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**E-LEARNING AT YCIS PUDONG: PLANNING FOR FUTURE  
SCENARIOS BASED ON LESSONS ALREADY LEARNED**

*Updated November 2022*



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## Rationale

Campus closure in February 2020 due to Covid-19 caught everyone by surprise and presented teachers and school leaders with a plethora of unexpected and unprecedented challenges, technological and pedagogical alike, that needed to be overcome in a short period of time. As it became apparent that school was not about to reopen any time soon, we realised what we had in place wasn't enough for our students. With our staff being both highly professional and innovative, we were able to find effective solutions to the vast majority of problems faced, and it is essential that we do not forget the lessons learned, and moreover that we leverage them for the future. In capturing some of those learnings, this document is designed to set out a flexible e-Learning framework with guidelines and planning for two key potential future scenarios:

1. Emergency campus closures, e.g., due to Covid-19, typhoons, snow days, etc.
2. Lockdowns or quarantines that mean a certain individual or group of students and/or teachers may not be able to be present on campus for a period of time

In addition, many of these learnings can be applied to our normal day-to-day school setting.

It is worth mentioning that the term 'e-Learning' is *electronic* in the sense that the communication element happens online. However, this does not mean that students are working solely on their devices, and nor should they be. The learning that takes place is highly varied in its formats. Wellbeing is central to our school culture and we have a number of policies and practices to ensure that use of devices is both safe and healthy.

Furthermore, we choose the term 'campus closure' rather than 'school closure' because campus closure does not cause our school to stop running. That is, we move to an alternative setup that is responsive to the needs of the moment so that we can keep providing the very best for each student's needs.

***"I think e-Learning has been positive because it is essentially like university in a way, where assignments and learning are set ahead of time, with some collaboration and meetings with teachers throughout the week. It gives students the independence to plan one's day and put emphasis on whatever subject needs more attention. It also gives more time since we do not have to commute to and from school, giving free time to supplement learning or do other activities."***

Year 13 Student

## Our Vision for e-Learning

At YCIS Pudong we have a clearly articulated Definition of Learning, and this remains the same whether we are on or off campus:

***High quality learning is a reflective and guided process of exploration in which we build upon experiences, skills and knowledge. Effective learning is meaningful, engaging and challenging – it motivates us to want to learn more.***

That said, our approach to e-Learning recognises that learning experiences teachers design when on campus often cannot simply be replicated with the same outcomes through remote learning. Online social interaction in particular looks rather different to the real-life classroom environment. This does not mean that it is worse, rather we need to find and become comfortable with alternative strategies so as to maximise the potential of distance learning.

When teachers are considering how best to plan units and lessons, we encourage them to consider how they are delivering the 'knowledge statements' in our Learning Principles, thus reflecting on the following:

- *How am I providing opportunities for students to solve problems by **connecting ideas to their own contexts**?*
- *How might I encourage **interaction and collaboration** when exploring essential questions?*
- *How am I developing **resilience and self-confidence** through opportunities for students to engage in **meaningful reflection**?*
- *How can I foster curiosity with engaging activities and resources that **stimulate inquiry**?*
- *What strategies am I using to ensure my assessment of learning promotes **timely, meaningful and ongoing dialogue** with each of my students?*
- *How am I maximising opportunities in my lessons for discussion around **cultural understanding and global citizenship**?*
- *How am I guaranteeing provision of the right level of **support and challenge** for each student?*



*Scheduled Fitness Sessions – YCIS Pudong: Active Community!*

# Leveraging Digital

In normal school life at YCIS Pudong, we harness digital technologies in order to promote a culture of deep learning by accelerating access to knowledge. The importance of this becomes heightened during campus closure or isolated quarantine when such technologies are the key tools for staying connected and managing learning.

Online or offline, YCIS Pudong will always continue normal day-to-day communications with students, parents and staff. These are remotely accessible and will function in an emergency situation.

