

PARENTS' NEWSLETTER

A Revolution Quite Unheard Of



A message from Mr. Ayan Pal
CEO

One single virus has brought in a revolution quite unheard of. The world we knew has changed so drastically that it is hard to comprehend. Our lives, our behaviour, our ways of life – everything has changed. The society, the economy, the politics, the culture and the psyche have taken a turn we never could perceive and worst, we do not know how to deal and come to terms with it.

One thing has to remain constant though; the human spirit has to go on. It has to develop, invent, create and no matter what the dialectics is going to lead us to – we need to build our future generation to prepare the model where all these dimensions of 'Social Distancing', 'Individualism' and others can be factored. Our little ones now have to deal with the jelly-like superman of Nietzsche.

In our endeavour, we have got a whole cohort of dedicated teachers at CIS, who have taken up a challenge – not only to deal with the impending disaster but also to educate your child. They have adopted a 'Virtual Learning Environment' about which they had no clue, but the way they have adapted to it and the colossal pressure it entails, is something we must salute. We are lucky to have this group of people who are not 'Stars' with million-dollar contract amounts – but the real guiding light for our children's future. Believe me, how they are coping is beyond my understanding.

It is my earnest request, please do not put anything before the mental well-being of your child. It is an emotional roller-coaster ride for them right now. Everything is uncertain for them at this moment. They are trapped in a lift and they can very well do without the bugbear of the parental expectations. Let them sleep, eat, have fun with you and their siblings, do what they wanted to do but never could because of paucity of time. Let them hear how much you love them.

I wish I could be with my daughter now. Do some physical exercise with her as she is always after my life because of my healthy waistline. Bake some doughnuts with her – of-course when her mother is not around. Read out Tagore to her. Try to do some ballet moves with her and no matter how much I hate it – hear some of the songs they hear nowadays with a façade of happiness!

I know the butterflies in your stomach – what would happen to the examinations, the learning curves, their predicted grades, their university applications and on and on. Trust me a whole think tank is working on getting things streamlined.

NO CHILD WOULD BE LEFT BEHIND

TEACHING AS USUAL, LEARNING A LOT MORE



*A message from Dr Munmun Nath
Principal, Senior School*

I have chosen to use this newsletter to reach out to all of you in this extraordinary time as I wanted to express my gratitude and also share some observations with you. This is a time that raised a number of concerns while at the same time, it has taught us invaluable lessons and opened our hearts to one another.

In the wake of the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (nCoVid-19) and the lockdown, we are working diligently to keep the school community safe while not compromising on the teaching and learning. We have entered the third week of the online teaching and work from home and I can confidently say that as a school we have succeeded in putting a system in place so that, despite the isolation we are more connected than ever. For that, I thank each and every stakeholder of the school. Without your tireless effort and dedication, this would have never happened.

Even though the situation is unforeseen, I am extremely happy to see the diligent participation of the students in daily school work. This gives me hope that all is not dull and gloom around. Learning does not always have to be in the classroom. In a globalised, digital world that we live in, learning can happen anywhere and through any medium - the school in the past three weeks has established that idea with conviction. This global crisis is a reminder that the world is moving to a space where virtual learning will take a huge place of importance. Staying connected does no longer necessitate physical proximity. We are all in this together through the magic world of world-wide-web. But I must emphasise that we should not take this for granted – that we can enjoy each other's company in school, that when we have to be closed, we can still continue with our studies, because we are blessed to have an access to all these facilities. Hence, this time calls for learning beyond curriculum too. I hope that all the students will take this opportunity to reflect and appreciate everything that they have.

My dear students of the Board batches, I know you all are anxious. I am sure that all of you have worked very hard for your exams and are upset that you did not get a chance to prove yourself. Have faith in yourself and be assured we are with you in this difficult time and everything will fall in place. Your perseverance will take you to great heights. Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish. Keep up your hard work till you reach the destined place.

I would also like to thank the teachers whose dedication in this time of crisis has ensured that the school continued to run smoothly. The teachers are excitedly learning about newer platforms to conduct lessons and create assignments. They are using them to keep the students engaged, taking on extra work to ensure the study materials are ready and making themselves available so that they can still be reached out to. While I understand that nothing can replace the human touch, we are doing the best that we can to ensure that we are there.

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I would also like to thank all the parents for their understanding and patience. When a school has to move to “Remote Learning”, a huge responsibility falls on the parents to make sure that the students are ready and doing the work. Without their support, understanding and constant encouragement, we as a school could not have done what we have in the light of such an unexpected crisis.

My sincere thanks to our Board of Governors for being there with us, supporting us and working round the clock to address any crisis situation.

We at C.I.S. understand that the times are trying and everyone is anxious with the deluge of information that keeps seeping in every day. We would like to remind all the members of the school community to take care of their health, stay safe and stay indoors.

We also thank the parents who are working in the essential services such as healthcare, banking, police and administration. Your selfless dedication and hard work make our world a better place.

Stay Healthy and Stay Safe!

TOGETHER WE CAN:
AWARENESS PROGRAMME on CORONA VIRUS



In the wake of the unprecedented situation that the whole world is going through with the emergence of the Novel CoVid-19 pandemic, students from CIS Middle and Senior Sections were engaged in various sessions to raise awareness about the virus and the ways to combat it.

Students of the Middle Section attended an awareness session on corona virus infection and precautions, conducted by:

- Dr. Sauren Panja- Critical Care Interventionist, HOD, Rabindranath Tagore International Institute of Cardiac Sciences Hospital (Narayana Hrudalaya Ltd)
- Mr. Devraj Mukerji - Head of Marketing of all units West Bengal - Rabindranath Tagore International Institute of Cardiac Sciences Hospital (Narayana Hrudalaya Ltd)
- Mr. Akhaya Mohanty - Camp In-charge. Rabindranath Tagore International Institute of Cardiac Sciences Hospital (Narayana Hrudalaya Ltd)

The session in the Senior Section was conducted by the students of Grade 9 who did a thorough research and shared the information about the threat with their school mates.

