

Date: 13 May 2020

Issue no.: 12

Dear Parent / Learner

Online learning may be a new experience for most of us but it is here to stay! Coming from a more traditional learning milieu, we must embrace, learn, adapt and make the most of the resources we may encounter in our online teaching and learning journey!

There are many higher education institutions that are geared towards this type of learning and this experience at school level may just be what the doctor ordered to prepare school learners for a higher education system that differs vastly from what is usually experienced at school. I do believe we need to acknowledge the benefits of an online or blended approach to teaching and learning. Thank you for the great feedback received since we started our online learning program – your support is greatly appreciated!

This said, one of the challenges that all schools face during the current national lockdown is how to replicate the face-to-face interaction and in-person discussions that we are accustomed to and easily provide on campus.



The solution? The online classes we are currently offering use a combination of discussion forums and interactive question-and-answer sessions to give learners the interaction with other learners and teachers. Summary documents of all academic work to be completed are therefore posted on MyHub, via e-mail, WhatsApp groups and ITSI (where applicable). Teachers are available online to assist should learners have questions or need support. **The learners can contact teachers according to their timetables to assist in managing time.**

This approach is followed to limit high data use as far as possible – unfortunately not all our learners have unlimited access to devices, data or are able to follow the same time structure. Many of our high school learners must take care of younger siblings, for example, while parents either work online or are involved in providing essential services.

Face-to-face discussions between friends and colleagues is something that we all do every day. However, an online academic discussion requires a different set of skills and might not come as naturally when an online learning journey is embarked upon. As an online teacher, you focus on the experiences that would best generate learning from the learner's point of view, rather than just publishing and assessing the information you think they need to know. Each participant in a course can and should be a teacher as well as a learner.

these webinar timeslots too and teachers who make use of these sessions have informed the learners involved thereof.

Wednesday morning Cycle Test periods may be used to catch up on work if needed or spent doing a bit of exercise (as with the Enrichment lesson on Day10). A number of short exercise videos have been created and posted to assist learners in keeping physically active.

An important aspect that determines the quality of a study experience is the level of support that learners receive. Please be assured that our teachers have jumped into this online learning environment head first – I have witnessed amazing webinars, superb online learning material, assessments and feedback, but most of all, I have witnessed teachers who sit down in front of laptop screens from early morning to late at night interacting with learners and preparing learning material because they truly care.

The role that personal and pastoral support plays in an online learner's success cannot be overstated. For this reason, Mrs. Bentel, our school counsellor and all our Grade Heads and Phase Heads are available to assist learners who may feel overwhelmed or need additional support.

We invite parents and/or learners to contact subject teachers, Grade Heads or members of the Senior Management Team (e-mail addresses below) with any queries or guidance – you are more than welcome.

If you are feeling overwhelmed or unsure of what to do, please ask for assistance. You are never alone, and everyone is here to help you make the most of your time at Curro Aurora and become your own success story.

Learning is particularly effective when constructing something for others to experience. This can be anything from a spoken sentence or an internet posting, to more complex things like a painting or a presentation. For example, you might read this page several times and still forget it by tomorrow - but if you were asked to explain these ideas to someone else in your own words, or produce a slideshow that explained these concepts, you would gain a deeper understanding that is more integrated into your own ideas. It is for this reason that teachers are still insisting for work to be handed in to be checked and I ask that parents support them as far as possible in this.

We are not working towards a June exam anymore due to the change in term timetable, but will rather focus on reporting on work covered during the course of this term. The assessments and marks collected during this term will form part of a CASS (continuous assessment) mark later in the year. Grade 12 portfolio requirements have been slightly adjusted by the IEB and these changes will be implemented by the subject teachers.

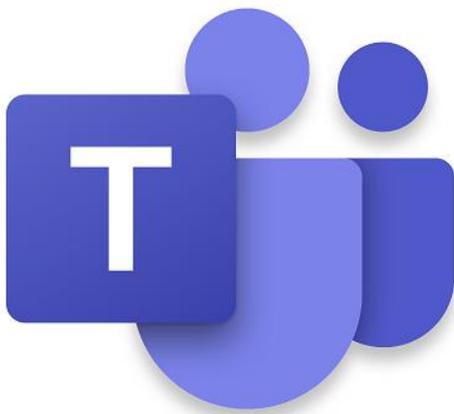
It has been shown that the most successful online learners/teachers tend to share the following characteristics:

- Self-motivation/self-starter
- Good organisation and time-management skills
- Resourceful and actively seek answers and solutions to questions and problems

Online learning emphasizes an interactive learning environment, designed to stimulate dialogue between teacher and learners and it is therefore important to realise that teachers will often act as facilitators, organizing activities that engage learners directly rather than relying too heavily on lectures. Although communication is sometimes asynchronous, real-time chat is always available.

