

MIS Hybrid and Distance Learning Policy

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Policy contact: Deputy Head of School

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1. Legal framework that guides this policy

This framework is guided by the binding directives of the StMUK, in particular [Distanzunterricht in Bayern – Rahmenkonzept](#) published on 01.09.2020.

The *Rahmenkonzept* framework for distance learning is developed to ensure schools meet the expectations of the legal code for schools in Bavaria, in particular [BaySchO §19 Abs. 4](#).

2. Definitions of distance and hybrid learning

At MIS we define distance and hybrid learning in the following ways:

Distance learning is when whole classes, sections of the school or the whole school is learning remotely.

Hybrid learning is when students move between learning on campus and distance learning in a pattern, for instance alternate weeks of learning on campus and then learning remotely. This results in some students participating in distance learning conditions.

Hybrid learning could happen when groups of students are quarantined or when social distancing requirements mean that learning on campus can only take place in smaller class sizes. As a rule, in Grades 6-11 hybrid learning would mean a rotation of two days on campus followed by two days of learning at home with some adjustments to even out the on-campus experience as much as possible. In JS and Grade 5 our aim would be to redistribute students in their classes in such a way to make continued full-time on campus learning possible.

3. How pedagogy informs this policy

All aspects of pedagogical priorities and practice detailed in the Teaching and Learning Policy for MIS (March 2017) remain the basis for guiding pedagogy during distance or hybrid learning.

Much insight into the implementation of our IB curricular programmes (PYP, MYP & DP) in distance or hybrid modes of learning has been published by the IB:

- 'Online learning, teaching and education continuity planning for schools', IB, March 2020
- PYP – 'Navigating changing times in the Primary Years Programme', IB, August 2020
- MYP – 'Navigating changing times in the Middle Years Programme', IB, August 2020

What differentiates hybrid/distance learning pedagogy at MIS from other school systems?

Whilst 'distance' and 'hybrid' learning provide different structures for organizing lessons, MIS pedagogical principles remain the same, and the student learning experience should be as similar as possible to that of on campus learning. When we first pivoted to distance learning in March 2020, we did not have systems in-place for effective videoconferencing. Additionally, students needed space and time to adjust to completely new demands and realities. Now the possibilities and the needs are different. We must provide as much active instruction and instructional support to our students as possible. This is different to other school systems which have decided on a focus on extended project work or alternating weeks of instruction followed by practice.

Hybrid/distance learning at MIS should look like:

- Teachers actively teaching their students, engaging them in conversation during online lessons, explaining concepts in 'live' situations.
- Teachers starting and ending lessons in 'live' format with their classes, including all students, no matter where they are physically located.
- Teachers interacting with students throughout the lesson, wherever possible interacting with students via videoconference.
- Typically, a 55-minute lesson includes approximately 45 minutes of active interaction between teachers and student. If, theoretically, a lesson is planned to begin at 10.15 am, the teacher would start the videoconference no later than 10.20 am and would continue to interact with students until at least 11.05 am.

Hybrid/distance learning at MIS should not look like:

- Teachers setting extended project work with little 'live' interaction with teachers.
- Students unable to receive timely feedback from teachers in order to rethink, adapt and revise their learning.
- Whole class instruction where there is no student choice or differentiation in challenge.

In short: The MIS Policy on Teaching and Learning applies to distance and hybrid learning this year, much the same way that it applies to face-to-face lessons.

4. Expectations for students

All students should:

- Actively participate in distance learning, which is a legal requirement for students ([BayEUG Art. 56 Abs. 4 Satz 3.](#))
- demonstrate their active participation in classes following classroom expectations, for instance being punctual
- complete the work set by teachers
- check online learning platforms, as directed by class teachers, for instructions and materials.
- comply with MIS' Commitments to Ethical and Principled Conduct, and Academic Honesty
- communicate questions and/or feedback to teachers via MS Teams
- enable the camera when in video conferences with teachers and/or classes, unless instructed otherwise by teachers.
- identify a comfortable, quiet place (with as few distractions as possible), at a table/desk where they can work effectively as if they were at school
- dress as if they were at school
- collaborate with their peers and support them to succeed and learn
- do their best to meet timelines, commitments, and due dates

Expectations for faculty

5.1 Organization of the day

Start of the day

- In case of the **whole class being in distance learning**, the homeroom teachers **must** start the day with a Teams meeting for their Homeroom, following the section specific guidance.

Junior School	Middle School	Senior School
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance• Morning class meetings from Responsive Classroom using MS Teams (15-20 minutes).	Attendance Morning Announcement Slideshow Q & A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance• Announcements• Q&A

- In case of part of the class being in distance learning (hybrid learning), homeroom teachers **must** start the day with following the section specific guidance, including distance learners via a Teams meeting.

