

COVID-19 GET INFORMATION CIRCULAR

17 August 2020

Dear Parents and GET (Grades 8 & 9) Learners

COVID-19 RETURN TO SCHOOL: PHASE 3 (All Grades)

We are excited to welcome all our Grades 8 and 9 learners back to school from Monday, 24 August 2020. Although the building and the people will be familiar to our learners, the sad reality is that we had to change how we do things to ensure the health and safety of all.

I. ORIENTATION VIDEO

To provide context of all the new protocols in place, it is important to watch the GET Orientation Video in conjunction with this circular. The video is available on our YouTube channel and Facebook page, or can be accessed by clicking on the following link: <https://youtu.be/R6SkxrellyA>

2. PREPARATION AT HOME

Before sending learners to school, please ensure that:

- parents/guardians have screened learners before leaving home for any health issues. If a learner is displaying a fever or is feeling ill, rather keep him/her at home and inform the school immediately.
- parents/guardians must ensure that the learner is wearing the correct uniform as indicated on page 3 of this circular.
- if a learner is using organised transport, the correct social distancing rules and sanitising of the vehicle is being adhered to before travelling to school.
- learners know their new class (see alphabetical grade lists attached to this circular)
- learners have their own pens, textbooks, workbooks, notepad and school diary.

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- learners have a packed lunch (*preferably in a disposable container*), as there will be no tuckshop or vending machine available.
- learners arrive at school wearing a mask (and keep it on) until they return home for it to be washed or sanitised. The school will issue four masks to each learner.
- learners understand that they must practice physical distancing at all times.
- parents/guardians and learners discussed the emotions that will be experienced and that it is normal. Family communication is incredibly important.

3. SCHOOL DAYS

To ensure that the school can maintain the correct physical distancing, as well as not exceed the prescribed 50% capacity, the school days will be as follows:

Grade 8s:	Mondays and Tuesdays
Grade 9s:	Wednesdays to Fridays
Grade 10s:	Mondays and Tuesdays
Grade 11s:	Wednesdays to Fridays
Grade 12s:	Mondays to Fridays

The FET learners (Grades 10-12) will have all their classes inside the main building, while the GET learners (Grades 8 and 9) will have all their classes in the Reeler Hall, Gilbert Room, Hobbs Hall and mobile classrooms. Therefore, the junior and senior learners will never share any classrooms or break areas on the days when they attend school.

4. SAFETY RULES

All learners should know the following **5 GOLDEN SAFETY RULES** to ensure that they are alert at all times:



NB: If a learner does not adhere to the safety protocols, he/she will be sent home.

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5. PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing markings have been painted in- and outside the school building to ensure that learners can maintain the prescribed physical distance of 1,5 metres. Due to the reduced class sizes, the desks have also been set up in such a way that physical distance is maintained.

It is very important that learners understand that, even though physical distance should be maintained at all times, it does not mean that they have to feel socially disconnected. Our social worker will be available for appointments should learners need assistance to deal with the trauma of this lockdown period.

6. THE SCHOOL DAY

The official school day will be from 07h50 to 13h30.

- Screening starts from 07h00, and learners must have completed the screening by the start of the school day at 07h50. No learner will have access to the premises before 07h00.
- Learners must report for screening as follows:
 - CLASSES A – E: Changeroom entrance at the Loevenstein Centre
 - CLASSES F - H: Cochoqua Court: Enter the queue on the swimming pool side
 - CLASSES I – K: Cochoqua Court: Enter the queue in the middle
 - CLASSES L – N: Cochoqua Court: Enter the queue on the side of the main building
- Screening will comprise of the following (*refer to video*):
 - Digital temperature scanning
 - A set of 6 questions
 - Sanitising
 - Sticker issued as proof of screening

Please note that learners MAY NOT BE ANYWHERE ON THE PREMISES WITHOUT FIRST REPORTING FOR SCREENING.

- The academic day will end at 13h30 pm. Scheduled assessments will start from 14h00.
- Lessons will be 45min each. There will only be one 30-minute break to accommodate the sanitization of the FET venues.
- At the end of the school day, Grade 8 and 9 learners may only exit the premises at the gate next to the Astroturf.

7. BREAKS

During break times, Grade 8 and 9 learners may ONLY use the following areas:

- The area between the Reeler Hall and Astro turf
- The pavilion next to the Reeler Hall
- The walkway between the swimming pool and Rugby field
- Fairfield

Grade 8 and 9 learners may not use the mixed quad at the mobile classrooms during break.

Learners must ensure that they always use the physical distance markings while socialising.

