



“Success for Every Child”

Date: 14 Aug 2020

Dear Parents,

Thank you for those of you who have already been in touch about the first day experiences for your child. As always, we value your feedback. It has been a very mixed result after one day with some having a very positive experience and some frustrated. I thought it might help to clarify the approach we have taken, the rationale for this and highlight the overview for the next week.

To prepare for the start of the year, we engaged International experts to meet with all teachers and EA's this week. On Monday, [Professor Helen Street](#) spoke with us and provided guidance regarding wellbeing. On Tuesday, [Matt Glover](#) gave us insights into the best approach for teaching writing via distance and online. Last, on Wednesday, [Dr. Jared Cooney Horvath](#) updated us with the latest in neuroscience and distance learning. All of the information they provided plus our own research was critical for informing our approach for the start of the year.

From their advice, our experience, the latest research and feedback from schools who had started a day or two before us, we planned:

- A gradual transition approach with a focus on connection to prioritize wellbeing and minimise overload for students;
- Whole class and small group connections via Zoom using separate group zooms or breakout rooms;
- A small quantity of independent learning focused on our first unit of inquiry of "Who We Are" with a wellbeing and relationships priority; and
- Time to help children to become familiar with systems, routines, protocols and expectations.

With this start in place, next week we go into full swing for Years 2-6 with all children having:

- The same daily start and end to the day, and the same break times for movement, refreshment, food and rest time;
- Specialist teaching zooms and allocation of specific timetabled specialist independent learning; and
- Increased live Zooms with the class teacher throughout the day.

Additionally, all families and children will have access to a dedicated Year group and class website to make accessing timetables, links, resources and information easier. Teachers will be sending this information home today. To help and support our teachers who are working

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**Kowloon Junior School 九龍小學**

20 Perth Street • Homantin • Kowloon • Hong Kong • 香港九龍何文田巴富街 20 號  
Tel 電話 +852 3765 8700 • Fax 傳真 +852 3765 8701





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increasingly long hours to plan learning, respond to submissions and undertake assessments, here are some important reminders for families:

- Please ensure your child is ready and present for the 8:30 am start, as this is when attendance will be taken;
- Ensure your child is present and ready for all subsequent scheduled Zooms throughout the day;
- Use the normal process to report absence;
- Note teachers will do their best to reply to parent emails within 24 hours (although this is not always possible);
- We will proceed with our current plans making minor adjustments as needed in the weeks ahead and then seeking feedback in due course;
- Reach out to teachers if you have concerns. However, please give the staff and children 'settling in time' next week;
- The first few weeks will be a big adjustment for children: back to rigid routines in the home, significant screen time, learning expectations and building new relationships. Please be patient with them and us as we build positive learning cultures in our rooms and establish expectations and routines. This will take more than two days. =)

Next Wednesday, we will send home the sign up for the "You tell us" meeting. These meetings are essential in providing teachers with information to ensure "Success for Every Child". You can start thinking about the things you would like to tell you child's teacher (you will have just 10 minutes) about:

- your perception of your child's strengths and needs;
- their concerns if they have them;
- any special interests or passions you would like to reinforce;
- any other information that you think will help teachers to support and challenge your child to achieve, have agency, be respectful, take advantage of opportunities and have positive wellbeing.

Once again, thank you to parents who have reached out to us and we look forward to seeing you very soon.

Kind regards  
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सधन्यवाद

Neill O'Reilly  
Principal

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