



Principal's Report

Week 2 Learning at Home Update

We have now completed 8 days of learning at home, but to me it actually feels like more than that. It must be the change and, like everyone else, I am adjusting to a different way of working and communicating. I sincerely hope that life at home is starting to settle down now; especially for all of our students, and that they are finding comfort in some new routines. It is important in this period of change that we are kind to ourselves, and patient with each other, as much as possible.

I want to say a sincere thanks to our students and parents for their positive feedback about Google Classrooms. Even though it's only been a short time, our teachers are already starting to find new and interesting ways of presenting the learning and communicating with their classes. Some teachers are posting morning video greetings, whilst others are making great 3D slide presentations of their daily program, complete with their own emoji's. This is well received by our students who are excited to see their teacher's faces.

We know that some families are keen for us to start some video conferencing, and I want to reassure you we are working on it. Google Suite is provided to our school by DET, and we are investigating if it is possible to use the video conference features, as DET control the administrator functions. Any schools using these features already would be using a non-DET version of Google Suite. Schools are not allowed to use Zoom, and are advised to be very careful in choice of any other platforms being used. To start this week we are running a trial of using WebEx (DET approved) with a small group of older students to see how this technology can be used to enhance learning at home. If this proves successful we will roll out on a broader scale.

What we have learnt this past week?

- Everything takes longer! In a physical classroom it is much easier to answer the questions of students in a timely or efficient manner. Replicating the school day online is simply not possible, so we all have to adjust expectations. Our teachers are spending many hours undertaking phone calls, replying to messages, looking at submitted work and planning for learning.
- Expectations and home circumstances vary greatly across families – what one family sees as too much work another may see as not enough. To best meet everyone's needs we are following the DET expectations and providing enough work for about two to three hours for Grade P-2 and three to four hours for Grade 3-6. With breaks included, this should keep many students busy with learning for a good portion of the day. Don't forget that Reading Eggs and Mathletics are other good options for independent learning for all ages.
- Some students are reporting to parents that they have finished their tasks very early in the school day; however, we have noticed some are tending to rush tasks in order to finish quickly. If students are undertaking the tasks correctly, they should have enough work to meet the DET requirements. We have also included a section in Google Classroom for optional tasks students can complete if they have time.

Other Resources

The Department of Education is providing a range of activities and resources that will supplement the work provided by our teachers through the FUSE Fun at Home page (<https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/funathome>).

It has ideas for parents to use with their children at home and provide fun, stimulating activities that can be used. The quality learning tasks are mostly self-directed, meaning children can do it by themselves, and are generally open-ended and can be interpreted by children of differing ages to suit their own capabilities/strengths.

ABC ME is showing educational programming from 10am - 3pm every weekday for Term 2. Mornings will start with primary school content, and move to secondary school in the afternoon. It's well worth while, even for building up general knowledge, or consolidating previous learning.



Protecting Privacy

In order to protect privacy and some copyright laws we ask that any material produced by our school staff, NOT be shared, reproduced or published in any other way, without the written consent from the school. I ask that you consider our staff in this context. The learning tasks and videos developed are work that we have put a great deal of effort into. We do not post this work in the online environment for praise or public scrutiny – the only purpose is to educate your children. You can imagine how vulnerable and exposed our staff will feel if videos of themselves are shared (even if the intentions are to highlight how wonderful they are) – please privilege them their privacy, and ensure that you are meeting the requirements of our schools, Acceptable Use Policy for Digital Technology. A copy of this policy can be found on our Website by following the link.

<https://amsleigh.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/APPS-Acceptable-Use-of-Technology-2019.pdf>

And finally...

I want to state for the record how proud I feel of our teaching and support staff. The manner in which they approach each day shows how dedicated they are to our students. We are all spending many hours each day focusing on wellbeing, and providing support to students and families. Our staff have quickly adapted to and embraced this way of working, which in many ways is more difficult than being at school. Teaching is always a very demanding job, but working, and especially communicating remotely, has made it more complicated than ever. However, in true Amsleigh style, our teachers and support staff have embraced this work with dedication and commitment and I feel very proud of them.

I hope you stay safe and well.

Michael Cormick

Principal