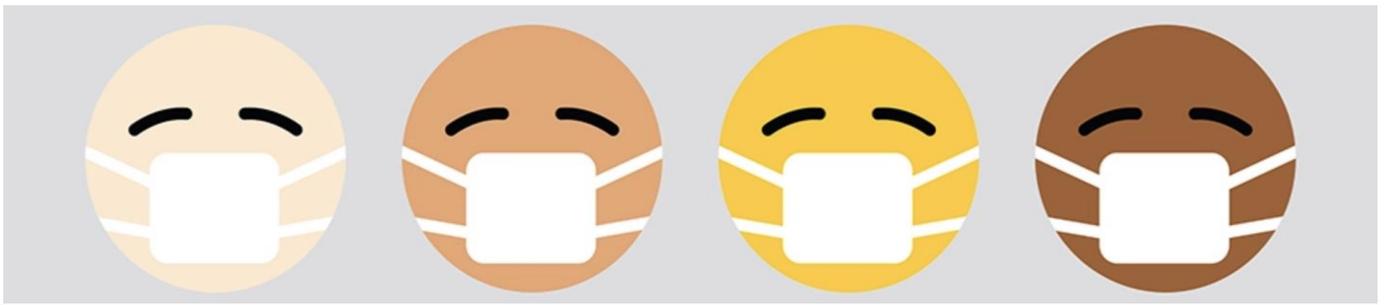
No ball games or dominoes will be permitted, as these games do not allow for the minimum physical distancing between people. Balls and dominoes will be confiscated and discarded.

Learners must bring their own lunch, as there will be no tuck shop or vending machine available.

Grade 8 and 9 learners may only use the bathrooms inside the Loevenstein centre. The number of people allowed inside the bathroom may not exceed the number of cubicles or urinals. Learners are reminded to sanitize before exiting the bathroom.

There will be 3 bells signaling the end of break:

- The first bell is for the teachers to return to class.
- When the second bell rings, learners will return to class using the following entrance points:
Reeler Hall: Use the side doors on the Astro turf side
Gilbert Room: Use the main entrance at the fountain
Hobbs Hall: Use the side door on the swimming pool side
Mobile Classrooms: Enter via the mixed quad area
- Learners must use the physical distancing marks while waiting for the teacher to sanitize their hands before entering the classroom.
- The lesson will start after the 3rd bell.



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8. TIMETABLE & VENUES

A brand-new timetable has been developed to avoid movement in the passages, as well as reduce class sizes to ensure physical distancing.

Grades 8 and 9 learners have been allocated to new classes (e.g. 9A, 9B, etc.) based on their Creative Arts choice. Learners will remain in this new register class, as the subject educators will be rotating to the various classes. In this way, each learner will only use one desk for the duration of their time at school. Learners must consult the alphabetical grade lists attached with this circular to ensure that they know their new class before arriving at school from 24 August.

As there are now 14 classes instead of the normal 9 classes per grade, this means that most learners will have new subject teachers. However, the timetable is structured in such a way that each subject will still be taught by the subject specialists in each department. Even though the Minister of Education announced that - in order to reduce class sizes - any teacher can be used to teach any subject, we feel that it is very important to only make use of subject specialists.

The GET timetable is attached with this circular. Learners will receive a printed copy during their orientation on the first day, but it is important that learners pack the correct books, as the academic lessons will start from the first day.

9. ACADEMIC & ASSESSMENTS

All learning areas will be covered in Grade 8. However, Life Orientation will be presented as a weekly online lesson that can be downloaded from the Covid-19 Grade Classroom. Learners will be able to make use of the school Wi-Fi to download these lessons if they do not have connectivity at home.

In Grade 9, Technology has now been excluded from the curriculum, as it will not impact the FET subject choices in any way. All other learning areas will be covered during the days at school.

Grade 9 learners will have contact-based Life Orientation lessons to assist them with subject choices and career guidance. There will also be a virtual subject choice evening in October.

As the Grades 8 to 11 learners will not be at school every day due to the changed circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, teaching will now need to follow a blended mode of contact-based and distance learning:

- The focus for the days at school will be the presentation and explanation of content.
- Work packs will be printed in time to hand out before the days when the learners will be at home. These work packs or other homework activities will re-enforce the content covered in class.
- The GET ONLINE classroom will not be in use once a grade has returned to school.
- Whenever online activities are required, it will be posted to the Covid-19 Subject classrooms used during the lockdown. These activities will be available for download on the days when learners are at school.
- Activities may also include pre-reading or preparation for the next section of work.