THE LOCKDOWN LIFE – A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



*By Mrs Spriha Patronobis
School Counsellor*

Sudden emergence of a virus has put the entire planet on standstill, indefinitely - things like this always sounded phenomenal for the plot of a post-apocalyptic Hollywood blockbuster film, best enjoyed in 3D, on a giant screen, with your favourite popcorn flavour; unfortunately as a reality, it's becoming increasingly difficult to deal with.

People of all ages are scared, confused, frustrated and overwhelmed, dealing with the global pandemic. Adolescents, as a group, tend to experience emotions more intensely, and this can make the job of a parent/ teacher/ care giver even more challenging.

It is important to develop and maintain a culture of caring—not only within the school community, but also at home. Children need to feel empowered. Providing them with a sense that they are competent to make decisions can help them to be confident. This will lead to being more resilient so that they can navigate through an unprecedented, disruptive time like this.

Let's look at some ways in which we as adults can provide as much stability, reassurance and emotional comfort as possible, in this unexpected and daunting situation:

- 1) Keep Calm:** These are trying times and everyone is stressed, including kids. They pick up on everything – from the conversations around them to the information they encounter on social media and from peers, so it's important to be a good role model. Remember that panic only creates more panic. If you are afraid, it's important that you work through your anxiety so that your child's worries are not further escalated. We must remember, kids do not learn well when they are feeling stressed.
- 2) Normalise Anxiety:** Some anxiety can be healthy. But not all adolescents, or adults, know that it typically acts as a useful and protective emotion. Adults can help young people understand that healthy anxiety has a purpose. It alerts us to potential threats and helps us move toward safety. Feeling some anxiety regarding the COVID situation will help us to be alert and proactively follow the health and safety measures prescribed by various health and government agencies around the world, such as Hand-washing, Social Distancing, wearing Mask etc.
- 3) Limit social media:** The constant and insatiable urge to know is a human condition, but isn't always the best for us. Our kids might be scared of or overwhelmed with things they've heard or seen on television or social media. Monitor and limit social media and screen time to prevent children from becoming oversaturated with frightening messages. Instead, do fun things, if possible.
- 4) Focus on Facts:** We can reduce the anxiety regarding the pandemic by separating rumours from reality. In addition to monitoring and limiting social media, help your children to develop a realistic perspective of COVID19, based on information and data that is verified by recognized health and government agencies around the world. Discuss the realistic risk of people contracting the virus in our country, based on demographic data. For eg: health workers and the homeless may be more vulnerable in catching the virus. Discuss the recovery rate of those who acquired it,

is reassuring. We can further reduce their anxiety by helping them to understand that the risk is further reduced if one is carefully following the hygiene and safety measures.

- 5) Listen and be supportive:** Being a good listener is the key to enabling children vent their feelings in a safe manner. Periodically, keep aside some time when you can just hear them out. Reflect on and validate their feelings. If you think their feelings are disproportionate or over-intensified, instead of dismissing them, you can ask them what makes them feel this way.
It's okay to say, "I'm feeling a little worried too, but we will take care of ourselves and get through this together." If your child is the quiet kind, ask them "How are you feeling?" Keep it open-ended (instead of asking "are you scared?") this will help them to introspect and communicate. Remind them that it's okay to feel sad, mad, afraid, stressed, nervous or confused.
- 6) Emphasize safety** – Our children need to be reassured so that they feel safe during this crisis. Remind them that scientist, medical professionals, policemen, teachers and various others across the world are working on this and doing everything possible to protect us and keep us safe. Focus on all the other caring adults around them who are working to keep them safe.
- 7) Need for structure** – With the indefinite time away from school, students may consider this time to be similar to long school breaks or summer vacation, but it is not exactly the same. Unlike summer vacation, this break is sudden and unplanned, and the time away from school has not been specified. This can be confusing for students to understand, especially in the absence of a schedule. It is important that parents are aware about and can supervise the academic action plan through online classes and other learning resources that are being scheduled by the school. Keeping in touch with your child's teachers is crucial. The daily schedule for any child must not only include academics. To compliment this, set a schedule for the weekdays and weekends. Adolescents do their best if there are plans for each day. Encourage them to include hobbies, family time, personal space, chores, rest, time for eating/bathing etc. It is equally important to not overburden them. Remember micromanaging is never favourable in this respect. Enable your child to develop the daily schedule themselves, under your guidance. This would not only give them the opportunity to hone their time management skills, but also provide them with a sense of autonomy and competence as they have a say in their own routine.

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While developing the schedule we must remember that this is a special circumstance, one that has not been encountered by us before. Hence, as much as we may want it to, their routine may not exactly be the kind of routine that our children are able to follow, under normal circumstances. This is the new normal, at least for a few weeks now, hence we must enable ourselves and our children to accept it and adapt to it.

- 8) Leisure time considerations:** Help your teen to balance between activities that he/she enjoys solo and those that you could all do as a family. This could mean that you may have to step outside of your comfort zone, a little – apart from encouraging them to participate in board games and other activities that you are well versed in, show interest in things that your child likes. Start watching an age appropriate Netflix series together, or play a video game with each other, make a bucket list of things that they would like to do once the lockdown is over – encourage them to be creative and come up with ideas as to how they would like to spend time with you. Focussing on some physical activity may be helpful, as we are all confined to the indoor spaces now. If possible, go out on the terrace/balcony or take a short walk outside.
- 9) Involvement in chores:** with the house helps being confined in their homes now, what better time to ask for your child's help in simple household chores? As they grow up, adolescents like to feel valued. Giving the chore like a punishment may only bring rebellious/ non cooperative behaviour from them. Instead ask for their help so that things can run as smoothly at home as possible. All children may not be able to do all kinds of housework, so allowing them to have some say in what they can help out with would be useful. Appreciating their efforts and showing gratitude for their contribution would reinforce their involvement in chores.
- 10) Social distancing, not socially distancing:** Being quarantined at home, as important as it may be to stop the virus from spreading, can be a gloomy experience. Let's remember that social distancing really refers to the physical distancing from social situations. Thanks to technology, there are multiple ways to keep in touch with our loved ones. At a time like this, we need to be sensitive and respect the fact that our children may need a little more time with their friends to catch up with, vent out and feel cheered up. Encourage them to connect virtually.
- 11) Expect the Unexpected:** Continuous and indefinite home confinement can take a toll on our physical and emotional health. Keep in mind that their feelings are not only stemming from the virus going viral, but a conglomeration of lifestyle changes that come with the situation, such as daily schedule being disrupted, change in learning environment, not meeting friends, no co-curricular activities, the monotony of being exposed to the same physical space with the same set of family members, vacation/travel plans being deferred, social functions being cancelled. Perhaps they were preparing hard and