Platform	Audience	Description
E-mail	Parents and Staff	Used for all major communications and announcements; used for setting work and sending schedules in ECE and Primary; used for sending schedules in Secondary
WeChat and WeCom	Parents and Staff	Used for filling out required health forms and other information; important school e-mails are also pushed out on WeChat
Seesaw / Padlet	ECE and Primary	Used for students to complete or upload specific tasks and reflections
ManageBac	Secondary	Used for communication and submission of assignments, provision of resources, calendar and messaging
Zomo / MS Teams	Students, Parents and Staff	Used for live lessons, learning conferences, meetings and webinars or parent information sessions

•Rhyming •Anaphor •Alliteration •Caesura •Personification •Metaphor

## The Caravan

Figures of men and horses, a caravan,  
 exposed on the white. Equipped with masks,  
 equipped with ropes, equipped with information  
 about the curse of Brady and Hindley to deliver,  
 equipped with an aura of hope. They travel inside  
 the cauldron where Winter brewed a war with a  
 swirling storm of screaming silver.  
 The hug of a dense mist embraces the area,  
 isolating the caravan. Smudged mountains shiver  
 on the thick white canvas. Snow sleep still  
 on the uneasy battleground and frozen river,  
 rocked by the lullaby of the howling wind.

**Annotations:**

- Establishes that the caravan consists of men and horses.**
- Refers to how the caravan stands out against the snowy land. Also shows that the caravan is alone.**
- The Coronavirus is compared to these two infamous murderers, emphasising that the Coronavirus is dangerous and difficult to deal with.**
- A harsh word, and refers to the devastating effects of the Coronavirus. It also shows the caravan lives through a difficult time.**
- Gives the caravan a saintly impression. It also suggests that there is hope in fighting the Coronavirus, and that humanity can survive through the tough time.**
- Compares a previous blizzard that happened in the area to a "war", showing how rough the surroundings are and how powerful the winter weather is.**
- Compares the surrounding to a cauldron, which is usually associated with witchcraft. This infers the wintry surroundings is like a spell that was cast into the area, suggesting it feels unnatural and powerful. "Winter" is capitalised, showing that the winter weather is very powerful and apparent.**
- Use of alliteration to emphasise "swirling" and "screaming", and is a metaphor. Both show how chaotic and powerful the previous blizzard was.**
- "hug" and "embraces" feel welcome, which suggests that the mist from the ice feels natural and has always been there.**
- Shows that the caravan is alone, and visibility is limited by the mist.**
- Gives the impression that the mist is like painting with distant shadows and lights like smudged ink.**
- Shows that it feels natural that snow lay naturally on the ground, and the snow is not moving.**
- Compares the mist to a "canvas" with smudged ink, suggesting that light and distant objects are faint and unclear.**
- Refers to the area. This shows that the area is rough and hard to navigate, as well as giving an unpleasant feel.**
- Feels smooth and comfortable, suggesting that there is a beauty and elegance in the wintry weather.**
- "lullaby", which feels soothing, juxtaposes with the "howling wind", which feels powerful and devastating. This suggests that the wintry weather is still elegant even though it is strong and devastating. There is sense of friendliness here, suggesting hope in the rough times of the Coronavirus.**

**Additional Notes:**

- A use of anaphor. This emphasises that the caravan is equipped and ready for overcoming the challenges in navigating the landscape. The last two uses give a heroic impression about the caravan.**
- The use of rhyming emphasises the words "deliver", "shiver" and "river".**
- The caesura creates abrupt pauses, creating an unusual rhythm, which reflects how the area and the time during the Coronavirus is very rough. It also mimics the stops of the horses, which has an unusual rhythm since they are travelling across thick snow.**

Use of technology to enhance learning in annotated poetry analysis – Year 10



## The Importance of Safeguarding Online

YCIS Pudong has a thorough and clear Child Protection Policy and Procedures, but online learning presents a rather different scenario to the normal on-campus environment. As such we have developed a few expectations for teachers when engaging in e-Learning with a whole class, small group or individual:

1. Ensure all conferences are pre-arranged between participants beforehand at appropriate times – please ensure parents are informed when an online conference involving students is being arranged.
2. During online conferences, both staff and students should be sitting in suitable environments and dressed appropriately (i.e. not on their beds, or with highly personal backgrounds).
3. Staff should continue the same professional caring attitude and maintain boundaries in their interactions with students, as they would in the face-to-face school environment.
4. Staff should adhere to the pre-agreed starting and finishing times.
5. Staff must follow normal rules of social media use as outlined in the Child Protection Policy and Procedures, and Adult Code of Conduct for working with Students. There should be absolutely no contact with students outside of school internal and approved platforms, and communication should have an educational purpose. Staff should ensure that their personal social media is private and inaccessible to students.
6. If the staff see or hear any unusual or concerning behaviours, they must report it to the Child Protection Officer.
7. Staff are expected to record all online sessions as this will provide transparency and a useful record for everyone. Teachers should consult school recording guidelines.
8. If staff choose to use any external learning resources, materials and platforms, they should check and get approval from the related Coordinator/Department Head. When possible, staff are required to download resources prior to the lessons.
9. To avoid sharing personal phone numbers, teachers should contact the parents by email, or through the school office to arrange a video conference.
10. Before moving into a phase of e-Learning, staff should re-read the Acceptable Use Policy.

