



## Head of Middle Years July 2020 Monthly Report

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# Teaching and Learning

## Adjusting to Remote Learning

### Staff and

students have grown considerably from the experience. New platforms were discovered and the greater potential of some realised. Overall, this has been a positive experience for most. In the initial stages, there were obstacles. However, rich and authentic learning occurred including:

### Students

- Needing to adjust to the varying requirements of subject areas and the platforms that each used
- Learning varying ways to upload assessment tasks
- Using a number of online forums to communicate with
- their teachers, individual groups and whole class group
- Learning new ways to present information
- Engaging in learning experiences never previously presented
- Developing a myriad of practical 'soft' skills that can be further developed and applied to future learning
- Finding alternate methods to communicate with their friends

### Staff

- Problem solving
- Adjusting their delivery of coursework and
- differentiated learning for student engagement to a greater degree
- Adjusting course material, as required, based on feedback / self-diagnosing potential issues
- Becoming more aware of individual requirements / obstacles
- Learning about new platforms
- Communicating with their students regularly through the delivery of daily devotions, Pastoral Care sessions, weekly assemblies, online forums etc.
- Communicating with colleagues / learning areas more often to overcome barriers / obstacles to engage students in their learning
- Tidying up planners and uploading these for parents / students to see with clear learning intentions and detailed plans
- Making regular contact with parents to not only check in on students, but to also check in on families
- Making adjustments and supporting students with
- emotional / social / cognitive considerations

Needless to point out, there was an array of 'hidden' learning that occurred throughout the experience that with additional nurturing / focus / planned opportunities, will add much value to the learning of students and staff. Both staff and students have come back together with absolute success. Like the organisation and preparation provided to everyone when we launched into Remote Learning, much consideration was given to the return of students and staff. These included (not limited to):

- Emotional support through available resourcing.
- Safety considerations e.g. Washing hands, social distancing, allocated tables, allocated arrival and departure areas etc.
- Greeting of students on their day of return.
- Varying communication methods to prepare students as well as parents / caregivers
- Student surveys to gauge their concerns / excitement during Remote Learning and for their return (the results varied, thus enabling us to best prepare / mitigate / take into consideration varying responses)

To ensure that there was familiarity in a weekly routine, Monday mornings were dedicated to a Chapel Service, whilst Fridays were dedicated to weekly assemblies. Communication with parents / caregivers occurred regularly via Signmee and DIREQT Messages.

Things to consider as we move forward include:

- How can we continue to adjust our practices in order to cater for the varying needs of students?
- What online platforms can be utilised to a greater potential now that we are back face-to-face?
- How do we effectively communicate with parents / caregivers on a regular basis and what value did it provide for the learning of the students?
- How do we grow from this experience, taking on board contemporary practices and embedding these?
- Are our current delivery methods of coursework sufficient enough?
- How can we continue to embed IB Learner profiles in an authentic way? E.g. Risk-taker, Contributor, Open-minded, Reflective. Which additional 'soft skills' compliment these?

Although much that has not been touched on, staff, students and their families should be congratulated on the way that they have worked through this experience and grown their skills in an authentic situation. Needless to say, the learning has been huge!

## MYP Authorisation Update

We are working towards authorisation. Erin Bagot has worked closely with staff from our College and our MYP consultant to ensure that we are tracking along appropriately. We are currently working on clarifying our Assessment Policy and Reporting procedures / formats to ensure that an understanding amongst staff is consistent and 'grey areas' eliminated. Seeking staff input has been instrumental through this process in order to have 'buy in' and ownership of the processes / procedures.

Please refer to the short IB MYP Overview presentation below prepared by Erin Bagot, GNLC's MYP Coordinator.

<https://screencast-o-matic.com/watch/cY161EC25J>

## Highlights in the Middle Years (MY)

To date, there have been many things to celebrate in the MY. These have included:

- A cohesive group of staff who work together to engage students in their learning and provide emotional, social, spiritual as well as academic support.
- Unique and talented students who are usually supportive of each other, look out for one another, provide friendships and have a wonderful connection to the College
- **Camps** – Year 6 Camp to Canberra (unfortunately cancelled due to COVID 19, but much preparation and learning occurred prior to the date. We are potentially looking for an alternate camp this year if allowed to), Year 7 'The Summit' Team building camp, Year 8 'Grantville Lodge' adventure camp, Year 9 'CYC' city camp. We have booked in camps for 2021 (the same for Years 6 – 8) with a change to the Year 9 experience.
- Year 9 Camp will move away from being a 'City Experience' to being one of challenging the individual. Along with the Rite Journey programme, we are providing students with the unique experience of hiking the Grampians, team building and completing a 'reflective solo night' at the 'Lutheran Tandara Camp'. The Rite Journey programme will be run during PC classes and Health sessions. We are currently exploring what this will look like.
- Year 9 students successfully completed their Community Projects. These started at the end of Year 8 with a focus on helping a group or individual in the community who had a specific need, some with outstanding results, including a number with perfect scores. As well as completing this Unit of Work, students also learned about groups and individuals in the community who were disadvantaged in some way and were able to gain some awareness of the issue, as well as practice compassion and caring. This was complimented by their CYC camp experience this year.

- Year 7 PC time had the classes reconnect after the Remote Learning period and build community with a game of 4 way soccer. 7LI came out the winners!
- Year 7 with some outstanding work across set assessments;
- home-made solar thermometers, solar ovens, water filters... and more!
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- Year 9 Robotics – robots were provided to students at
- home to continue their learning with programming. These were provided by the Wyndham
- Tech School for our use
- Year 6 – focus is on our 'College's involvement with our
- Local Community - Working collaboratively - Mental Health'.
- Year 6 students take part in a program called 'Confident Me!' (Body Image & Mental Health) in collaboration with Wyndham Youth Council. Apart from the ongoing activities at school on the topic, Wyndham Youth Council representatives visit our College to enlighten the students about their role and responsibility with this issue.

It is exciting and a privilege to be part of the College!