

HOME-BASED LEARNING VERSION 1

AT MATER MARIA

PARENTS - 26 March 2020

This document sets out in broad terms a framework to support the implementation of a home-based (remote) learning model that will take effect from Monday 30 March 2020. At this stage there are many unknown parameters and the landscape is changing daily with different Government strategies and guidelines therefore this framework will be constantly evolving and responding to the needs of the community and the resources available at any given time. This first version of the plan will be evaluated by staff and a sample group of students and parents at the end of this term. By that stage, we should have more of an idea on what schooling will look like in Term 2 for everyone and in particular our Year 12 students. Updates will be communicated as changes are made.

CONTEXT - OUR NEW REALITY

As a society, we have been forced to change our way of life to protect the most important thing we all have, our health. We have changed the way we work, parent, socialise, learn, teach, exercise, shop, celebrate, worship and relate to one another - basically our lives have changed for the time being. Although we know it is temporary, change never feels comfortable and in times of great change we look for stability and support. This situation will force us all to take stock of what is truly important and we will soon be feeling grateful for little things that we used to take for granted. When we are in home isolation the family unit becomes the focal point for this support and stability. At Mater Maria we value quality education as well as community and hospitality - we ask ourselves, how we can show compassion to all as we go about doing our personal best as learners?

Our home-based learning model recognises the extra strain all families are feeling. We are attempting to find a balance of keeping our students engaged and in the routine of learning, as well as supporting you as a family to show love and care for one another.

DEFINITION OF HOME-BASED LEARNING

The school provides students with the opportunities to continue their learning from the isolation of their home. It is a flexible programme of learning that has the capability to adjust depending on the available resources. It is significantly different to normal school-based lessons and requires a different mindset from all parties for it to be effective. It is obviously more student centred than the traditional classroom and requires a level of independence and responsibility that our students are capable of, given the correct amount of support from both their teachers and family. It might take awhile for some students to settle into this type of learning arrangement.

MAINTAINING A NORMAL DAILY ROUTINE

It is important to continue a normal school day routine and complete the timetabled hours of school work for each subject. We strongly encourage students to follow the routine and guidelines below:

- ❖ Get out of bed, say good morning to your family, have breakfast and get changed in time for learning by 8:40 am. Don't stay in your PJs all day - especially if video conferencing - it's not appropriate.
- ❖ 8:40 am - start the school day with a prayer - one of gratitude is good and include your intentions. There are prayers in your diary and others will be posted on the 'Wellbeing Site'
<https://sites.google.com/dbb.catholic.edu.au/wellbeingmater/daily-prayer>
- ❖ 8:50 am - start checking your emails, compass notifications, Google classrooms for information and school work.
- ❖ Create a 'To Do' list for the school work required for the day ahead. Your daily timetable can be seen on *Compass* and you can use the *My Tasks* feature to create your daily 'To Do' list.
- ❖ 9:10 am - 3:30 pm focus on completing your school work -
 - try to stick to your timetabled classes in the appropriate lesson times, this is when your teacher is available for your class.
 - Your teacher will give you instructions on how they will communicate with you each lesson - please be available for any group collaboration sessions or video conferencing (Years 11 & 12 only at this stage)
 - as you finish a task, tick it off your 'To Do' list.
 - take short breaks and to avoid eye strain, look away from your screen to the distant corner of the room or out a window for 30s every 20min.
 - eat a healthy morning tea and lunch.
 - keep hydrated with water - try to drink 2L of water a day.
- ❖ After school maintain an exercise regime - keep social distancing in mind.
- ❖ Complete any extra work required i.e. assessment tasks or allocated work not completed during the day.
- ❖ You need to clear your daily to do list before relaxing, gaming and watching videos. It will be a good idea to reduce your gaming and small screen video watching given that your learning screen time will increase.
- ❖ Read a book for 30min a day - you will not be doing DEAR.
- ❖ Maintain healthy sleeping patterns.

Student Responsibilities -

- ❖ To be actively engaged with learning.
- ❖ Regularly check school email, compass notifications and check-in with Google Classrooms throughout the school day.
- ❖ Submit work through Google Classroom when requested by your teacher.
- ❖ Be authentic with the completion of work, do not copy and paste content from the internet or copy work from friends unless it is a collaborative task - it should be your own work.
- ❖ Communicate any issues with classwork with the class teacher
- ❖ Communicate any wellbeing issues with Year Coordinator
- ❖ Follow all College expectations with regards to respectful, responsible and safe uses of technology - see pages 143 -146 of the student diary.
- ❖ Respect others when using communication tools especially video conferencing. We will take the 'mucking around' by sharing images, video and audio of teachers and /or students is very serious and will not be tolerated.

