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THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL



THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL-
DUBAI
REMOTE LEARNING PLAN
GUIDELINES FOR
2020

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Remote Learning Plan Overview

The purpose of this document is to outline the approach and actions The Westminster School (TWS) has put into effect in the event of a school closure. We have and will continue to offer an effective education through a Remote Learning Plan (RLP). At The Westminster School, we are committed to delivering a high-quality education and fulfilling our mission for our learners. We are relentless to establish effective means to do so under the current circumstances that require a full campus closure. In such conditions, our commitment is to provide alternative means of education in the form of a Remote Learning Plan. The RLP outlines the experience that students will have when school remains in session, but when students are unable to physically attend school because of campus closure. While an RLP cannot replicate onsite learning, our teachers can and are delivering powerful instructions that allows students to meet expected standards in an online environment. The aim is for our learners to continue to be inspired, passionate, and intrinsically motivated to reach their learning goals.

The success of our RLP requires a true partnership. Firstly, our dedicated teachers will commit to careful planning, maintaining an online presence, and providing regular feedback. Our students will need to bring motivation, presence and engagement to each session and subsequent online work. Lastly, our families need to support this alternative mode of instruction in the home environment. The result of such learning experiences will continue to support students' academic progress and will be mindful to attend to students' social and emotional well-being.

While this is a challenging time of uncertainty and change, these circumstances also provide an opportunity to explore innovative learning opportunities for our students. Our learners, through Microsoft Teams, are equipped with learning dispositions and mindsets that allow them to be flexible in their learning. Our infrastructure and staff are prepared to support our learners. TWS is prepared for this challenge and will work relentlessly to ensure that there is continuity and support for our community.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency of approach in learning. Teachers will be expected to provide quality instruction and lessons via online platforms.
- The use of existing technology should enable students to learn at home and parents to support in collaboration with teachers.
- To ensure the continuity of learning for our students.
- Provide guidelines on how to deliver high quality lessons and to ensure consistency.
- Explain the method of online lesson delivery through technology and platforms.
- Set out expectations for staff, students and parents in the event that students cannot attend school.
- Instil confidence in the provision for online learning.

APPROACH

To ensure quality of learning and teaching is in line with normal lessons, the following should be evident:

- Detailed Remote Learning Plans to be uploaded to the school website every Thursday
- Reflect students' existing timetables for year groups. Each class will study the same lessons each week (reduced timings during Ramadan).
- Timetables as per normal and can be seen on myLearning.
- Learning is new and shows progression in every child's learning.
- In addition, examination year groups will also continue the revision and consolidation and collecting evidence of their learnings.
- Ensures that a teacher is contactable through online platforms or email.
- Communication will be in a timely manner (within 48 hours).
- Learning objectives are clearly shared.
- Time expectations follow timetable structure.
- Direct teaching videos will be incorporated as appropriate
- Specialist teacher lessons - including Arabic and Islamic will be similar to normal planning structure.
- PE to provide suggested physical activities not necessarily based on the current topics.
- Learning will include online, small group collaborative sessions, and live online full class sessions
- Phoenix Classroom and Microsoft Teams will be the main learning platforms used. Other third party applications will be used for supplementary learning in the same way they are used during normal school time.

Leadership Expectations

First and foremost, The Westminster School leaders set the tone and model what is expected for every member of our learning community. Administrators' daily support, online presence and responsiveness are essential.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The list below outlines some of the commitments the leadership is expected to make, but is not all-encompassing. The role of the leaders is to rise to any occasion or need from our learning community.

- Develop, monitor and adjust divisional plans for remote learning.
- Share the RLP with the student and parent community through the school website and email.
- Communicate with faculty/staff on a daily basis and for parents on a weekly basis.
- Support faculty/staff and parents in utilizing the RLP.
- Ensure effective implementation of RLP and accountability to student learning.
- Monitor staff and student attendance through the support of the pastoral team and act upon regular absences to ensure staff and students are engaged in the remote learning expectations.
- Support with any technical issues that may arise with the online platforms being used through our IT Support Team.
- Respond to emails in compliance with our norms of no more than 24 hours.
- Disseminate a student and parent survey and analyze results to make the necessary changes to the program.
- Continue to hold regularly scheduled meetings virtually i.e. grade level, department, and full faculty meetings.
- Attend virtual Senior Leadership Meetings, and other regularly scheduled meetings.

