



Back to School Plan

2020-2021 Academic Year

Table of Contents

.....	1
I. Introduction.....	3
II. Ministry Guidelines for the Start of School	4
A. Cohort Concept	4
B. Implications of the Cohort Concept	4
<i>i. School Structure & Daily Schedule.....</i>	4
ii. Classroom Use	5
<i>iii. Afternoon Program Adjustments.....</i>	5
C. Hygiene Requirements	5
<i>i. Air quality.....</i>	5
<i>ii. Physical Distancing / Abstand</i>	5
<i>iii. Personal Hygiene</i>	5
<i>iv. Foot Traffic.....</i>	6
<i>v. Masks.....</i>	6
<i>vi. Sharing classroom resources</i>	6
<i>vii. Arrival and Departure</i>	6
<i>viii. Building Cleaning</i>	6
D. Disciplinary Action.....	7
E. Symptoms & School Attendance	7
<i>i. Parent Infection Information Form.....</i>	7
<i>ii. Students with symptoms.....</i>	7
<i>iii. Teachers with symptoms.....</i>	8
<i>iv. Students & Teachers in the Risk Group</i>	8
F. School Events & School Calendar	8
III. Positive Infection Protocol	9
A. Infections in Households	9
B. Immediate Actions	9
C. School Closure.....	9
D. Communication.....	9
IV. Teaching & Learning.....	10
A. Remote Learning	10
B. Structural Adaptations for AY 20-21.....	10
C. Remote Students.....	10

I. Introduction

As we start the 2020-2021 school year, we are very fortunate to be in a position locally and nationally where the COVID situation is relatively under control. However, the risks of a second wave emerging due to the start of the new school year is substantial. The success of our community in weathering any Corona-related challenges will rely very heavily on the support of our parent community in adhering to *all* guidelines and policies the school has put in place.

Ultimately, ISC is a community with a high degree to exposure both internally among students and staff as well as externally through the various contacts and activities of our families outside of school. We would like to ask all of our parents to be very vigilant not only in their adherence to the hygiene regulations of the ISC community, but also in their personal lives. The overall health of the ISC community is fragile, and we must rely on each other to care for one another through our diligence in hygiene across all aspects of our lives.

As always, we promise to do our very best to fulfill our mission, even in such unpredictable and uncertain times. The following plan represents our best effort to stay true to who we are as a school while complying with the necessary governmental regulations. We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to serve all of your children in such an extraordinary time. Thank you for trusting us as an organization to keep your children safe, healthy, and teach them about the amazing, wonderful world in which we live. We greatly value the partnership we have in our parent community. We are confident that our partnership will make this plan and the whole school year a great success.

II. Ministry Guidelines for the Start of School

A. Cohort Concept

The guiding principle established by the Ministry of Education for the next school is the “Cohort Concept.” In brief, the concept can be summarized as the creation of isolated learning groups where any cases of COVID infection are contained and/or prevented through minimal contact with other cohorts. Perhaps the most noteworthy element of the cohort model is that students within a cohort are not required to maintain physical distancing from one another.

At ISC, we will define individual cohorts as single grade levels. For example, all students in Grade 5 will form a cohort, and all students in Grade 6 will form a separate cohort. The only exception to this is with the IB Programme, where students in Grades 11 & 12 will be combined into a larger cohort.

Teachers are allowed to work across multiple cohorts, but they must adhere to strict hygiene protocols, such as maintaining a 1,5 meter minimum distance from all students or wearing a mask where this is not possible.

B. Implications of the Cohort Concept

i. School Structure & Daily Schedule

Cohorts should have minimal contact with one another, especially during break and lunch periods.

Circumstantially, ISC has grown to its final size this year with regard to the number of grade levels taught in the school: Grades 1 to 12. With this final stage of growth, ISC is officially establishing three divisions within the school: Primary School (1-4), Middle School (5-8), and High School (9-12). This replaces the old model of Primary and Secondary. These divisions will serve multiple long-term academic and operational purposes, but they are also a useful tool for managing of cohorts during this year.