Staff should also ensure that students are made aware of and follow the procedures below:

1. Choose an appropriate place to sit for the conference e.g. ideally at their desk or dining room table. It should be quiet but able to be supervised by adults in the home.
2. Dress appropriately, irrespective of the locations.
3. Maintain appropriate behaviour and respectful interactions with staff and other students, just as they would in person.
4. Communication with other students should only be as instructed by the teachers and not on other social media platforms.
5. Inform their teacher, counsellor or Child Protection Officer if they feel unsafe in a virtual class, session or forum.
6. Report any inappropriate, harmful or illegal material to their teacher, counsellor or Child Protection Officer.

***“A huge part of the learning curve has been to focus more on the wellbeing of students, and teachers, before the curriculum. It is a package and learning to manage that has been a very important part of my own development. Empathy and understanding before my own agenda - so key!”***

Primary Teacher

## **Guidelines, Roles and Responsibilities for Parents**

The transition to e-Learning will be challenging for families. Parents will need to think differently about how to support their children; how to create structures and routines that allow their children to be successful; and how to monitor and support their children's learning. Some students will thrive with aspects of e-Learning, while others may struggle. The guidelines provided below are intended to assist parents in thinking about what they can do to help their children find success in a distance learning environment.

### **1. Parental involvement has a positive impact.**

We know from a meta-analysis carried out by Hill and Tyson (2009) that "parental involvement during middle school is positively related to achievement", especially where it creates an understanding about the purposes, goals, and meaning of academic performance; communicates expectations about involvement; and provides strategies that students can use. We found this to be especially true during the course of e-Learning in Spring of 2020, with a strong correlation between students reporting their parents as very involved in their e-Learning and their ability to deal well with learning in a new environment. Thus, there is a clear message: talk regularly and supportively to your child about their learning goals, routines and needs.

### **2. Establish (or review) routines and expectations.**

In February 2020, parents were encouraged to establish routines and expectations as YCIS Pudong families moved to e-Learning for the first time. Many parents did so, which was critically important to their children's success as the campus closure went on. Some parents did not establish routines, instead leaving their children to figure out how best to learn on their own. Should families again be forced to move to e-Learning, it is important that they do not simply default to the routines established last time. Rather, parents and students should have a conversation about what worked, what didn't, and what needs to change. It is important that parents set expectations for how their children will spend their days before e-Learning starts, not some time later, after it becomes apparent your child is struggling with the absence of routine.

### **3. Define (or review) the physical space for your child's study.**

It is vital that you help your child establish a regular location where they will spend most of the time learning. Why not ask your child about their needs and guide them in creating a set-up that will facilitate optimal learning? It should be a place that can be quiet when needed and it will need a strong wireless internet signal. We recommend that their workspace has natural lighting, comfortable seating and is free of distracting items. It should also be a place where you can monitor and support their involvement. Key to success in e-Learning is that parents are as engaged as possible with their child's studies, and the physical environment has a significant impact on this, so it is worth taking seriously.

### **4. Monitor communications from your children's teachers.**

Teachers will communicate with parents through email, when and as necessary. The frequency and detail of these communications will be determined by your child's age, maturity, and degree of independence. YCIS Pudong wants parents to contact their children's teachers. However, we ask parents to remember that teachers will be communicating with a great many other families, and that communications should be

essential, succinct and self-aware. We also encourage parents to have their children explain the platforms teachers are using with them.

### **5. Begin and end each day with a check-in.**

Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, ask what your child is learning today. What are their learning targets or goals? How will they spend their time? What resources do they require? What support do they need? This brief grounding conversation matters. It allows children to process the instructions they've received from their teachers. It helps them organise themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (that's normal!), but they should, nevertheless. Parents should establish these check-ins as regular parts of each day to help manage independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines need to be established at the start of the e-Learning period, i.e., before students have the chance to fall behind or begin to struggle.

