

Student & Parent Covid Safety Protocols

August 2021



**NIBRAS
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL**
American Education

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Dear NIS Community:

Nibras International School continues its change journey this coming school year. Aspiring to be a more rigorous international school, a highly respected international school globally, and the school of choice in our local region, we are more determined to reach these goals this school year.

We have demonstrated these aspirations during the past school year, by completing two concrete and strategic actions on behalf of our entire school community. Our teachers undergoing a thorough appraisal program to determine their commitment to rigorous instruction and pedagogy, helped us identify the best educators Nibras could have as it moves forward. The next step was not easy, but our worldwide search to attract the best educators from other international schools has strengthened our instructional community. With these new staff members, we have valued our conversations about passion and commitment and our common moral obligation regarding teaching. Influential leaders believe that the quality of strength and dedication shown by every staff member, determines how the learning community will be nurtured.

This school year, we remain committed to continuing our change journey by sharing our evolving educational philosophy, and with the aim of making Nibras International School the School of Choice in the area and different from other schools in the region.

This school year's focus on "Teach to Understand" positions Nibras International School to be an authentic American International Curriculum School. We are dedicated to sharpening student comprehension and thinking skills so that they can become the most effective community leaders here at home, and in the world. Fully grounded on the American thinking principles, Nibras commits to connecting with its immediate communities and beyond to explore, design, and act on socially and globally relevant student topics of interest through their units of inquiries. Additionally, our learning community remains respectful and fully committed to the UAE's National Agenda.

With our academic plans, social-emotional support programs, and safety protocols entirely in place, Nibras International School is looking forward to welcoming everyone on campus. Let this school year begin.

Together, we will explore why and how we "Teach to Understand." Let us continue our journey to define our new Nibras International School community.

Best Regards,

Dr. Jay B. Teston
Head of School / Principal

CHAPTER

1

REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE

NIS Re-Opening Guiding Principles

NIS is committed to igniting the Torch of Learning in every child. Our safety protocols are guided by the following principles.

- 1 Prioritize student and staff health, safety, and wellbeing
- 2 Learning must continue with health and safety measures in place
- 3 Offer the broadest curriculum possible
- 4 Promote practices and policies that reduce risk and remain agile when facing changing health circumstances
- 5 Strive to adhere to our NIS Mission and TORCH Values



OUR MISSION:

NIS opens students' hearts and minds so that they embrace challenges and opportunities, share ideas and purpose, and truly influence others to make a positive difference.



OUR TORCH VALUES:

At NIS we want our students to be Tolerant
Organized, Respectful, Caring, and Honest.

Regulations and Guidance

COVID protocols at NIS are based on guidance issued by local and global authorities, best practice from other Global ISP schools, and our own risk assessments.



