

# Parent and Carer Protocols for home learning

## Recommendations for maximising learning and being safe while learning online at home

### *How Might We Prioritise What Matters Most in a Time of Uncertainty?*

*“The consensus advice to parents and caregivers seems to be: create a bit of structure, make a little time for formal learning and more time for play and exploration, and help kids feel safe and secure. Above all, keep it simple and make it work for your family — there is no one best way.” (Childress, S. cited in Martin, K., March 2020)*

### **Managing the home learning environment**

- Please acknowledge the wellbeing of yourselves and your children. If any of your family are struggling on a particular day, for whatever reason, be kind to yourselves. Allow the children time to play and have a break from home learning if this is required. Get back to it later in the day or even the next day. Many of us are parents too and know how hard it is to juggle working and parenting.
- Brain breaks, movement breaks and water/fruit breaks are vital to student learning and wellbeing. Please allow your child/ren to have frequent learning breaks throughout the day (just as we do at school) to run and move. A day of learning at home is likely to look very different to a school day. Your child may do 20 minutes learning and then have a 30 minute break. This is okay.
- We also encourage you to acknowledge the vital importance of creativity and play in the development of your child, even older primary age children. Teachers will be ensuring these opportunities are being provided and we ask that you also recognise the importance of this for your child/ren.
- Making mistakes is an important part of learning and develops a growth mindset. Let your child make mistakes, don't do too much correcting of their work.

Playtime is precious.  
Play builds brain  
pathways for thinking,  
creativity, flexibility,  
empathy and many  
other lifelong skills.

Heather Shumaker

(Mrs) Dr. Neil to Steffen and Other Elementary Rules for Raising Competent and Compassionate Kids.)

## Parent responsibilities

- Parents are encouraged to monitor their children when they are working on a device. Even our oldest students are, at most, 12 years old and are not yet mature enough to completely manage their own learning without guidance and reminders about how to behave online. Be mindful of who your child is online with and what they are doing. We recommend setting up a home learning space where you can walk past your children and easily see their screens. This way you can redirect them as needed and have a quick chat about what they are learning as you walk past.
- In setting up home learning spaces consider including your children in the process. Have a conversation with them about what makes a good learning space that meets the needs of everyone.
- When we begin our virtual lessons and class check-ins you can help us by keeping your child as focussed as possible for that 30-40 minutes:
  - finding a quiet place they can be seated in one place for the entire session
  - having a snack before or after the session (not during)
  - moving away any distractions e.g. a toy or pet
- We anticipate there may be many questions, particularly in the first few weeks of this very new process, and have put several communication tools and opportunities in place to address this. We ask that you be patient with us if you don't receive an answer as quickly as you wish. This environment is new for teachers (we are all working in a steep learning curve) and we may need time to check with our teaching team or senior leadership before answering questions. We thank you ahead of time for your patience.
  - Each year level will have a google classroom designated as a communication area. Twice weekly, teachers will open up time on this google classroom to allow parents and students to ask questions. These questions may be answered by other students and parents. We view this as an opportunity for you to all support each other and share ideas. Teachers will monitor this, and at the close of the 30 minute session, note any unanswered questions, which they will answer in the following 24 hours. A schedule of these times will be provided.
  - Please email your child's teacher for any questions related to your child and their learning, that you do not want to ask in a public forum.
  - Seesaw will continue to be used as a platform for students to share work and for parents and teachers to give feedback. We prefer that Seesaw not be used for messaging concerns to teachers please.

## Communication about technical difficulties

- If you are having technical difficulties with a device or with getting on to google classroom etc., please email Nathan James [nathan.james@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:nathan.james@ed.act.edu.au) He will either organise a time to call you to see if he can help over the phone, or he will redirect you to a person who can help.

## Staff responsibilities

- Teachers will endeavour to respond to parent emails about student learning or other issues within 24 hours of the question being asked. Please be patient with us because we may experience a high volume of contact. Until we test this new form of learning, it is hard to know how many questions we will get and how best to timetable that.

- There will be scheduled times each week for teachers and learning assistance staff to have one to one communication with students via Google Hangout or phone calls home to answer questions about home learning and to maintain the relationship between teacher and child. A schedule will be provided. This is the third avenue, along with email and the google classroom page, that we have formalised to maintain communication between home and school.

### Student responsibilities

- Google classroom is a learning tool, however, students enjoy using it as a communication tool with their peers, particularly at a time when they are unable to socialise in other ways. Teachers will remind students about appropriate use of google classroom but you can support us in this area by having discussions with your child/ren about appropriate times and ways to communicate with their friends. What opportunities are available to them to catch up with friends that sit outside of the formal learning platform?
- Teachers frequently have conversations in school about looking after their own and other's equipment while at school. Responsibility is one of the PYP learner profiles. We suggest encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning space at home, tidying it at the end of the day, making sure there are no food scraps left around and that the space is ready for the next day's learning. We also want students to take care of any device they are using, whether it belongs to the family or to the school.

The following guidelines were written by teachers and senior students. We encourage you to use them at home.

I, the student, agree to:

- only use my device with my parent's permission
- take responsibility for the safety and care of my device - handle it carefully, keep food and drink away and store it safely when I am not using it, and
- be principled in my use of the device, using it appropriately for my learning:
  - only access websites that my teachers and parents have given me permission to use
  - report offensive and/or inappropriate material to my teacher or parent, including material which may be considered bullying
  - not use my device to search for, view or save material that is offensive or inappropriate
  - not use my device in a way that breaches another person's right to privacy e.g. not upload photographs of students/teachers to the internet
  - not share my passwords and google classroom codes
  - make sure my device is charged ready for learning each day.