- Review new admission files as disseminated and returned to Admission in no more than 24 hours.

Teacher Expectations:

TWS teachers are expected to maintain the school's high expectations for professionalism and conduct. As a result, we have outlined the school-wide expectations for teachers below. There are also specific guidelines below.

- Continue to have the safety and wellbeing of students at the heart of their work.
- Understand this is a challenging time for parents and are here to support students and families.
- Continue to offer outstanding education within the context of distance learning.
- Offer a variety of screen based and non-screen based activities daily.
- Discuss and monitor online safety regularly with their students.
- Ensure that any "live session" has a minimum of 3 participants (including the teacher).
- Be careful when sharing your screen during online lessons Ensure that all irrelevant documents, websites and programmes such as Outlook are closed when sharing your screen
- Record and store all live sessions so that they can be reviewed when necessary.
- Discuss wellbeing concerns with their students and offer support from the wellbeing department.
- Do not use personal accounts to communicate with students and families. .
- Set expectations for online behavior as you would set classroom expectations.
- Report any suspicious online behavior.
- Monitor and consider the needs of Students of Determination and other vulnerable students
- Consider your surroundings, ensure that your home and personal materials cannot be identified in the background when conducting live or video sessions.
- Dress professionally Treat online lessons the same as delivering a lesson in the classroom and maintain a professional image.
- Follow the current daily class schedule.
- In the event that a teacher is sick, the teacher is to follow the same protocol of reporting an absence.
- Be available to students, colleagues, and parents during normal working hours (i.e. 7:50 am – 1:50 pm), Sunday through Thursday and 9 am to 2 pm during Ramadan.

Specialist Teacher Expectations:

Physical Education: develop a bank of exercises and physical activities for students and share these with classroom teachers and families.

Art: Staying mindful of the resources and tools families may not have in their home, develop a bank of projects and activities for students and share these with classroom teachers and families.

Music: Staying mindful of the instruments or resources families may not have in their home, develop a bank of activities for students and share these with classroom teachers and families.

Computer & IT: Staying mindful of the technologies students may have access to at home, develop activities that demonstrate their understanding.

Collaborate with classroom teachers on how to integrate content into classroom projects and experiences.

Modern Foreign Languages: Utilize technologies that will allow assessment of speaking and listening activities.

Arabic:

- Collaborate with colleagues in designing RLP experiences in accordance with school- wide and divisional plans.
- Develop high-quality learning experiences.
- Communicate with and provide timely feedback to students and parents.
- Communicate the weekly learning and homework as per divisional agreements.

Islamic Education:

- Collaborate with colleagues in designing RLP experiences in accordance with school-wide and divisional plans.
- Develop high-quality learning experiences.
- Communicate with and provide timely feedback to students and parents.
- Communicate the weekly learning and homework as per divisional agreements.

Innovation Leaders:

- Communicate regularly with assigned teachers to support planning, facilitation of learning opportunities, lessons and creation of assessment tools.
- Collaborate with Subject Leaders to continuously develop and update the department's RLP.
- Provide teachers within your divisions with useful links, e.g. "How to Videos", apps and/or alternate strategies.

SEND Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Support Staff:

- Maintain 1:1 communication with the assigned students.
- The teacher should communicate regularly with the subject or classroom teachers who teach the students on their caseload.
- Ensure all teachers are added as a collaborator on each learning platform.
- Teachers will help the subject or classroom teacher differentiate lessons and activities for the students on their caseload.
- The teacher will communicate regularly with students on their caseload and/or the parents to ensure they have success with distance learning.
- Teachers will provide supplementary learning activities for students on their caseload who may benefit from additional practice to close academic and curricular gaps.

Learning Support Assistants:

- Communicate regularly with classroom teachers to identify ways you can support students and contribute to planning and instruction.
- Monitor student learning and provide feedback to students, as requested by the teachers and teams you support.

Librarians:

- Communicate regularly with Subject Leaders and Key Stage Leaders to support planning and facilitation of learning opportunities and lessons e.g. what subscriptions can be utilized.
- Collaborate with Subject Leaders and Key Stage Leaders to continuously develop and update department's Remote Learning Plan.