Resources

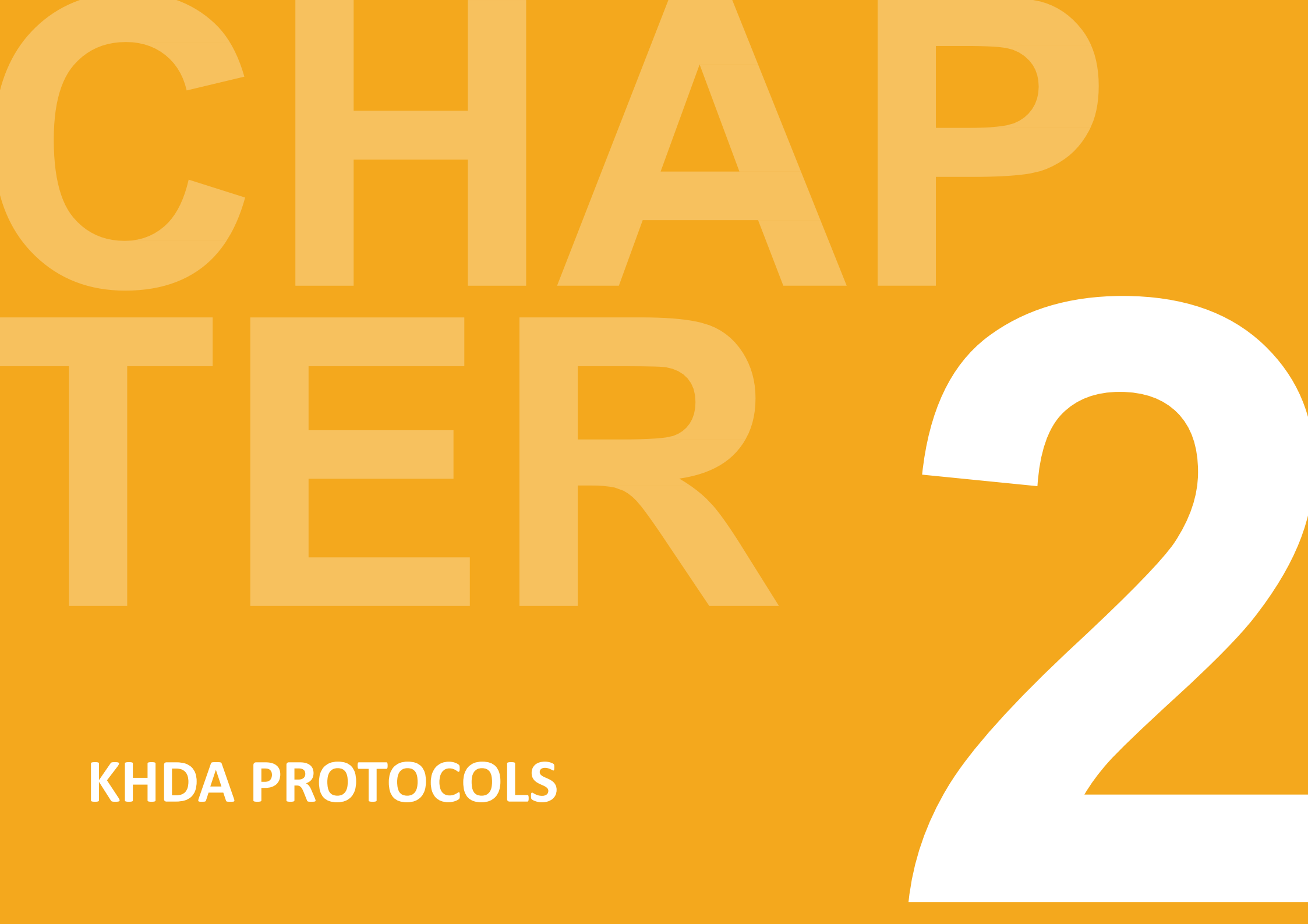
WHO - https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52_4

DHA - <https://doh.gov.ae/-/media/57B1A0DB7454477FADC87595E313DA62.ashx>

DM- <https://www.dm.gov.ae/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Health>

Safty_DM-PHSD-GU94-CDCN2_Technical-Guidelines-for-Cleaning-Disinfecting-in-Childcare-Nurseries-Premises.pdf

KHDA - <https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/KHDA-Back-to-School-Protocols-2021-En.pdf>



CHAPTER

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2

KHDA PROTOCOLS

What are the significant changes in the health and safety protocols for the 2021/22 academic year at Nibras International School?

The major change for the new academic year is that **all students must be back at school for face-to-face learning** by October 3, except in exceptional circumstances.

1. From the start of the academic year, NIS has opted to offer the KG1 and KG2 programs onsite only.
2. From the start of the academic year, NIS will accept some online students from grades 1-12. These students, however, must report onsite in October.
3. Unless approved under exceptional circumstances, all NIS students must be onsite by October 3, 2021.



Can students continue with distance learning this academic year?

1. From the start of the academic year until September 30, certain accepted students may join NIS via distance learning. **From October 3, 2021, all these students will have to report to campus for face-to-face instruction.**
2. After this date, students who wish to continue with distance learning must provide a medical certificate issued by Dubai Health Authority.
3. Class groups or grade/year levels may temporarily switch to distance learning if positive cases of Covid-19 are detected.



Entry and Pick-up

- Every child's temperature will be scanned at the school entrance or before boarding the bus. Anyone with a fever ≥ 37.50 C should not be allowed entry.
- Teachers, staff, family members, and students older than 6 years are required to wear face masks at all times.
- Only one family member or guardian is allowed to enter the child's classrooms for drop off / pick up. There is a ten-minute time limit.