looking forward to prove their competence in the upcoming exams. All these changes are sudden and occurring simultaneously. This can be too much for them to deal with and there may be times that they may have a meltdown or appear cranky. Their behaviour needs to be understood in this particular context. Allow them some space to vent out, to reflect. Being critical of their behaviour would make them withdraw or act out more in more difficult ways.

- 13)Developing Empathy:** Every situation has its positives and negatives, even a crisis. We may see this as an opportunity to enable our young ones to give back to society – whether it is contributing a part of their pocket money to a relief fund set up to help those in need, or feeding street dogs, or helping an aged or sick neighbour by getting them some supplies from a local store, or just giving some company to a lonely neighbour – there are many ways in which adolescents can be encouraged to be sensitive towards others and helping out in times of need.
- 14)Monitor and Identify any Warning Signs:** It is extremely important to ensure the mental well-being of your teen, at a time like this, by checking with them at regular intervals. While being stressed or feeling gloomy to some extent is normal, but if a child is withdrawing or acting out excessively, then it could be cause for alarm. If you're unsure how your teen is coping, look out for these changes - such as loss of appetite, drastic changes in eating and sleeping pattern, irritated mood, anger issues, loss of patience, loss of interest in activities that they previously enjoyed, withdrawal and disengaged demeanour etc. that could indicate that the child is not keeping well, or is taking undue stress. Keep a check. If you observe any odd behaviour or changes, it is time for you to intervene. Talk to them about it or involve another trusted individual to help such as a family member/friend/relative/counsellor.
- 15)Reaching out:** Finally, managing our homes, our work, our family and ourselves during this difficult and uncertain time can make each one of us feel distressed. I would urge all parents, students and teachers to reach out to me through email (schoolcounsellor1@calcuttais.edu.in), in case there is any concern. We can set up counselling sessions over phone or through video calling platforms. These would have the same privacy as face to face counselling sessions. While we are physically self-isolating, let's remember that we are in this together!

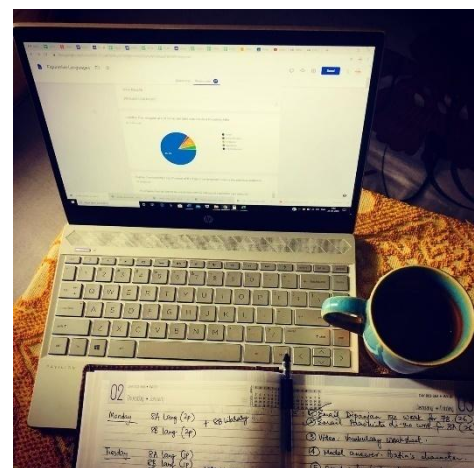
It's important to empower and enable our children such that they do not overestimate the dangers surrounding the pandemic, nor underestimate their ability to protect themselves and deal with the situation.

To reach Mrs Patronobis, you can write to her and send your concerns, feedback, problems to

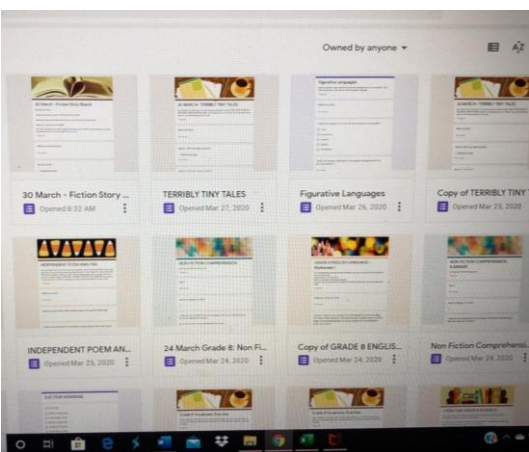


schoolcounsellor1@calcuttais.edu.in

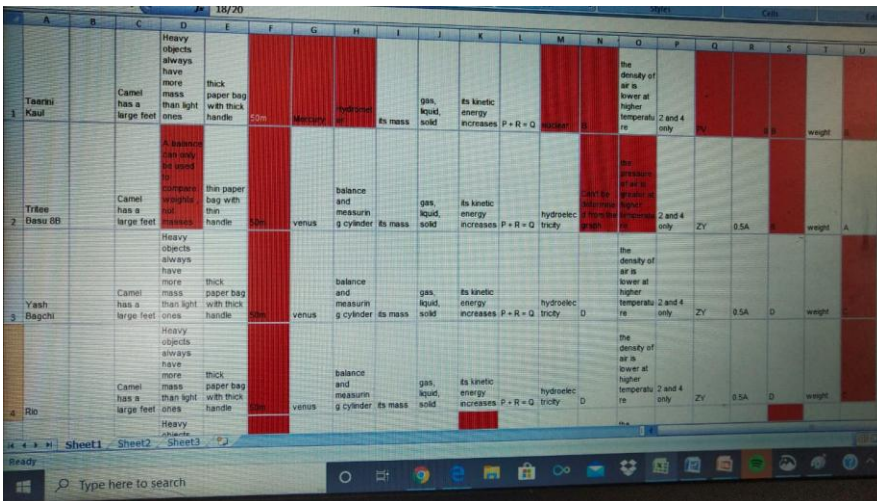
REMOTE LEARNING – THE CIS WAY



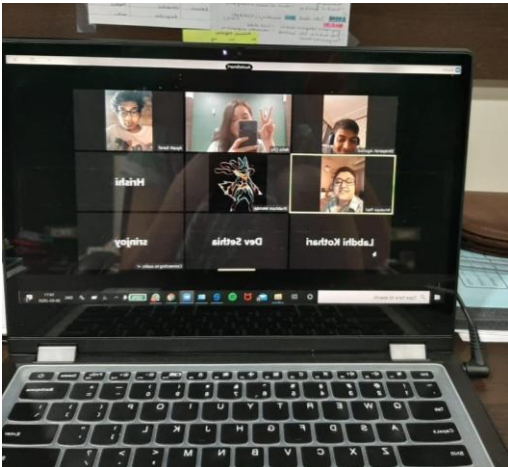
Teaching-Learning-Assignments – this scene has become the new normal for the CIS family. We are more connected than ever and we shall overcome.



