

Continuity of education for students with disability

Learning from home considerations for teachers

Interact collaboratively | Create workable learning options | Minimise parental pressure



Knowing our students context and their families context

- Communicate with the parents and coordinate a flexible learning plan - reassure them that the day will not look the same as a school day. The expectation is that at home learning will look different to a school day.
- Encourage families to prioritise mental health and wellbeing at this time.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-from-home/advice-to-parents-and-carers>

- Understand that there are likely to be increased levels of anxiety for both students and parents. Neuroscience tells us that stressed students will not have the capacity for learning and stressed parent will find delivery hard. Support wellbeing.
- Trust that families have the best interests of their child at heart. They want their child to succeed and to support ongoing development. They have been working collaboratively with therapists and education long term. They have a deep knowledge and understanding of their child. They are their child's first and most influential educators. Work alongside them.
- Have a conversation with families and try to understand what a day at home looks like for them. What works well and what is challenging? Where can you support?
- Consider the everyday needs of the student in regards to self-care, toileting, hygiene, feeding, mobility, positioning, self-regulation, attendance to task, and challenging behaviours. How do these needs impact on the daily routine?
- Consider the general and ongoing fatigue of parents and caregivers. Parents clearly communicate that meeting the ongoing additional needs of their children is exhausting beyond the comprehension of many.
- Use your knowledge of your students and their families to construct workable arrangements. Be collaborative, realistic and empathetic in your planning.

- Consider the family dynamic. How many adult caregivers? Who needs to work in the household? Who is doing the primary care? How many siblings are there and what are the siblings' needs? How much time do adults have for 1-1 learning with your student? What is the parent or caregivers capacity to deliver learning tasks?
- Consider the socio economic background of the family and adjust your delivery accordingly. Meet families where they are at and scaffold to build capacity.
- Be flexible with your expectation of task completion. Deadlines may create pressure to be producing evidence of work that add too much strain. Our students are not autonomous learners and expectations of task completion need to reflect this.
- Develop learning tasks that can be done within the home during routines and that develop adaptive function and autonomy such as setting the table. Embed literacy and numeracy such as; count the cutlery, write a procedure or record an instructional video, discuss position, and sort or classify items.
- Provide some tasks that reflect school learning and an idea of what the routine/timetable may look like – there can be security in the familiar.
- Be responsive to family needs, engage, listen and adapt. Now is a time for increased collaborative practice.

Supporting parents/caregivers to set up daily learning routines at home

- Use students Individual Learning Plan goals and adapt for home experiences – cooking, board games, life skills, sensory play, construction, craft, dance, fundamental movement, investigation or backyard exploration.
- Where possible have a range of activities for students/families to choose from and engage with such as a matrix or grid.
- Utilise resources that are readily available in the family home.
- Provide opportunities for life skill development.
- Provide activities that support interpersonal engagement and relationship building.
- Be flexible to meet the student and family needs in a holistic manner.
- Support with visuals - weekly plan, daily plan, session plan, lesson plan
- Pre-empt student needs by planning for regular - lesson breaks, movement, sensory input and output.
- Plan tasks that are - engaging | hands on learning tasks | relevant to the students.
- Access online platform of school that is already familiar to students/families.
- Maintain communication with students/families – phone app, email, phone, skype, zoom or other means
- Plan who the regular school contact (teacher/SLSO) will be and how you will engage with them based on their individual context.
- Try to link students socially through online interaction.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-from-home/school-planning/professional-learning-in-the-use-of-technology>



The learning space

- Discuss with families what spaces they have to meet the changing social emotional needs of students. How might they set up – learning space with suitable posturing, quiet spaces, sensory equipment and/or movement options.
- Consider what school resources you can lend for continuity of learning such as hands on maths resources, visuals and game educational packs.
- Discuss how adults might direct students to make positive task choices and how they will redirect when students make poor engagement choices – ‘when & then’ visuals.
- Support families to set up expectations that are consistent for the student.
- Share behaviour plans with family to support continuity and predictability.
- Support parents to understand the impact of each student’s individual sensory profile in regard to task engagement and make suggestions about how to modify task, session and/or day for sensory needs.
- Encourage parents to provide regular lesson breaks to address student's movement needs and/or to incorporate learning opportunities with movement activities.
- Provide support for developing a consistent routine and suggest methods to clearly communicate changes of routine – visuals, timetable, timers, and explicit language.
- Share fact sheets with families to develop at home strategies for student – resilience, adaptive function and self-regulatory skills

Lesson delivery

- Support families to have a shared vision with child – what are we doing and why?
- Provide families with visible learning strategies with clear learning intentions – should match what is used at school.
- Encourage parents to model what to do with a task and/or to provide examples.
- Encourage parents to have high expectations that are clearly communicated.
- Explicitly describe how families may scaffold and support child to complete work.
- Ensure the work that you provide is achievable resulting in success.

- Provide instructions that are explicit.
- Instruct families to provide wait time or processing time for students before students are expected to action information.
- Provide tasks in chunks that are manageable.
- Encourage families to check in regularly with student progress.
- Students are encouraged to request clarification or assistance.
- I use 'when and then' so that students know what is next. Provide rewards, breaks, student choice – in response to effort, completion of task or attendance to task.
- Provide examples of positive reinforcement and encouragement used in class context – phrases, charts, and/or visuals.
- Use student interests and strengths to promote engagement.
- Provide students some choice and a sense of agency.
- Provide hands on and experiential learning.
- Encourage families to abandon a lesson that is not working



Behaviour management

Provide access to school behaviour plan (if there is one) – it should have;

- Pre-emptive strategies.
- Be written in positive language.
- Provide consistent expectations, responses, language and consequences.
- Be written in children's terms.
- Be provided to the student in a visual format.
- Consider intent and respond accordingly – poor behaviour choice OR fight or flight?

General management strategies to communicate to families;

- Remind families that behaviour is communication and behaviours have a purpose so encourage them to question – What is the purpose? How do we address the cause?
- Encourage positive language, positive reinforcement.
- Explicit language, calm voice, directing how to solve the problem/challenge.
- Offer choice where possible – of two things within a task e.g. texta or crayon.