Transportation

- Bus capacity will increase to 100%.
- Each student will be given a designated and pre-assigned seat.
- All bus passengers, exception for children younger than 6, must wear masks.
- Bus hygiene is maintained by the appropriate sanitization and physical distancing standards.
- With full capacity expectation, bus service will be on a first-come-first-served basis.



Health & Safety Plans

- Schools have a team of Health and Safety Officers (HSOs) to ensure all health and safety protocols are being adhered to.
- DHA Guidelines on the screening and management of suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 will always be followed.
- School follows contact tracing procedures necessary to trace the contacts of confirmed Covid-19 cases.
- Staff, guests, and/or students that receive a Covid-19 positive PCR test must provide a DHA clearance certificate to return to the classroom. All staff and students must declare their recent travel history by completing the DHA form online.
- Students, teachers, and school staff should be encouraged to stay home if unwell.



Hygiene

- We follow protocols laid out by Dubai Municipality about disinfecting and sanitizing the school.
- The school premises will be cleaned and sanitized at the end of each school day. Common
- Areas and frequently touched surfaces will be frequently cleaned and sanitized.
- We encourage a strict handwashing regimen and adequate hand washing breaks. Hand
- Sanitizers are available throughout the school premises.

COVID-19 vaccination

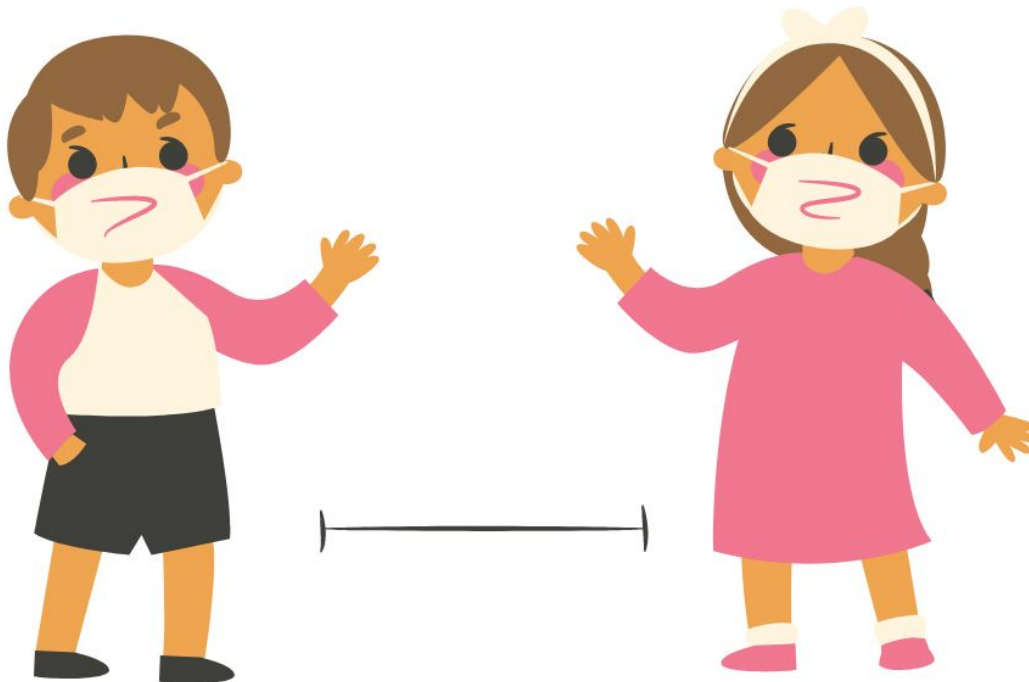
Is it compulsory for school staff and older students to have a Covid-19 vaccine?

- Although we encourage students 12 years old and above to be vaccinated, COVID vaccination is not compulsory. Students are not obliged to submit negative PCR tests every week.
- This participation will ensure a more safe and more virus-free Nibras community. With a couple of approved exemptions, **our staff has a 100% vaccination rate.**



Restrictions

- All staff, visitors, and students 6 years or older, except those with an approved exemption, must wear masks at all times. Noncompliance will lead to denial of entry to the school.
- One meter of physical distance is recommended in all common areas, at service desks, and where different groups of students, staff, and visitors mix.
- Parents, guardians, or visitors who enter the school premises, including those dropping off and picking up younger children, should provide **proof of vaccination or a negative PCR test taken in the previous 48 hours**. All parents without proof of vaccination or negative PCR result will have to wait for their children out the school gate.



