



6 June 2020

Dear Parents

**Update: Processes Health and Safety (COVID-19)**

As communicated previously, we have been committed to ensure that our health and safety processes meet the highest requirements. Stringent health and safety considerations have informed the decisions of the SAHETI Covid-19 Task Team throughout this lengthy and important process, and they have approved, pending Board approval on the 11 June, of the school's proposed phased in re-opening. We feel satisfied that the conditions will ensure a safe environment for those returning. Please be re-assured that these decisions are taken carefully and thoughtfully with our own needs as a school community in mind. This has been, and continues to be, a complex process and we thank you for your unreserved support and understanding. We have reviewed carefully the results of the surveys that many of our families completed, and have balanced these to see how we can accommodate these on the one hand, while maintaining the stringent COVID-19 safety measures on the other.

For your information and attention, please refer to our Covid-19 Policy and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) in the attached Covid-19 handbook. This will provide you with greater understanding of our protocols. SAHETI's compliance letter from the Department of Health and Social Development after their site visit, is also included. Please note that the handbook is not a final document but a working one, being revised daily in order to be presented for final approval to the Health and Safety Committee on 10 June 2020. We encourage you that once the document is perused, any comments should be emailed to [wjansevanrensburg@saheti.co.za](mailto:wjansevanrensburg@saheti.co.za)

On Monday the various principals will be communicating the details relating to the proposed reopening. Briefly:

- the Matrics will start with block teaching (in some subjects) on Saturday 13 June followed by Prelims as previously announced
- Grade 7s will return on June 17.
- Subject to receiving the appropriate government approval, we will deviate from the National plan and phase in Grade 11 on June 18 followed by Grade 3.
- It is our proposal to phase in the entire Primary School and much of the Pre-primary by the end of term.

It is important to note that social distancing prohibits a full school and only allows for 50% capacity. We are not returning to school as normal. All plans will be subject to ongoing review of the progression of the disease within the country. At this point our proposal does not include a return of Grade 8s, 9s and 10s for the remainder of the term. Within our planning we have also given consideration of the emotional well-being of our students. The return will involve a full orientation programme, which will include talks from the Psychology department and the School nurse. Details of our approach will be communicated per school.

We believe that we can accommodate the numbers per grade that we have projected from the survey results which have been attached. Once we have specified the restrictions and return dates per grade, however, we will need a final response for each student as the restrictions will affect planning for return. As expected, many parents have chosen not to return as we have not yet reached the peak of infections in the country, and

in many cases because of health risks to family members. For students who have any health issues, a return at this point is not recommended.

Many parents have asked the reasons for not continuing with distance learning for the term. The answer is that while some students have responded positively, there are some students who have struggled with the online environment either due to personal learning styles or because of the lack of suitability of the home environment for distance learning. The extent of adult supervision at home also significantly influences the choices made. Certainly, we are led to believe that Term 3 will continue to have measures of social distancing with number of groups in the classes determined by the COVID-19 curve. We have decided, to ensure that planning runs meticulously without hindering academics, that Term 2 will close as expected on 31st July, but that Term 3 will re-open 3 days earlier on Thursday 27th August.

Please note that any reopening of grades even in the future will be phased-in, to allow for students to become accustomed to the requirements before additional students are added. Physical distancing will be strictly enforced and classes will be kept separate during breaks. No tunnel spraying of students will occur and no quaternary ammonia-based sanitizer will be used. Regular disinfection of all surfaces will take place as per the handbook. Students will be allowed to return in either full sports kit or civvies. We recommend that pupils get dressed warmly as we are encouraged to keep doors and windows open. The tuckshop will initially not be open. Lunches must be packed in disposable packets or bags. Each student and staff member will be issued with at least two masks and one face visor to ensure the correct safety specifications. Gloves will not be allowed for the reasons mentioned in the handbook. No sharing of equipment and food will be allowed and regular washing of hands will be enforced.

I thank the SAHETI Operations Team and the Covid-19 Response Team (headed by Mr Werner Van Rensburg) for getting our campus ready. I further take this opportunity to thank Mr Warren Manson who has chosen to move into a new position that will provide him with much opportunity for further personal growth. I thank him for his exceptional dedication and commitment to SAHETI, especially during this challenging time in which he has led the team with dedication, preparing the school for its reopening. I have worked exceptionally well with Mr Manson and I am saddened that he will be leaving us. I wish him well and thank him for being part of our program for the past number of years, for his contribution in ensuring that our school's aesthetics are something for which we are all proud. The systems that he has put in place will ensure that the operations at SAHETI continue to function in an optimal way.

I wish you a restful Sunday and good health.

Kind regards

Warwick Taylor  
(Executive Headmaster)