



# Gaesdonck Parents Letter

No. 32/2020-21

19.02.2021

Dear Gaesdonckers, dear parents,  
today especially: dear parents and students of Years 10, 12 and 13,

**The time has come.** As already announced, we will be resuming face-to-face classes for Year 10, 12 and 13 from Monday. We are very much looking forward to seeing our external students again, at least from these three grades, so that at least a bit of normality can return to the campus.

Of course, nothing will be the same this time either, because in view of the still high incidence levels, the constraints under which lessons will be held from Monday onwards are immense. The team in the school management around our new headmistress Mrs Schleede-Schmalz has been feverishly searching for solutions to the many detailed questions that are needed to offer both teachers and students as safe a school environment as possible. A mountain of individual measures has come together - you guessed it: this will be a very long parents letter.

For us as a boarding school, this also presents the task of maintaining the high level of security that we have built up in recent weeks through strict contact restrictions in our boarding school community as well as possible, even with simultaneous attendance classes. We are confident that through the following measures, the "microcosm boarding school", as it was so beautifully written in the Rheinische Post a few days ago, will also remain a safe home for our internal students!

## Hygiene concept

The basis for the resumption of classes is our updated hygiene concept. (The current version can be found in the download area of our website). Please read it carefully. It contains many binding instructions for the organisation of school and boarding school life at our campus, which are only reproduced in excerpts in this letter to parents:

### I) Prerequisite for school and boarding school attendance

Participation in attendance classes and arriving back to the boarding houses is generally only possible if the student concerned and all persons living in his/her household

- feel healthy and do not show any symptoms typical of Covid 19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, muscle/joint pain, sore throat, headache, nausea/vomiting, diarrhoea). In the case of a simple cold without further signs of illness, it is recommended that the child first be observed at home (or in the boarding house) for 24 hours, in accordance with the guidelines of the

Ministry of Education. If no further symptoms appear, the child can attend classes as usual. However, if further symptoms appear, a diagnostic clarification is necessary.

- have not been in contact with a person diagnosed with Covid-19 or SARS-CoV-2 in the last 14 days. If the information is unclear (e.g. if there is a category 2 contact person in the family), we ask the parents to contact us in order to agree on the further procedure. If necessary, it is possible to participate in lessons by team.
- As a boarding school community, we trust that all our students respect and comply with the rules of conduct set out in the CoronaSchVO in mutual responsibility.

## II) Distance regulation

Outside the boarding community, a **minimum distance of 1.50 m** from other persons is to be maintained at all times on the entire campus, if possible; group formations are to be avoided. This also applies outdoors.

## III) Mandatory masks (FFP2; KN95; everyday masks (MNB))

On the entire Gaesdonck premises, also during lessons in the classrooms, as well as in the bus, a medical mask according to the standards FFP2 or KN95, but at least a medical surgical mask or other mouth-nose-covering (MNB; "everyday mask") must be worn at all times. A face visor is not sufficient. If a MNB is forgotten, a disposable surgical mask can be obtained from the school office.

Outside of school lessons, the boarding houses form the home environment for those students who live with us permanently. Therefore, "free-tested" (see below) students are allowed to move around within the boarding community without a mask and without the obligation to keep their distance from each other.

In order to prevent the Sars-CoV-2 virus from entering the boarding houses, it is compulsory for boarding students to wear an FFP2 mask at all times during lessons. The boarding school provides its students with a sufficient number of FFP2 masks.

## IV) Entering the campus for students

In accordance with the current CoronaSchVO and CoronaBetrVO, external students from **grades 10, 12 and 13 are** again permitted to enter the approved areas of the campus during their own lesson time from Monday onwards. This includes free periods between lessons.