Sports and extracurricular activities

Nibras will resume the following activities following mandatory safety protocols when all students are back on campus (mid-October):

- Sports lessons
- School trips, excursions, and camps
- After-hours extracurricular activities
- Performances, assemblies, and other events at school or an external venue
- Our swimming pool will remain closed to students during school hours. However, students may participate in the after-school swimming program at Nibras International School run by an approved provider from the Dubai Sports Authority.



Physical Education

- Sports activities will be limited to students from the same sports class.
- Entry and exit to sports facilities will be staggered to maintain the recommended one-meter physical distancing.
- Sports equipment and playgrounds will be sanitized after being used by each group of students.
- Individual sports can resume in line with Dubai Sports Council guidelines. Group sports must be adapted to minimize contact and risk.

School premises

- Prayer rooms will follow the guidelines of the Islamic and Charitable Affairs Department.
- Science laboratories, training kitchens, art studios, music rooms, and others will not be used in full capacity to ensure one meter of distance during the class session.
- Libraries will implement staggered entry to the library. Library lessons and reading corners will maintain one meter of physical distance between students, wear a mask and use a hand sanitizer.

Educational provision

- Student ratios will vary depending on the size of the classroom.
- Students will have designated, pre-assigned tables and chairs with a recommended one-meter distancing between them.
- Shared materials will be sanitized after every use. Posters explaining the rules for handling shared materials are placed around the school.
- Students and teachers must bring their own stationery items, devices, or gadgets (i.e. laptops, tablets, headphones, etc.).



Gathering and Events

What kind of events can resume at school?

- Assemblies, performances, rehearsals, and events can resume in line with Dubai Health Authority guidelines.
- Instructional areas around the school will remain closed to parents during school hours. All parent requests for meetings during school hours will be conducted virtually or by telephone.
- Both Admissions and Finance Offices will continue to service parents by appointment only during school hours (8:30 AM to 2:30 PM). Walk-ins with approved safety credentials may be entertained after school hours.

Food and Beverages

- Schools will continue to provide catering services of pre-packaged food from providers that follow Dubai Municipality guidelines related to catering services.
- Families are encouraged to supply food and beverages (water bottles) for their children.



CHAPTER

3

WORKING TOGETHER

We are in this together

Understandably, each of us has a different response to the COVID - 19 safety measures that have been put in place around us. We ask that you please support and respect each other, regardless of your personal opinions. While you are on premise at NIS, **we kindly ask you to respect the measures** that have been put in place and do your part to **ensure a safe environment for everyone.**

We are in this together, therefore, we will rely on you to:

- Reinforce the same safety messages and protocols at home
- Help your child understand and be comfortable with the changes
- Respect the boundaries and rules we may need to put in place at school
- Continue to work in partnership with us so that NIS is able to provide the best learning environment possible

Take precautions when:

- Attending crowded social events
- Allowing children to go out to socialize with their peers
- Visiting markets and other venues where social distancing is not possible
- Travelling / having visitors from abroad

Please share concerns you may have of behaviors that could put our community at risk.

We **welcome your feedback**, so that we can make the experience even better for the NIS community.



Our commitment to you

We have continued to invest in our leadership team, our people, resources and the infrastructure at NIS. Students will be able to enjoy learning and reading in our upgraded classrooms. There will be other visible facility and technological improvements that will enhance our teachers' abilities to facilitate student learning.

While we continue to invest into making NIS the school of choice for you, we have an operational cost base and financial commitments, like anyone else, that we cannot defer. Our team is using financial prudence and austerity as much as possible during this challenging time.

We appreciate that this crisis may also have a financial impact on individuals and on our families. At this time, we are not in a position to discount tuition. We will, however, do our best to assist with payments plans and other arrangements for those families who are facing hardship.

We urge you to contact either the Principal of NIS or our Finance and Administration Manager should you need to discuss this further.

Principal: Dr. Jay B. Teston

j.teston@nisdubai.ae

Finance and Administration Manager: Tracey Morrison

t.morrison@nisdubai.ae



Staying informed

- At NIS we will **remain committed to sharing relevant updates** with you on a regular basis. We will continue to keep you informed through our weekly newsletters. Information will also be shared on the apps that our school is using.
- Our entire team of NIS is available to you through emails and phone calls.

