



Dear Parents,

Ramadan Kareem,

The COVID 19 crisis has thrown all of our plans for the near and medium future into disarray. For those of us who had hoped to travel in the summer all has been thrown into question. Where can you go and how long will you have to stay in quarantine? Will we be able to get back into the UAE? Some parents have started to ask me **what learning will look like at CIS next academic year**. The reality is we just don't know, although we are planning for a variety of scenarios.

When the children return to school there needs to be a plan in place. When COVID-19 hit us suddenly, daily **routines evaporated**. For most children, their daily goal in going to school is not just to learn but to see their friends and to feel a sense of self-worth that only a peer group can offer. You cannot underestimate the impact of the loss of that social interaction. It is as key to their holistic development as any lesson. Human beings are fundamentally social creatures, and the brain grows in the context of meaningful human to human interaction.

So, we are challenging ourselves and **reviewing a number of scenarios**, from the school remaining closed (100% of students continue Distance Learning), to school partially re-opening with between 30-50% of time in school and the remainder of time spent on remote learning. There are many more aspects, however our main focuses of this plan are based around **4 areas in particular: Being Safe, Healthy Relationships, Responsive Curriculum & Building Resilience**.

I want to also take this opportunity to **thank all the parents** that have paid their school fees. These are very **difficult conversations** at this trying time and not all families are in the same financial situation. Therefore, I want to remind you of the **GEMS Rewards** programme that can save you considerable amounts of money over the year, money that you may have had to spend anyway, however now you do not have to always pay the full amount. GEMS Rewards is our way of saying thank you to our community of Parents, Staff and Students. It is a structured programme which consists of multiple components which aspire to help reduce the impact of annual tuition fees.

The offers range from discounts & buy 1 get 1 deals to GEMS Points earning opportunities. 10 GEMS Points equals to AED 1 and can be used to pay school tuition and transport fees.

The primary components are:

1. **Ambassador Programme** – Refer a friend to a participating GEMS school and earn 4% in GEMS Points on successfully enrolled referrals.
2. **GEMS Rewards Offers** - Discover incredible deals and start saving by redeeming exclusive offers across our network of partners on the GEMS Rewards app.
3. **GEMS Points** – Earn GEMS Points towards school fees on travel bookings, shopping and by transferring other loyalty programme points on the GEMS Rewards app.
4. **FAB GEMS Co-Branded Card** - Pay Tuition fees in advance with your FAB GEMS co-brand card to avail of discounts up to 4.25%.

In anticipation of a UAE private sector holiday announcement, and with deference to the results of an official moon-sighting, CIS will provisionally observe Eid Al Fitr on:

Friday 22nd May 2020
Saturday 23rd May 2020
Sunday 24th May 2020
Monday 25th May 2020
Tuesday 26th May 2020

School timings for the rest of the year are as follows;

Foundation Stage: 8:30am – 12:00pm

Year 1 & Year 2: 8:30am – 1:30pm

Primary: 8:00am – 2:30pm

Secondary: 8:00am - 1:45pm

Heads of School will inform you of the finer details of the day before the end of Eid.

Please stay tuned to the official UAE holiday announcement.

Finally, a reminder that stricter restrictions have been brought in starting tomorrow. The curfew has been changed and the fines being suggested for infringements in gatherings have increased considerably. [New Eid restrictions](#)

I want to wish all of our community a joyous Eid Al Fitr. Take the time to enjoy with your families in these difficult times. Savour to the time we have with those who are important to us (and for us that means all in the CIS community). My very best wishes to you all.

Sincerely,



Lachlan Mackinnon

CEO/Principal

Fortune Favours the Brave