### **6. Take an active role in helping your child own their learning.**

In a regular school day, your child engages with other students or adults dozens if not hundreds of times. These social interactions include turning to a peer to exchange a thought or idea, participating in small or large group discussions, asking questions for clarification, collaborating on group projects, laughing at a joke on the playground, and countless other moments. While some of these social interactions will be re-created on virtual platforms, others will not. Human beings learn best when they have opportunities to process their learning with others. Beyond the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each day, parents should regularly circle back and engage with their children about what they're learning and how they are feeling.

### **7. Don't complete assignments for your child.**

It's important that your child owns their work, even when they are struggling. In the meta-analysis by Hill and Tyson (2009), parental involvement pertaining to homework assistance and supervising or checking homework was the only type of involvement that was not related with achievement. It may be tempting to 'help' them, but this perceived assistance typically has a negative effect, because students need to process their learning themselves. If your child is really struggling with a particular topic or concept, the best way to move forward is for them to have a conversation with their teacher about it, as the teacher will then be able to find strategies to consolidate their understanding. Parents should encourage, ask questions and reassure, but certainly not do the work for their child.

### **8. Establish times for quiet and reflection.**

A huge challenge for families with multiple children will be how to manage all of their children's needs, especially when those children are different ages and are working towards different curricular expectations. There may be times when siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distraction. Parents may even experiment with noise-cancelling headphones (no music necessary!) to block out distractions.

### **9. Ensure regular physical activity and exercise.**

Make sure your children regularly take opportunities to move and exercise. This is vitally important to their health and wellbeing, as well as to their learning. YCIS Pudong's PE teachers will recommend activities or exercise routines, but it is important for parents to model and encourage exercise! Better still, find ways to exercise as a family. Think also about how your children can pitch in more around the house with



chores or other responsibilities. Don't let your children off the hook – expect them to pitch in and to be active!

### 10. Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry.

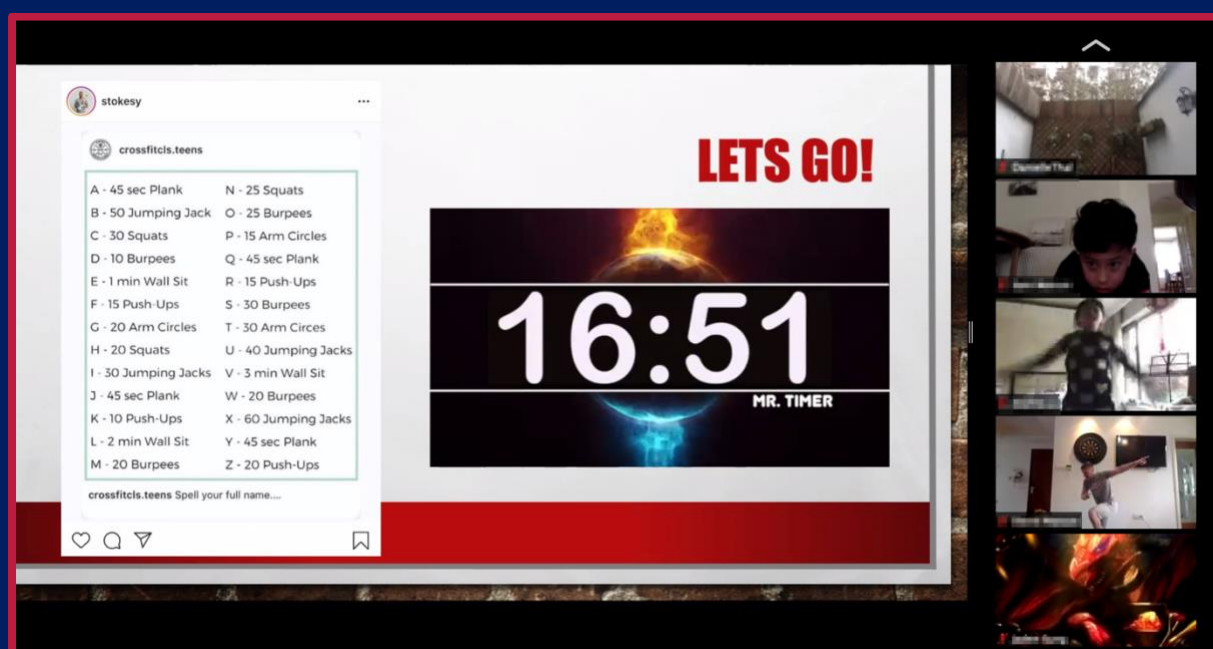
Should families need to move to e-Learning, it will inevitably feel like an uncertain time. It is imperative for parents to help their children manage any worry, anxiety and range of emotions they may experience. Difficult though it may be, do your best not to transfer your own stresses to your children. They may be out of sorts, whether they admit it or not, and need as much normalcy as parents can provide. Don't forget that the School Counsellors are also available online for appointment if your child wishes to talk through issues they are facing.