Educational/Lab Assistants:

- Communicate regularly with classroom teachers to identify ways of supporting students and contributing to planning and instruction.
- Monitor student learning and provide feedback to students, as requested by the teachers and teams.

Remember:

The transition to remote learning is not simple or easy. Teachers will need to think differently about how to communicate, give instruction, and provide feedback; how to design lessons and assignments that are authentic and meaningful; and how to ensure students continue to collaborate and communicate with others. The points provided below are intended to help teachers across all divisions reflect on challenges they will confront in shifting to distance learning.

1- Culture of Kindness:

The students may be stressed or worried. Before diving into curriculum, take the time to assess the students' mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. How are they doing? How are their families? Continue regular check-ins with the students as long as this RLP is in place.

2- Evaluate students' conditions for distance learning:

While most students will have reliable online access at home and the necessary device to shift to distance learning, others may not. Teachers should remember that each family's circumstances will vary and they should avoid assumptions about limitations or restrictions students are facing. Ask the students and/or their parents to confirm their location (possibly not the UAE) and time zone; whether their online access is reliable; and what devices the student has at their disposal. Open a dialogue with families and avoid assumptions that all students' circumstances are the same.

3- Less is more approach:

TWS implement this RLP, one challenge confronting teachers will be how to best streamline content and elevate the most essential learning for students. In other words, teachers need to take a less-is-more perspective, including the pacing of lessons and assignments. It can also be hard to know exactly how long school closure might last, which makes longer-term planning difficult.

4- Designers of experience; facilitators of learning:

In shifting to remote learning, it is especially important for teachers to think of themselves as designers of experiences and facilitators of learning (as opposed to distributors of knowledge). Remote learning places a premium on a teacher's ability to think more deeply about how to introduce content, design experiences, and coach students with thoughtful, specific feedback. Teachers need to establish conditions where students have a clear sense of purpose, opportunities to express themselves, and experiences that allow them to work toward mastery. This will help students stay motivated and engaged in learning, even when they are not physically at school.

5- Think differently about assessment:

Assessment is one of the most challenging adjustments for teachers during distance learning. Distance learning should be seen as an opportunity for students, individually or collaboratively, to complete writing assignments, design infographics, make video presentations, or complete oral assessments via video chat. Teachers are encouraged to think differently about the end goal to

performance instead of forcing a traditional assessment method that doesn't fit distance learning. Thinking differently about assessment will positively influence the experience for students, leverage the strengths of distance learning, and prevent frustration on the teacher's part when traditional methods do not work.

Marking and Feedback:

- There should be a range of activities for students, using a mixture of on-line and written responses
- Each year group will set the expectations of the balance between on-line activities and copy book activities to balance screen time
- Feedback on completed work should be given by the end of the following working day. This should be a mixture of
 - Vocal response
 - Written response (e.g. annotated work, photographs etc)
- Some tasks will be projects which require feedback at the end of the week
- Where teachers assign projects and coursework, students may be required to submit work to the teacher directly who will in turn provide feedback and next steps
- Marking schemes, rubrics and answers may be provided to allow for self-assessment and reflection opportunities
- A formal formative assessment should be carried for every child at least every two weeks. Marks from this assessment should be recorded in the normal way
- Grades from all assessments should be recorded in the same way as they would for assessments taken in the classroom

Attendance:

- Parents to email in, if their child is sick or absent from learning as per normal school policy
- In order to get an attendance mark there must be evidence of completing online work. This could be through joining a remote classroom activity, submitting work to a teacher or communication from a parent confirming learning has taken place.
- Students must aim to have at least 96% attendance at all time.

Cyber security and Safeguarding:

- The e-learning class is an official class that is subject to the regulations and laws of the face-to-face classrooms in the United Arab Emirates.
- The e-learning class is subject to the law of electronic crimes in the Federal Government No (12) for the year 2016 regarding the use of the Internet and social media.
- Be sensible as you communicate. Reread your written text before posting or emailing. In much of the corporate world, writing in all caps is considered yelling and, therefore, is not acceptable in any online communication, nor is texting lingo.
- If staff are in live sessions at home, ensure they have checked the background or blurred the background so that their place of residence cannot be identified and there are no personal/unprofessional materials in the background eg papers with addresses, personal photos etc. It should not take place in a bedroom.