Even though all students will begin and finish the school day at the same time, each division will have its own, different schedule during school day. Primary school students will remain with the previous model of rotating between 45 minute periods. Middle and High school students will transition to a schedule of mainly 60 minute periods during the morning program. (New schedules will be emailed to parents by Wednesday, August 5th). One change to the daily schedule of particular note is **that the start of the school day has been returned to 8:00 a.m.** The end of the day will remain 15:15 with study hall offered until 16:00. (Some IB classes may run until 16:00).

Each division (Primary, Middle, & High) will have completely separate break and lunch periods. The outdoor play space will further be divided into four separate spaces (as was implemented last year). This will provide an isolated outdoor space for each cohort in the respective divisions. Lunch seating and food service will be arranged by cohort within each division’s lunch period.

ii. Classroom Use

Classrooms should be assigned to single cohorts and the sharing of classrooms between cohorts should be kept to an absolute minimum. In practice, this means that secondary students in particular will not be able to rotate into subject specific rooms and will receive instruction for all subjects in the same classroom. Only students and teachers associated with the cohort are allowed to enter the classroom.

In special purpose classrooms, such as the Music, Art, or Gym, multiple cohorts are allowed to use them permitted that there are stringent hygiene practices in place to recycle the air and disinfect any necessary surfaces in-between cohort use.

iii. Afternoon Program Adjustments

Many of the Afternoon Program courses offered by ISC in previous years have combined students from multiple grade levels. This is no longer viable when adhering to the cohort model. As such, all Afternoon Program courses will only be composed of students from the same cohort.

The effect of this is a limitation of the choices available to students. Of particular note, students in Middle and High School will not be able to enroll in the Guild of their choice – rather they will decide as a cohort on the theme of their Guild. This theme may vary from project to project and does not need to remain static over the course of the semester or school year. Once decided, the Guild teachers may be shuffled between cohorts in order to align teacher skillsets with the best student project fit. Other electives, such as Ceramics/Programming/ISC Magazine will also be assigned to specific cohorts rather than being presented as a choice across three different grades.

C. Hygiene Requirements

i. Air quality

All rooms occupied by students or faculty must receive periodic airing over the course of the day, including during break or lunch time and at the start and end of the day. This is accomplished by opening the windows and classroom door fully to allow for sufficient air flow that replaces the air supply for the classroom.

ii. Physical Distancing / Abstand

Physical contact between all individuals in the building must adhere to the local regulations (1,5m). Students within the same cohort are generally excepted from this requirement. However, in activities that produce a higher release of droplets, such as Physical Education class, students must adhere to the 1,5m distancing regulations. (Singing is temporarily not allowed).

iii. Personal Hygiene

As with last year, hand hygiene is a point of emphasis for all individuals in the building. The use of hand sanitizer, however, is only to be done under teacher supervision for students in Grades 1-6.

iv. Foot Traffic

ISC will maintain the same system of using the North stairway to go upstairs and the South stairway to go downstairs will remain in force. All individuals in the building are expected to follow all traffic signs within the building.

v. Masks

There is no over-arching obligation to wear a mask in the building. Students are welcome to decide individually whether they will wear a mask during the day. For students with members of the Risk Group at home, we recommend the use of mask.

As mentioned above, teachers who work across multiple cohorts (nearly all ISC teachers) should wear a mask while working with students if they are not able to maintain the 1,5m distance. Even though no official requirement is in place, ISC would like to ask all parents to wear a mask when entering the building.

vi. Sharing classroom resources

In general, the sharing of resources between students should be minimized, even within cohorts.

vii. Arrival and Departure

Students will inevitably arrive or depart the building at the same time as members of other cohorts. In order to minimize cross-cohort contact, students must adhere to a minimum of 1,5m physical distancing during these times. There are dedicated entry/exit points for each division:

- Primary: Main Entry
- Middle: Cafeteria
- High: Gym

Parents are expected to wait outside the main gate when picking up their students. Parents and students **must maintain a 1,5m physical distance** from members of other households at all times. In order to support this, we ask that parents do not densely congregate around the front gate.