## V) Zoning of the campus



### Internatsbereich

- Betreten und Befahren verboten
- Ausnahmen: Schülerinnen und Schüler im Vollinternat; Erzieher/-innen; Lehrer/-innen; Mitarbeiter/-innen; Schülerinnen und Schüler im Tagesinternat während des Nachmittags
- Zugang zur Mensa zum Mittagessen und Nachmittagskaffee für Schülerinnen und Schüler im OEx frei (Pflicht zum Tragen einer MNB)

### Schulbereich



- Betreten während der Unterrichtszeit erlaubt
- Pflicht zum Tragen einer Mund-Nase-Bedeckung
- Juvenat ab 13.10 Uhr Internatsbereich

## Resumption of face-to-face teaching

Under these strange circumstances, the class teachers of the three levels concerned have already informed their students this afternoon about the organisation of lessons from Monday, 22 February 2021.

In detail:

### For Year 13

- In the **advanced** courses there is continuous face-to-face teaching.
- For group sizes of up to 16 students, lessons take place in the room specified in the timetable.
- For groups of more than 16 students, 2 rooms are available for division. Lessons are organised and groups are divided individually.
- The **basic courses** are organised in a mix of face-to-face and distance learning.
- For students who have chosen a course as their 3rd or 4th Baccalaureate subject, there is one double lesson per week in the face-to-face classes, for all others one single lesson.
- For group sizes over 16 students, 2 rooms each are available for division; Individual lesson organisation and group division.
- In addition to the face-to-face lessons, students are given assignments to work on at weekly intervals (via Moodle or worksheets).

### For Year 12

- Continuous **face-to-face teaching** in all advanced and basic courses.

- For group sizes up to 16 students: room according to timetable.
- For group sizes over 16 students, 2 rooms each are available for division; Individual lesson organisation and group division.

### For Year 10

- Classes are held according to the regular timetable, **alternating between face-to-face and distance learning**.
- Division of classes into A-/B-weeks: A-students are provided with assignments for the B-week; etc. Video teaching no longer takes place, but teacher contact and counselling in the distance weeks is of course possible.
- The division of the class is done by the class teacher.
- Classes are largely held in the Primanerbau (P building). Individual subjects are taught in the Juvenat.
- Class tests will be suspended until Easter; however, smaller learning success tests are possible.

### Lunch in the refectory

Some students have reported back to us that on some days before the Christmas holidays it was not easy to find a seat with the sufficient distance between them in the canteen. In order to better ensure a distance of 1.50 m between the students during lunch, we have reorganised the canteen operation for the next few weeks.



Starting next Monday, the number of seats in the canteen has been significantly reduced. As a consequence, lunch will be served at different **times for the** different groups of students. These times must be observed in a binding and disciplined manner. 5 minutes before the end of the respective period, the students are informed upcoming change by a bell.

- 12:00 - 13:00 Meals available for boarding school students, for students in Years 12 and 13 with free periods and, if possible, for the staff
- 13:00 - 13:30 Meal option for the Year 12
- 13:30 - 14:00 Meal option for the Year 13

Entering the cafeteria is still only permitted after **disinfecting hands** or washing hands immediately beforehand. During the main meal times between 13.00 and 14.00, compliance is checked by the supervisor at the main entrance.

Between 1.00 and 2.00 p.m. a **one-way system** applies in the refectory area: the refectory is entered via the main entrance and exited exclusively via the cloister.

In addition, the individual **dining halls** are bindingly assigned to individual groups. The Stucksaal and the Primanerspeisesaal are only used by boarding school students until further notice:

	Glass halls	Capitol Dining Hall	Stuck Hall+ Primary Dining Hall
12.00 - 13.00	OEx with free period	Staff	Boarding students
13.00 - 13.30	Year 12	Year 12	Boarding students and staff
13.30 - 14.00	Year 13	Year 13	Boarding students and staff

In order to equalise the meal times, the 6th lesson for the Year 12 will temporarily end at 1.00 pm. The 7th lesson for the Year 13 does not start until 14.00.

The discarding of the face-mask is only permitted at the pitch and only during the meal.

### Adapted testing strategy - Covid 19 antigen rapid tests for "clear testing" at boarding school

With the resumption of attendance classes, we have also adjusted our Covid-19 testing strategy for boarding students. We will have a Covid-19 antigen test by throat swab performed for the last time on arrival on Sunday. From next week, we will instead rely on regular and continuous antigen tests via a saliva sample, following the Austrian model.