Reminders

- Students are urged to bring their **own water bottles** – disposable water bottles will be available to purchase. All water bottles and masks should be **labelled with the student name**.
- Please ensure students above age of 6 **have their own masks**. Masks will only be provided in emergencies. Students and staff are required to wear mask at all times.
- Parents, guardians, or visitors who enter the school premises, including those dropping off and picking up younger children, should provide **proof of vaccination or a negative PCR test taken in the previous 48 hours**.



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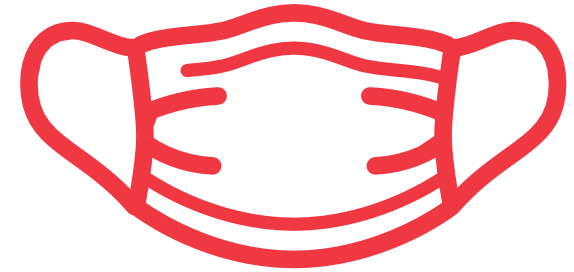
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**KEY COVID HEALTH
& SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

WEARING OF MASKS

Our policy on wearing masks follows the guidelines provided by the authorities.
Some of the policies we enforce at NIS include:

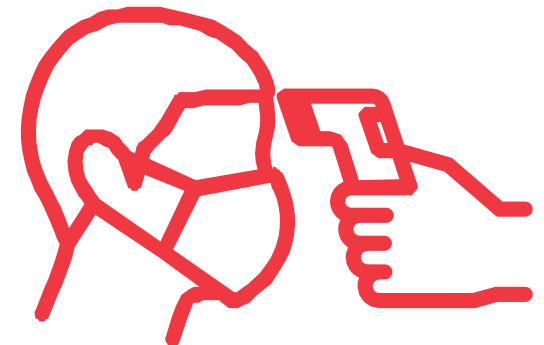
- All staff, visitors and students over the age of 6 will always need to wear masks
 - The only exception will be if students or staff:
 - Are engaged in high intensity physical activity or eating
 - Have a medical certificate confirming a medical condition
- Students and staff are required to bring two masks per day
 - One for morning use and one for afternoon use
 - In the case of cloth masks, precaution must be taken to ensure that masks are cleaned on a daily basis



TEMPERATURE CHECKS

Our policy on temperature checks follows the guidelines provided by the authorities.
Some of the policies enforce at NIS include:

- All students, staff and visitors will always be required to have temperature checks on entry into the school and/or bus.
- Non-contact thermometers are located at all entry points into the school.
- Any staff, visitor or student with temperatures exceeding >37.5 will not be allowed into the school and will be requested to return home.



HANDWASHING

As all the guidelines on COVID-19 suggest, washing your hands constantly is a key preventative measure against the virus. At NIS:

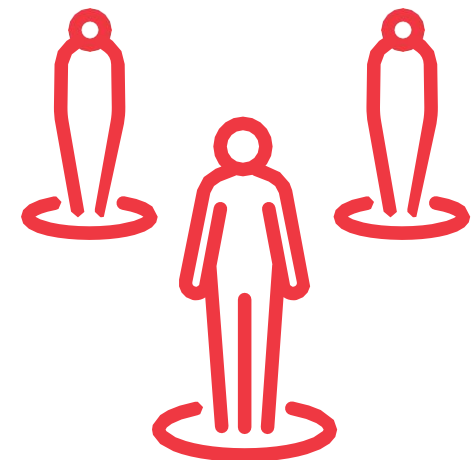
- We provide additional hand washing / sanitizing stations:
 - On entry to campus
 - In classrooms
 - Around cafeteria
 - In playgrounds and other sports facilities
- Teachers model and guide students on hand washing regimes
- Handwash breaks are worked into the timetable for all students – before and after breaks including snack time in the classroom
- Those entering the school are required to sanitize their hands upon entry
- Each hand washing station are equipped with liquid soap, disposable paper towels, and posters with effective handwashing and drying instructions.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing measures have been put in place around the world and the UAE. NIS will be no different.

