



OUR REF :

TRN : 100483609200003

PROCESS MAP FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

(This is also applicable to students who have opted for blended learning on the days when they have distance learning)

Date: 28th August 2020

Parents who have opted for **Distance Learning / Blended Learning** (days when distance learning is applicable) are reminded to kindly consult this document for important clarifications.

- 1) School begins on **30th August 2020** for ALL students who opted for Distance Learning and – Years 4 - 13 and also those students who opted for Blended Learning but for whom Sunday is a Distance Learning Day. On Sunday, 30th August, class teachers (Years 4-13) will conduct a morning session with their classes from 7:30 am to 10:30 am. The class teacher will create a GOOGLE CLASSROOM for their class and post the zoom link there. Attendance will be taken directly by the teacher in SIMS. Every child **MUST HAVE THEIR CAMERA SWITCHED ON – for attendance to be authenticated. This will be a daily practice for registration.**
- 2) For years 1 - 3 there will be an orientation in the evening per class with the class teachers at 6:00 pm on 30th August 2020. The teachers will explain how lessons will take place, lesson timings and give you other important information related to academic work for this year. Group emails have been created for each class using your child's unique school email ID. In case your child is new to St. Mary's and you have not yet received this email ID, please write without delay to itsupport-smchs@smgeducation.org The class teacher will send a zoom link to the class group email.
- 3) Every child must have a laptop or a tablet to work on. Please note that even in homes with siblings it will be important that a child's academic work is not hindered due to shared devices. We have been flexible with this last year but it is important now as we begin a new year that every child has the key tools required to fully access all academic resources and be able to meet deadlines for submission of digital homework. **MOBILE PHONES MUST NOT BE USED FOR ACADEMIC WORK**
- 4) All devices **MUST have a fully working WEBCAM/ CAMERA and a fully working audio.** Once again we have been flexible with this in the past but as we begin a new year, it is imperative that every child has equitable access to lessons and has working systems that comply with updated school regulations for distance learning.

- 5) **NO PARENT OR GUARDIAN IS ALLOWED TO ACCESS THE PREMISES AT ALL AFTER THE 29TH OF AUGUST 2020 DURING THE WORKING WEEK.**
- 6) Text books will not be required until the third week of September 2020 for all classes (except years 11 and 13) There has been an International shipping delay from the UK due to the global pandemic and Iris International will deliver the books to you as soon as they receive them. Please be informed that Iris International is not responsible for International shipping delays and will deliver books to you as soon as they receive the same.
- 7) For all classes (except years 11 and 13) we will be conducting simple baseline checks in week one and revision and teaching in the first two weeks will be tailored to dealing with gaps in learning that become evident from those baseline checks.
- 8) Email groups will be created for all classes with the class teachers. These will be used to convey messages to parents. Class teachers will send a daily email with updates for each class. In addition ALL parents are encouraged to check the SIMS PARENT APP or the school website before you shut down for the day every evening.
- 9) **ALL FIRST TERM FEES MUST BE PAID IN FULL IRRESPECTIVE OF THE MODE OF DELIVERY OF LESSONS. FEES MUST BE PAID ONLY THROUGH SKIPLY. Please check the school website for the fee table.**
- 10) For years 4-13 timings are from 7:20 am until 1:40 pm. On Thursdays lessons will end at 12:20 pm as usual. For years 1-3 there will be asynchronous work set for the mornings and live lessons will be held between 5:00 – 7:30 pm so that an adult can assist younger children with the technology required to manage a live session. For years 11, 12 and 13 we might need to schedule a few extra lessons after school hours or on Saturday morning and we request the collaboration of your children and you as well towards this end.
- 11) All parents must make sure that the **ZOOM APP** is downloaded on your child's device. All devices **MUST BE STRICTLY IN THE FULL NAME OF THE CHILD**. Children will not be admitted to lessons with any other username.
- 12) We will be following the regular timetable everyday and class teachers will send a daily group email to parents with regular updates.
- 13) Some lessons will be Asynchronous with work set for the stipulated time of the lesson. Students must complete that work at that time.
- 14) While it is not mandatory for students attending lessons via Distance Learning to be in school uniform, they must be neatly, smartly and modestly dressed. (More on this in our guidelines for Zoom) However if we find that children are not adhering to the regulations for attire, we reserve the right to mandate school uniform for Distance Learning.