### 11. Monitor how your child is spending time online.

YCIS Pudong does not want its students staring at computer screens for 7-8 hours a day. It can be difficult to find the right balance between online and offline learning experiences, and parents should play a role in this by monitoring their child's use of devices and minimising distractions to ensure that their screen time is being used effectively. We also encourage continued involvement in non-curricular activities that students would normally be involved in – practising a musical instrument, reading for pleasure, playing board games, sports etc.

### 12. Keep your children social but set rules around social media interactions.

For a prolonged period of e-Learning, students start missing their friends, classmates and teachers. Help your children maintain contact with friends and see them in person when circumstances permit. Please do monitor your children's social media use. Social media apps such as WeChat, Instagram or TikTok are not official, school-sanctioned channels of communication. Remind your child to be polite, respectful and appropriate in their communications and to represent your family's values in their interactions with others.



*Taking on Stokesy's Challenge – one way the PE Department motivated our community to keep active*

## Guidelines, Roles and Responsibilities for Students

- Establish clear daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences. You may wish to use one of our school-provided planning tools for this purpose.
- Identify a comfortable, quiet space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully.
- Regularly monitor online platforms to check for announcements and feedback from your teachers.
- Complete assignments with academic integrity, doing your best work.
- Do your best to meet timelines, commitments and due dates.
- Communicate proactively with your teachers if you cannot meet deadlines or need additional support.
- Collaborate and support your YCIS Pudong peers in their learning.
- Comply with YCIS Pudong’s Acceptable Use Policy, including expectations for online etiquette.
- Proactively seek out and communicate with other adults at YCIS Pudong as different needs arise (see below).

### Important Requirements for Live Sessions

- Students should choose an appropriate place to sit for the conference (e.g., their desk or dining room table – quiet and private but not overly personal).
- Students should maintain appropriate behaviour and respectful interactions with staff and other students, just as they would in person.
- Students should wear school uniform for online live sessions.
- Students should not be messaging or communicating with other students on other social media platforms during lessons.
- Students should ensure their cameras are switched on and they can be clearly seen in view, but microphones should be muted unless asked to speak.

## Who to Contact?

For questions about...	Contact
Lessons, assignments or resources	The relevant teacher
A technology-related problem	<a href="mailto:helpdesk@ycis.com">helpdesk@ycis.com</a>
A personal or social-emotional concern	The relevant school counsellor: RP – <a href="mailto:jamie.hoel@ycis.com">jamie.hoel@ycis.com</a> CP – <a href="mailto:ariana.lester@ycis.com">ariana.lester@ycis.com</a>
Other issues related to e-Learning	Your homeroom or class teacher

*"I have really enjoyed my DT and artwork over the last few weeks because I feel like it was really productive to be able to take a break from screens and do some creative designing and sketching. I found it very relaxing and just very enjoyable."*

Year 9 Student

## **ECE - Priorities and Considerations**

- After receiving initial notice about campus closure or students/teachers in lockdown/quarantine, relevant leaders will send an email to parents with division-specific information. This will be followed up as needed by the child's teachers.
- We may not hold online classes for K2 depending on the duration of the campus closure. Plans will be communicated as early as possible.
- As the K3 and K4 students are a little older and mature enough to participate in online activities, we will offer online classes. K3 and K4 parents will have the option of whether or not their child will participate in online classes.
- The main tools for communication between teachers and families will be email and the SeeSaw app.
- It is important that the main characteristics of effective learning continue through our e-learning programme. Therefore, it is necessary to continue providing activities which allow for exploration and playing, active learning, Life Skills, physical movement, creating and thinking critically.
- Learning experiences during e-Learning will be supported with optional open-ended creative activities assigned on SeeSaw, requiring minimal screen time.
- The ECE Team will provide families with opportunities to maintain and develop social and emotional skills, literacy growth in both Chinese and English, numeracy skills, fine and gross motor skills through:
  - Daily connections in live sessions
  - Guided activities, experiences and challenges
  - Support for families as we all work together on e-Learning

### **Daily e-Learning Sessions**

Each day, the teachers will provide live sessions in the following areas. Each session will focus on the connections between teacher and students as learning is built upon in a holistic emergent manner.

