

Distance Learning Plan Unexpected School Closure

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DISTANCE LEARNING ACTION PLAN



1.1 INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed to ensure that all staff in GMS school are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of students, parents and teachers. This policy has been shared with the Governing Body and will be reviewed at regular intervals.

E-Safety is a safeguarding issue and all members of the school community have a duty to be aware of e-safety at all times, to know the required procedures and to act on them.

This document aims to put into place effective management systems and arrangements which will maximize the educational and social benefit that can be obtained by exploiting the benefits and opportunities by using ICT, whilst minimizing any associated risks.

MISSION (Adopted from E learning standards and licensing, UAE)

The institution distance learning policy

- describes accurately and truthfully the distinguishing characteristics of distance learning .
- is approved by the governing body
- is periodically re-evaluated to assess its efficiency and its usefulness in providing overall institutional direction;
- provides overall direction to teachers, students and parents
- is widely understood by all the stake holders
- has institutional goals and institutional objectives; the objectives are measurable

OBJECTIVES

Distance learning in GMS prioritizes seven strategic action areas that are necessary to embed eLearning effectively across all phases

- leading safe sustainable e-learning implementation;
- supporting innovation in teaching and learning;
- developing the education workforce;
- unifying learner support;
- aligning assessment;
- developing a clear communication tool.



ETHOS

It is the duty of the school to ensure that every child and young person is safe. We make sure that the same 'staying safe' principles apply equally to the 'virtual' world.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils is embedded into the culture of the school and its everyday practice and procedures and hence the same will be carried out during the e learning days too

All staff have a responsibility to support e-Safe practices and all pupils need to understand their responsibilities.

Bullying, harassment or abuse of any kind via digital technologies or mobile phones will not be tolerated and complaints of cyber bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal and director of the school is responsible for ensuring the best delivery of e-learning:

School will ensure that:

- All staff are included in E-Safety training. Staff must also understand that misuse of the internet may lead to disciplinary action and possible dismissal.
- Teachers act as the first point of contact with regards to breaches in e-safety and security.
- that ICT security is maintained.
- Every teacher attends appropriate training.
- It provides support and training for staff on E-Safety.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers have received training on all aspects of distance learning

SOCIAL NETWORKING AND CHAT ROOMS

- Pupils will not access social networking sites during distance learning classes.
- Pupils will be taught the importance of personal safety when using social networking sites and chat rooms.
- Pupils will not be allowed to access public or unregulated chat rooms.
- Pupils will only be allowed to use regulated educational chat environments and use will be supervised.
- Staff will not exchange social networking addresses or use social networking sites to communicate with pupils.



DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

- Staff, children and young people, parents/carers must know how and where to report incidents. Concerns related to Safeguarding issues must be dealt with through the school's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- The school's designated person for e-safety will be responsible for dealing with complaints and any complaint concerning staff or pupil misuse of the internet must be reported to the principal immediately.
- Pupils and parents/cares will be informed of the complaint's procedure.
- Parents/carers and pupils will work in partnership with the school staff to resolve any issues.
- There may be occasions when the school must contact the police. If appropriate, early contact should be made to discuss strategies and preserve possible evidence.

ONLINE LEARNING AND TEACHING

GMS uses two types of online learning and teaching: synchronous (happening collaboratively and at the same time with a group of online learners and usually a teacher) and asynchronous (happening at any time, not necessarily in a group).

The chart below provides strategies that are used in GMS.

Activity	Synchronous	Asynchronous
Collaborative writing	X	X
Note book work	X	X
Discussion forums / text-based chats	X	X
Assignments		X
Games /quizzes / puzzles	X	X
Live video chats	X	
Mapping (mind-mapping, using interactive maps and charts, etc)	X	X
Multimedia presentations	X	X
Drawing and craft work		X
Quizzes and surveys	X	X
Video chatting and conferencing	X	X



CURRICULUM COVERAGE AND INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

With the announcement of distance learning school had to make a complete revamping of the timetable with major changes in the number of periods and instructional timing for each subject. The following three steps were taken into account in developing the final timetable for the classes. This involved the participation of the supervisors in order to finalize the allocation of teachers.

Part I: Designing an e-learning course

The ACP (Annual Curriculum Planner) was restructured to focus on the time and resources available for distance learning. The teachers were provided guidance on how to design an e-learning curriculum depending on the weightage of lessons like from the needs, target and task/topic analysis to the definition of learning objectives, sequencing, choice of learning strategies and delivery formats.

