



مدرسة جيمس متروبول  
GEMS Metropole School  
MOTOR CITY



# GEMS Metropole School

## REMOTE LEARNING PLAN 4.0

2020 – 2021



## Table of Contents

Remote Learning Plan Overview	3
Objectives	4
Roles and Responsibilities	4
Communication	7
KHDA Digital Learning Evaluation	
Teaching and Learning	8
Wellbeing	13
Online Safety Protocols	15
Points to Consider for Parents	17
Frequently Asked Questions	18



مدرسة جيمس متروبول  
GEMS Metropole School  
MOTOR CITY

## Remote Learning Plan Overview

The purpose of this document is to outline the approach Metropole School will take in the event of a school closure. We will continue to offer an effective education through a Remote Learning Plan (RLP).

At GEMS Metropole School, we are committed to delivering our high-quality education and fulfill our Vision for our learners. We are relentless to find effective means to do so under exceptional circumstances that may require a full campus closure. In such conditions, our commitment is to provide an alternative means of education in the form of a Remote Learning Plan. The RLP outlines the experience that students will have when school remains in session, but when students are unable to physically attend school because of campus closure. While an RLP cannot replicate onsite learning, our teachers can deliver powerful instruction that allows students to meet expected standards in an online environment.

The success of our RLP requires a true partnership. Firstly, our dedicated teachers will commit to careful planning, maintaining an online presence, and providing regular feedback. Our students will need to bring motivation, presence and engagement to each session and subsequent online work. Lastly, our families will need to support this alternative mode of instruction in the home environment. The result of such learning experiences will continue to support students' academic progress and will be mindful to attend to student social and emotional well-being.

While this is a challenging time of uncertainty and change, these circumstances also provide an opportunity to explore innovative learning opportunities for our students. Our learners are equipped with learning dispositions and mindsets that allow them to be flexible in their learning. Our infrastructure and faculty are prepared to support our learners. Our students are exceptionally committed and will rise to any occasion set before them. MTS is prepared for this challenge and will work tirelessly to ensure that there is continuity and support for our community.



## Objectives

To ensure the continuity of learning for our students, whilst ensuring the safety of our school community.

For parents to feel confident that MTS has a robust plan in place that delivers our objectives.

To have a flexible plan that builds on feedback received from all stakeholders in order to deliver high quality home and online learning.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The list below outlines some of the commitments you are expected to make but is not all-encompassing.

## School

### MTS leaders are expected to:

- Share the RLP with the teachers, students and parents.
- Monitor and adjust the plans for remote learning to ensure effective implementation.
- Administer regular surveys for parents, students and staff to gain feedback to ensure a collaborative approach to progressively developing our distance learning and to address individual concerns.

### MTS teachers are expected to:

- Be available to students, colleagues and parents during normal school hours and according to the school timetables for each class, with slight modifications as appropriate.
- Document direct parent communication in GEMS Quality Assurance Programme (QAP)
- Connect with their students on a daily basis via Microsoft Teams (Primary) Phoenix Classroom (Secondary) to ensure daily participation in the RLP.
- Provide learning content that matches the regular curriculum content so there is a seamless transition on return to school.
- Take daily attendance of students and follow up on any absences.



## Parents

### **MTS Parents are expected to:**

- Establish routines and expectations for their children to engage in the remote learning that has been set for them.
- Provide children with a safe environment that is conducive to learning, including access to the required technology.
- Provide emotional support to children by ensuring they have time for reflection, physical activity, conversation and opportunities for play.

## Students

### **MTS students are expected to:**

- Communicate proactively and responsibly with teachers and peers during remote learning.
- Meet timelines, deadlines, commitments and due dates.
- Attend live sessions with their teacher to understand what they are learning and what they need to produce.
- Make sure they have everything they need to complete their work, including a quiet space that is free from distractions.
- Do their own work. Parents and helpers are encouraged to assist but should not do the work for the students.
- Keep healthy habits. Take suitable breaks away from devices, eat sensibly at regular meal times and go to bed at regular school day times



### **SEND and EAL Specialist Support**

- Communicate regularly with the subject or classroom teachers who teach the students on their caseload.
- Support class teachers and parents in scaffolding or modify assignments, as per IEP/ILP recommendations.
- Provide guidance and support to subject or classroom teachers on how to differentiate lessons and activities for the students on their caseload.
- Complete live IEP parent meetings to set Term 3 targets that are conducive for parent support and learning environments. IEP Parent meetings will commence during the week of the 19th of April during your child's normal scheduled Inclusion support times.
- Encourage and model emotional wellbeing balance.
- Guide and model life skills development.
- Encourage functional language development.
- Communicate regularly with students on their caseload and/or with their parents to ensure they have success with distance learning.
- Makaton sign language skills development and challenges will be shared on Social media platforms – a challenge and skills development the whole family can get involved with.

