

Distance Learning Policy Secondary School

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Distance Learning in the event of school closure

In the event of an unforeseen school closure, Fairgreen International School will transition to online learning. Online platforms will be used by all grade levels to ensure the continuation of education. The guidelines below outline the roles, expectations, and procedures for staff, students, and parents during the online learning period.

Rationale

This policy has been designed specifically with secondary aged students in mind. In this phase of school, students are generally expected to demonstrate more independence and responsibility for their learning, and are able to use their devices to access the various learning resources available to them without needing much support. This is especially the case for students in the upper MYP and CP/DP.

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance for the continuation of learning, whilst acknowledging the limitations that distance learning brings. The policy therefore intends to support the community in balancing the need for continued learning with realistic expectations.

School Timings

In order to provide structure and familiarity for students, school timings will continue as normal. This means students will begin each day with a homeroom which provides an opportunity for a check-in with students to support them from a wellbeing perspective.

Lessons will then proceed as normal according to each student's timetable.

We are cognisant that being on screens for the duration of the day would not be in the best interests of our students. Teachers will be mindful of this in their planning, and the regular break periods should be treated as time away from screens for students in order to aid their concentration as well as their wellbeing.

Safeguarding

Students should only join lessons using their school Google accounts; personal emails will not be accepted. Students should aim to join lessons from an appropriate work space (e.g. not sitting on their bed). They should be in day wear, not pyjamas. Families will need to give consideration to what can be seen in the background of their child's screen.

For safeguarding purposes, we discourage students and teachers from participating in online 1-1 sessions. Where possible, functions such as breakout rooms should be utilised for this. However, we recognise that there are some occasions where teachers may need to meet students individually due to the nature of the learning taking place, e.g.

individual oral assessments. In these instances, teachers should liaise with leadership about the most appropriate way to arrange these sessions.

Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

During periods of distance learning, teachers will use their professional judgement to determine what is the most appropriate balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning. This will vary between age levels, subjects and other factors, such as exam preparation. If distance learning continues long term, this will be reviewed to ensure that the quality of learning is not compromised further.

Teachers will use appropriate online platforms to deliver synchronous learning that are accessible to all students, such as Google Meets.

The wellbeing of students will be factored into the amount of synchronous learning that takes place, as we need to consider how much time students will be using devices during distance learning.

Attendance

Students, where reasonably expected, are expected to engage in distance learning each day.

Attendance will be recorded as DL (Digital Learning) for students who engage with the learning set by their teacher. This may include participation in live online lessons or, where students are located in a different time zone or face other exceptional circumstances, the completion and submission of assigned learning tasks within the expected timeframe.

Students who are unable to attend live sessions due to time zone differences are expected to access learning resources and asynchronous learning materials and demonstrate engagement through the work they produce. Parents should inform homeroom teachers where this is the case.

Students who do not attend live sessions and do not engage with or submit the required learning, and where no communication has been received by the school, will be marked as Absent (Unauthorised). Families of students who are persistently absent or not engaging with learning will be contacted initially by the pastoral team and subsequently by a member of the school leadership team.

Breaks

Students should not spend the entire day in front of their screen. Teachers will design lessons that incorporate screen breaks, allowing students time away from devices. Students should also be intentional about spending designated break times away from devices.

Microphone Use

To maintain a smooth lesson flow, teachers may mute all students at certain points to ensure clear communication. Students should only unmute when prompted by the teacher.

Camera Use

Students should have their cameras turned on when the teacher is delivering the live introductions. Please be mindful of background distractions.

Asking Questions

Students are encouraged to use functions such as the 'raise hand' option if they have a question during the lesson. Teachers will do their best to engage with all students, but online learning presents unique challenges in managing large groups.

Internet Connection

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has a stable internet connection during online lessons. If there are connectivity issues, either the student or parent should inform the teacher.

Tips for improving connection:

- Restart devices daily.
- Disconnect unnecessary devices.
- Avoid streaming/downloading during lessons.
- Turn off VPNs.
- Perform updates outside school hours.
- Keep devices near the router and fully charged.

IT Troubleshooting

- **Contact IT Support:** For technical issues, email ithelpdesk@fairgreen.ae with "IT Support" in the subject line.
- **Supported Issues:** IT can assist with login issues related to Google suite and Zoom and provide guidance on other technical concerns.

Staff Absenteeism

- In the case of short term absence, teachers will ensure that learning resources are made available on Managebac and Google Classroom.
- Students should continue to complete the work set as they would normally.
- In cases of longer term absence, substitute teachers (cover teachers) will be sought.

After School Activities (ASAs)

All ASAs will be cancelled during periods of school closure.

