



Head of Junior Years
May 2020 Report
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Teaching and Learning

Teaching

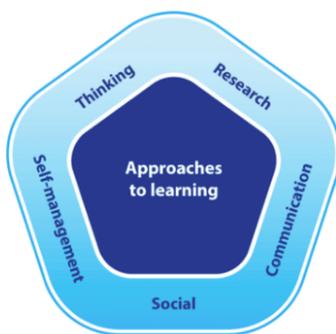
In many ways, the move to remote learning has improved the personalisation of education. Teachers report that they are knowing more about students as individuals because they are spending time interacting with them individually and in small groups.

Learning

Whilst it is clear that some students cannot work from home, it is also apparent that other students thrive when they are able to choose the time, place and method of learning.

Assessment

Through the remote learning experience, teachers are learning more about students as people; however, they are never sure about what each student *really* knows and can do as a result of what they submit. The problem is that teachers never know the extent to which parents supported the learning – and they base assessment marks on what students can do independently.



Teachers decided to use the PYP Approaches to Learning as a guide for reporting to parents at the end of this semester. The individual and small group conversations with students have allowed teachers to look particularly at process rather than product. Students were able to demonstrate communication skills, thinking and self-management.

Student reports will include the following disclaimer:

As a result of remote learning throughout most of Semester 1 this year, some changes have been made to the Progress Report. Although teachers have been collecting data on student achievement, they will not be assigning an A – E grade. The grades are designed to indicate progress in classroom learning and therefore would not accurately reflect student progress considering the broader range of approaches taken during Term 2. Remote learning has focused on developing a variety of skills, rather than a final product, therefore teachers have observed how students have demonstrated the PYP Approaches to Learning and reported on those. Teachers have also commented on learning they have seen during Term 1 as well as how students have adjusted to this flexible learning environment through the Pastoral Care comment. At Good News we are fortunate that SEQTA and Seesaw enable us to continuously report and provide parents with regular updates on student learning. At the end of Semester 2 A – E grades will be resumed.

Culture

When the return of students was announced, teachers were happy and contemplating more change over the next few weeks. Teachers are engaging in "Stop, Start, Keep" discussions.

- What have realized we can make redundant in face-to-face learning? What should we stop doing in an electronic way once it is no longer necessary?
- What is the next step for us? For our students? Are there new ways of teaching we could try?
- What will we keep doing electronically, even when we are back face-to-face?

Physical Space

The Prep team has been working with Maintenance to redevelop its space so that it is in greater alignment with the aims and philosophy of the PYP Early Years Programme. They are looking both at the use of the indoor spaces as well as the garden space as an area for creation and discovery.

Procedural changes due to COVID-19

Teachers have been engaging in robust discussions as to how we might practice social distancing and consider hygiene as much as possible when all students return to campus. In the Junior Years, some extra considerations are needed.

- How can we minimize cross-contamination with the touching of books? Shared pencil/pen trays? Shared iPads?
- What considerations can we make for the return of younger students with high anxiety? With other special learning needs?
- What procedures need to be in place to ensure that students have clean hands when entering and re-entering the classroom?
- What might be moved or re-arranged to allow for more physical distancing between students whilst in the classroom?
- How do we introduce students and families to new drop-off and pick-up procedures?

Parents are being informed of these procedures.

Teachers have ongoing worries about students and families who are still overseas and for those who do not believe it is safe for their children to return. They want to do what is best for the students and also know that it is not feasible to run dual programmes.

PYP Authorisation Update

We are finalizing documents ready to submit for authorisation. Once the documents are submitted, we will receive information about the arrival of a visiting team who gives us the final stamp of approval.

Our consultants visit earlier this year was very positive. She encouraged us to begin thinking about our next areas for growth beyond the authorisation requirements. One direction we might investigate is increasing our understanding of and action toward being more internationally minded.