Part II: Creating interactive content

The teachers were provided detailed guidance on creating interactive content from the application of learning strategies and implementing it through the software. The subject heads and teachers were involved in content development as well as the methodology and tools that needs to be used to deliver the content effectively.

Part III: Managing and evaluating learning activities

The leaders were provided an overview of online collaborative learning, evaluation methods and learning platforms used to host online courses. The leaders were guided hoe to conduct and evaluate an online course and how learning platforms can support course delivery and communication among students and parents.

Part IV: Designing of the timetable:

A core committee was incorporated to work on the timetable under the leadership of the senior secondary supervisor. the teacher load and the subject load was finalized and a vey dynamic timetable was created for the student community. 5 days a week with 1 hour sessions for middle and secondary school and 1 hour sessions for phase 1\2 .

TEACHING AND LEARNING

At GMS the online course was organized into 5 parts , which are weekly sessions, depending on the duration of the course and on learners' available time. The following are the components of our online course:



- Kickoff session
- Cycle of learning events
- Final assessment
- Feedback
- Survey

Kickoff event: The kickoff session introduced the course goals and the agenda to the parents via circular, teachers through online training and students during the class teacher period. It motivated the participants and provide an overview of the activities and methods that will be used through the course for three months.

Cycle of learning materials: Thee learning course consists of lesson derived from the ACP that are scheduled on a weekly and daily basis. Learning activities include self-study as well as a range of individual and collaborative activities, such as: Readings, presentation and self-study. It also includes different types of content, such as simple learning resources (documents and presentations), video and audio content and Individual project work: The teacher also asks learners to conduct project work or an assignment to be presented in front of the class. Students and teachers to comment on each other's assignments.

Final assessment: This includes a variety of assessment for learners through online in house structured and through google classroom. Assessments can vary – they can consist of a set of multiple-choice questions and/or be an evaluation of learners' final assignments made by the teacher. These assessments are analyzed and evaluated as per the standards of KHDA and a consolidated report is mailed to the teachers for the heads of the departments. A weekly review is conducted to evaluate the learning curve of the students. Necessary steps are taken in places where the attainment is low.

Feedback:

- provides feedback on tasks, assignments and assessments.
- accompanies participants during their work by checking their work and interfering into the quality of work by providing guidance.
- provides summaries at the end of units, answers questions concerning the unit, provides notes for lessons.



- motivates participants to produce, reflect, animatedly exchange ideas and discussions, organizes the final evaluation of the e-learning event to all students.

Survey: The most important part of the e learning in GMS is the survey which is regularly conducted for students, teachers and parent. The evaluation survey provides the SLT course designers with feedback from all stake holders. This is a very useful step as it allows SLT to improve the course. It also gives participants the feeling that leaders are interested in making the course more effective.

ASSESSMENTS:

The school has developed an in-house assessment tool which is monitored by the assessment coordinator. Other tools are also used by the teachers

1. Google Forms: Create forms with hyperlinks, images, and videos.
2. Socrative.com: A free web-based service that lets you assess students with prepared activities or on-the-fly questions to get immediate insight into understanding.
3. Class flow: Class flow lets you build lessons using cards you create using the content of your choice.
4. Kahoot: This is a popular free class quiz game that lets teachers use multiple choice or sequencing questions.
5. Quizizz: Another great game and quiz-making application.
6. Quizlet: Lets students learn and improve by studying with flashcards, games and more.
7. DOC HUB
8. NEAR POD

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Distance learning activities becomes most effective by using a range of communication tools – both synchronous and asynchronous. Some of these tools, that GMS is using are circulars, zoom meetings, google hang outs, audio and video conferences. Synchronous tools are mainly used in school as it provides higher social presence in virtual classrooms as learners can use chats to offer comments and answer questions during the presentation.

WELL BEING IN GMS

The inclusion champion has been designated as the wellbeing coordinator. The student council has two members wellbeing representatives. A variety of sessions are introduced to children regarding health, posture and mental wellbeing.



Teachers are always helping students to keep classwork organized, follow schedules, and complete tasks. These self-management skills are discussed during the class teachers' period on a regular basis to help students. Students are encouraged to create to-do lists in Google Docs, to schedule their deadlines. Teachers use Google Classroom to send wellness reminders to students. Well being challenge is a regular event in the school calendar. The inclusion department is involved in many activities for the wellbeing of all student, parent and teachers.

HOME WORK SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

A date sheet has been fixed for the submission of homework assignment in order to ease the workload for children. The same is revised as and when it is essential to do so. It is also share with the parent community. The access of sharing the assignments is kept child friendly.