External (Paid) Afterschool Activities

For enquiries regarding cancellation policies, please contact the paid ASA provider directly.

Complaint Procedure

For any concerns, parents must follow the proper escalation process. This will ensure questions are handled efficiently. The escalation process can be found in the parent handbooks linked [here](#).

Assessing Student Learning Online

Assessment for learning and formative assessments will be used to monitor progress during distance learning through the following methods:

- Questioning and Polls
- Online Quizzes
- Exit Tickets
- Presentations
- Padlet Posts
- Peer and Self-Assessment

Parent Roles and Responsibilities

- **Notification of Absences:** Parents must inform the school of student absences using normal communication channels.
- **Communication:** Parents will be notified of school closures and the transition to online learning via email, with as much advance notice as possible.
- Reference our Distance Learning Guide for Parents (Appendix A).

Distance Learning Guide for Secondary

Ethos

Distance learning at Fairgreen is designed to provide continuity in student learning and to minimise any potential disruption to their progress. In keeping with Fairgreen's commitment to high quality education, distance learning experiences are developed to be robust and meaningful. When circumstances dictate that we have to be on distance learning it does provide an opportunity to work, not just on developing knowledge, but also a real world opportunity to work on learning skills e.g. self-management, research, thinking and communication.

General Guidelines

In Secondary, we will follow the regular school day as scheduled, meaning lessons will take place at their usual times. This will include a homeroom period from 8:00-8:30am where students check-in with their homeroom teacher to clarify any questions and get support with their learning. Students can access their timetables on Managebac.

We will use Google Meet as the platform for all synchronous elements of lessons. Students should attend all scheduled lessons by logging in to the relevant Google Meet link and teachers will be online and available to support students for the duration of each lesson. Depending on the subject and type of learning taking place, each lesson may take a different format. For some classes, particularly those who are in exam years (Grade 10 and 12), lessons may be more synchronous and require students to be present on the call for the duration of the lesson. In others, teachers will introduce the lesson and provide learning activities that allow students to self-manage and complete their work independently. Students in this phase of school are able to demonstrate more autonomy in their learning and so they may manage themselves and complete their work independently in many cases.

Teachers will ensure their camera is turned on during their teaching input so that students at home can engage fully. **Students are expected to have their cameras turned on** as well. Teachers will make online resources available via Managebac, Google Classroom or Google Drive. Students should submit their work on the appropriate platform or on their return to campus, as informed by teachers.

If there are any extenuating circumstances which means that your child is unable to attend synchronous classes, please reach out to their Homeroom teacher so they

are aware and can provide advice and guidance as necessary. As always, our counsellors are available should you or your children require their support in these circumstances.

Logistics

Google Meet will be used for the synchronous element of lessons. All classes will have a Google Meet link available on Managebac. Each subject has its own link which will be used for each lesson throughout the week.

Students should join the appropriate link at the time that each lesson is scheduled for, and teachers will take attendance as normal.

For homeroom, teachers will share a Google Meet link on the homeroom group on Managebac. Students should use this link to log in for homeroom each morning.

Guidelines and Regulations for Using Google Meet

Expectations of Students
• The purpose of this arrangement is for you to learn. • Make sure you still follow the Fairgreen behaviour expectations. • Cameras should be on during synchronous learning. • Do not record the session, or stream it over social media. • Be prepared for your lesson according to the directions given by your teacher. You may need to access the online resources before the lesson, so that you are ready for learning with your class. • Be punctual and engage actively in your learning. • Ensure the environment you are learning in is appropriate and that you are dressed for a day of learning.

Expectations of Parents
• Support your child with Distance Learning whenever you are able. • Ensure you do not engage with any other children online. • Please do not engage the teacher - they will be focused on providing for the needs of all the students and trying to ensure their lesson can flow as naturally as possible.

- Do not comment (either verbally, on social media or elsewhere online) about other children or the lesson.
- Do not record the screen - other parents have not given permission for this.
- Please be mindful of the environment that your child is learning in as this is visible to all.
- Please ensure your child is punctual and follows their regular timetable

Expectations of Teachers

- Ensure Google Meet links are prepared for all lessons.
- Should be visible and available to students on Google Meet during the lesson.
- Ensure students have access to the materials for the lesson via the usual online platforms.
- Ensure that they are familiar with the functions of Google Meet that will support the learning environment.
- Take attendance at the beginning of the lesson and monitor work submission.
- If a student is inappropriately dressed or in an inappropriate environment, discretion will be used to determine an appropriate response and reported to relevant staff.
- Do not meet students 1:1 on Google Meet or accept unscheduled calls.
- Do not record the call.

Should you have any other questions regarding distance learning, please reach out to your Homeroom teacher.