Umina Beach Public School
Learning at Home
Advice to Parents and Carers

In response to the current health situation and the advice from the NSW Premier for parents/carers to keep students at home where possible we have designed units of work that will be delivered to all students, whether they are learning at home under the supervision of parents or at school under the supervision of teachers. These units of work aim to engage students in learning on both digital and non-digital platforms.

Parent responsibilities during learning at home

Provide support for your children by:
- establishing routines and expectations
- defining a space for your child to work in
- monitoring communications from the school
- encouraging physical activity and/or exercise
- monitoring how much time your child is spending online

Student responsibilities during learning at home

These responsibilities should be adjusted according to the age of your child:
- establishing and/or following a daily routine for learning
- identifying a safe, comfortable, quiet space where they can work effectively and successfully
- regularly monitoring digital platforms and online communication
- completing tasks with integrity and academic honesty, doing their best work
- complying with the departments' Student use of digital devices and online services policy'

Establishing routines and expectations

From the first day, you will need to establish routines and expectations. You should use the timetable or schedule provided by your school to set regular hours for school work. Keep normal bedtime routines for younger children and expect the same from your older primary and high school-aged children too. It is important that you set these expectations as soon as learning from home is implemented, not several days later after it becomes apparent a child is struggling with the absence of routine.

Setting up a learning environment

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. Above all, it should be a space where you or another adult is present and monitoring your children's learning. Refer to the Learning environment checklist (PDF 81KB)

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Wellbeing

Being confined to home for an extended period of time can cause stress and conflict. Tips for looking after your children during home learning include:

- Talking about what is happening. Understanding the situation will reduce 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.
- 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).

Communicating with your child

We encourage you to start and finish each day with a simple check-in.
In the morning, ask:

- what are you learning today?
- what are your learning targets or goals?
- what help do you need?

In the afternoon, ask:

- what did you learn today?
- acknowledge one thing that was difficult. How would you deal with this next time?
- consider three things that went well today. Why were they good?

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.

Communication from the school

Our school will communicate with parents and families via our regular platforms including our digital newsletter, School eNews Smartphone App, Facebook, our school website [https://umina-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/] and Class Dojo (only available for some classes at the discretion of the teacher).

Using technology

Our school and the department already have a wide range of software available that have been specifically chosen to provide your child with the support they need.

- Google Apps for Education - online Google apps. For student access go to: Students portal > Learning > G Suite

This suite of applications includes Google Classroom which will feature as the main digital platform for online delivery of lessons and learning.

Accessing digital devices and the internet

You need to be aware of the department's policy regarding technology, devices and the internet. Student use of digital devices and online services policy.

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Managing screen time

Screen time refers to the amount of time a user spends on a device to access on-screen activities. There are limits as to the amount of time everyone should spend online, but the amounts and the rules for screen time vary by age.

Video conferencing and social interactions using video do not count towards screen time.

The following recommended screen times (excluding video conferencing) are based on the recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- Ages 2 to 5: 1 hour, broken into sessions of a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Age 6 and above: no specific screen time limits, but screen time should not affect physical activity and face-to-face interactions at home and school. Consistent limits on screen time are also very important.

Some screen time activities such as online socialising and gaming can be very immersive. Make sure that non-school activities are limited in length.

Managing behaviour

Even though your child is at home they still need to comply with their schools' behaviour management policy.

You can refer to the following:

- Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy
- Behaviour code for students

Collaboration, group work and peer feedback during remote learning will require students to communicate online and work together in digital spaces.

The expectations of your child and their required behaviour will be the same as a face to face lesson.

Digital citizenship

It is important that during this period of remote learning that we maintain safe and responsible use of information and communication technologies. This includes appropriate use of digital platforms, privacy and information protection, respectful communication and how to deal with online issues.

Source

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