Certainly, the test procedures and possibilities for self-testing will develop strongly in the coming weeks. We have also been very aware of statements by individual politicians that free tests will soon be available. Until then, we have been able to secure our students - again with the help of a student's mother, thank you very much! - saliva tests at reasonable conditions, so that we can carry them out in our own infirmary at a cost of only € 7 per test.

Analogous to the procedure defined in the CoronaSchVO § 5 (5) for inpatient facilities, the boarding school life will in future be accompanied and secured by a permanent testing strategy with Covid-19 PoC antigen rapid tests:

#### 1) Initial test on arrival before entering the campus

If the test is negative, the student can enter the campus and move around freely. During the first 3 days, there is a permanent obligation to keep a distance from each other. Visiting each other in the room is not possible. However, the previous obligation to wear a mask during that period no longer applies.

#### 2) Follow-up test after 3 days

If the second test is also negative, the student is considered to have been cleared. This means that students who have been cleared can move freely on the premises outside of class as a house community without restrictions (without distance and without a mask).

A journey home, for example at the weekend, is possible at any time. If you return, you will have to go through the process again.

### 3) Weekly follow-up tests

Every Sunday, all boarding students are tested again.

In addition, each pupil is checked at least once a week for a possible increase in temperature.

If interested, the offer of a Covid-19 PoC antigen rapid test is **also** available to **our external students** after pre-registration at the above-mentioned cost price via the infirmary. We would like to encourage all students to participate in this campaign and take advantage of the opportunity, as it provides another building block for safety on campus. To register, please send an email to [poststelle@gaesdonck.de](mailto:poststelle@gaesdonck.de) by the evening before.

### Nearest arrival for the boarding school

As announced, the next opportunity to **arrive at the boarding school** is on **Sunday, 21.02.2021 between 18.30 and 19.00 hrs.**

The procedure described in the [parents' letter no. 25](#) of 07.01.2021 applies once again. Please keep to the time stated above. No doctor will be on campus after 7.00 p.m. for the first test!

Due to the resumption of face-to-face teaching, this arrival date is binding for all students in Years 10, 12 and 13.

For planning purposes, we kindly ask you to send an e-mail directly to Mr. Gysbers by 6 pm on Saturday evening.

### Outlook: Homecoming weekend and Easter holidays

According to current knowledge and in view of the current development of the incidence values, the coming weekends will alternate between boarding and home weekends as planned in the annual calendar.

Also according to current knowledge, the campus will be closed during the Easter holidays. We ask the families of our international students in particular to plan accordingly in good time.

### Continuation of emergency care

Furthermore, we offer **emergency care for the** students of the Years 5 and 6. For day boarding students this also extends to the afternoons if required.

In order to avoid unnecessary contact with the upper school students, emergency care will take place opposite our library from next week. Participating students please use the "basement entrance" to the right of the main entrance.

For reasons of planning security, we again ask you to notify us in good time of any care that may be required by sending an e-mail to [poststelle@gaesdonck.de](mailto:poststelle@gaesdonck.de) using the form linked [here](#).

## School bus

As of Monday, our bus lines will also be running again. The normal timetable applies without the Corona special lines. Download the timetable [here](#). Please remind your children once again of the importance of keeping their distance and of the obligation to wear masks both at the bus stop and on the buses.

## Thank you very much and goodbye!

At the end of this letter to parents there is something quite different. Nearly unnoticed in these crazy Corona times, an era came to an end at Gaesdonck last week.

After almost 30 years, generations of students and probably more than 8 million meals, our chef Erich op de Kamp has quietly retired. For him, too, it is true that he would have deserved a greater farewell than circumstances currently allow. But the warmth with which at least our present boarding students said goodbye to him on the last day before the carnival days gives an idea of how passionately he was there for "his" Gaesdonck over the years.

**We sincerely wish him an enjoyable rest and a happy, healthy time with his family.**



You have made it. The next parents' letter will be shorter - we promise. Until then, we wish you again:  
**Please continue to take care of yourself and stay healthy!**

With kind regards

Dr Markus Oberdörster  
Director

Sabine Schleede-Schmalz  
Headmistress

Michael Gysbers  
Head of Boarding Houses