Assessments or tests will be scheduled on the following days:

- Grade 8: Mondays and, when needed, on Tuesdays
Grade 9: Wednesdays and, when needed, on Thursdays

All assessments will start at 14h00. Learners will receive a detailed, fortnightly assessment timetable after their first week back at school.

Please note that, in order to meet the promotion requirements at the end of the year, learners will still be required to present a valid medical certificate or signed affidavit for any assessments missed. The regulations pertaining to learners in quarantine or self-isolation are explained later in this circular.

10. UNIFORM

To avoid possible contamination, the uniform arrangements will be as follows:

- GRADE 8: **Uniform will be compulsory on Mondays.** We are aware that some Grade 8s have not been able to purchase winter uniform, thus we will accept either winter uniform, summer uniform or the official school tracksuit. Learners may wear comfortable **civvies on Tuesdays**. The civvies and uniform rules, as per the school's code of conduct, will apply.
- GRADE 9: Learners may wear comfortable **civvies on Wednesdays and Thursdays**. Winter or summer **uniform will be compulsory on Fridays**. The civvies and uniform rules, as per the school's code of conduct, will apply.

11. SANITISING & CLEANING

Learners' hands will be sanitized each time they must enter a classroom.

Our friendly and hardworking amenities personnel will be sanitising all the desks, chairs, doorknobs and other surfaces daily. The school has purchased fogging machines to ensure that the building is deep cleaned with certified anti-viral chemicals every Tuesday and Friday afternoon. For this reason, the building will be locked from 2pm on these days, unless a test has been scheduled on these days.

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12. OPTIONS FOR SCHOOLING

On 6 July 2020, all parents received an email regarding the options for schooling as stipulated by the Department of Basic Education. These options are:

- A. Return to school for contact-based schooling.
- B. Apply for Distance Learning at your school (*as a result of a comorbidity or as a personal preference*).
- C. Withdraw from the school and register with a Home School body.

Distance Learning applications for GET will close on Friday, 21 August. The details are stipulated in the correspondence sent on 6 July, but it is important to note the following:

- Distance learners will receive recordings of the lessons happening in class via a special Google Classroom that will be made available once the application is approved by the Western Cape Education Department. These recordings will run with a 24-hour delay.
- All assessments must be done at the school. Learners will receive information regarding the times when they must report for an assessment. Desks have been allocated in the large venues for this purpose.
- Learners approved for Distance Learning may not attend school other than for the completion of an assessment. Should a learner wish to rather continue to attend school, the Distance Learning application must first be withdrawn in writing.

13. QUARANTINE / SELF-ISOLATION

When a learner must quarantine as a result of being in close contact with a Covid positive person OR when a learner must self-isolate as a result of testing positive for Covid-19, the following procedure must be followed:

- A. When a **learner** has tested positive, a copy of the test result must be emailed to Mrs Hall (hl@settlers.org.za).
- B. When a learner must quarantine as a result of a family member or other close contact testing positive, a copy of the test result of the positive person, as well as stating the reason why this test affects the learner (*i.e. father – lives in the same house*) must be emailed to Mrs Hall.

The learner will then receive a code to access the Distance Learning classroom for the duration of the time in quarantine or self-isolation.

The test result will also be regarded as valid proof for assessments missed during this period.

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14. PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

At this stage, the promotion requirements for the end of the year have been adjusted as follows:

School-based assessment will consist of the Term 1 and Term 3 marks only:

- The Term 1 marks are as per the academic report issued on 14 March 2020.
- Term 3 will be from 3 August until 23 October. The Term 3 test will therefore include the work covered on the GET ONLINE classroom as from 3 August, as well as all work completed at school from 24 August.

This school-based assessment will count 80% of the final mark.

The November examination will be reduced to a test series and contribute 20% of the final mark.

15. DEALING WITH CHANGE

During these unfamiliar times, we are all facing our own fears and apprehensions. We have to train ourselves to become **alert** and **not fearful**. We must learn to adapt and embrace change in order to assist us to face our fears. We must focus on what we can control, and, at this stage, we can only control our own attitudes and actions.

While the school will try its best to ensure that safety protocols are followed, it is even more important that each learner accepts the responsibility to follow the safety protocols and these new habits must also be re-enforced at home.

When we substitute old, comfortable behaviours with new and unfamiliar ones, it burns self-control. Therefore, learners must understand that they will experience exhaustion while trying to acclimatise to this foreign environment.

With this awareness, as well as practicing the 5 golden rules, learners will quickly become accustomed to this “new normal”.

We look forward to seeing our learners back in the classroom.

Kind regards



H SMUTS
Deputy Principal