Junior School	Middle School	Senior School
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance• Morning class meetings from Responsive Classroom.	Attendance Morning Announcement Slideshow Q & A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance• Announcements• Q&A

Start of the lesson

- Both in hybrid and distance learning all lessons (*see Section 7 for exceptions*) **must** start with a check-in with students via MS Teams videoconference in order to:
 - Check attendance
 - Review the plan for the lesson
 - Objectives and instructions for the lesson should be provided in a format, which the student can reference throughout the lesson e.g. in video, Word doc, PowerPoint, Teams message.
- **Junior School:** Homeroom teachers will start the day at 9:15 with a 15-20 minute Responsive Classroom Meeting in MS Teams.
- **Junior School:** Homeroom teachers by grade level will post a daily instructional teaching video in Seesaw for elements of the daily instruction that would be best communicated in this way.

End of the lesson

- Both in hybrid and distance learning lessons **must** end with a check-in with students via MS Teams videoconference in order to:
 - Reflect on what learning progress has taken place and address any challenges
- **Junior School:** Homeroom teachers will facilitate a whole-class videoconference at 15:00 using MS Teams to wrap up the day, answer questions, and remind students about upcoming projects and work.

Which lessons will be taught each day?

- In **MS/SrS**, learning in both hybrid and distance models should follow the daily timetable as planned. Therefore, if a lesson is scheduled for that day teachers should prepare and deliver instruction following section specific guidance.

Junior School (Distance Learning):

- Homeroom Class Meetings
- Students will participate in Seesaw learning engagements aligned to their timetable
- Students will participate in small-group MS Teams videoconferences at least 4 X/week with either their homeroom, EAL, German, or Learning Support teachers.
- Art, Music, PE, Makerspace, and Library will provide learning engagements on Seesaw and optional 'synchronous' lessons and activities for grade levels through MS Teams.

Junior School (Hybrid Learning):

- All students will attend every day.
- Homeroom class groups will be reconfigured to create groups of 15 or fewer students.
- Timetable will be modified to accommodate for the additional grade sections.

5.2 Differentiation, assessment and feedback during hybrid and/or distance learning

Ensuring appropriate challenge for students

- Differentiated instruction. Teachers must ensure that through their collaboration students receive appropriate levels of challenge, i.e. students are neither overwhelmed or underwhelmed with learning tasks.

Tasks and assessments during distance learning

- **General principles of tasks and assessments during hybrid/distance learning**
 - Expectations for assessment tasks must be clear to prevent any misunderstanding including explicitly communicating:
 - The formative or summative nature of the assessment
 - The expectations of the task, typically through a rubric and/or model
 - The deadline and method of submission
 - The recommended time for completion of the task
 - Projects have regular planned check-ins and written teacher feedback points to ensure students stay on track.
 - Assessment tasks should be designed in a way that students show their individual understanding with open-ended/contextual questions (where responses cannot be copied).
 - MS Teams is the only online platform to be used for posting, receiving and feeding back on assessed student work in MS/SrS.
 - By 16:00 on Friday, Assignments (tasks for students), formative assessments and summative assessments for the forthcoming week need to be posted.
- **Specific expectations for summative assessments**
 - It is important that for summative assessments students have similar conditions (DuR 1.5). Therefore, typical classroom summative assessments, e.g. test papers, can only be completed on campus.
 - A variety of formats must be used for summative assessment (particularly if the period of distance learning extends for a long period of time).
- **Specific expectations for formative assessments**
 - Shorter, more frequent formative tasks are encouraged

Providing feedback to students

- Regular individual feedback on learning, particularly for assessment tasks is important.
 - Feedback should be given no later than two weeks after submission of the assignment. Preferably as soon as possible for students to use.
 - Self-assessment can be a strategy used by teachers, but it cannot replace regular individualised feedback.
 - Through participation in video-conferencing teachers should be available to answer individual student questions.
- Homework assignments may not all receive individualised feedback, but teachers should record whether the task has been completed.
- Praise for exceptional student effort and achievement should result in feedback through a Commendation communicated via SchoolBase in MS/SrS and Seesaw in JS.
- Feedback should promote growth and student learning, including developing the ATLs and Learner Profile attributes.
- Feedback should build students' capability for self-reflection and assessment.

5.3 Homework expectations during hybrid/distance learning

- **SrS:** Homework expectations remain the same as usual in both hybrid or distance learning, and therefore should not be more than during normal on-campus instruction.
- **MS:** Due to increased screen time during the day, it is advised that homework be reduced to promote balance and wellbeing.
- **JS:** During distance learning students will complete their learning engagements during school hours and homework will not be assigned. After 15:15 students will be encouraged to read freely, exercise, go outside, and to participate in activities that do not require the use of digital devices.

