



PIS/2020-21/003

5th August 2020

Dear Nurturer,

We hope this message finds you well.

As we are now nearly three months into the term, we just wanted to provide you with a general update as to how things have been going, share our thoughts regarding suggested next steps, and check-in with you, as Parents, regarding your observations and experience of how your child has been coping with online schooling.

General Update:

For the most part, based on the feedback received from the students, they seem to be adjusting fairly well to the new normal. Several of them have been proactive and have been providing critical input regarding their learning experiences - what has and has not been working for them - and recommendations for what can be done differently to better support all learners. While a few have taken to this with a certain amount of ease, others are still learning how to organize and plan their day, and minimize the distractions that come with this increased digital access. While they see certain advantages of learning from home, they also seem to miss being at school amidst their peers, and the critical human interaction that being in a school provides.

As Educators, we are also adjusting to this new approach, and are finding our way. Teaching in the virtual space is very different from teaching in a traditional classroom. Not having students physically present and communications being limited to the digital realm has not always been easy. There have been challenges in keeping students engaged and motivated and adapting our conventional methods of instruction and evaluation to meet learner needs. We are seeing how to overcome these challenges, to make better use of available educational technology, and develop a better working understanding of successful online teaching strategies that we can apply in our own practice.

Thus the entire process has been fluid and continues to be calibrated as we proceed.

Next Steps:

With the lockdown likely to be extended, we want to now look at seeing how to fine-tune this process further and extend the emphasis beyond just academics. We would like to see how to create a more holistic ecosystem and bring in certain requisite changes to their daily routines and arrangements. For this to happen, we will need your support and participation.

(next page)

Below are a few initial steps:

Screen Time / Responsible Digital Usage :

In this the scenario of online learning, there continues to be an ongoing debate about how much screen time is healthy. As with any complex topic, there are many perspectives about how constant engagement with technology in general, and screens, in particular, impact students' lives.

From our end, we are encouraging teachers, in so far as possible, to assign work that is not entirely screen dependent, so that students can also do some of their work offline. In Senior School, in subjects where text-books are being used, we are requesting that students procure a hard copy of the same.

We are aware that some students are sitting for extended hours in front of the computer, citing academic work as the primary reason. We do request you to set boundaries and keep a tab on how students are making use of this access to media, for their safety and well-being.

Some students have candidly shared that they do get distracted at times with non-academic options, including but not limited to video games, online videos and social media platforms, just to name a few. It is extremely important that you take a hands-on approach when it comes to monitoring your child's digital use and interactions, and speak to them about how they must use it in an appropriate and responsible manner. We request you to place consistent limits on the time spent using media, and on the types of media used, and to make sure media use does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity, and other activities essential to health. We also recommend that you keep the computer in a shared space, check in on your child from time to time to see what they have been doing, and encourage them, in so far as possible, to spend time with the family.

Physical Activity :

It is imperative that students maintain a basic minimum level of physical fitness. Several students have shared that, unless, under direct supervision, yoga is no longer part of their routine. Also, many have shared that they are, for the most part, not very physically active, with most citing lockdown restrictions as the primary reason. The P.E. team has provided links to workout videos that students can do from home. Please do encourage the students to integrate this into their day, and join them in their workout sessions, if possible.

Daily Routine :

Please sit with your child to negotiate a daily lifestyle routine that would be to his/her benefit. Upon speaking to some students, we find that there has been a little bit of a holiday hangover that has become a part of their daily routine, with some of them sleeping late and waking up late on a regular basis. Please fix appropriate and suitable wake-up and bedtimes, as well as consistent meal times insofar as possible. It is also recommended that students bathe twice daily.

Life Skills:

Being at home provides an opportunity to exemplify to students the tools, beyond academics is vital to lead a well-balanced life.

Students should be encouraged to participate in household activities and be assigned chores and tasks to help develop independence and a sense of shared responsibility. Essential life skills that can be imparted include cooking and eating healthy, basic first aid, usage of home appliances, home cleaning routines, financial planning, hospitality, event planning, and organizing, just to name a few.

It is very important that students are put in situations where they have to think beyond themselves, where they have to think of the needs of others before their own. Please see if there are any opportunities for your child to volunteer for some local initiatives or citizen groups.

Students also need to learn how to make use of the time that is given for leisure. How people spend their 'free time' can actually have a big impact on their success in both their personal and professional lives. Encourage them to pursue a hobby/interest, read for pleasure, brush up on their mother tongue, or learn a new language, take a non-academic course of choice, spend quality time with family and friends, just to name a few.

Equipping our children at this stage in their lives to follow a healthy lifestyle, to be self-sufficient, as well as to come up with wholesome leisure options will support them in the long run.

We are planning to assign tasks of this nature for the students to complete while at home.

August 9th – August 15th :

From August 9th to the 15th (Independence Day), we will be changing the schedule up a bit. We are seeing a little bit of fatigue setting in on all fronts. We will not be assigning any new academic tasks as such. Instead, we will be taking this week for students to focus on the areas listed above. This will be informed to the students shortly.

Your Observations & Experience :

Online learning has further highlighted the need for collaboration between parents and teachers for creating an atmosphere that is conducive for each child's well-being.

We do acknowledge the increased role of the Parent in Online learning, and want to continue to hear from you about your take on how things are unfolding. We can only imagine how challenging these last few months might have been for you. Many of you have been kind enough to share your observations and feedback along the way, for which we are grateful, and encourage you to continue to do the same at parents@intellischool.in

Thank you,

- Team Intelli