### **Individual Learning Support Assistant Support**

iLSA support will still be available during our virtual learning period, at an additional cost. Should you wish to begin or continue with the support system, please contact Ms Tracey Ferguson directly to discuss further.



## Communication

GEMS Metropole Schools main form of communication to parents is through the GEMS Connect Application. This aims to keep all of information for parents in one centralized location. Messages from the Principal will also be communicated through the regular social media platforms. Newsletters will continue to be shared with all stakeholders during a period of forced school closure.

The GEMS Metropole website <https://www.gemsmetropoleschool-dubai.com> is regularly updated to ensure that it keeps current parents, prospective parents and newly recruited staff up to date with relevant information. The virtual admissions centre allows the public to access example live online lessons and virtually meet the leadership and admissions teams through a series of webinars and meetings.

The virtual Meet The Principal is held monthly. Parents can join the Principal and his leadership team in a Virtual Q&A session through which you will be able to chat live with the team and ask all your questions.

GEMS Metropole is committed to quality customer service. Our front of house team are always happy to answer any questions you may have or request follow ups through our quality assurance system. This system records communications between staff and parents and focuses on a star and a wish. This information is inputted into Pulse and followed up on if required by the relevant leader.

All senior leaders are provided with a school mobile so that parents can be contacted by telephone if required.

Virtual Parental Engagement Meetings will continue to take place in both primary and secondary school. These have been well received and will continue once fulltime school resumes.

Metropole Live continues to take place every Thursday afternoon and shared via social media platforms. The program invites school specialists to discuss key topics in education. Each





Monday, parents have the opportunity to join a zoom Q & A forum based on the topic introduced during the previous live session. Students may communicate with their teachers through Microsoft Teams or Phoenix classroom if applicable. Parents can contact teachers by email and expect a direct response within 24 hours. Parents Evenings will continue, but through a virtual meeting.

## Digital Learning Evaluation

The KHDA Digital Learning Evaluation graded the school as Developed, which was the highest grading for online learning.

Some of the positive features from the KHDA evaluation were:

1. There was careful attention and modification of curriculum standards, ensuring continuity of learning.
2. The processes and protocols for ensuring the safeguarding of students
3. The effective use of resources by the school to support learning at home.

## Teaching and Learning

The main method of teaching for online learning will be online meetings and posts on the main landing page of each class. Teachers and students can write comments in real time and upload files and documents in assignments.

We will deliver virtual learning for all students from EYFS- Year13. There will be a requirement for students to access their webcam appropriately during virtual lessons. Students are required to follow the Student Virtual Metropole User Agreement which links directly to the Parental Virtual Metropole User Agreement, both of which are included below. If the rules outlined in the agreement are not followed, then regular school sanctions will be applied in line with the school's behaviour policy and parents will be contacted immediately.

Teachers plan activities that relate as closely as possible to current class content or skills as outlined on the weekly information. The activities reinforce existing understanding or





introduce new content as planned in regular schemes of work. Students are able to carry out the tasks assigned by teachers independently, including accessing all content and resources. We are not expecting parents to become the class teacher, however, some additional support from home may be required.

Teachers will continue to assess classwork by monitoring students work that will be submitted online. Appropriate feedback and next steps will also be given, through assignments, to ensure progress. Teachers will provide a mixture of live lessons and pre- recorded lessons; they will set independent learning tasks using already familiar online learning resources and content. Project based style learning has been set for children to complete over the course of the week. Designated time has been given for this, but there is flexibility for students to complete this at a convenient time. Special subject days, such as STEAM Day, will run to engage and motivate the students in an area of the curriculum.

We will continue to use Microsoft Teams in Primary and Phoenix Classroom in Secondary. Further support and user guides will be shared with parents on GEMS Connect. Metropole Live has been introduced to keep parents up to date with current educational topics. A Zoom meeting follows up these sessions as a forum for parents to ask questions to the panel.

Learning activities will be posted ahead of timetabled lessons each day from Sunday to Thursday. Lesson delivery will be condensed to reduce screen time and to allow for students to complete the planned activities. Please refer to the Metropole Microsoft Teams support communications or Phoenix Classroom before contacting IT support in our school.

