

## 10 Guidelines to support GCS Parents / Carers

The transition to Alternative delivery of learning may be challenging for families. These ten guidelines provided below are intended to support parents in ways to help their children find success in an Alternative learning environment:

1. **Establish routines and expectations.** GCS encourages parents to set regular hours for their children's schoolwork. We suggest families discuss these expectations and build a timetable together with all members of the family. Keep normal bedtime routines for younger children and expect the same from your Junior School and High School aged students, too. (Don't let them stay up late and sleep in!) Your children should move regularly and take periodic breaks as they study. It is important that parents set these expectations for how their children will spend their days starting as soon as the Alternative delivery of learning is implemented, not several days later after it becomes apparent a child is struggling with the absence of routine.
2. **Define the physical space for your child's study.** Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may or may not be suitable for an extended period. We encourage families to establish a space/location where their children will learn most of the time. This should be a public/family space, not in a child's bedroom. It should be a place that can be quiet at times and have a strong wireless internet signal, if possible. Above all, it should be a space where parents are present and monitoring their children's learning.
3. **Monitor communications from your children's teachers.** Teachers will communicate with parents through email, when and as necessary. We also encourage parents to have their children explain the Learning Management Systems (e.g. Seesaw, Google Classroom, Education Perfect, *Google GSuite*) teachers are using. If you are unsure, please contact your PC / Classroom teacher
4. **Begin and end each day with a check-in.** Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, ask what is your child learning today? What are the Success Criteria? How will they spend their time? What resources do they require? What support do they need? This brief grounding conversation matters. It allows children to process the instructions they've received from their teachers. It helps them organize themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (that's normal!) however, they should. Parents should establish these check-ins as regular parts of each day. Not all students thrive in an Alternative learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines need to be established early, before students fall behind or begin to struggle.
5. **Take an active role in helping your children process and own their learning.** Supporting your child to help unpack learning requirements is natural, however, it is our intention that our teachers will continue to teach the learning – *WE DO NOT expect you as parents to become the teachers*. It is important that your child owns their work, don't complete assignments for them, even when they are struggling, rather encourage them to seek support from the relevant teacher .
6. **Establish times for quiet and reflection.** A huge challenge for families with multiple children will be how to manage all their children's needs, especially when those children are different ages and have different needs. There may be times when

siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distraction. Parents may even experiment with noise-cancelling headphones to block out distractions.

7. **Encourage physical activity and/or exercise.** Make sure your children remember to move and exercise. This is vitally important to their health, wellbeing and to their learning. Our PE teachers will support with this.
8. **Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry.** Please know that our Gold Creek staff are still here to support you and your family in these trying times. Please contact your child's teacher if you are concerned.
9. **Monitor how much time your child is spending online.** GCS is fine tuning its online learning versus on-screen learning. As we know, learning happens everywhere so we will ensure we also plan off-computer tasks. Please be patient as we get the balance right for your child.
10. **Keep your children social but set rules around their social media interactions.** Help your children maintain contact with friends, however it is critical that you monitor your children's social media use, especially during an extended school closure. Younger students should not engage in social media. Older students will rely more on social media to communicate with friends. Social media apps such as SnapChat, Instagram, WhatsApp, or Facebook are not official, school-sanctioned channels of communication. GCS asks parents to monitor their children's use of social media. Remind your children to be polite, respectful, and appropriate in their communications and to represent your family's values in their interactions with others. A student's written words and tone can sometimes offend or cause harm to others.