5.3 Use of learning technologies during hybrid/distance learning

MIS practice for using learning technologies to enable distance/hybrid learning

- Enable the 360 microphone/speaker so that all students have access to aural/oral instruction and students can learn from one another in real time (MS / SrS Only).
- All videoconferencing must take place using MS Teams.
- In **JS** all instructions, or links to resources, must be posted on Seesaw.
- In order to support **MS/SrS** students and parents at home, Microsoft Teams should be the primary means of communication. You don't have to eliminate or reproduce materials that are on ITS-Learning. If important materials are on ITS-Learning then:
 - They can be copied across to Microsoft Teams OR
 - A link to the materials on ItsLearning can be posted as an instruction on Microsoft Teams (so that if a student is looking on Microsoft Teams, they will see where to go on ITS Learning).
- Do not use your **analogue whiteboard** as this excludes distance/hybrid learning students from the instruction
 - Alternatives to analogue whiteboards include
 - Wacom tablets connected to laptops (iPads in Grade 5 & 6)
 - Shared platforms such as PowerPoint, Word, OneNote, either pre-prepared or 'live' documents

Junior School Expectations for Using Seesaw

- Homeroom posts to show the learning goals, the learning process, reflection and student progress/growth
- Posts from Specialists to include unit integrations, subject-specific information, learning processes and products.
- Teachers will support students to select their own work samples to represent all subject areas and transdisciplinary themes.
- Teachers will support students to include the Learner Profile Attributes, ATLS and student initiated action in their posts.
- Teachers will communicate regular updates to families via Seesaw Announcements
- Each teacher will regularly “approve” the posts for the work they have assigned.

5.4 Communication with families during hybrid/distance instructions: successes and challenges (MS / SrS Only)

- If a student is completing exceptional work or demonstrating exceptional effort in Approaches to Learning, then Commendations should be used to record this via SchoolBase.
- If a student is not accessing learning materials or not submitting assignments/assessments, then this should be recorded and parents should be notified as soon as possible.
 - In the Senior School, an Academic Concern should be recorded
 - In the Middle School, a Distance Learning note should be recorded
 - In the Junior School, parents will be notified by email by the homeroom teacher, then as needed by the assistant principal or principal.
- Communication with families to address incomplete work should be addressed sensitively, stating facts rather than expressing judgements. The below examples should guide these communications.
- Should a challenging email conversation develop, seek advice from the Grade Level Coordinator in order to mitigate potential conflict.

Dear XXXX

I am writing regarding Max's learning in his Design class.

In these challenging circumstances of distance learning, we are trying to ensure that students are still engaging in their learning. Therefore, we are contacting parents to let them know when it appears that students are not engaging in their learning as expected, in order that parents can discuss this with their child to help resolve any issues.

At this stage it appears that Max has not submitted his assignment 'Robotic Arm Design', due on 05 November, via MS Teams.

Please could you discuss this with Max. Should he need help with the assignment please encourage him to make contact with me via MS Teams so I can help him with feedback.

6. How can parents/guardians best support learning during hybrid/distance instruction?

- supervise young children when using digital devices and inform the child's teacher of any problems with the assigned learning
- establish routines and expectations for their children concerning daily work
- help children define physical space for their studies
- monitor communication from their children's teachers
- take an active role in helping their children process their learning
- establish times for reflection and for taking a break from school work
- encourage regular movement and exercise
- monitor screen time and help children find ways to engage in their learning away from digital devices
- be mindful of children's stress levels and mental state and alert teachers and school counsellors to any concerns or problems
- Should the student not be able to participate in distance learning the parent/guardian must contact MIS to confirm this ([1 BaySchO §20 Abs. 1](#)).
- Requests for the child's absence from school, for any other purpose, must follow the usual procedure of application in advance via the school offices ([1 BaySchO §20 Abs. 3](#))

7. Section specific clarifications

Junior School

- **Homework:** During distance learning students will complete their learning engagements during school hours and homework will not be assigned. After 15:15 students will be encouraged to read freely, exercise, go outside, and to participate in activities that do not require the use of digital devices.

Middle School

- Videoconferencing is required only once per week for Arts, Design, PHE.
- Teachers will use the student concerns survey found on the weekly blog to report students who may not be adjusting well academically or socially/emotionally.
- Due to increased screen time during the day, it is advised that homework be reduced to promote balance and wellbeing.

Senior School

- Videoconferencing is required only once per week for Arts, Design, PHE
- It is important that those who are working well get positive feedback and those who are not, are communicated with through the normal channel – Schoolbase. Mark Palfrey will keep track of this and take action accordingly (just like when students are taught at school).

8. **List of grade level coordinators**

- EC – Mandy du Buisson
- Grade 1 – Natascha Gaim Marsoner
- Grade 2 – Susan Bushby
- Grade 3 – Tonianne Lederer
- Grade 4 – Dan Stevens
- Grade 5 – Jane Holdaway
- Grade 6 – Catherine Shave
- Grade 7 – Ann Garcia
- Grade 8 – Gillian Haddon
- Grade 9 – Mark Palfrey
- Grade 10 – Angela Brassington
- Grade 11 – Anders Carlsson
- Grade 12 – John McMurtry