Please note that due to cohort restrictions and the additional strain on staffing and hygiene practice, the school will no longer be able to offer an Early Arrival to school. **Students will only be allowed to enter the building at 7:50 a.m.** and must proceed directly to their assigned classroom. We strongly discourage parents from dropping their children off before 7:50 a.m. as students will not be monitored and ensuring that students adhere to appropriate physical distancing will be at risk.

viii. Building Cleaning

The building must receive daily, professional cleaning in all high-use areas. All bathrooms and sinks must be cleaned thoroughly on a daily basis. Any classrooms or spaces that are shared across cohorts, such as the cafeteria, must be thoroughly sanitized before being used by a different cohort.

D. Disciplinary Action

All students are required to comply with all established hygiene procedures in the building. It is of the highest importance that students adhere to strict distancing between cohorts. This includes all forms of physical embrace and or contact, such as hugging and shaking hands. It is certainly natural, especially after a long summer break, to want to greet friends in a warm and friendly manner. However, we must insist that students do not physically touch members of other cohorts.

Students who are found to be in violation of the hygiene protocols in the school will receive disciplinary measures appropriate to their age and the severity of the transgression. Generally, students will first be issued a verbal warning. In the event of repeat offenses, students will receive a written warning from the teacher or staff member who observed the offense. Parents will also be notified that their child has received a written warning. Upon receiving a second written warning, they will be sent home from school for the day. Upon receipt of a third written warning, they will not be permitted to return to school until a meeting between the Head of School, the parent(s), and the student has been held to discuss ways to ensure compliance in the future.

Please note that students and parents are expected to adhere to cohort distancing in the immediately vicinity of the school, such as the sidewalk and parking areas in front of the school. Parents and students must maintain a minimum of 1,5 meters distance from each other in these spaces. This is particularly important during drop-off and pick-up times. These are not only ISC policies, they are also part of the official Landesverordnung of Schleswig-Holstein effective as of the 20th of July.

The school has the right to refuse attendance to a student if there are serious health concerns for the rest of school community as a result of that student's attendance. Students who regularly violate the 1,5m distancing protocol *or whose parents* are regularly observed in violation of this protocol will be considered health risks for the community and may be refused in-person attendance at the school.

E. Symptoms & School Attendance

i. Parent Infection Information Form

Parents will all receive 2 documents from the Ministry. The first is a general information letter about the state-wide plan for this school year. The second is a single page document informing them about the Coronavirus, its symptoms, and its complications. This document contains guidance as to how parents should handle suspected symptoms or infections with their own children. Parents will be required to return the form with their signature on the first day of school. Students who are over the age of 18 must complete and return the form themselves.

ii. Students with symptoms

All students displaying symptoms of the Coronavirus (as defined by the Robert Koch Institute) will be treated as suspected cases of the virus. They will be removed from the classroom and must return home immediately. **Parents must be prepared to** alter their private schedules and arrangements to accommodate the **pick-up of a symptomatic student promptly.**

Students who have been sent home as a suspected case must receive documented clearance from a doctor and submit this to the school before they are allowed to return. The school is able to reserve the right to reject the attendance of a student if the health status of a student remains in doubt.

iii. Teachers with symptoms

Teachers demonstrating symptoms will be treated in the same manner as students regarding their physical presence in school. Unless they have received a doctor's note excepting them from work, they will be expected to continue their instructional duties remotely via video conferencing with students who are under the supervision of a substitute teacher.

iv. Students & Teachers in the Risk Group

Students are generally still responsible for fulfilling their mandatory school attendance (schulpflicht) in person. For students who belong to the Risk Group (as defined by the RKI), they may make an appeal to the Head of School to receive an exemption for remote attendance. This appeal must be made in writing and should be accompanied by a doctor's note confirming the student's membership in the Risk Group.

Teachers who belong to the Risk Group (as defined by RKI) must have both a doctor's note and an occupational health assessment in order to be released from in-person work. Once remote work has been granted, teachers will be expected to teach all lessons remotely via video conference with students on campus under the supervision of a substitute.