And so, we await further announcements regarding education and the planned way forward, not with despair, but with the knowledge that we can and will overcome this obstacle and commit to continue providing quality learning to our Curro Aurora learners.

Tips for Teams:



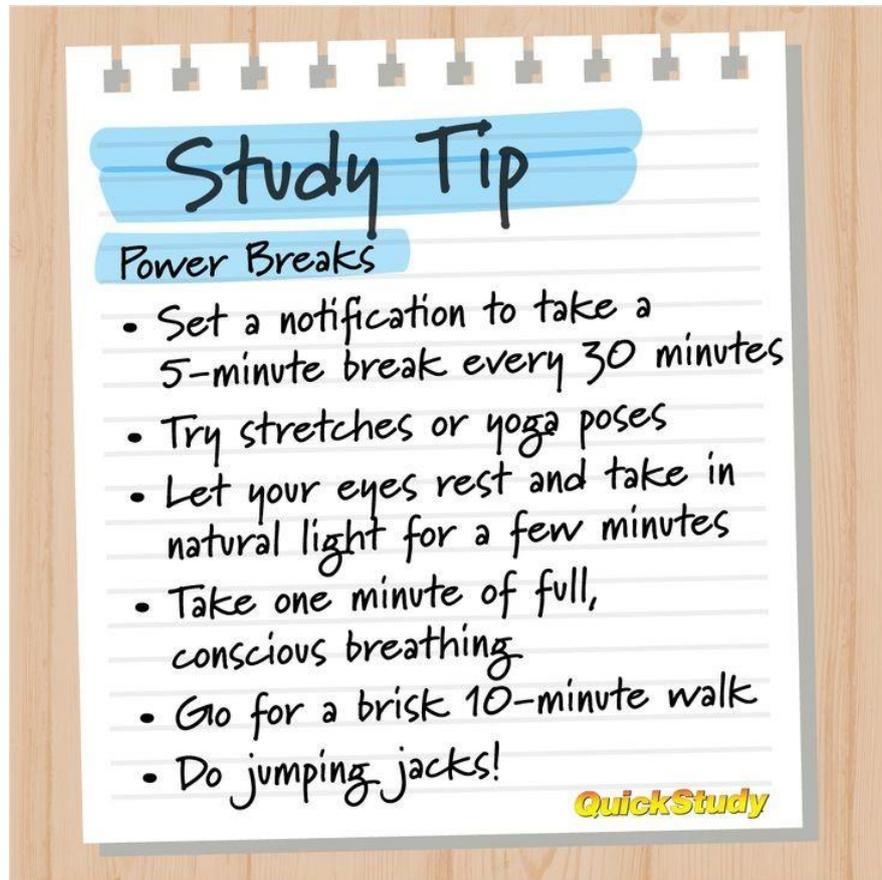
1. **Be active and engaged.**

No one likes a “quiet and empty” house. Let’s agree to engage as much as possible! We will encourage each other to share by sharing ourselves.

2. **Be kind and supportive**

This is a no-brainer but still good to have as one of our house rules. In Teams, you have so many ways to show your support using – reactions, GIFs, stickers, memes, and much more. Let’s be respectful to each other and show our support for one another.

- 3. When you join the meeting, turn your video camera and microphone off unless** your teacher has instructed you otherwise. To do this, click the microphone and video camera sliders so they are both set to off. You can always turn them on in the meeting if the teacher requests it.
- 4. If your teacher does want you to turn your video camera on, blur your background.** This creates the best learning experience for all of your peers. You won't have to worry about something behind you distracting another student or being potentially offensive. To blur your background, click the middle slider when you join your meeting. This will open a panel on the right side of the screen with several background options. Pick “Blur” to obscure details of everything behind you.
- 5. Use the meeting chat to ask questions.** Your teacher will likely have guidance for the best way to raise your hand, but a common way is to click the “Chat” icon in the meeting, then tap on the “Raise Your Hand” icon. Then wait for the teacher to call on you.
- 6. Follow your timetable and try not to fall behind –** if you are experiencing ANY difficulty, talk to your teacher and ask for assistance. In class they can gauge where you may feel lost by reading facial expressions or body language. In an online learning environment, YOU must reach out and ASK.
- 7. Remember to look away from your screen every 20 minutes,** and to stand up and stretch (or even do some jumping jacks!) between classes. Get up and walk around during break times so that you are able to sustain your concentration when you get back to class.