TEACHER COMMUNICATION & TOOLS

	LEARNING TOOLS	COMMUNICATION
Standard (all Years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Google Apps for Education including Google Classroom ● DBB email address ● On-line resources ● Education Perfect (Yr7-10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shared collaborative documents e.g. a class chat on a shared Google doc ● Email questions, queries and submit work. ● Links provided by teachers ● Teachers to set activities - students have been sent login instructions.
Advanced (Yr 11 & 12 only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As above ● Video conferencing (<i>optional based on teacher choice</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Face-to-face learning

If students are unable to access the work online, please inform your child's Year Coordinator ASAP - please outline the problem so we can organise support.

Teacher Responsibilities -

- ❖ To set rigorous, relevant lessons for students and upload these onto Google classroom.
- ❖ Be available to respond to student enquiries during school hours (8:50am-3:15pm).
- ❖ Check work and give feedback on student work through Google Classroom or other tools already in use.
- ❖ Make contact with parents/carers of students who are not completing set work or engaging in the learning experiences - a simple email to parents.

ASSESSMENT

- ❖ The vast majority of in-class assessment tasks have been cancelled and a couple have been reshaped into a hand in tasks.
- ❖ All scheduled hand-in assessment tasks are to be completed and submitted by the due date unless teachers have directed otherwise.
- ❖ Formal assessment will now be put on hold until we have more clarity about the potential closure of schools and the estimated duration of that closure.
- ❖ Students will receive feedback on their classwork that they are producing through the home-based learning plan and we will be collecting data on student achievement through this work that can be used to assign grades for students in Years 7-11 if need be.
- ❖ Students will be acknowledged for their commitment to learning and the improvement that we witness in their day-to-day work.

LEARNING SUPPORT

- ❖ Learning support staff will work with different subject areas to develop differentiated learning activities.
- ❖ Students (and their parents) who have case managers and plan managers will receive regular communications with learning support teachers.
- ❖ Parents can contact their child's case manager or Tara Marshall (Learning Support Coordinator) if there are issues.

HSC STUDENTS

- ❖ NESA will post updated information here
<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/about/news/novel-coronavirus>
- ❖ At this stage advice from NESA to Year 12 students is:
 - *We know you are worried - while we recognise we are facing an unprecedented situation, we want to assure you that you will be able to get a HSC certificate this year and that the certificate will facilitate access to university, further education and employment, as it has for students over the past 50 years.*
 - *Keep learning, do your assessments as advised by your school, most importantly, look after yourself, whether you are at school or at home. Reach out to family, friends and your teachers if you need to.*
 - *If you get sick, your school and NESA have provisions to ensure you are not disadvantaged.*
- ❖ We will keep students and parents informed in regard to HSC assessment tasks.
- ❖ As soon as NESA have given some direction on major works and performances, we will provide Year 12 students with a complete update. We expect to receive this information within the next week. Once we have this information we will work out a plan to assist students with their major works.
- ❖ Teachers are keen to assist all students so please keep in constant communication.
- ❖ Use the opportunity of having extra time to get study notes together and do some past papers on NESA website -
<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/home>
- ❖ Support one another by setting up group chats and sharing good study resources.
- ❖ Contact Mrs Saunders, Mrs Hurley, Mrs Timp or Mr Reicher if you need assistance for your Year 12 student.

STUDENT WELLBEING / PASTORAL

- ❖ A 'Wellbeing' google site has been created and will be constantly updated with resources for students and parents. Here is the link <https://sites.google.com/dbb.catholic.edu.au/wellbeingmater/home>
- ❖ If a student has any issue they should contact their Year Coordinator or our Pastoral Care Coordinator for assistance and support.
 - Year 7 - amanda.atkin@dbb.catholic.edu.au
 - Year 8 - mark.leaver@dbb.catholic.edu.au
 - Year 9 - paul.graham@dbb.catholic.edu.au
 - Year 10 - michael.rulli@dbb.catholic.edu.au
 - Year 11 - kate.nowland@dbb.catholic.edu.au
 - Year 12 - kathryn.saunders1@dbb.catholic.edu.au
 - Pastoral Care Coordinator - allison.hurley@dbb.catholic.edu.au
- ❖ Support services will be made available for students in need.
- ❖ If students are having any issues with technology or not being able to access lesson content they should email their Year Coordinator with a description of the issue - we will then organise the appropriate support.
- ❖ Tips for looking after your children during isolation include:
 - ❖ Talking to your whole family about what is happening. Understanding the situation will reduce their anxiety.
 - ❖ Help your children to think about how they have coped with difficult situations in the past and reassure them that they will cope with this situation too. Remind them that the isolation won't last for long.
 - ❖ Exercise regularly. Options could include exercise DVDs, dancing, floor exercises, yoga, walking around the backyard or using home exercise equipment, such as a stationary bicycle, if you have it. Exercise is a proven treatment for stress and depression.
 - ❖ Encourage your children to keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media (where appropriate).

