Dear Parent / Guardian

**COVID-19: RETURN TO SCHOOL TIMES AFTER LOCKDOWN**

Thank you for your understanding this past month. There were many rumors about school affairs doing the round - some were true, others only sensation. The change in phasing dates has also caused a lot of confusion, but things seem to be finalized now.

We, at Meerhof School , are doing everything possible to make things here at school as safe as possible for your child, but as we all know, these are uncertain times and we cannot give any guarantees. We realize that there are parents who are concerned about their children's safety and doubt whether they should send the children back in the current “Virus climate”. We would like to provide you with the following facts so that you can make an informed decision:

• Learners aged 15 and under are obliged to attend school and since the Minister of Education has officially announced the reopening of schools, it is a violation of the school act if they do not attend school.

• Therefore, if you are considering keeping your child out of school for the rest of the year, the learner may need to repeat the year.

• Parents should realize that learners must be at school for assessments, tests, oral assessments and practical assignments. Forfeiting these marks may adversely affect their year marks.

• Although we will make special arrangements for learners with comorbidities (our Sick Bay has identified these learners), they still need to be assessed by the school. The school will provide assistance where possible, please come and discuss it with us.

• As the learner then remains an enrolled learner at Meerhof School, you as parents will still be responsible for the settlement of school fees. Although the learner does not physically sit in class, he / she receives all learning material and assistance from the teacher.

• For classes that have not been phased in, work will be sent home regularly as teachers have done for the past 2 months. Google Classroom will also be used by certain subjects and grades.

• There are parents who inquire about online classes - e.g. Zoom. It takes a lot of data and the lack of enough data can cause learners to miss classes.

• There are parents who want to take their children out of school to do homeschooling. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

* The learner must then be deregistered at Meerhof School and if you want to come back next year you will have to go through the whole evaluation process again as determined by our admission policy.
* The learner will need to be enrolled in a registered homeschooling program and you will need to notify the Department of Education.
* Make sure of the homeschooling institution's accreditation. This is extremely important as all homeschooling programs are not up to the standard of the Department of Education. Learners who wanted to enroll at Meerhof School in the past had to repeat a year as the homeschooling program they followed was not up to standard. The learner will be re-evaluated before readmission to determine the correct degree of placement.
* Learners will also not be transferred to the next grade if the institution does not issue a formal and official report.

• If your child was in the hostel before the locking period and will no longer be living in the hostel, you must let the school know as we have a lot of planning to do for the return of the whole school.

• If you decide to take your child out of Meerhof School for whatever reason, please notify the school in writing.

If you have any questions, please contact the school. Every child is precious to us and the safety of our learners and staff is crucial.

Meerhof greetings

MR DJ VAN DER MERWE  
PRINCIPAL