



# CHITTAGONG GRAMMAR SCHOOL

*Education for Life*

2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2020

Dear Parents,

We hope and pray you are all keeping well during these challenging times. News is filtering in of losses many of you have endured, loss of a loved one, a parent, a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, our hearts reach out to you in sympathy. Deepest condolences for your losses, our prayers and thoughts go out to you; we will forever be saddened by the human loss this virus has brought upon us. Inshallah, in time, things will return to normal - a new normal, for most of us have lost someone we knew, someone we cared for, someone we respected or held in high esteem.

Since there is so much uncertainty we thought we would update you on various matters and assure you that CGS will always deliver a top-rated education, but with a sensitivity to the needs of the moment and a view to the future goals and prospects of our wonderful students.

### **Virtual engagements:**

Over two months ago we went into 'lockdown' and soon afterwards started delivering education through virtual platforms. Our M-B-S (Mind, Body, Soul) programme was developed to encapsulate the vision of CGS which goes far beyond academics. Our purpose is to ensure students stay on top of study targets and exams (Mind), engage in physical activities to stay healthy and fit (Body) and are supported mentally and emotionally (Soul) with extracurricular activities, counselling support and moments in the day to connect with each other to remind ourselves that we are all in this together.

### **Champion teachers:**

By now each of your children have been contacted by a staff member who reaches out on an almost DAILY basis to connect with your child and ensure he / she has robust support in all areas. These include

- Helping them keep abreast with academic schedules and attend all virtual classes
- Giving in assignments and tests on time
- Sharing any problems that arise and helping to understand and solve them
- Ensuring they have someone to talk to for their mental and emotional well being
- Basically, being a friend and rock for them to lean on when it all gets too much.

### **Cambridge Examinations:**

We are working with Cambridge International Examinations to assess students and ensure they get results which fairly reflect their achievements for each exam subject. Students will receive their Cambridge certified grades in August and following that the certificates on schedule. This ensures no student misses an academic year or even a term. Those continuing to university will be able to do so without any delay from our end.

### **School Calendar:**

Through all the combined efforts of our fabulous teachers and admin supporting them we are on track to complete syllabuses target within the original mid-July time schedule. We are also planning to stick to our school calendar of **18<sup>th</sup> August 2020** start for the new school year, 2020 / 2021. Closer to the time we will announce whether the school year will start virtually or indeed with regular classes. Before that we will be circulating a survey form to you to get your opinion on the best way to re-start with your support and blessings.



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## **Looking forward:**

Many of the changes we see around us due to the pandemic will become a beacon for the future - certainly the use of technology and online learning will take a much bigger space in the way we deliver education in both schools and indeed in universities. Our wonderful teachers have had to train and re-train to adapt to a new way of delivering education - they have been remarkable and I am sure you all join us in congratulating them for their efforts.

While schools will remain the most essential core of a child's learning world, some of the innovations and changes you are seeing in the education sector are here to stay! CGS recognises this and has already adapted to new ways of disseminating education. Some of the changes that will remain include:

- The role of teachers will become more of a facilitator with improved lesson planning and better articulated online delivery. *Our teachers are ready for this and have enrolled for courses to up-skill themselves.*
- Students will become better self-learners and engage in online learning, collaborations and courses. *Many of our students are actually performing better under the guidance of our new frameworks with improved results.*
- Learning platforms like Google Classroom, Future learn or academic online courses on Khan Academy, Coursera will thrive and enter our homes. *We are already using these and more are being added as we go forward.*
- In addition Zoom, Webex or Microsoft teams will become the regular way of connecting. *We use several of these platforms to connect with our students and are piloting a new Learning Management System (LMS).*

In order to ensure your child does not get left behind it is imperative that wifi connectivity at homes is kept up to a high level, and privacy is protected. In addition, students in class 8 upwards (perhaps earlier) must have personal laptops to work on. We are ensuring all CGS teachers have their own laptops as well as training to keep abreast with the technology to support this transformation.

## **School life is a vital and precious life experience:**

CGS has always been a front runner amongst schools and we will continue to play a vital role in shaping students' academic, social, physical and moral growth and we will always ensure that these are aligned to deliver a holistic experience to our students. The closures have also shown us that social interactions in school CAN NEVER BE REPLACED by virtual ones and the school experience is more relevant than ever - with opportunities for team sports, exercise and playground games with class mates as well as the friendships formed, the break time games and the bonds forged forever!

CGS is by your side to help our students and families go forward, in the words of Rumi,

***"The wound is the place where the light enters you."***

The entire world is wounded and is slowly healing, but it is also an opportunity to become a better person, a better community, a better country and indeed a better world.

Wishing you and all your loved ones good health, safety and complete recovery for those who have been infected.

Farhat Khan and Shereen Ispahani  
CGS Directors