With the continual development of the online learning platform, a focus upon the quality use of teaching apps within Microsoft Teams will continue. Each a week an additional teaching resource within teams will be implemented such as Pear Deck, Polly or Stream.

### **For example:**

Pear Deck: Pear Deck is an interactive presentation tool used to actively engage students in individual and social learning.

Teachers create presentations giving students an interactive and collaborative approach to



presentations.

Polly: Polly is a fun way to create anonymous polls for students so that answers can be collated collaboratively live on the Teams feed.

## **The School Day**

The school day currently runs from 8.00 am to 12.30pm in FS1 and 7.45am to 3pm in the rest of the school.

Subjects will be allocated the same percentage allocation of time as they would in the normal MTS curriculum.

## **Inclusion**

The Inclusion Department will continue to send home activity packs for students to practice specific skills and tasks as outlined by the IEP for the term – This may not be applicable to all students. Each student will have a Teams Inclusion/EAL/counselling classroom set up with specific virtual learning activities, live meetings and videos to model activities you can do with your child to support their IEP/ILP/Counselling Support Plan target development. Some tasks will be project based but will be communicated and modelled on the Teams classroom. Inclusion Support teachers, EAL teachers and Counselling staff will be available for a Teams virtual meeting with your child and you to support when it would usually be their support session time. Please ensure that you keep a routine at home. Have this done visually for primary and have a discussion and schedule with your child (Secondary).

The Gifted and Talented Parent mentor program will continue through live meetings with the specific student group. The schedule of meetings will be shared within their G&T Teams classroom. The MTS Futures alternative activities plan has been shared and specifically focuses on non-academic challenges during this virtual learning time.

## **Assessment**

All examinations will be cancelled until further notice. Internal teacher assessment will continue through feedback and marking of work.



## Importance of the Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage is a vital part of a child's education. These are the basic building blocks that serve them for their rest of their time in school.

Research shows that children who start school at 3 and continue in the same school, are more likely to perform better at the end of KS1. A child's engagement with and months spent in the Foundation stage at the same school was found to directly relate to their intellectual gains at the end of Year 2 (EPPE Research, DfES, Oxford University). The online learning provided at Metropole still follows the EYFS curriculum and builds on the essential learning steps to prepare them for Y1.

## FS1

FS1 closely follows the developmental processes needed for language development, physical development (essential for the writing process in FS2) as well as specific areas of learning. Children in FS1 are already beginning to learn the sound to letter correspondence in preparation for FS2, where children begin a more formal writing process.

While still building on the Prime areas of learning, the Continuous Provision tasks set for the children each week ensure that they are still developing problem solving processes, fine motor skills as well as carefully chosen texts that promote the language progression.

The methods used to teach all of these skills are ones that the FS1 teachers have trained in and are also highly skilled in making sure that the activities provided each week build on the progression in each of these areas of learning.

Teachers use a video overview for each input so that parents can understand where the learning of each activity fits in the progression of a child's learning.

## FS2

In FS2 the online teacher uses video overviews to explain to parents the relevance of the learning in each activity, so that they can understand how each piece of the learning jigsaw



fits together. This information is communicated to other parents through the weekly newsletter and parent workshops.

At the end of the academic year in FS2, children are assessed against 17 different areas of learning called Early Learning Goals (ELGs). Below are the ELGs for Writing and Numbers.

The Early Learning Goal for Writing is as follows:

*Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible. (gov.uk)*

The Early Learning Goal for Numbers is as follows:

*Children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing. (gov.uk)*

Children who do not complete their FS2 year will be assessed against the EYFS end of Key Stage criteria prior to the next academic year, and the correct year group placement made for them.

Our teachers are always more than happy to help parents with strategies to help move children on in their learning with a focus on the individual child's needs.



مدرسة جيمس متروبول  
GEMS Metropole School  
MOTOR CITY

## Wellbeing

GEMS Metropole School will continue to provide the highest possible standards of care, welfare and support to all of its community during periods of virtual learning. We acknowledge that the loss of the daily school day routine and subsequent face to face contact with our staff could negatively impact on the wellbeing of some students and indeed parents.

Our pastoral team will be available for students and their families to communicate with should any issues or concerns arise. There are opportunities during the registration period for students to have informal chats between their teacher and peers to encourage social interaction.