- **Harassment and other offensive behavior.** The online learning environment is no place to harass, threaten, or embarrass others. Comments that can be viewed, as offensive, sexist, or racially motivated will not be tolerated.
- **Offensive material.** Students may not post, transmit, promote, or distribute content that is racially, religiously, or ethnically offensive or is harmful, abusive, vulgar, sexually explicit, otherwise potentially offensive.
- **Copyrights and intellectual property.** Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Ideas that are copied should always be cited correctly.
- **In case you feel threatened by something or someone's actions, then immediately report to an adult who could be your form tutor/counselor or DSL. The contact email and number is mentioned in the important contacts list.**

Parent Expectations:

With the transition to remote learning, parents, in partnership with teachers 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 remote learning, while others may find it challenging as this is a new way to access the curriculum. The guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in a remote learning environment.

- Parents should support the school's aims and objectives of on-line learning by encouraging participation
- The age of the child should be considered - home learning environment should be adjusted to suit their educational needs.
- Children should be provided with an environment conducive to learning (access to technology, safe and quiet space during daytime).
- Understand this is a challenging time for students too.
- Set up a family meeting discussing rules, devices, emotions and needs.
- Maintain a routine at home for their child, balancing learning with physical and mental wellbeing.
- Do not leave their child unsupervised.
- Support their child's distance learning as best as they can.
- Monitor, as best as they can, their child's online activity: online work, games, time spent...
- Make sure their child has plenty of off line time every day including in the evening before bedtime (no screens in the bedroom).
- Use TWS helpline (helpline_tws@gemsedu.com) to ensure constructive communication.
- Contact their class teacher or the wellbeing department for questions or extra support.
- Remember that everything doesn't have to be perfect, we understand this is hard.
- Remember their own wellbeing and try to practice self-compassion.
- Encourage physical activity and/or exercise.
- Remain mindful of stress or worry. It is imperative for parents to help their children manage the worry, anxiety, and range of emotions they may experience.
- Keep children social, but set rules around social media interactions, help children maintain contact with friends and see them in person when circumstances permit.

Student Roles & Responsibilities:

- I do my best to continue to learn from my home.
- I stay safe by following my teachers' guidelines.
- I use a safe search engine.
- During online teaching time I stay focused on my work and don't play at the same time.
- I stay kind and polite online, I will not tease, embarrass, share pictures or rumours or bully others.
- I create my own work with my own words, I don't copy from the internet.
- I respect my family's decisions for what I am allowed to watch, play or listen to and when.
- I will tell my parent and teacher if anything online makes me feel uncomfortable, sad or unsafe.
- I will tell my parent and teacher if I am a victim or I witness any cyberbullying.
- I am mindful of spending plenty of time off line every day.
- I can share my wellbeing concerns with my parents, teachers
- Collaborate and support TWS peers in their learning.
- I will not disrupt any lessons within my organisation.
- I will not start or participate in any groups or chats which do not involve a teacher.

Important Contacts

- Learning related questions and initial contact should be sent directly to the class teachers using email or Phoenix Classroom
- Unanswered questions on Passwords and technical issues to Mr Shynnath Kalari Kunnummal, shynnath.k_tws@gemsedu.com
- Alternative general help enquiries: helpline_tws@gemsedu.com
- All other communication as per normal communications channels
- In the case of the school being closed to staff two emergency numbers will be available: +971521082241 and +971521082251
- Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) Ms. Sahar Aly Manssy. Her email is sahar.i_tws@gemsedu.com

References:

[GEMS Safeguarding and Inclusion guidelines for remote learning](#)



❖ Managing Behaviour for Online Learning:

1 st Degree Offences (Simple)	Minor Behavioural Offences (Distance Learning)
1.1 Repeated tardiness without an acceptable excuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A delay of (10) minutes or more from the beginning of a distance learning class when broadcasting live without an acceptable excuse.
1.2 Non-compliance with the school uniform policy without an acceptable excuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing clothes that violate public decency and morals while attending the period when broadcasting the distance learning period live.
1.3 Failure to follow the rules of positive behaviour inside and outside the class, such as remaining calm and maintaining discipline during the period, and making inappropriate sounds inside and outside the class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private conversations or discourse that are not related to study and hinder the course of the lesson during the live broadcasting of the distance learning period. • Ridiculing the teacher or a colleague during the distance learning period.
1.4 Eating during periods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating while attending a distance learning period especially during Ramadan
1.5 Misuse of electronic devices such as a tablet and others during the period, including electronic games and headphones in class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding any unauthorized program, including programs that are shared and free programs. • Using the microphone feature, camera or chat without prior permission from the teacher. • Playing games (except with the express permission of the teacher because it is an educational necessity linked to the lesson.) • Misusing rights and tools available through Microsoft Teams.
2 nd Degree Offences (Medium Severity)	Medium Severity Behavioural Offences (Distance Learning)
2.1 Absence from school without an acceptable excuse at any time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence from a single school day (via distance learning) without an acceptable excuse.
2.2 Incitement to intimidate classmates, fight threaten or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inciting students not to attend periods, threatening or intimidating them, and not attending periods in distance learning platforms. • Creating quarrels between students, whether visual or written, by broadcasting via synchronous and asynchronous distance learning platforms. • Not responding to the rules governing the course of lessons.
2.3 Misusing communication any means of bullying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misusing ministerial computers during or after the completion of distance education periods. • Engaging in audio and video communication with the rest of the students for non-educational purposes after the end of the official period time, be it on or off school premises. • Using e-mail or social media to reveal information of a personal nature. • Removing the teacher or students from the group that leads to blocking the course of the lesson, teacher's work and other students' rights.

2.4 Verbal abuse or insulting students, staff or school guests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using profanity, racial slurs, or other language (text, sound, or hint) that may be offensive to any other user. • Abusing or insulting official visitors during periods during the live broadcast.
2.5 Smoking online and/or possession of smoking paraphernalia visible to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking while attending the distance learning period or possessing any smoking paraphernalia while attending the period.
3rd Degree Offences (Serious)	Serious Behavioural Offences (Distance Learning)
3.1 Bullying of various kinds and forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the initiative's communication and information technology to insult, curse, threaten with violence, slander, or blackmail in a deliberate and repeated manner via any digital platform.
3.2 Attempting to defame or abuse schoolmates and/or personal on social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in unofficial mailing lists and bulletins within the distance education initiative and posting information about teachers and students without permission. • Posting about the initiative through social media. • Divulging other students' personal information, including home addresses and phone numbers.
3.3 Impersonating others in school transactions or forging school documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for information, obtaining specific copies, or modifying files and other data, or passwords belonging to other users on the network. • Entering and using the account of another teacher or student with or without his/her knowledge and/or consent.
3.4 Destroying or damaging school, tools and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destroying, modifying, or misusing devices or software in any way. • Tampering, removing, requesting the removal of, or intentionally causing damage to any device, software or hardware. • Installing or downloading software or products that might harm the device or the network.
3.5 Photocopying, possessing, publishing and circulating images of school personnel and students without their permission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using any camera (available as part of or as an add-on to certain devices) for personal use, and/or sharing photos or any information about any of the students' parents, employees, or any other person without their explicit consent. • Using educational content to photograph and recording conversations between students, and posting them without prior permission.
4th Degree Offences (Very Serious)	Very Serious Behavioural Offences (Distance Learning)
4.1 Using any means of communication or social media for illegal or immoral purposes, or to harm an educational institution, its employees, or others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating or opening hyperlinks or any associated files unless they are sent from a trusted source. • Using montage software that can produce unreal and fake content and circulating it on social media. • Using the network to develop programs that harass users or to penetrate or destroy other people's accounts and devices. • Establishing networks or network connections to make live communications including audio or video (relay chat) without prior formal permission. • Publishing, creating, exchanging or promoting malicious or suspicious software.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inundating e-mail accounts or applications used for distance education with high electronic data flow, stopping it them working, disabling them or destroying their contents. • Intentionally capturing or intercepting any communication without authorisation through the information network used for distance education

Any breach of these rules (especially third and fourth-degree offences) may lead to procedures ranging from withdrawing the user's right to log-in or monitoring the use of the service or terminating his/her use of the service or both with retroactive effect. In some cases, it may lead to facing criminal charges, and there will be disciplinary procedures in case of breaching these conditions and rules.