

Distance Learning Plan Unexpected School Closure

مَدْرَسَةُ الْخَلِيجِ النَّمُوذَجِيَّةِ Gulf Model School



Distance Learning
E-platform,
Training & Guidance



PLANNING FOR EFFECTIVE DISTANCE LEARNING:

Gulf Model School decided to have effective continuation of learning during the covid-19 pandemic situation. After researching on different platforms, the school decided to implement two different e-learning platforms to make sure, the learning is happening to the fullest in each phase of the school which cater to their needs and requirements. Though e-learning is considerably new to the school, the vision, objectives, milestones were explicitly defined and each lesson was successfully executed in the virtual classrooms.

To create a school like environment virtually is challenging. Additionally, it is not easy to ensure that each student remains engaged and actively learns what is expected. It is unrealistic to expect all participants in an eLearning project to be familiar with the online environment and the technology or application being used. To make learning more interesting, interactive and easier, the school has come up with modified teaching methodologies through e-learning platforms. Individually, we can do little, together, we can do so much, involving every staff, students and parents together in a virtual classroom.

E-platforms are specifically allocated to different phases according to their needs and requirements. Following are the platforms which are user-friendly (according to their phase).

Phase 3 & 4 - Google Classroom & Google Meet

Phase 1 & 2 - ZOOM

Phase 1 - Class Dojo



PHASE 3 & 4:

Google Classroom & Google Meet:

Since the school has been following the Google Classroom application for their material and project sharing purpose from the previous academic year(which was one of the reasons), it was decided to roll out the same platform for e-learning as well. Google classroom is a platform where class work, projects, test paper and assessment can be created and shared with the students. However ,face-to-face teaching was not possible here. To make video-conferencing possible and to have face-to-face teaching and learning, Google Meet is now added to Google Classroom.



With the help of google meet, teachers can schedule a class according to their normal timetable and share in google classroom, students thereby use the conferencing links from classroom to access every session.

Students were clearly instructed at each step. This includes creating the account, inviting the students to join the class and they were given set guidelines to have a successful virtual classroom.

Teachers:

Teachers were given proper and detailed training(phase wise) on e-learning platforms. The techniques and tips to handle the application smoothly and effectively were demonstrated to them. Before the commencement of classes, teachers conducted demo sessions(amongst themselves) to study the advantages and limitations of the e-learning platforms. Upon the successful completion of the training, teachers were asked to prepare appropriate resources for e-learning that match their curriculum plans. The following steps were followed:

- Create a Google Classroom
- Add the Students as per their credentials created by school
- Add the co-teachers, for different subjects and areas of learning.
- Schedule the sessions according to the time table.
- Create video conferencing links for every session and uploading them in Google Classroom.
- Create resources and study materials inside the Google Classroom.
- Conduct assessments after the completion of each lesson.

Students:

To have secure access and to ensure effective learning through e-learning platforms, all the students from grades 6 to 12 were given school domain email IDs to access Gmail, Google Classroom, Google Calendar and Google Meet. To bring out the best out of students, there should be a proper guidance and support. Despite the students of this generation being well versed with modern technology, they would still require adequate guidelines to keep their focus on dot. We planned the process sequentially:

- gmsdubai.ae domain ids are created and shared to all students.
- The detailed installation guide for the applications were created and shared to parents.
- By accepting invitation from every class, the student becomes the member of the class.



- He/she can access, resources, study materials, test papers and conferencing links once accepting the join invitation from Google Classroom.
- Netiquettes – the complete guidelines to follow during the e-learning classroom.

Parents:

Parents do play a pivotal role in ensuring the successful functioning of a school. Similarly e-learning also involves parental guidance in assigning the appropriate digital gadgets to their wards and monitoring their behavior and safety online. Even though school insists the right use of gadgets for learning purpose, parental guidance and keeping a watch over the ward is essential too. As a minimum we would ask parents to support the child by checking on what they need to do and whether they have completed the tasks set.

As the parents become active participants in the process of e learning, the following measures were taken by the school to support the parents:

- Advise on appropriate Gadgets
- Installation of applications with the help of school IT department.
- Revisiting the instruction and the guidance provided by the school.
- Help to access the assignment given by teachers on a daily basis as and when required..
- Trouble shooting the problems faced by the children as and when encountered.

PHASE 1 & 2:

ZOOM (Ph 1 & 2) and Class Dojo (Ph1)

For eLearning to be successful, everyone including school, parents and students have crucial roles to play, especially with phase 1 & 2 students. They may not be much tech friendly, but once guided ,they will excel in those. In the beginning, the students should be properly guided with the do's and don't's during the e-lesson. Even after sending all instructions through mail and school portal, every teacher should be reinforcing the e-learning culture every day as practice makes a person perfect in what he/she does. The school decided go ahead with Zoom in phase 1 & 2 primarily because of the additional features in ZOOM which allow the students to be more engaged in the learning. Especially Whiteboard option in Zoom helps the little ones to write or draw and show to the teachers, which everyone else can see too.