ZOOM GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS:

Even though we require all parents to frequently monitor your child's online Zoom class, we would like to reiterate that the learning session is strictly between the teacher and the students. We understand that as parents you might be tempted to communicate something to the teacher right away, but we would like to remind you that this must not be done at all. Let us please all keep in mind that the situation is already very stressful for the teacher who is aware that parents are also present while lessons are going on and anything a parent says is said in the presence of all the other children and parents. We have instructed the teachers that no communication must take place between them and parents during a Zoom class and we would expect that ALL PARENTS respect the ethics of this virtual space. You may email any feedback or queries you have directly to the teacher and if your concerns are more serious, you may continue to email our Vice Principal on l.pinto-smchs@smgeducation.org. Please don't forget to include your mobile number in case she would like to speak with you.

Since we are now conducting live lessons that are part of the virtual space, it is important that we all update ourselves and our children about important security information related to these live lessons. We would also like you to have a serious sit down conversation with your children about the stringent laws related to **CYBERBULLYING** and all related offences. *Since learning has moved into this online phase, the Ministry of Education requires schools to report any incidents of cyber bullying and inappropriate online behaviour that take place*

- The Zoom link sent to you for your child's class MUST not be shared with any other individual.
- **It is strictly forbidden to screen shot any frame of a zoom lesson as this violates all local as well as international child safeguarding policies.** Students should at no point capture a picture of the zoom screen frame either through a screen shot or by any other means by which a picture may be captured.
- In a similar manner, due to child safeguarding policies and protocols, **no zoom session must ever be recorded by a child or parent. Any recording or attempt to record is in violation of our acceptable terms of use for ZOOM as an e-learning platform.**
- **ALL PARTICIPANTS CAMERAS MUST BE ON DURING THE ENTIRE SESSION OF A ZOOM CLASS.**
- We have instructed the teacher to disable the chat function between participants but we would like to reiterate that **chats between participants of a Zoom session must not take place under any circumstances. Any cyber-bullying / inappropriate comments related to faith, race, culture etc will be dealt with severely which will include removal from live sessions and could include reporting to the relevant authorities.**
- **Language used must not be offensive, derogatory or discriminatory to anyone.**

- For local and international child safeguarding purposes, no one to one sessions will be conducted between any student and teacher. For any individual sessions with an LSA an additional school staff or school counsellor will be present. Parents are therefore reminded not to request for a one to one Zoom session with any teacher.
- All children must join the sessions with the names by which they are officially registered on the school's registration roll. Students must not use different screen names to join any Zoom session. Students must not use any screen image either. **Parents are requested to check your child's zoom login credentials to this effect.** Teachers have been asked to remove individuals who appear without their officially registered names. This has been done for the safety of all students.

***** The school shall have the right to amend the above and update them and we will share the updated documents with all parents.**

Based on our experiences over the last academic year we would like to reiterate the following guidelines as well to be read together with your children.

- Students must not attend Zoom sessions while lying or slouching on the bed.
- It would be ideal that the device is set up in as quiet a place of the house as possible and the child is seated at a table so he/she can write as well. All background noise must be avoided. All background noise should be kept to a minimum during a Zoom session (i.e., TV sound, radios, dogs barking, etc.).
- Have a plain and neutral background.
- Other distractions like gaming consoles, mobile phones etc. should be kept away during lessons. (We have had instances last year where students have been very distracted on another device close by during lessons) Students must stay off their phones, other devices, and social media.
- Students should be modestly and well attired (Pyjamas , night wear, immodest clothing is not acceptable).
- While we understand that children often feel hungry, it is advisable for them to snack in between sessions or before the start of sessions but not during a session. Water may be consumed at all times.
- Students must be ready with all their required materials for their learning sessions.
- Attendance is being taken for all Zoom sessions. This will count towards their overall attendance and so we would like to encourage parents to please make every effort to ensure that your child is present for the learning sessions.
- Teachers have the discretion to disable the video of all or any participant where his/her professional judgement calls for the same in the best interests of the lesson being productive.
- We had experienced a few instances of students sending mean and hurtful messages to other classmates. Please remind your children that this amounts to Cyber Bullying and the school will be compelled to take strict action.
- Students MUST always have their microphones on MUTE and must only UN-MUTE to answer when their name is called upon by the teacher.

