



24 March 2020

## PARENT ADVICE FOR ONLINE LEARNING

This correspondence is designed to assist parents in supporting their son as the College transitions towards an online learning environment for the remainder of Term 1, 2020. The online environment maintains great capabilities to ensure that students can access quality teaching and learning opportunities from home. Staff at St Edward's have been working hard to ensure that continuity of education is of high quality during this difficult time. The College is well equipped with teaching and learning resources that will allow students to continue learning at their own pace. It will require students to be independent with their learning, but their teachers will be available online to provide support, feedback and advice when required. Further information will be provided to assist students and parents in the event that we move to an extended period of online learning.

### Overview of Online Learning at St Edward's College

1. All student work will be made available through the student portal for each day, accessible through the student timetable.
2. Parents can also access the work set for each day via the Parent Portal. I encourage you to log on to familiarise yourself with the platform. If you forget your log in, please use the *Forgot Password* function on the home page.
3. Students will be able to communicate with their teachers through a range of online platforms. If for some reason they are not available at that time, they are committed to responding to student questions as soon as possible.
4. Our Information Software Department will be also available between the hours of 8.00am and 3.00pm to support any technical issues. They can be contacted at [support@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:support@stedwards.nsw.edu.au)
5. The instructions that are provided for each lesson will give advice to students, often linking them to other applications such as Canvas, One Note, Google Classroom, Office 365, Education Perfect, their online textbook or their hard copy textbook. Students have been utilising these applications through the normal teaching and learning process and have developed a great skill and understanding of the benefits to their learning.
6. At times, students may be set tasks that are designed to be worked on over a period of time. In these situations, teachers will be giving guidance that assist students in staging their work throughout the allotted timeframe.
7. In addition to the work set each day, students will be provided with additional handy hints, designed to further and promote higher learning.
8. The St Edward's College Website also provides access for students and parents to an online [Study Skills Handbook](#)
9. At times, teachers may be requesting that students submit work for feedback. It is important that students commit to completing this work and parents monitor their son's progress. Further advice on how parents can support their son's learning is provided later in this correspondence.
10. It is important to understand that not all student work will be completed online. In some subjects, students will be required to complete handwritten work. This is an important skill that students need to continue to develop and teachers have established a variety of ways to provide feedback on this work.





## Student responsibilities during remote learning

- It is the expectation that students access their timetabled learning activities on the student portal on a daily basis
- Establishing and/or following a daily routine for learning
- Identifying a safe, comfortable, quiet space in their home where they can work effectively and successfully
- Regularly monitoring digital platforms and communication (Office365, Canvas, email, Education Perfect, One Note etc) to check for announcements and feedback from teachers
- Completing tasks with integrity and academic honesty, doing their best work
- Doing their best to meet timelines, commitments and due dates
- Communicating proactively with their teachers if they cannot meet deadlines or require additional support
- Collaborating and supporting their classmates in their learning
- Complying with the College's Acceptable Use of ICT Policy
- Seeking out and communicating with school staff as different needs arise

## Parents are encouraged to support their son(s) with their learning by:

- Establishing routines and expectations
- Defining a space for your child to work in
- Monitoring communications from teachers
- Beginning and ending each day with a check-in
- Taking an active role in helping your children process their learning
- Encouraging physical activity and/or exercise
- Checking in with your child regularly to help them manage stress
- Monitoring how much time your child is spending online
- Keeping your children social but set rules around their social media interactions.

## Establishing routines and expectations

We encourage students to plan their day around their school timetable. Allocating time to complete the work set in the allotted time. This timetable should also include regular breaks for activity, eating and drinking. In the activity breaks, it is important that students get up and move around.

It is important that you set these expectations as soon as off-campus learning is implemented, not several days after when 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 planned with your son. For the younger years, a public/family space may be appropriate, but for more senior years as students are more independent, a bedroom or study may be more suitable. 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 child's learning.





## Wellbeing

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

- Talking to your whole family about what is happening. Understanding the situation will reduce their 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. Remind them that the isolation won't last for long.
- Exercise regularly. Options could include exercise DVDs, body resistance and floor exercises, yoga, Pilates, walking 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).
- We have commenced a Well-Being Program in the junior years and these lessons will continue throughout an extended period of isolation. Teachers will be checking in with students during these lessons to engage them in conversation and activities designed to promote well-being.
- The Pastoral team including the Director of Pastoral Care, the Year Group Pastoral Leaders, Leader of Well-Being, Counsellors and College Counsellors, will be available to support any boys and their families who may be experiencing distress. The email addresses of your teachers and Pastoral Leader are available on the Student Portal.

## Communicating with your child

We encourage you to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. These check-ins need to be a regular part of each day and start straight away. Not all students thrive in a remote learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure and the check-ins help keep them on track.

In the morning, ask:

- What are you learning today?
- What are your learning targets or goals?
- How will you be spending your time?
- What resources do you require?
- What support do you need?

In the afternoon, ask:

- What did you learn today?
- Acknowledge one thing that was difficult. Either let it go or come up with a strategy to deal with the same problem if it comes up again
- Consider three things that went well today. Why were they good?
- Are you ok? Do you need to ask your teacher for something? Do you need help with something to make tomorrow more successful?





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. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (this is normal!), but they should anyway.

### **Communicating with the school**

It is important that parents continue to liaise with the College during a time of student non-attendance. Parents are encouraged to use email as the main source of contact to teachers. Teachers will respond to emails, but please remember that teachers will not be expected to contact parents or students via email after 3.30pm. The email addresses of each of your son's teachers are available on the Student Portal.

We will be working through a process of continuous improvement and refinement based on feedback, so we ask you and your child to share your thoughts with us on how the system is working.

General feedback can be provided through [info@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@stedwards.nsw.edu.au). This email address will be monitored with appropriate staff responding when required.

### **Communicating with teachers**

Teachers may be communicating with your child during this period using email and other applications such as One Note, Office 365, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and Canvas.

It is important for you and your child to remember that teachers will be communicating with dozens to more than one hundred other families and that your communications should be meaningful and short. You may also need to remind your child to be patient when waiting for support or feedback.

### **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. Sydney Children's Hospital [Sydney Children's Hospital Fact Sheet](#) provides valuable information on age appropriate limits and guidelines to assist parents in monitoring screen time with their son(s).

### **Digital citizenship**

We recommend that you take the time to explore the [NSW Department of Education](#) website which provides accurate advice to parents on supporting your son(s) safety in an online environment.

It is important 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. If concerns arise regarding inappropriate use of





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Please do not hesitate to contact me via email at [principal@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:principal@stedwards.nsw.edu.au) if you have any questions or would like to discuss the information outlined in this letter.

Your sincerely

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