- All common areas, elevators and hallways have stickers on the floor indicating the required a 1-meter distancing between people
- All classrooms are arranged to maintain a minimum of one meter distance between students
- All common areas have staggered use so that social distancing can be maintained
- We have adopted a more paperless strategy
 - Teachers will continue to use educational apps to communicate
 - Online payment portals have been put in place
- All parent teacher meetings, information sessions, coffee mornings and all other meetings for parents will be held online



CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

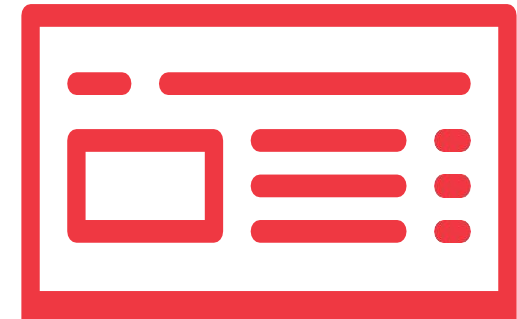
Cleaning and Disinfecting protocols at NIS happen at regular intervals every day and they follow the Dubai Municipality guidelines.

- All key areas are disinfected hourly and after every use
- Regular disinfection of frequently touched surfaces like door handles
- Signage shares details of the proper disposal of masks and gloves
- Wipes and sanitizers are available in every classroom



ATTENDANCE AND TRACKING RECORDS

- Parents and registered guests will be allowed on premises by appointment only
- Appointments will be shared with the security team on a daily basis
- Visitors or parents without their NIS Id's will continue to sign in with security and follow visitor protocol
- Attendance is compulsory
- Elementary students will have their attendance taken twice a day with information uploaded to Engage
- Secondary students will be registered by their teachers on Engage at the beginning of every class
- Attendance will be taken daily on the bus



MEDICAL CONCERNS

NIS has put strict protocols in place for handling medical concerns at school :

- We are enforcing a “stay at home if unwell” protocol
- It is everyone’s duty to notify the school if there is suspected COVID-19 case
- All staff members are aware of emergency protocol for COVID-19 in the school
- The symptoms related to COVID-19 have so far been identified as the following:
 - A fever >37.5 degrees Celsius
 - Cough
 - Body ache or fatigue
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat
 - Runny nose
 - Diarrhea and Nausea
 - Headache
 - Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Parents are asked to keep children at home if they show any of the above-mentioned symptoms
- Any student, member of staff or visitor showing any symptoms related to COVID-19 will be isolated immediately and referred to a hospital
 - For any suspected cases, NIS will follow the protocols issued by the DHA and other government entities
- Entry to the nurse’s office will be limited to students or staff requiring medical attention
- There is a separate isolation room for anyone showing symptoms
- Anyone on premises with a temperature above 37.5 C will be held in the isolation room until protocols can be followed, similarly anyone with a temperature above 37.5C will not be allowed to board the school bus
- Once the school has been notified of a suspected COVID-19 case, the school will implement “Track – Trace - Isolate” to identify anyone the person has come into contact with on campus
- The school will develop a list of “high risk” individuals and this group will be informed of any confirmed cases
- It is mandatory for anyone returning to school after a positive confirmed case of COVID to provide a clearance certificate from the DHA



FAQs

Q: What if my child is not in the same bubble as his/her friends?

A: Student bubbles are created keeping families in mind. If your child is not in the same bubble with his or her closest friends, they still have the chance to interact with their friends virtually.

Q: How many children will be in each bubble?

A: Our self-contained bubbles (KG1 and KG2) have a maximum of 12 students. The homeroom bubbles (Grades 1 to 8) have a maximum of 25 until Grade 5 and then in Grades 6 to 8 they have up to 25 students. The specialty bubbles (Grades 9-12) also have a maximum of 25 students.

Q: Is the school prepared in case there is a COVID-19 emergency or the KHDA announces school closure again?

A: With provisions and plans in place, we can adapt to any change in circumstances without disruption of education delivery. We can ensure that learning will continue in any circumstance.

Q: Will I be notified if anyone in the school is a confirmed case of COVID-19?

A: We will immediately follow all the guidelines provided by the authorities regarding tracking and tracing based on confirmed cases.

Q: If my child has a runny nose is it okay to send them to school?

A: We are enforcing a “stay at home if unwell” protocol at NIS. We ask that you keep your child at home if they are feeling unwell.

Q: Who can we reach out to if we have more specific questions?

A: Please email Jenifer Kinny at jpapricipal@nisdubai.ae for any specific questions you may have.



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