CATHOLIC EDUCATION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PARENTS

A Guide to maintaining a safe, supportive working environment for your children learning from home

This guide is intended for parents to consider how they are integrating the three Key Practices of the CEWA Child Safe Framework as our students continue their learning online.

If you have a child safety concern, please contact your school's Principal.

Code of Conduct applies, especially online. Talk about this with your child(ren) and get ideas about what this looks like when online.

Situational Prevention – *through our behaviour and culture this practice aims to mitigate situations that present risk for our students*

- Only the platforms approved by CEWA (TEAMS and school e-mails) should be used to communicate between students and teachers. As per the code of conduct, teachers should be transparent and accountable in all electronic online communication. Phone contact will only be made in exceptional circumstances. This would normally be through the pastoral care or leadership of your child's school

- Ensure you are aware of your child's school ICT policy.

- Consider creating a dedicated workspace for your child and ensure that you are familiar with how to blur the background on TEAMS if using the video feature.

- Consider other members of your family who may be also be working in an online space and how your family can manage the noise and reduce distractions as much as possible so that everyone is able to focus on their devices and work/learning obligations.

- Consider your child's personal presentation, even though they may be in the comfort of their own home the school may require they dress in school attire.

- Try to adhere to normal routines as much as possible so that students are not confused by too many changes. This means waking at normal school time, having breakfast before learning begins, getting washed, dressed and supporting them to access their online learning in their dedicated workspace.

- It may be wise to write up the schedule/timetable each day as is often done in the physical classroom so your child can see they are making progress throughout the day and they are aware of what lessons are coming next. This reduces anxiety, sets up expectations and provides a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day.

- Include normal school breaks and food for recess, lunch time and crunch 'n' sip if applicable. This also means your children should go outside and play or get some fresh air during these times as they normally would at school.

- As the online environment will now be the primary source of communication there is a potential for cyber issues to increase. Consider familiarising yourself with the eSafety Commissioner's website on what these issues could be and how best to manage them.

https://www.esafety.gov.au/about-us/blog/covid-19-online-safety-kit-parents-and-carers

Extended Guardianship – *it is our collective responsibility as adults to support an environment that is engaging, supportive and safe*

We strongly encourage you to create an online agreement with your child or set some boundaries around yours and the schools' expectations for completing their online learning. It is important to avoid excess use of technology, and to set clear expectations amongst the family to avoid any unwanted conflict. Here's an example agreement from the eSafety Commissioner: https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/children-under-5/family-tech-agreement

- In the event that online learning is not accessible for whatever reason it is strongly encouraged that you have a backup plan. This may be a physical work package that your child's conscientious classroom teacher has put together. This may be a bank of ideas you have up your sleeve, such as all the things you wish you were taught when at school.

- It is important to remember not to beat yourself up about missing online learning if it's not working, use this time to connect with your child if your own circumstances allow. For example; teach them how to change a tyre, how to cook, read together, do a puzzle, play a board game, build a pillow fort, get the Lego out, go through the photo albums and look for those teachable moments.

- Remember, learning comes in many forms and in the face of these extraordinary times, do the ordinary things.

- Speak with your child's teacher if you have any questions about this.

So do your best. We recognise parents as first educators and in the event of teachers being unavailable, we support you to make decisions in the best interest of your child.

Healthy and Respectful Relationships – modelling behaviours equips our students with the understanding of how they should be treated

- Don't forget to model expected online behaviour if your circumstances allow

- Respect the contact hours set by the school in expecting responses from staff.

- If you expect your child to give the lesson their full attention, it is important you model this on your own device and demonstrate how to best interact when there are interruptions.

- Remind your child not to type, say or do anything they wouldn't in person and that anything that is streamed can be retrieved.

- Make your child aware that their personal interactions may be read, heard or viewed, not only by their teachers but potentially also, those who share the teacher's household.

- We understand that you as parents may have other obligations and you may not always be fully aware of what is happening in your child's online classroom. Therefore, we encourage you to maintain and keep the lines of communication open and transparent between you and your child's teacher's.

- Consider a discussion with your child about their safety network. They may have already done this at school, but it is timely to review the network as our regular circumstances have changed. Be aware that many of your child's regular network helpers may be currently unavailable (e.g; specialist teachers, sports coaches, neighbours, friends, etc.) or the methods of contact may have changed. Alternative trusted adults may be needed, as well as community services such as the 'Kids Help Line' along with their contact details.

If you want to know more about the CEWA Child Safe Framework, please click on this link:

https://childsafe.cewa.edu.au/