



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the BIS Houston Virtual School Experience. Our goal is to continue to provide a premium education experience whether on our school campus or at our virtual school.



## *Academics*

It begins with our commitment to a continuity of curriculum. Our curriculum is divided into unit plans, these will continue to drive the learning for the students. Teachers have designed a range of learning experiences that will include, where appropriate; live video lessons, pre-recorded video sessions, seminars, question and answer sessions, small group conferences etc. These will be balanced with time for students to work independently on tasks. We are very conscious of the quality of screen time and have spent time working on creating a range of activities for students that will keep them engaged and enjoy the learning.

## *Wellbeing*

The Wellbeing of our entire community is crucial for us, and therefore there will be regular opportunities where our teachers can check in with the students and families to ensure that their personal, social and emotional wellbeing is supported. In addition to this, our School Therapist [Samantha.Schlanger@houston.nae.school](mailto:Samantha.Schlanger@houston.nae.school) is available to support students and families.



## *Learner and Leader Profile*

There are various other elements of our virtual school that will help keep students connected to regular school based around the Learner and Leader Profile, from assemblies to House events and a continuation of our rewards like House Points and our Virtual Bulldogs.

## *Global Partnerships*

Our partnerships with Juilliard, MIT and UNICEF continue through our work in Performing Arts, Design Thinking and Humanities. In addition to this there are Global Campus challenges for our students to access in Primary and Middle School. <https://globalcampus.nae.school/auth/oidc/>

## *Enrichment and CCAs*

Although we are not able to run our full Enrichment and CCA Programmes we are continuing to look for opportunities for students to engage in activities that enrich and enhance their learning. We have built these into our planning in the form of extension activities and challenges, including a number of Physical Education challenges, House challenges and even a continuation of our Mother Tongue Languages Programme and individual music lessons.

Enjoy your Virtual School Experience.

*Mark Wilson*

Principal



# How to *support* your child during their Virtual School Experience



## 1. STRUCTURE EACH DAY

Adopt a routine to help your child stay on task and reduce any anxiety they might experience whilst being absent from school and friends. Follow your child's teacher's learning plan for best results.

## 2. CREATE A DEDICATED LEARNING SPACE

Ensure that your child has an appropriate area to learn with minimal distractions. Suggest that they sit on a comfortable chair at a table to work and not on a bed or sofa.



## 3. BE FLEXIBLE WITH YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Understand that as this is an irregular learning situation for your child. Follow your child's teachers expectations for each task assigned, but feel free to stop if your child appears to be taking longer. Communicate with your teacher accordingly.

## 4. ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO SHARE THEIR LEARNING WITH YOU

This will allow them to demonstrate their understanding and will ensure that they have a positive and enjoyable learning experience during what can be an unsettling time.



## 5. TAKE REGULAR BREAKS

Ensure that your child remains focused by taking regular breaks. Encourage them to participate in a short burst of physical activity to help alleviate any stress or anxiety.

## 6. MONITOR SCREEN TIME

Try to ensure your child alternates screen time with off-screen activities. Your child's teacher will provide a variety of activities to encourage a broad range of learning opportunities that extend beyond the use of a digital device.



Whilst your child is experiencing our Virtual School, please continue to regularly check your email for updates from your child's teacher and Senior Leadership Team.





## Primary Virtual School

Dear Parents,

The circumstances in which we find ourselves in are unprecedented, both for our families and for our school. Our staff have been overwhelmed by your support and we continue to seek your feedback on what is, and isn't, working well through learning at home. The goal for our Primary school during this time is to provide virtual school learning for our students, which is accessible and engaging without the normal scaffolding provided by teachers in school. Many of our teachers are also parents, so we understand the challenge that this time is placing on our families. We have tried to achieve the right balance for all of our students, so if your child isn't able to complete the daily tasks, please do not worry! If your child needs more, please encourage them to engage in the further challenges provided. The most important thing is to achieve a manageable balance for your family.

Please find below details of our Primary Virtual School Plan and do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

With warm regards,

*Gemma Averette*

Head of Primary

## STUDENT LEARNING

### What to Expect?

**By 7pm (the evening prior)** the Daily Virtual School Learning Plan ([click here to see a template](#)) will be emailed to parents only by your child's Head of Year. This is to simply provide you with an overview for the following day.

**Between 8-8.25am** the Daily Virtual School Learning Plan (with live links to all required resources) will be posted to the students (Years 1-4 on Seesaw, Year 5 via student email, Year 6 via Show My Homework), we encourage the children to then have a look through all of these.

**At 9am** A short pre-recorded video message from the Class Teacher will be posted on Seesaw, the purpose of this message is to provide an overview of the day's learning, address any issues/observations from the previous day's learning, and for the children to see their teacher's happy face as usual!



## What is Included in the Daily Plan?

- An English task
- Phonics every day for Year 1, four times per week for Year 2
- A Maths task
- An IPC or Science task
- A link to the 1:1 Zoom schedule, reminders of live Zoom sessions that will be taking place
- A 'further challenges' section for students
- One specialist subject (Physical Education, Music, Performing Arts, World Languages)
- A virtual Bulldog award from the previous day

## How are Learning Tasks Structured?

### Learning Activities will:

- Have a clear 'what, why and how'
- Be explicit in terms of the expected outcome
- Provide guidance as to the expected time a task should take
- Consider the needs of our English as Additional Language students and students who access Learning Support
- Be highly structured, child accessible, requiring minimal adult support

## During the 'School Day'

- Students should upload their completed tasks to Seesaw and teachers will provide feedback where appropriate within a 24-hour timeframe on weekdays.
- Teachers will continue with the 1:1 Zoom conference schedule, this will be one call per week. The focus of these conversations will be a wellbeing check, along with a learning focus/follow up/feedback.
- We are developing our use of Zoom for live sessions with groups/classes of Primary aged students and as you would expect, there are some things that work and others that are not as successful! As the weeks progress, we will add in live group opportunities which may include: guided reading sessions, circle time, PSHE sessions and class social chat time.
- On Friday afternoons, each Head of Year will post a weekly 'round up' and 'preview' video to finish off the week.



## *Student Wellbeing*

During this period it is important that we collectively support our students, families and staff to maintain a healthy wellbeing balance. We ask that you consider the following:

- We will be using 7pm as our cut-off time in the evenings, students should not post or comment on Seesaw or Show My Homework
- 7pm will also be our cut-off time for staff, where we will ask staff to stop checking work emails, refrain from sending emails to parents. Evenings should be spent with their families and focusing on their own wellbeing.
- If there is an emergency situation and you need to contact the school, I am very happy to be available to parents via email [Gemma.Averette@houston.nae.school](mailto:Gemma.Averette@houston.nae.school) or by cell 281-979-6863 at any time.