TIPS FOR PARENTS

We appreciate that this may be a difficult time for your family with many families sharing space and resources for parents to complete their work and students to complete their schooling. The changing dynamics of the family home and the financial stress that many families are experiencing only add to the complexity of things.

Many schools have come up with different models to keep students feeling like it is a normal school day including making their students put on uniforms so they are ready for normal schooling. We will support any reasonable measures that you believe will work for your family however we do not wish to impose strict guidelines that have the potential to cause unnecessary conflict in your home - you know what is best for your children.

However, we do ask that you:

- ❖ Encourage your children to maintain a regular school workday as described above.
- ❖ Ensure students take scheduled breaks and walk away from their learning spaces and from their screens.
- ❖ Check-in with your children twice daily about what work they need to be doing and how they are going with it.
- ❖ Check the Google Classroom pages of your children's subject areas and make sure that work is being completed authentically a couple times a week.
- ❖ Encourage your children to maintain regular bedtimes and sleep patterns and wake up at a regular time for their school day.
- ❖ Check-in with your children's Year Coordinator with any concerns over their mental health, wellbeing or work issues.

What is Google Classroom?

We appreciate that you may not be aware of how your children are using Google classroom and other Google Apps to communicate, share their learning, ask questions and seek clarification from their teachers.

This is just one of many videos that can help you understand the technology your children are using - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6L-nZGIUTE>

The NSW Department of Education website have some excellent resources and tips for parents, some of which I have included below:

<https://www.education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-from-home/advice-to-parents-and-carers>

❖ **Setting up a learning environment at home:**

Try to create a quiet and comfortable learning space. Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may not be suitable for working in for an extended period of time. A space/location for extended learning should be a public/family space, not in a bedroom. It should be a place that can be quiet at times and have a strong wireless internet signal, if possible.

Refer to this [Learning environment checklist \(PDF 81KB\)](#) for more advice.

❖ **How to talk to your children about school work?**

In the morning, ask:

- ❖ What are you learning today?
- ❖ What are your learning targets or goals?
- ❖ How will you be spending your time?
- ❖ What resources do you require?
- ❖ What support do you need?

In the afternoon, ask:

- ❖ What did you learn today?
- ❖ Acknowledge one thing that was difficult. Either let it go or come up with a strategy to deal with the same problem if it comes up again
- ❖ Consider three things that went well today. Why were they good?
- ❖ Are you ok? Do you need to ask your teacher for something? Do you need help with something to make tomorrow more successful?

These specific questions matter because they allow your child to process the instructions they have received from their teachers and help them organise themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (this is normal!), but they should anyway.

For more information, refer to [Remote learning guidelines for students and parents \(PDF 186KB\)](#).

SUPPORTING EACH OTHER
It Is Time To Show Support and Compassion To All

- ❖ Over the past couple of weeks I have heard many stories from so many of our students, parents and staff about their concerns and family situations. We have a number of very vulnerable people in our community and we need to support them through this time.
- ❖ Wellbeing Site - there is a parent section on our wellbeing site where we will provide some resources to assist parents and students. This site is currently being developed and will be updated regularly with new resources - <https://sites.google.com/dbb.catholic.edu.au/wellbeingmater/parent-page>
- ❖ Financial assistance - we understand that we already have many families who are experiencing financial stress and should we move to Category 3 lockdown, we will have many more - we are committed to supporting all families through this time and there is no need to consider moving your child from their school due to financial issues - we are here to support you.
- ❖ We are fully committed to doing our best to provide a dynamic home-based learning plan that meets the needs of our students. I ask for your support and understanding that we have developed this program in four working days. It will take a little while to settle into this new routine. As mentioned previously we will be constantly evaluating and reviewing this plan and I predict there will be a number of versions published before we return to normal lessons again.
- ❖ As outlined in this plan teachers will be available to provide guidance and answer questions during the school day. We have put in contingencies should staff become ill themselves and they can not complete their teaching duties however there may be times when the teacher is not available. Students will be informed of this within the content of the lesson in Google classroom.
- ❖ As teachers we are fortunate that we are able to work from home and we are excited at the opportunity to support our students however I do ask that we all remember that teachers are normal members of the community who also have families, become ill and are going through similar issues as everyone else.
- ❖ We thank our community for your support and encouragement over the past week - it has been much appreciated. I feel blessed to belong to this supportive community and I pray that we all keep well and support those who are struggling in our society.