In case of a long period of distanced learning we will provide additional pastoral care initiatives, including wellbeing days that allow for students to work away from devices reducing screen time.

Both of our school counsellors will be available for their regular counselling sessions, which they will conduct online with a focus on wellbeing and life skills development. This will be by agreement with student, parent, the contact member of staff and the counsellor.

Small groups with the focus of careers support will continue as per the usual timeslots from the previous term.

The Teen Mental Health First Aider program will continue their skills development with live training sessions run by the student counsellors.

Counsellors will provide podcasts once a week that will be shared on all MTS social media platforms that are aimed at supporting parents and students during the virtual learning period.

***If your child would like to book a session with either school counsellor, they can contact them through teams or through their email address.***

**[r.karmarkar\\_mts@gemsedu.com](mailto:r.karmarkar_mts@gemsedu.com) | [r.zahoor\\_mts@gemsedu.com](mailto:r.zahoor_mts@gemsedu.com)**



## Behaviour whilst online

High levels of behaviour remain a priority when working online and in fact take precedent to ensure that high levels of effective teaching can take place. The normal 'Behaviour for Learning' Policy is still in place to ensure high levels of learning.

### *Four non-negotiables that we require students to adhere to:*

- Be on time for every lesson with all equipment and appropriate resources and ready to learn
- Follow all instructions first time and be polite when using the speaker.
- In the group chat feature on Teams/Phoenix Classroom, be respectful and always use appropriate language when addressing the teacher and other students.
- No screenshots of online conversations between teacher and students or students and students. Also, no sharing of material like videos outside of the Teams classrooms. This is strictly forbidden and may lead very serious legal repercussions.

Students and staff are encouraged to be as positive with their contributions when interacting online.

## Attendance Policy and Processes

Attendance across the school remains mandatory during this time. In Foundation Stage, parents and Year 1 and Year 2 students and if necessary, parents are expected to come online at 7:45am and be registered by their class teacher. After this there is more flexibility to when the students (which some assistance from parents) complete the tasks throughout the day.

In Year 3 – Year 6 students follow a normal timetable and failure to register between 7:45-8:00am will mark the students either “late” or “absent” for the day.

In Year 7 – 13 students follow a normal timetable and failure to register between 7:45-8:00am will mark the students either “late” or “absent” for the day. In secondary period 1 will therefore start at 8am and will follow a normal timetable there afterwards.

Depending on the key stage, if a student is marked absent the following steps will be followed by MTS attendance team:



SMS sent to parents alerting them to the fact that their son/daughter has not been marked present during registration period (7:45-8:00am).

Follow up phone calls made by attendance team to those families where students have not been marked present.

Attendance team to update registers appropriately based on conversations and communication from families based on absenteeism of student on that day.

Impact: These robust procedures have ensured that during periods of remote learning MTS has reported high level of attendance and engagement (93% on average).

### **Online Safety and Protocols**

During distance learning, GEMS Metropole School Dubai, will provide parents and students access to learning materials in accordance with the end-user policies of the certain online platforms e.g. Microsoft Teams, Phoenix Classroom, Accelerated Reader, Active Learn etc.

By accessing any of the learning materials provided, users are agreeing with all of the school's policies which can be found on the school's website. These policies highlight the responsibilities of all users, including showing respect and courtesy for all other users, students, parents and staff in the MTS community. It also includes the strict prohibition of cyber bullying, online harassment and the use of inappropriate language in any communication. Any misconduct online will be treated similar to in school and in accordance with the school policies.

To raise awareness of online safety at this time and to show our commitment to continually reviewing our school online safety procedures we have been accredited the National Online Safety Certified School Programme Award. This is a whole school community approach to online safety training. It has allowed us to train our safeguarding leaders, teachers and school staff as well as offer training for parents and LAB members. It supports us to stay on top of online safety news, social media updates and evolving online issues as well as access to a resource hub, with lesson plans and parent guides, which are shared weekly through social media.





### Online safety and how it works: Guidance for parents, staff and students

Ensure that any 'live sessions' have a minimum of 3 participants (including the teacher) there should be no 1:1 sessions. If there is only one student online in a session the teacher will postpone and reschedule.

All live sessions will be recorded and stored in the cloud so that they can be reviewed and revisited by students and staff when necessary.

GEMS Metropole staff have been asked to revisit Safe working practice to avoid behaviours that may be outside of the GEMS Safer Working practice guidance and any relevant codes of conduct.

