

6 April 2020

Head of School Address

Welcome to our online learning programme. First of all, a very big thank you for all your support over the last few weeks as we have worked to manage the situation of COVID-19 here in Singapore. It's now reached the point where we need to close school, and to do what we've been preparing for for many weeks, which is to do online teaching. There will be many challenges to work in this environment, because to do an online programme – a fully online programme, is something that's very new for all of us. However, I do believe there is a silver lining behind most situations. And at the end of this, we will be able to look back and reflect on all the wonderful new technology skills that we have learnt, all the different ways of learning that we've been exposed to, and how much we've learnt about ourselves as learners. That can really, only strengthen us for the future. Given that, I thought I would run through a little bit on how the online programme is going to work.

We've built a programme that is developed mentally appropriate for the age of our students. So if you have a student in, say, High School and Middle School, it will look a little bit different from what we're doing in Elementary as well, because we've developed something that is age appropriate for our students.

In High School, we will be running a normal school day, but it will be done 100% online. We'll be using a programme, primarily Zoom, along with Google Classroom, and some other applications that our teachers have identified. In Paterson Campus, in Middle School – MYP 1, 2 and 3, we're going to begin the programme with doing quite a bit of pastoral work in order to prepare our young adolescents for working online. We recognised that we need to do some serious groundwork with these students so that they can be effective in that online programme. This is building on the work that we did already before the holidays, where we did some practice work for working online.

In the Elementary School, you will see that it is a little bit different, and that's for different purposes. We're very aware that Elementary students need a bit more support in order to work online. We do recognise that a number of our parents are also working from home. So the programme is a little bit more flexible. There are, however, expectations for the number of hours that students are engaged in things like mathematics and writing, and that they will also be doing quite a lot of work, project based work, which will extend over several days. We hope this gives our parents some flexibility to work within working hours that they may have to adhere to as well. Nevertheless, we're asking all of our students to keep a log of the number of hours that they will be working outside of school, online, or on projects, so that we can keep track that things are going in the way that we expect to.

Each of our programme coordinators will be sending out a set of expectations for online learning, and that will be in alignment with the things I've said, and the development stage of each of the students. Please, if you have any questions, make sure you email us, or call us, because we are all working from home but online most of the day as well. We will be asking for your input in the review process as this programme goes on so that we can make some

in-flight adjustments as at where, to make sure that what we are doing is meeting your expectations and the learning outcomes that we have set for our students. Fingers crossed that this online learning and working from home really helps us to reduce the number of cases we have in Singapore so that we can eventually all get back to normal, and be together as a community.

Once again, thank you so much for your support, and look for my videos from time to time as I talk to you about some tips for working from home, and we'll engage in different discussions about learning. Have a wonderful day ahead and all the best. Thank you.

Dr. Margaret Alvarez

Head of School

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