F. School Events & School Calendar

The local governmental restrictions on events for the whole community continue to guide the school's ability to host traditional school events. Given the size of our community, many of our events, such as performance evenings, parties, feasts, festivals, etc. may not be able to take place this year. We sincerely hope that the situation develops in a positive manner and we can celebrate the various accomplishments, seasons, and holidays with each other.

In the event that these restrictions remain throughout the year, we will do our best to find ways to gather in smaller groups to maintain a sense of community and friendship. These will likely take place at the division or grade level.

The school will inform parents about changes to events as far in advance as far as possible. At a minimum, the official start and end dates of the school holidays should remain the same as published earlier this year and on our website. We ask for your patience and understanding with the rest of the items on our calendar as they may be subject to change on short notice.

III. Positive Infection Protocol

A. Infections in Households

In the event that a household member of an ISC student or staff member tests positive for the virus, the school should be informed immediately. Please send an email to info@isceducation.de as the formal method of communication. The student or staff member should remain at home and participate in their work remotely as possible.

B. Immediate Actions

Upon confirmation of a positive Coronavirus case, the school's first action is to contact the Health Ministry in Pinneberg. They will provide the school with specific instructions as to how to handle the case with regard to closures, quarantine, etc.

The school will then inform all members of the affected cohort(s) that there has been a positive case from a cohort member. The default assumption is that the cohort(s) will immediately begin their 14-day quarantine unless the Ministry informs us otherwise. Members of these cohorts are asked to wait to communicate this information further until the school has had time to make a general announcement to the rest of the ISC Community.

C. School Closure

Unless otherwise directed by the authorities, the school will also close entirely for a minimum of 1 school day if a case has been confirmed. This will to allow time to do contact tracing, inform all necessary parties, and work with the Health Ministry to make a plan.

Ideally, the cohort model should allow for a relatively quick return to in-person instruction at the school. While the specific timing of the return of students in non-affected cohorts will depend on guidance from the Health Ministry, healthy students should be back on campus within a few days.

In the event that a second wave of infections becomes serious enough to threaten the health of the whole community, it is possible that the Ministry of Education could decide to temporarily close all schools as happened in the previous year.

D. Communication

All official information will be communicated by the school directly to parents via email. After the school has informed the affected cohort(s), a general information will be sent to the rest of the ISC community that a positive test has occurred. Parents will be informed as quickly as possible with any updates or changes in plan.

IV. Teaching & Learning

A. Remote Learning

It is our intention never to lose more than one day of instruction in the event of a positive case of the virus in our community. After the 1-day closure mentioned above, remote classes will begin for any students who are quarantined or waiting for the school to reopen.

Remote Learning will take place in nearly the same manner as was implemented during the extended closure in the Spring. Students will follow the same schedules remotely as they do in-person with the exception of Art, Music, and PE lessons.

The main platforms and methods of communication for delivering the remote learning will remain the same, primarily delivered through the Google Suite.

B. Structural Adaptations for AY 20-21

Through the Remote and Blended Learning programs from last year, students, teachers, and staff have learned things that not only support remote learning but also have the potential to improve the learning experience on campus.

Specifically, Google Classroom and ManageBac will be used as the main learning platforms and content delivery systems at the start of the year, even with in-person instruction. Students can rely on these platforms as the main source of information for all of their classes.

Another change relates to the concept of “single-subject days.” After surveying both students and staff, the overwhelming response was that they were well-liked as a model. While it is not possible to carry over a pure form of this schedule for various reasons, we have done our best to maintain double periods where possible to allow for the deeper learning that emerged in this approach during the remote learning program last year.

C. Remote Students

Due to the ever-changing and unpredictable nature of the Coronavirus’s impact on international travel, we expect that we will need to support students who are unable to attend school in person and must do so either from their home country or another international location. These students will be fully supported via Remote Learning.

Learning can be done in either a synchronous or asynchronous manner depending on the time zone of the student and their personal preferences. In classes where these remote students are enrolled, all lessons will be available for live streaming and the lessons will be recorded and uploaded to the learning platform for later viewing.

In the event that the Google Suite is inaccessible for Remote Students, teachers will implement the use of other video platforms, such as VooV, and share resources and assignments with students remotely. Students can submit all of their work directly to teachers.