All live lessons will be randomly monitored by middle leaders and senior leadership staff for quality assurance and to ensure online safety measures are being met for both staff and students

If staff are in live sessions at home, they will ensure that the background is suitable so their residence cannot be identified and there are no unprofessional materials in the background.

Greater emphasis has been made on how to disclose concerns when working online. A significant amount of correspondence has been shared with students on how to make a disclosure via the [myconcern\\_mts@gemsedu.com](mailto:myconcern_mts@gemsedu.com) that will be picked up by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

To further safeguard staff and students, GEMS IT and Microsoft have worked together and are putting the following safeguards in place for all GEMS schools using Microsoft Teams:

**Disable recording option - Only teachers can record the session, students will not be able to disable private chat**

**Grey out "Meet now" option - this would ensure students are unable to start their own meeting. In addition to this, IT have also created a workaround, which would allow only the teachers to mute the students**



## Points to Consider for Parents

With the transition to remote learning, parents, in partnership with teachers will need to think differently about how to support their children; how to create structures and routines that allow their children to be successful; and how to monitor and support their children's learning. Some students will thrive with remote learning, while others may find it challenging as this is a new way to access the curriculum. The guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in a remote learning environment:

- Establish routines and expectations around how your child engages with our virtual school.
- Define the physical space for your child's study - consider the environment in which child is studying and how you monitor this.
- Monitor communications from your children's teacher(s)
- Begin and end each day with a check-in - What are you learning today? What did you learn?
- Take an active role in helping your children process and own their learning
- Establish times for quiet reflection
- Encourage physical activity and/or exercise
- Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry
- Monitor how much time your child is spending online.
- Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. My child is taking external examinations next term, will there be any additional support classes when school reopens?**

*A. Teachers are continuing to finish courses with our students and are providing full support to students and to the examination boards to ensure that all the evidence we provide to the boards is a true and fair reflection of our students.*

**Q. How can I contact my child's teachers?**

*A. You will be able to email your child's class teacher (primary) or LEAD teacher (secondary) as usual and can expect a reply within 24 hours. The teacher may choose to telephone you back so please ensure your contact details are up-to-date in our system.*

**Q. My child is struggling with the work provided, what can I do to help them?**

*A. Contact your child's teacher straight away so they can support you and your child. It is important that your child is able to access the learning and has access to the ongoing support that our school continues to offer. Secondary parents should contact the LEAD teacher in the first instance should any issues arise. Following this the Heads of Year and pastoral teams are working as normal and can provide further information and individualised support where required. For general feedback and suggestions please continue to engage with parental surveys so that we can adapt our remote learning in line with your feedback.*

**Q. I am having difficulty getting online to access the remote learning programmes, who do I call to help?**

*A. Please refer to the communications section where you will see the telephone number and email contact for the MTS IT helpdesk.*

**Q. If primary students cannot complete all the work assigned what should we do?**

*A. Each day three assignments will be set which are required to be submitted. The Virtual Metropole learning platform for primary allows for flexible learning so that students can either follow the live timetable or submit their assignments within their own timescale during the day.*



**Q. Will I still get my child's report and will there be an online parents evening?**

A. All parental engagement and communication will go ahead as planned. Reports will be issued through GEMS connect in the normal way. Parental engagement will be complete on the advertised dates using your son or daughter's teams log in for an online appointment. In secondary the same system will work but with a scheduled appointment for each subject across the day or the given time period.

**Q. What should I do if my child is finding it hard to engage in the online learning?**

A. If you are finding the online home learning at home a struggle then please do not hesitate to contact your class teacher who can support with strategies in learning.

**Q. Does my child need to complete the tasks at the same time as they are on the timetable?**

A. Our online learning is designed so that you have the choice to either complete the activities when the teacher is live for each lesson or that you can complete them in your own timeframe. We understand that the learning in FS needs to be flexible, therefore we have provided all of the learning resources you need with an overview and a video which features the teacher to go through the learning. You also have the option of speaking to the teacher live on teams throughout the day. Teachers are able to provide feedback to the students on live chats.

## Contacts

IT Help Desk Telephone	04 5735777 (between 9am till 5pm - SUN-THU)
Email:	<a href="mailto:itsupport_mts@gemsedu.com">itsupport_mts@gemsedu.com</a>
PRE:	052 107 8500
Financial Queries:	04 550 7200
Admissions:	052 107 8557
GEMS Parent Experience Centre:	600 567 771 (between 8am till 5pm)