- English
- Chinese
- Co-teaching
- Active Kids

Note, sessions such as English and Chinese language will be repeated, where necessary, to accommodate time zones and to ensure smaller teacher-student ratios.

### **Flexible Learning**

Extended activities offer opportunities to explore and develop new skills. These may include practising physical activities; Librarian story reading; Music activities; Art; focus on wellbeing

### **Time Frames for Live Sessions**

Approximate session times are as follows.

- K2: 15mins (for check-ins)
- K3-4: 20-30mins

## **Primary - Priorities and Considerations**

- After receiving initial notice about campus closure or students/teachers in lockdown/quarantine, relevant leaders will send an email to parents with division-specific information. This will be followed up as needed by the child's teachers.
- The main tools for communication between teachers and families will be email and the year level blog.
- To ensure the integrity of our curriculum and effective delivery of quality teaching and learning, it is important to maintain a sense of routine based around our regular school day as much as possible. Thus, students and staff will continue to follow a timetable as they would at school.
- Students will have both off- and on-screen learning activities and tasks designed to engage learners in experiences that connect to current curriculum. Students will be expected to check the daily blog and complete assignments set by their teachers as well as engaging in live sessions.
- Daily/Weekly blog posts with assigned work will be posted from 6pm the day before to allow parents to ensure their children are prepared for the tasks.
- Timely feedback will be provided to support students' learning.
- Students should not work longer than a typical school day. If everything isn't finished, we recommend that parents let the teacher know what was not completed.

## **Synchronous Learning through Live Sessions**

- Students will have several live sessions for different classes each day. A timetable will be provided for all live sessions. On a typical day, this will include around six sessions.
- Just as it is important to attend school daily to take advantage of the full range of learning activities, we encourage all of our students to actively participate in live sessions as these are an essential component of e-Learning.
- Core subjects such as English, Mathematics and Chinese language and Active Kids will be offered once a day.
- Topic lessons will be conducted at least twice a week.
- Specialist lessons will be offered through the week.
- If students are not able to attend online lessons, a recording will be sent out.

## **Time Frames for Live Sessions**

Session times are as follows. These are approximate times, according to needs at a given moment. Each session will typically include time for interaction as well as for individual classwork.

- Years 1-2: 30-40mins
- Years 3-4: 40-45mins
- Years 5-6: 45-50 mins

## **Secondary - Priorities and Considerations**

- After receiving initial notice about campus closure or students/teachers in lockdown/quarantine, relevant leaders will send an email to parents with division-specific information. This will be followed up as needed by the child's teachers.
- Teachers will set assignments using ManageBac. These assignments may themselves contain the relevant resources or may be linked to other sites depending on the needs of the subject. Due dates for all assignments will appear on the calendar in ManageBac.
- Learning experiences are designed to be completed independently or in collaboration with other students. Tutoring is not recommended, nor should a parent/guardian be too involved.
- Because the needs of different subjects are extremely diverse, provision for e-Learning in Secondary will look more varied than in other sections of the school. Planning will be carried out to ensure the learning experiences are maximised according to the specific area of the curriculum, and as such more practical subjects may look rather different to less practical ones.
- Students are encouraged to be proactive in reaching out to teachers when they have questions or are unclear about assignments.
- The Counsellor, Homeroom Teachers and relevant section Coordinators are always available to support students with academic, social, or emotional needs. Students are encouraged to be proactive in reaching out to schedule an appointment if they would like to talk through an issue they are facing.

## **Synchronous Learning through Live Sessions**

- Secondary students are expected to be independent in their approach to e-Learning and this is reflected in the requirement for them to manage their own schedule according to their individual timetable.
- Live lessons will be scheduled in accordance with our normal two-week timetable. Teachers will only arrange live sessions in the normal scheduled lesson time, unless there is a need for a class before/after school to accommodate differing time zones or provide extra support.
- All live sessions for synchronous learning will be scheduled using the calendar function on Teams. Teachers will schedule these by 15:30 on Friday of the previous week in order for students to be able to map out their week ahead.
- A live session will last 30-50 minutes according to curricular needs at that time. These live sessions will be supplemented by assignments to be completed in the students' own time.
- Friday Period 8 Community Time will continue as normal using the Zomo webinar account or Teams calls, depending on the nature of the planned activities.



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