The teacher has the sole authority of controlling the class, as the application gives all the controlling access to the host i.e. the instructor. The teacher can decide when to mute everyone, when to give



give access and when to enable the white board access. All the teachers in phases 1 & 2 were given comprehensive training to handle the e-learning platform.

Teachers:

Every teacher was asked to create a zoom account using the official email id to have secure access and for effective implementation. After Zoom training, all teachers were asked to conduct a demo class among them as a part of training. They have been given the option of choosing different virtual backgrounds in order to make the learning interesting and lively to all students. The platforms chosen are not complex, but user friendly and simple UI.

The important features of e learning in phases 1 and 2:

- Every session is scheduled priorly.
- There is a unique personal meeting ID and Password created in 1st phase of e-learning.
- Before starting the session, the complete lesson plan is made, resources are gathered to execute the lesson.
- The same credentials are shared to parents to access the lesson and the time table.
- In 2nd phase the complete hyperlinked time table is shared to all parents, where parents have to just click the appropriate time table column and get inside the class.
- Not everyone can access, but teacher has to verify the user, before entering the class, until then all students will be in waiting room.
- As it's a user specific platforms/host, the students time table is linked with different teachers according to their time table.

Students:

Every student should be creating an email id with help of their parents and school IT, to create an account in ZOOM. The detailed installation guide and instruction to use ZOOM is mailed to every parents. The resources required for lessons are mailed to parents before hand to prepare for the class. Phase 1 students are already familiar with Class Dojo, all their worksheets, information is shared in advance in this platform to parents. Parent teacher communication is easily accessible of both the parties by Class Dojo. Students were supported in the following areas:

- Email id creation.
- Installation of Zoom, creating the account using the above email id.
- Accessing the hyperlinked time table, according to their session timings.
- Accessing the assignments in and after the zoom classes.
- Participating in all the activities set by the teachers.



- Following the set guidelines to have successful lesson.

Parents

Parents were sent detailed guide to start the e-learning effectively, step-by-step procedures to follow. Starting from installation, about the platforms and guidance to help the ward to start the e-lessons. As the e-platforms used in phase 1 & 2 are easy to handle and simple user interface, it's easy to understand. They don't access the applications directly, but use only the hyperlinked time table, shared to each parent, they find it very convenient. Soon after clicking on the appropriate slot in the class timetable, it will be automatically directed to that particular class. There is absolutely technical difficulties involved in accessing the lessons. Teachers were trained in such a way that the lessons are prepared according to required strategies involved in e-learning so that it is effective and successful. Parents were supported in the following ways-

- Advising on gadgets that support these applications(almost all the gadgets support the applications initiated)
- Installing, activating and accessing e learning applications.
- Reinforcing the netiquettes to be followed during the e-lesson classes.
- Guidance on downloading and uploading the sent study materials, in case of assessment or classwork and projects.
- Supporting and guidance on accessing projects during after class activities.

Point of contact during the e-learning & Technical Support.

As the e learning environment is new to all, everyone needed a proper guidance to kickstart e-learning and to have a successful journey. Every student and parent can contact the following personnel, respective to their department.

- Class Teachers (Refer External Links)
- Phase Leaders
 - o secondarysupervisorm@gmsdubai.ae – Ms Salon Mary (Phase 4 - MS)
 - o secondarysupervisor@amsdubai.ae – Ms. Deepthi Das (Phase 3 & 4 – AS)
 - o middleschoolsupervisorm@gmsdubai.ae – Mr. Aby I Ipe (Phase 3 – MS)
 - o primarysupervisor@gmsdubai.ae – Ms. Nandhini K (Phase 2 – Grades 3 to 5)
 - o primarycoordinator@gmsdubai.ae – Ms. Amrita Singh (Phase 2 – Grade 1 and 2)
 - o kgsupervisor@gmsdubai.ae – Ms. Sarita Mote (Phase 1 Coordinator)
 - o inclusionchampion@gmsdubai.ae – Ms. Princiya (All Phases)



- School IT department
 - o itadmin@gmsdubai.ae – Mr. Paulraj

Basic Requirements & Applications involved in eLearning.

1. Basic Internet connection.
2. Gadgets supporting the e-learning platforms.
3. Set study area, to feel and create classroom environment.
4. Gmail. (Phase 3 & 4)
5. Google Classroom & Google Meet. (Phase 3 & 4)
6. Supporting Google Applications (Sheets, Docs, forms, calendar, etc) (Phase 3 & 4)
7. Zoom (Phase 1 & 2)
8. Class Dojo (Phase 1)
9. School Portal – GMS Learning Pathway (Orison)(All Phases)