Google forms have become a very useful tool for submission of work, especially for shorter responses and MCQ practices. Middle Section English and Science classes depended heavily on google forms.



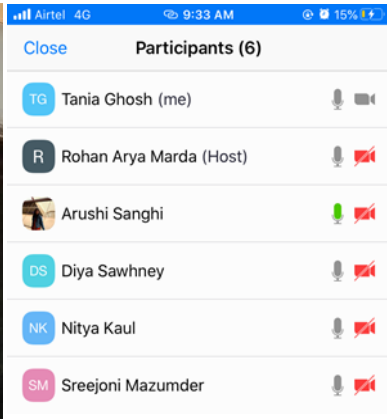
Collation of students' work and grading. The red cells indicate wrong answers – this method has given the teachers a visual representation of all the students' progress and helped the teachers to plan accordingly for the subsequent assignments. It also helps in monitoring attendance and providing detailed and meaningful feedback.



ZOOM is the new buzz-word. Economics lesson being conducted.



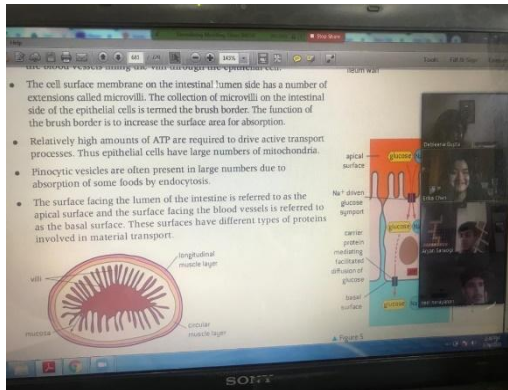
IB Physics lesson being conducted here.



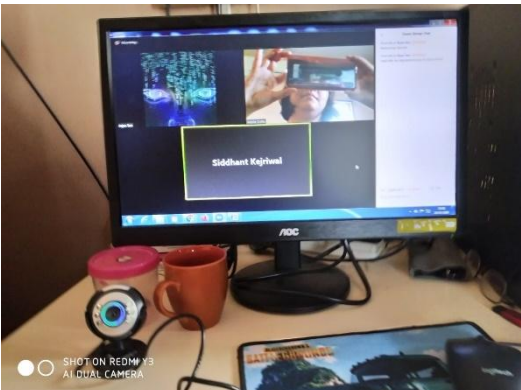
Google Classroom was also very useful. Physics class here.



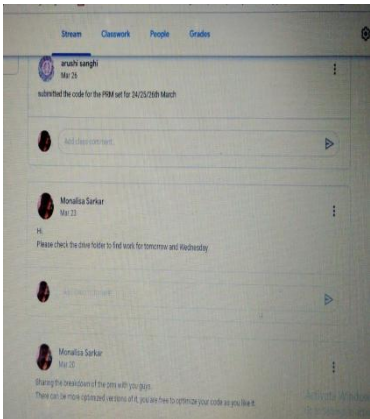
History lesson using Zoom.



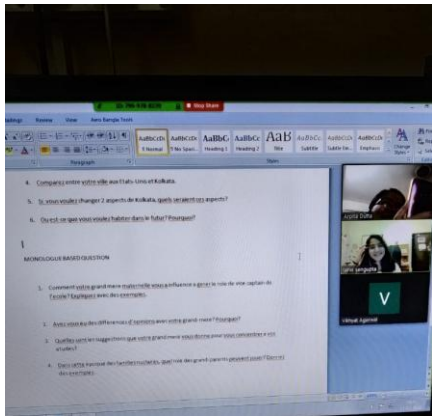
Biology lesson, using ZOOM



French Lesson using Zoom



ICT Lessons using Google Classroom.



Foreign Language class using Zoom.

“Teaching is a heart work”

Department meetings, Level meetings, Section meetings: teachers are constantly holding conference calls to deliberate on the way ahead in order to ensure effective teaching and learning is continued in this time of crisis.

Messages from Parents



MR VIPUL SANGHI

Covid 19 hit us all very unexpectedly. The first week of March brought with it news from friends who were in the far east getting affected by this novel virus, sort of like many geo-political event out there.

Then, WHAM, it hit us within the space of a week. Kids were getting quarantined from school due to history of travel and other risk criteria. It was a harrowing time for the kids. It was as if the disruption was at our doorstep and we had to do something about it. We had our PTM in school with disinfectants and social distancing norms in place. The teachers were all there and put up a brave face and we got through it.

The inevitable and expected quarantine notice came on Sunday via email. Initially, one of my two kids was overjoyed and the other a bit about the school closure.

The weekend passed by a bit anxiously since we were worried about the academic curriculum and board exams. Friends with kids ready to go to college were even more so since they did not know how the delay would affect the admissions. Little known to us the teachers and the administration had sprung into action and put together an academic plan for the kids to get distance education.

Having worked closely with the school and worked in large corporate environments before, I was a bit sceptical about how well this would work, especially in subjects that required a lot of supervision and interaction in class. Given our small classrooms, CIS students expect constant interaction with both their teachers and their peers. We were the first school that I know of to be doing this in the city and certainly one doing it so extensively across the curriculum.