CULTURE

Mrs Saskia Snyders

– Curro Arts –
SUPERHERO
2020

– CURRO –
CREATE
ARTS SUPERHERO

CAS Has Gone Virtual

Check out Curro Create's
YouTube channel for tutorials and
learn from the masters.

#Learners2Leaders

CURRO

A BIG creative thank you to every learner who has submitted their Curro CAS entry. Solo Performance Entries, please make sure that you follow the steps that have been communicated on the Microsoft Teams platform. Stay Creative! Stay Healthy!

COVID-19 ARRANGEMENTS / RETURN TO SCHOOL

When the go-ahead is given by educational minister, Minister Angie Motshekga, Curro Aurora will be ready to implement the necessary safety precautions and procedures as detailed in a Standard Operating Procedures document. These procedures include safety aspects and procedures that teachers, learners, parents, visitors to the campus and auxiliary staff will need to adhere to strictly.

The wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE) will be compulsory and face masks will be provided to learners by Curro. Temperature screening and hand sanitizing will become part of our daily routine upon entering the school premises and continued social distancing and regular washing of hands will become a way of life for the foreseeable future.

We ask that visits to the school be limited as much as possible and we therefore ask that parents set up appointments with staff prior to coming onto campus to facilitate proper protocol.

For more information please visit the Curro Aurora Facebook page where you will find a comprehensive document and instructional video to assist parents and learners in preparing for the long-awaited re-opening of our school.

ONLINE CAREER and SUBJECT CHOICE ASSESSMENTS

Mrs Tina Doukas, our campus-based educational psychologist, is offering online Grade 9 subject choice and Grade 10 to 12 career assessments.

Please see her details below:



ONLINE

MIND
+ me

Grade 9 Subject Choice and Grade 10 - 12 Career Assessments

- Online Psychometric Assessments (2 – 3 hours)
 - Testing Aptitude, Personality and Interests
- Full Report and Feedback
- Secure Online Platform
- Medical aid accepted

For Bookings, please contact Tina Doukas (Educational Psychologist)
Mind + Me Psychology Practice
071 715 2406 / tina@mindandme.co.za / HPCSA Reg. No. 0125130

There is no reason to panic. If you **stay informed** and take the necessary **precautions**, you can keep yourself and others safe.



#Learners2Leaders

www.curro.co.za

CURRO

It is very important to remember that children look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events. If parents seem overly worried, children's anxiety may rise. Parents should reassure children that health and school officials are working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy.

However, children also need factual, age appropriate information about the potential seriousness of disease risk and concrete instruction about how to avoid infections and spread of disease. Teaching children positive preventive measures, talking with them about their fears, and giving them a sense of some control over their risk of infection can help reduce anxiety.

CANSA SHAVATHON – THANK YOU



Curro Aurora

Blue pride week 2020

Together we raised over R20 000 for CANSA!
Thank you to everyone that contributed!

#BLUEPRIDE
#GETINVOLVED
#CURROSUPPORTSCANSA
#CUBSTOPRIDE



SPORT

Mr Adrian Ferreira

During this time when there are no sports taking place, the learners were challenged to do some form of exercise; and those involved in the extra-mural sports programme, to practise their sports-related skills. Many learners and staff, including our Executive Head Mr JC, submitted videos that showcased their creative ways in practicing! It is encouraging to observe these learners continuing to apply themselves in the sports that they enjoy.



Staying active during this difficult time is important. Being physically active helps lower blood pressure and cholesterol and can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes, while maintaining muscle mass and bone density. Physical activity helps to keep your immune system working effectively as it flushes bacteria from the lungs and airways, increases white blood cell circulation and raises body temperature, all of which help the body fight infection.

Keeping active is also a great way to ward off some of the psychological issues associated with being cooped up for an extended time. Being active helps lower stress hormones such as cortisol and promotes the release of feel-good hormones, such as endorphins. Mr Craig Hourquebie created a series of fitness videos to encourage all learners to participate in exercise. Learners also submitted their videos, displaying their enthusiasm in participating!

