

LEARNING FROM HOME AT NEWTOWN NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL



What we do and why we do it this way.

Over the last 18 months the staff and students at Newtown North Public School have developed their skills and capabilities in technology and how it applies to learning both in the classroom and whilst learning from home.

We have developed a suite of strategies that we have found to be the most effective for our staff and students taking into consideration following factors:

- The age of the student and the ability to independently engage with technology.
- Lesson content and the most appropriate instructional method.
- Family circumstances and access to technology.
- Independent work habits.
- Over exposure to technology.
- Covid safe practices in relation to physical resources.
- The number of children in the family and demands on technology in the household.
- Independent activities and the demands on parent time whilst trying to work from home.
- Timetabling when considering families with more than one child.
- Capacity for teachers to monitor student engagement within a reasonable timeframe.
- Teacher communication with families.
- Whole school communication with families.
- A balance of learning and wellbeing.

LEARNING PLATFORMS

At Newtown North Public School, we use several learning and communication platforms to facilitate daily learning from home.

CLASS DOJO (K-6)

Used primarily in Kindergarten to Year 2, teachers communicate daily learning through posts on Class Dojo. The weekly plan is posted at the beginning of the week and teachers check in at 9 am each day with a daily post. Parents are asked to assist children with responding to the daily post so we can mark daily attendance.

Teachers post videos and/or activities to allow parents to engage in tasks at their own pace.

Students/ parents upload completed work to the students learning portfolio and teachers monitor student work thorough individual portfolios.

3-6 teachers use Class Dojo to communicate access information to other online learning platforms and daily instructions. Most learning programs and work however and completed through Google Classrooms.

Teachers monitor student activity and provide feedback between 9 and 2:30 Monday to Friday.

PAPER LEARNING PACKS (K-2)

To reduce the amount of time our students spend on devices teachers have developed learning packs that can be collected from school each week. Individual teachers communicate the time and place to pick up packs from school. They also provide an electronic copy should you be able to print it out at home.

WUSHKA (K-4)

The school purchased a subscription to WUSHKA in 2020 to enable levelled reading to continue without distributing home readers and sharing them across households. Teachers monitor the children's reading levels based on the completed online work. Teachers will assess reading levels and move children through the system. Please consider though that once a child has reached level 23, daily home reading is best supplemented with the novels and picture books your child enjoys reading in addition to Wushka tasks.

MATHLETICS (K-6) AND READING EGGS (K-2)

Literacy and numeracy are supported with teacher directed activities on Mathletics and Reading Eggs. Teachers will set and monitor required tasks on a weekly basis.

SPECIALIST PROGRAMS (K-6)

Drama and visual arts will be supported with weekly lessons posted on either Class dojo or google classrooms by our specialist teachers.

GOOGLE CLASSROOMS (3-6)

Students in years 3-6 will engage with their learning program through Google classrooms. Our teachers create lessons on google slides, add written instructions, Videos of teacher instructions/ messages and links to resources and activities through this platform. Teachers monitor student engagement and interaction.

ZOOM (K-6)

We use zoom as a student wellbeing check in tool rather than an instructional tool. Classes will set weekly catch up sessions for students to meet on zoom, engage with their teachers and each other. We have found that daily zoom "lessons" are not practical for students in our age group and require substantial parent supervision and interaction to ensure cyber safety and participation. I believe that practical instructional information is best communicated through our other platforms.

Timetabling daily zoom also significantly impacts on the supervising adult's capacity to attend to their own work commitments so we prefer to pre-record our daily instruction to allow for flexibility.

It is however perfect for our students to engage with each other in an environment that can be directed and supervised by teachers for short periods of time and enables social opportunities for our students throughout the week. Teachers will communicate zoom details through class dojo to parents in plenty of time to allow families to organise access.

ABC TV PROGRAMMING/externally produced programs.

The ABC has worked with the Department of Education to enable informative instructional resources to be shared with children through Iview or YouTube links. Teachers will embed links into their communicated instructions. You can access these at your own convenience. We also access several other student targeted programs and YouTube resources that have been created to support the instructional process.

CREATING A DAILY TIME TABLE

We are acutely aware that family circumstances differ greatly in our community. We have created a suggested daily timetable that allows for families to plan their day around parent work commitments, family time, and student engagement. The timetable focuses the learner on literacy and numeracy tasks with a range of other activities that can be completed off line and uploaded to our communication platforms.

PUBLISHING DAILY WORK

Each stage takes a different approach to publishing daily work based on the experience, learning habits and learning needs of their class and age group. Our teachers publish some student/parent instructions and learning packs at the beginning of the week but upload videos and activities throughout the week to support instruction. Teachers are monitoring work throughout the day and then prepare work in response to daily tasks for the following day. Teachers are working extended hours to provide individualised feedback on students work and aim to have daily learning available to students by 8:30 each day.

SCHOOL HOURS.

Children spend 6 hours per day at school. This is however punctuated by a variety of activity, brain breaks, physical exercise and social interaction. It is therefore unreasonable of us to expect that children are engaged with intensive one on one instruction via computer access each day. We have therefore created what we believe to be a reasonable amount of work to ask of a child, isolated from a normal classroom situation and their peers. We can provide extension ideas and activities should they be needed.

Where to next?

As a school we always strive to improve on what we do. As we gather more information about our learners, find new ways of engaging and teaching and develop our skills in teaching remotely we will refine our methods and develop our systems. We greatly appreciate, your feedback, suggestions and offers of support and aim to get the balance right for our students, our families and our teachers.

With thanks,

Elizabeth McGlynn
Principal