In the past 2 weeks that we have had this on, the learning process that has been put together by the school has surprised and impressed me and other parents that I have spoken to. Along with the learning the routine has given a structure to the day that is so much a part of school besides the academics. In these testing times where we are all locked in, it is reassuring to have a routine established for the day.

Particularly impressive has been the iterative improvements that have been made by the teachers. They have taken this as an opportunity to actually improve learning outcomes by trying out new techniques and following best practices across the faculty and the program.

I think we will be pleasantly surprised when school opens as to the silver lining of the new teaching methods and improvements in terms of skills that the kids will have which will serve them in their future life - skills such as video conferencing and on line submissions, calendar management etc, which they have acquired.

As a parent, would like to thank all the school staff for your efforts during these trying times. I know I speak for many who are quiet.



MRS NILANJANA SENGUPTA

I had never imagined to experience "Quarantine" in my lifetime...to be in a war like situation yet way better off as we are blessed with food on our plates and a roof above our heads! Yet these are testing times for all of humanity.

What has amazed me is the ease with which both my daughters have adapted to this situation. But I guess children are way more flexible and accept change faster than adults. A lesson we can learn from them. CIS and its teachers have gone beyond their call of duty and I fall short of words to express my gratitude and respect towards them. From setting work, correcting assignments, being available on WhatsApp, e-mails ... the teachers have stepped in where we parents couldn't possibly have!

The online schooling/classes have inculcated and reiterated the need to be independent and proactive in students. I was moved to tears reading the sensitive E mails sent out for the mental well-being of the children and the comfort of knowing that the teachers were only a phone call away for a chat if the student felt the need to talk.

When all this is behind us...

We must celebrate...

The positivity, grace & immense strength with which the CIS teachers and faculty have come forward and created a bond that parents & students will cherish and remember forever.



MRS SURABHI KAMPANI

“It’s when difficult times and situations come upon us that we realise the true value of what we have”.

The world is getting devoured by an alarming rabid virus and countries have started to bleed with fatalities. The world has shut down. We are at the brink of an Emergency being called in our country. In such times of utter panic, disbelief and distraught, CIS has chosen to go that extra mile to help and support its students.

Middle school is at a crucial time for teenagers as they have to decide their streams. Teachers decided to keep the work study on-going online and have students engaged in school activities as per schedule. The work is mailed to each parent and student on a daily basis and corrections are also sent back. This new system of education is working tremendously well given the situation. There have been Mathematics classes held on Face Time as well for one of my boys as he needed extra help to understand. I am so deeply grateful to all the wonderful teachers of CIS for their tremendous effort...it’s so heartfelt. It’s the little, little things, a phone call, a text message, a kind and encouraging email which is helping students cope with a distressing situation. Overwhelmed!

"We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives." - John F Kennedy



MRS VIDYA KAMPANI

A sniff here and a sneeze there - All mums (caregivers) would agree being homebound also gets us paranoid with these small nuances in these troubled times - The teaching faculty of Calcutta International School has remarkably made sure every student of theirs is kept busy with productive online work. In this challenging era as we swim through uncharted waters of our daily routine in the absence of our domestic help not knowing what tomorrow has in store -

It is CIS that comes to the rescue to charter a course, a way forward with a smile and an unrelenting effort made continuously by the teachers. I humbly salute all. As parents would agree “work is getting done, power control battles now barely exist and television / computer time is limited.



MRS. SANJUKTA SARKAR

We all are going through a difficult situation due to this Covid 19 outbreak all over the world. However, we have to be positive and be safe staying at home. In this tough time CIS has taken a very positive step starting a regular homework and revision procedure through Edmodo and email communications among students-teachers-class teachers, Section Head and Principal. It is a successful endeavour by the school on the basis of a prompt action. The students, who were a little perplexed initially with the surprise school closing, have started their regular studies within a couple of days. It was absolute peace for parents as we were worried how to deal with them at this uncertain home-stay

especially in such an odd situation when most of us were also not in a comfortable and peaceful mental state. A big applause to all the teachers for their hard work to make it a success. I, personally would like to congratulate all of you and the talented students of CIS for superbly handling this crisis situation.

MRS ADITI AGARWAL

During the last few weeks we have seen one of the most unfortunate situations due to COVID -19. At this testing time, we have realized we have been blessed with the most caring and hardworking Teachers who are working relentlessly and providing the children worksheets as per their school Time Table Schedule and subsequently correcting. My kids Avni and Lakshya Agarwal in grade 6 are studying regularly from 8am-1pm on regular basis. We thank our Teachers and Mentors from the bottom of our heart.

Messages from Students



SHRADDHA DUTTA, AS Level

We are living during uncertain times. The spread of the contagious COVID-19 sent a wave of fear and anxiety whose ripples can be felt all over the globe. It is quite an unusual request governments are making of their people- for them to stay at home. The future cannot be determined, the outcome is unpredictable. Young, impressionable students might fear the worst. However, in a time of distress and alarm, where we are being made to socially distance to help better the situation globally, the only thing we, students of Calcutta International School, can now focus on is our education. I personally am motivated by all the new, undiscovered areas of my chosen subjects that I am yet to explore, and am grateful that I am being able to pursue my desire to further my knowledge through online classrooms and with the support of the CAIE board. Instead of feeling alone and defeated, I am quite enthusiastic about being able to interact with my peers and teachers just as if I were back in school. Learning will empower us students of Calcutta International School during this time of crisis, even if we must continue to socially isolate ourselves. So, by participating in online classrooms, taking constructive feedback from teachers, and submitting challenging worksheets, we will be able to renew our hope for a better future through greater learning and empowerment.



