must log into Microsoft Teams daily;
- Work is regularly sent to all students. Parents are asked to check their emails and the emails of their child;
- Ensure that students exercise daily

I remind parents and students that Thursday is the last day of school for Term 1. Parents should not expect to have work sent back for teachers to mark during the holidays.

Term 2

The Term 2 commences Monday 27th April with a Staff Development Day and students will commence lessons on Tuesday 28th April. It is most likely that we will continue the remote learning format well into Term 2.

Ramadan commences during the school holidays. Lessons during Ramadan will conclude at 2.00pm.

Thank you for your support and encouragement during the Term. I wish you a restful, happy and safe holiday and Ramadan Mubarak to you and your family.

Kind regards



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