- Students who repeatedly and wilfully misbehave, do not follow instructions, hinder the lesson, display disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour will be removed from the session. Parents will be sent an email detailing the incident.
- If necessary, the teacher may ask a student to leave the Zoom class session until all distractions in the student's environment have been addressed
- **Since children are spending a lot of time in front of a screen we recommend the 20-20-20 rule. After every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away from the screen for 20 seconds.**

SOME GENERAL GUIDELINES:

In these challenging times where we are faced with extraordinary circumstances, we as parents and teachers will need to think differently about how to support our children, how to create routines that are both useful yet practical, how to monitor and support their learning and most importantly how to 'be there' for them. We would like to offer you some simple practical tips to help our children as they find themselves 'learning at home'. **CHILDREN MUST UNDERSTAND VERY CLEARLY THAT THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS ARE OVER AND A NEW SCHOOL YEAR HAS BEGUN.**

1) SET A DAILY ROUTINE

We encourage all parents to set regular hours for your children's school work to include the morning hours stipulated by us and some follow up hours in the evening. Please try to keep normal bedtime routines for younger children and a reasonable one for older children too. We recommend that children move regularly and take periodic breaks as they work and learn.

2) DEFINE A CLEAR CUT PHYSICAL SPACE FOR LEARNING:

We are certain that every child has a regular space at home for their daily homework but this might not be the most practical for an extended period of 'home learning'. We would recommend a space that has good lighting, a strong wireless internet signal, be quiet when needed and above all one where parents and guardians are able to monitor their children's learning

3) BE A PART OF YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING AND HELP HIM/HER TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THAT LEARNING:

During a regular school day, students have numerous opportunities to enhance their learning by bouncing ideas off their peers and taking part in meaningful discussions, collaborating in their student groups etc. 'Learning at home' means there will be less opportunity for these social interactions and the few that take place will be virtual. We learn optimally when we have a chance to process our learning and understanding with others. We therefore ask you as parents to please engage with your children and provide them those opportunities to process their learning better and yet take ownership for it. What might that look like? Ask a question/ drop a subtle hint/ share an analogy / debate an idea/ ask for a recap..... What must it not look like? Giving an answer/ completing an assignment/ solving a problem.....

4) START AND END EACH DAY WITH A SIMPLE CHECK AND FOLLOW-UP:

We would like to encourage parents to start each day with a very simple check of the basics. What is your child going to be learning on that day? What additional support might they need? What resources do they require? How will they spend their time? This check from you will help your child organize and process the instructions they have received from their teachers. It will help them gather resources. It is important to do this briefly even with older children who sometimes have the tendency to 'drift' with too much independence. Similarly, do follow-up at the end of the day. What did they learn? Do they need anything additionally from you?

5) MONITOR COMMUNICATION FROM YOUR CHILDREN'S TEACHERS:

Teachers will be communicating with you and your children in various ways. For younger children it will mostly be through their class group email which comes directly to you but for older children it will be through various platforms like Google Classroom, Group Emails with their teachers, Class group emails and Whatsapp groups with their teachers. Ask your children to show you how learning platforms such as Active Learn and Google Classroom and Zoom work.

6) ENCOURAGE MOVEMENT AND HEALTHY EATING :

It will be essential, even in a confined space for children to move. We recommend simple and basic stretching and as an alternative to outdoor exercise, do get them to help you with the 'household chores'. This would be a wonderful way to 'move around' and help them learn the value of pitching in as a family. Do ensure that children are eating vitamin rich foods especially fruits and vegetables and some healthy snacks during the day.

7) BE MINDFUL OF THEIR ANXIETY IN THESE CURRENT STRESSFUL TIMES:

Let us remember that our kids are just as scared as we are right now. Not only can they see and hear everything that is going on around them, but they can feel our constant tension and anxiety. They have never experienced anything like this before. It will be natural in the coming weeks to see an increase in some behavioural issues with the children. Expect to see more meltdowns, tantrums, protests since they can't do things normally. We need to reassure them that everything is going to be ok. Right now they need **OUR COMFORT AND OUR LOVE**.

8) MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S SCREEN TIME AND TIME ONLINE :


We have tried to be careful especially with younger children that they are not spending too much time in front of a screen. We have tried our best to set work that blends online and offline requirements.

9) BE MINDFUL OF YOUR CHILD'S SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTIONS :

At this time of extended school closure, children, especially older children will rely extensively on social media to keep in touch with their school mates. Please remind them to be polite, respectful and appropriate in their communications with others and to reflect the values of the UAE and school and family in their interactions with others. Especially at a time like this please remind them not to spread baseless rumours associated with Covid-19 and in general as well.

We will continue to update you with more information. Please make it a point to check the school website for updates at least ONCE daily before you turn in for the evening. We would like to welcome your child back to school for the new Academic Year even though virtually and we certainly understand and respect your decision as we know you have keenly kept the safety of your child as the topmost priority. Let us work together in faith to ensure a happy and productive year ahead for the children.

Yours sincerely,



**Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)**