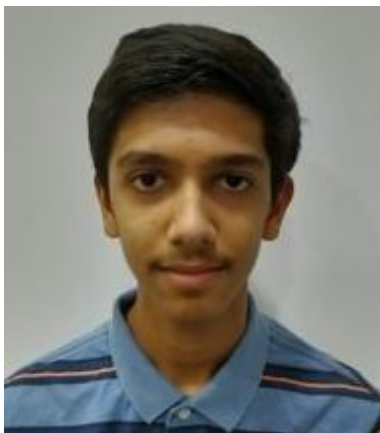
HARSH KUMBHAT, AS Level

Due to the outbreak of coronavirus all over the world, my school, Calcutta International School, took the initiative of having online classes and assignments. This kept us, their students and staff, safe while still ensuring that our education continues on. The switch to video call from actual face-to-face classes was tough to adapt to at first, but got better as it went. They feel no different from our normal class experience, and we are able to understand what we are being taught. Assignments actually feel easier to do and to submit for students. Using laptops are more convenient and easier for most students, and it was probably easier for teachers to correct our work as well. Overall, I think our school has done a great job to make these difficult times easier for all of us by keeping us engaged and in touch with our education.



ARUSHI SANGHI, 9B

When school was cancelled it was pretty much guaranteed that I would be at home all day getting bored with nothing to do. But I think I can speak for all of us when I say I was surprised when we received the mail about online classes. The online classes have been quite the challenge, from spending 10 minutes so everyone can figure out how to use the video conferencing app zoom, to actually getting all the work done in time to meet the deadline. The first week was the hardest, learning to adjust but in the past 2 weeks significant progress was made; some teachers started using google classroom others started having more and more zoom meetings while continuing the syllabus. From teachers to us students, everyone deserves plaudits for rising to occasion and handling the situation so well.



VIKHYAT AGARWAL, 10B

Due to the unfortunate COVID-19 outbreak, our school administration needed a way to maintain continuity and ensure that the students' education was not disrupted. Thus, during the past month, we've been having classes over Zoom, a video communication platform that allows us to video call while a teacher can share their screen or write on a digital whiteboard. Aside from a few connection problems, the classes run smoothly and understanding concepts is just as easy as in our typical school classes. We can schedule meetings according to whenever everyone's free and also record these meetings to use later for revision. A slight drawback, though, is the possibility of students being distracted as online classes often don't come with the same student accountability and supervision. Nevertheless, online classes are a great learning method for times when regular school days aren't possible.



**ARONI DAS
8A**

To stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, school has been shut down and we have been having assignments ever since March 18th, 2020. I would like to thank all the teachers for arranging such a process in such a short span of time. It's just like normal school assignments, but at home over the internet. The system is very organised. In this tough time, all teachers and students are coping well, thanks to the system. I find this method effective as it ensures that we don't forget what we have learnt and constant revision goes on. During this time, everyone should stay home to reduce the spread of this deadly virus. Stay safe.



**SARA SENGUPTA
8A**

The sudden decision to close school and start online classes was scary at first. But I am glad we did. It has kept us engaged and makes us spend time meaningfully as we are unable to go out. I personally think that this is a great way to help us keep in touch with our studies. However, I miss face to face interaction with my friends and teachers. Emailing and waiting for a response is not the same, but I also understand that it is the best in this situation. Thus, I find the idea of online school to be useful and effective. Furthermore, I am glad to see the compassion and care we get to see in the face of this crisis and I hope when we go back to school, we will continue to be kind.



**SHOME DEEPTO
SARKAR, 7B**

The spread of COVID-19 has affected everyone, some more than others. Through these trying times, our school has ensured that we still get to learn and study through the lockdown period. We receive our work in the form of Google Docs or Google Forms and complete them on our computers and submit in a timely manner. I think it's great that the teachers have taken this initiative and tried out this new form of teaching, and it's quite convenient too (especially the Google Forms!). As a final word, I want to tell everyone to be calm, practise proper hygiene and limit outdoor exposure. During these difficult times we need to be kind to each other and exercise compassion. The world will get through this.

“Education Is Not Just Preparing For Life, Education Is Life Itself”

Messages from the Teachers at C.I.S Senior School



Mrs. Sharmila Mukerjee, Section Head, Middle Section

It gives me an immense sense of fulfilment to see how our students, under the able guidance of their dedicated team of teachers, could rise to the occasion and handle the challenges of uncertainty in such a matured way. The timely decision to close school and keep the students and all the members of the CIS family safely away from the onslaught of the COVID-19 – the invisible enemy, was necessary. However, the academic journey of the bright, creative, energetic and thinking young minds needed to go on. The need of the hour was a quick and concrete plan to facilitate remote learning for at least a fortnight and even more. The academic plan was ready within a few hours soon after intense discussions, exploring online resources and platforms and calculating the risks of the possible technological glitches. All my dear colleagues shared a common thought – how they could convert the homes of their students to active learning centres, make them follow a routine and engage them fruitfully during the ‘working hours’. We are too elated to know every child looks forward to the assignment from their teachers. They are determined to complete and submit them often much before the stipulated time. Sometimes, the students send reminders to their teachers if the assignments are slightly delayed for some reason. It is evident that distance is not a deterrent for those who wish to learn and as a facilitator I can now say with conviction that our children are future ready.



Mrs. Anusuya Paul, Section Head, Senior Section

As we tell our students, so we believe that every day opens up a new learning opportunity. However, never could we teachers imagine the level of learning that we would all be engaged in amidst this exceptional situation. The moment we realised that we may have to close regular school, a plan of action was formulated collaboratively with the aim to ensure academic continuity and provide every possible support to our students. Time was short and there was no scope for any trial. We were ready to face the challenges and overcome hurdles on this new path. I feel proud to be working with a team which is constantly engaged in collaborative learning, empowering each other to offer the best of what we can to our dear students. Words of appreciation and encouragement from the students and the parents have served as the much-needed impetus for us to work harder towards a shared goal. Like everyone else, stress is building up for us as well. The challenges of working from home in the middle of such anxiety & uncertainty, managing the house & family alongside preparing online lessons, completing corrections and sharing feedback are high. However, as teachers we all realise our responsibility towards our students and want to reassure you that we are always available for any support that our students may need. We love our students; we miss being with them. We believe that the present situation is not our destination. The best is yet to come. Our prayers and good wishes to our extended CIS family.



