

Dear Parents,

the pandemic imposed distance learning on the school world, which managed to cope with the emergency and prevented teachers from losing contact with their pupils completely.

However, if two years ago it was a new situation, in which we experimented, each for his own role, now, after some time, we can identify some suggestions to ensure that the experience is not completely lost.



Here are some rules that can be used to improve new and sometimes unfamiliar distance learning environments.

### **Establish routines and expectations**

It is important to develop good habits from the beginning. Create a routine, divide the days into predictable segments. It Helps students to get up, get dressed and be ready at the appointed time. So go to bed at a reasonable hour, without thinking that the next day you will be at home anyway.

### **Choosing a good place to learn**

Create a physical space at home dedicated to school activities: it should be quiet, well lit, free from distractions and comfortable (an ergonomic seat helps, as does positioning the computer at a height that allows the arms not to strain); headphones or earphones to concentrate; a stable and fast internet connection should be available.

Make sure you have everything you need before the start of the lesson: in addition to teaching materials, water, herbal tea, snacks to avoid distractions; inform people at home that you are doing the lesson from a distance.

If the student is in the first years of school, the constant presence of an adult or online learning monitoring is necessary.



### **Keeping in touch**

Teachers will communicate through the chosen platform. Parents should make sure their children have identified the platform and know how to access it. Parents who have questions should post them in the platform chat and wait for the digital team's response.

### **Helping students "own" their learning**

No one expects parents to be full-time teachers or education experts and to have the necessary knowledge for all subject contents. Parents should provide support and encouragement but let their children do their part. Parents shouldn't help too much and replace their children. Becoming independent requires a lot of practice. At school a student usually interacts with other students and a number of adults. Interactions at a distance are different and cannot all be replaced. And parents shouldn't be frustrated because you cannot.

### **Start and end the day by checking in**

In the morning, parents might ask:

- What subjects do you have today?
- Do you have any evaluations?
- How will you spend your time?
- What resources do you need?
- What can I do to help?

At the end of the day they might ask:

- How far have you come in your learning activities today?
- What did you find out?
- What was difficult?
- What could we do to make tomorrow better?

These short basic conversations are important. They help students to process the instructions they have received from their teachers and help them to organize and prioritize, and this also applies to older students.

These check-in routines may help to avoid later challenges and disappointments. They help students develop self-management and executive functioning which are essential life skills. Parents are excellent life coaches.

### **Establishing moments of quiet and reflection**

For families with children of different ages and for parents who can also work from home, it is good to build some time for peace and quiet. Siblings should be able to work in different rooms to avoid distractions. Many families will need to negotiate access to devices but this should be done clearly. And one day a week alternative activities, such as reading, should be offered away from devices.

### **Encouraging physical activity and exercise**

Living and working at home, we all need some space to let off steam. Moving (independently and together as a family) is vital for health, well-being and preparation for learning

**Monitor time on screen and online**

Distance learning doesn't mean staring at computer screen seven and a half hours every day. Teachers will aim to create variety, but trial and error will be needed before finding the balance between online and offline learning experiences in small spaces. Parents and teachers will work together to find ways and times, also depending on the age of the students.