I encourage all learners to continue with skills and/or exercise in preparation for the resumption of the sports programme.



KEEPING FIT

Mr Craig Hourquebie

As a Curro Aurora teacher in the greatest English department anyone could hope for, it feels like lockdown is just a small hurdle on the way to success for our learners. We, as educators, feel like we have our learners' best interests at heart through all of this. We strive to do everything possible to ensure they get the quality education they are accustomed to.

For someone like me, this also means ensuring that our learners are given the opportunity to be guided and challenged towards a pursuit of fitness. I have a passion for strength and fitness (strong body, strong mind) and have been a CrossFit trainer for the past three years and an athlete in some capacity throughout my life. When the opportunity arose to post few videos for our learners in Lockdown, I welcomed the this! My goal is to inspire an active lifestyle, and to keep our learners strong of mind and body in a time when uncertainty and high levels of stress need a physical channel of release.

Yes, these are uncertain times, but we will navigate them together and hopefully emerge better for it. Until then, remember the ancient Eastern saying, "This too shall pass."

Let's keep active and keep our focus. Education is more than occupying the mind with study. Powerful lessons and benefits are learned and gained in physical application. Stay safe, stay home, stay sane and stay strong.

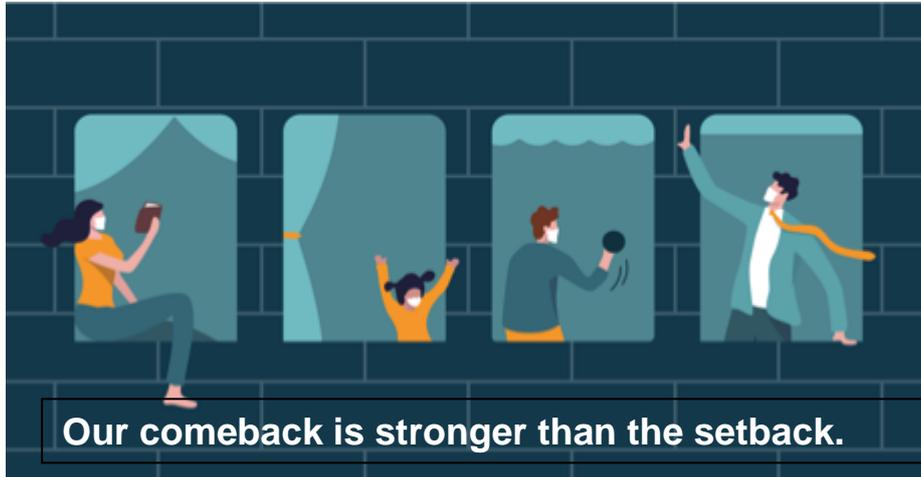
COMMUNICATION:

During this period of lockdown, it is vital that we have open communication channels as we will be expecting learners to continue their learning whilst at home. Various channels of communication are being used, including e-mails, WhatsApp groups, ITSI and Microsoft Teams.

Contact details of the School Management Team and Grade Heads herewith for easy reference:

Receptionist	Cindy Duma	Cindy.D3@curro.co.za
Head of High School	Dion Kotze	Dion.K@curro.co.za
FET Phase Head	Sarah-Jane Olivier	Sarah-Jane.O01@curro.co.za
Snr Phase Head	Donne Valkenburg	Donne.V1@curro.co.za
Head of Sport	Adrian Ferreira	Adrian.F@curroholdings.co.za
Head of Culture	Saskia Snyders	Saskia.S@curro.co.za
Grade 12 Heads	Nicole Webb	Nicole.W2@curro.co.za
	Maria Chou	Maria.C@curro.co.za
Grade 11 Heads	Judy Beeston	Judy.B@curroholdings.co.za
	Anita Bornman	Anita.B@curro.co.za
Grade 10 Heads	Janine Tobin	Janine.T@curro.co.za
	Wendy Longwitz	Wendy.L2@curro.co.za
Grade 9 Heads	Kelsey Gallon	Kelsey.G2@curro.co.za
	Brendan van Zyl	Brendan.v@curro.co.za
Grade 8 Heads	Kyla Hayter	Kyla.H@curro.co.za
	Warrick Hammond	Warrick.H@curro.co.za

THOUGHT TO PONDER:



We wish you and your loved ones continued health – please keep safe.

Yours in education,

Dion Kotze
Head of High School.