Ms. Tina Servaia, IBDP Coordinator

These unprecedented circumstances have certainly stretched and challenged the IB students and teachers, but also have brought with them new opportunities for growth. WFH (the trending acronym for working from home) has given both students and teachers a chance to actualise the IB Learner Profile. Both teachers and students have to balance school work and family commitments, be open-minded and accepting of new strategies and reflect on their priorities while continuing to become more knowledgeable inquirers and thinkers. The IB2 have accepted the cancellation of their examinations with striking maturity. Although they were dealt an unfair hand, we are proud to see them adapting to their changed circumstances with grace. They are working under difficult circumstances to complete their Internal Assessments which have to be submitted soon, conducting Physics experiments in their bedrooms and completing art installations in their living rooms. The teachers were quick to respond to this crisis. With just a day’s preparation, the activities of the IB Department were taken online and they have ensured that there is no lag in syllabus completion or shortage in teaching hours. There has been a sharp learning curve as students and teachers both have learnt to use new technologies and make use of both synchronous and asynchronous online teaching strategies. Although we await the day when we can all be back in school, till then, in true IB spirit, we will make the best of difficult circumstances.



Ms Preeti Roychoudhury, HOD – English and the Senior School English Department

The altered circumstances which have all of us now locked down in our homes, have definitely impacted the regular teaching of the department. But what has been heartening is the way the teachers and the children have responded to the challenges of the new ways of navigating through online teaching and learning. The students are definitely cooperating and we must thank them and their parents. We know the ones who are not being regular with their submissions must be having some kind of valid reason for their irregularity. We do hope they can cope better in the coming weeks.

As teachers we have once more learned we cannot take anything for granted. We were moving into the final phase of the school year and it was time to wrap up loose ends and assess the year gone by. We are doing that in our own way through our continued communication with all our stakeholders.

My only message to my students across the senior section is -

These are momentous times. The world has changed drastically and your education is also altering itself to help you cope. Please use this time to think beyond your syllabus and about who you want to be as citizens of the future, Let English be your ally in your expression of your self-worth and self-preparedness



Mr Samitava Mukherjee, HOD – Mathematics

Since our school closed for the Corona virus situation, Mathematics teachers at CIS are putting in constant effort to keep the learning process smooth. In Middle Section, since the syllabus was already over and it was mainly revision time planned, teachers continued the process of revising by regularly sending worksheets to students, getting the work done, assessing and providing feedback in a systematic and organised manner by using online tools like Edmodo, Google drive, emails and even WhatsApp. Regular feedback is also sent to parents about the student's progress.

In Senior Section, the same process has been followed with the addition of online classes through Zoom and accessory softwares. Students responded very positively to the new strategies of teaching. Though there were some initial hiccups, with the joint effort of teachers, students, parents and strong support of the management, the obstacles were easily conquered. Though in CIS teachers are quite technology savvy, yet the new situation of distant learning added new experiences and dimensions to the teaching learning process for the teachers.

At this juncture of uncertainty, the positive attitude of the teachers and students is really commendable. We would continue to keep up this spirit remembering that – this shall too pass.



Ms. Swati Chamaria, HOD – Business and Economics

A typical school day during this "lock down" period for the teachers and students consists of an online class, quizzes and assignments. Teachers in my department are learning a lot these days about online platforms and truly surprised at how well they are able to conduct classes and assignments seamlessly. Our students have shown real strength of character and maturity at this time; submitting their work regularly and logging on for class on time, which has been a source of inspiration for all our teachers. This unprecedented time has brought us closer to our students and we are glad that even though our school is closed, our classes are not and we are still able to teach, laugh and spend time with our students. We wish our students good health and congratulate them on their sincerity and dedication.



Mr. Subrata Ghosh, HOD – Art

We have been trying our best in this situation and our students have participated well. I feel this Art practice has helped them to release their stress a lot. I have communicated with the students as well as with my colleagues always- to see the progress.

I am learning a lot from this new challenge and trying to set assignments for the students in appropriate ways.

Students need to understand the importance of this isolation while they concentrate on their studies.



Mrs. Sushmita Mukherjee. HOD – Humanities

This is a new experience for all of us, we are teaching through Zoom. In the beginning it was a little difficult to communicate with the students, especially maintaining the timings of the lessons. However very soon we adapted to the situation and got accustomed with the new system. The students are cooperating, they are maintaining the time and the lessons are progressing with a steady pace. They are working hard in order to submit their assignments on time. As a teacher I have learnt how to work efficiently during a crisis and how to adapt to difficult situations. The only thing that I would like to say to the students is that this is a very difficult time for all of us. Use this time to explore and learn about things that interest you outside the classroom. Learn new things yourself, do something productive in your spare time. Try to cover the syllabus as much as you can with your teachers, and even if you fail to do so then do not worry, your teachers are there to help you always.



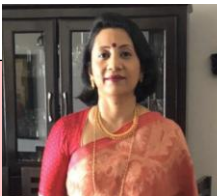
Mrs. Debjani Sen, Mathematics Teacher

We are passing through the most difficult situation, combating with COVID – 19, a lethal enemy that the world has never faced before. We are fighting hard, some in the front line while the rest by staying at home. Please remember, staying at home and keeping social distance are the two most important strategies to be followed by us. Also, we must always maintain a positive outlook towards life. I am really thankful that all of you responded to the initiatives taken by our school very diligently. The enthusiasm and motivation with which you have been studying from home is really making me immensely proud. We have been taking classes on zoom for many days now. I feel elated to see your faces online as we are unable to interact like we used to do in school. If you have any doubt or any problem, please feel free to approach us. We are always there for you. We all have learned that necessity is the mother of invention, but we never thought that we will live by that very notion in our lives. We have successfully adapted ourselves to the changed scenario and I am delighted to see how you have adapted to this new normal. I would like to advise you to take care of yourselves, look after your families, especially elderly members. Never forget your pets and needy people near you. I know, you will love to come to school when this phase will be over. When you do come back, you will understand the need of friendship, care for others and the nature around us even better.



Dr Runa Ghosh Auddy, Biology Teacher

One week gone, two more to go...and during this period we have all learnt to use technology efficiently. A tool unexplored previously “Zoom classes” have become our daily connect with our dear students. It is indeed heartening to see that our students have adapted to these online tools of learning so very easily. Let us keep our spirits high and remain calm and dear students do remember we are there with you.



Mrs. Rini Ghose, Geography Teacher

Switching overnight to an online teaching learning platform was an experience that is hard to describe. On one hand I was trying to deal emotionally with the new situation which created havoc in my personal life and on the other was trying to remain calm and composed and planning interesting lessons for the children on a platform where I was also a learner along with the children. The thing that keeps me motivated is the increasing enthusiasm that the children have shown on this platform. This is particularly true for those students whom I had to chase to submit work. Suddenly the tables turned and I am being chased by the same students to submit instant feedback because they have submitted work on this platform even before time. Teaching in many ways has been fun because of the many avenues I get to explore to teach a topic. But I long to go back to school just like my students!



Mrs. Tania Ghosh, Physics Teacher

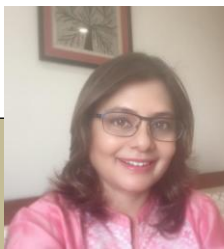
‘Every crisis is an opportunity for reinvention’ -This has truly reflected among the teaching fraternity of CIS. We are taking this situation in our stride and moving boldly ahead.

Websites and apps like Zoom, Wiziq, google classroom, the big blue dot, seesaw, Dojo, twinkl had been the ones that I sought out. Our teachers have been very progressive and taken on this paradigm shift in the teaching –learning process. I attended a worldwide webinar on eLearning practices, on the 28th of March,2020, where teachers from China and European countries gave insights on how they have been addressing online learning for the past few weeks.

Students have been excited with this new way of learning. The usual mode of teaching has been replaced by various platforms which are keeping them on their toes. They are responding to each of our request and diligently working with us. We have learnt a lot from them and sometimes the tables are turned, where we are learning about technology from them.

Students, you have been incredibly involved with us in these trying times. We are interconnected and will be requiring each other’s support. Stay safe and let the learning continue. Only knowledge can transport us into better times. Be well informed, pacify others around you and don’t indulge in fake news. You as CIS students have a responsibility and credibility for your actions. Let’s learn to appreciate things that we take for granted otherwise.

We are at an important juncture of history. Take care.



Mrs. Debleena Gupta, Biology Teacher

As the world battles with COVID 19, CIS Science teachers adapt and adjust to the new reality “teach from home”.

Thanks to the plethora of online learning platforms, our tech savvy students and the zeal of the CIS teachers, teaching and learning did not grind to a halt. We have been effectively taking online class, sharing assignments and sometimes even taking tests using Zoom, Google Classroom et al. CIS Students are equally proactive. The challenge at the moment is, hands on practical for the Science Classes and we are exploring various simulation resources to overcome this. IB learners are being guided to start their primary research for their IAs and Extended Essays through one to one sessions, so that they can start with their data collection as soon as the school reopens.

Personally, this has been a good opportunity to update myself on the latest tools and techniques of E- learning and I am sure many of these online learning tools will be in use, long after the COVID 19 days.

We are all disappointed and sad, as our normal life has come to a standstill. But as Martin Luther King Jr. has rightly said “We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope.”



Mrs. Paromita Bhattacharjee, Physics Teacher

In order to teach online, we teachers needed to adjust our mindset and attitude. Working from home for teachers? How are we ever going to manage? Notwithstanding these initial reactions, we found our teachers plunging into the challenge at hand. All joined hands assimilating technical knowhow of connecting to students and imparting tasks. Students did their part quite well. The younger ones were excited to be doing and submitting work online. Deadlines were maintained, feedback sent every week, parents updated regularly, and meetings held. We were all together – working, learning, sharing and helping. It felt like one big family moving together towards a common goal. The nature of the workload changed and it did feel considerably overwhelming at the beginning. The lockdown however set the platform for learning new concepts of technology and helped us to manage our time judiciously. The global community was connected and resources were shared without discrimination. But I missed my students – the hustle-bustle of the school, the laughter, smiles, running around, “excuse me teacher”, the endless queries, missed my colleagues, missed the “sneaked in” fun moments, tasting food from all lunch boxes, the mini parties – all that kept us going – “the human touch”.

“At The Heart of What We Do, We Always Find You”



From the Newsletter Team, under the able guidance of Dr Nath

Mrs Saswati Bhattacharya, Biology Teacher
Mr Surya Subha Banerjee, English Teacher

The biggest fulfilment of a teacher comes from the students. Their enthusiasm, their diligence and dedication always act as the biggest encouragement for a teacher. A good teacher is only possible when he or she has good students. It is your success that defines us as educators. Today, standing at this crucial juncture of our planet’s history, when the whole world is fighting an unforeseen, lethal enemy, we realise that success is not just the grades on your transcript. It is far beyond that and we are extremely proud to say that our students have graduated that extraordinary test of life with flying colours. Shifting to a virtual learning mode was challenging, even more as there was hardly any time for preparation. With a lot of questions in mind we started the journey, shaky and doubtful steps, one at a time. There were hiccups and there were frustrations. There was exhaustion and there were complaints. However, it was the Midas-touch of our students, their regular participation, and their eagerness to complete the work made it all disappear. What filled our hearts was pure joy of being in this together, with all of you. We miss you, we long to go back to the chatter-clatter of the classroom, we yearn to see your faces, but your constant messages, your questions and at times a small text asking about our well-being cloak us with that fuzzy feeling of love. We know we are more connected than ever, not only through our assignments but through the genuine care and concern. This phase will pass and we will be back in our classrooms soon. We hope we will be a little wiser, more caring and compassionate towards each other. Always know, we are there for any need that you may have. We love you.



To all the students from all the teachers of CIS Senior School

#StayHome
#StaySafe
#TogetherWeCan
#WeLoveYou

We will continue to keep you updated about all events through emails.