

CIRCULAR FOR PARENTS

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To: Parents (Class 1 to Class 6)

From: The Principal

Subject: Planned Improvements in the Remote Learning Process and Brief about the Extra-curricular (ECA) program

Dear Parents,

This is to update you regarding certain improvements in the remote learning process, which will be implemented in the coming days.

First of all, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our parent community for their extensive support and honest feedback related to remote learning. This '*new normal*' has brought many challenges for all of us – *students, parents and educators*. However, the ongoing transparent dialogues and trust between the home and school, has played a significant role in helping all of us to adapt to this new normal.

Since the last couple of weeks, we have actively interacted with our students and parents to gauge their feelings and challenges related to remote learning. We have also held many internal discussions to reflect on various processes and their effectiveness. Based on careful and collective considerations, we have decided to take certain steps to streamline the process of remote learning.

There are some parent suggestions/challenges which are difficult to address due to other constraints or may be possible to address in the near future. Rest assured, we will listen to all your feedback and try our best to streamline processes keeping in mind the overall considerations. We appreciate your proactive feedback, however, we request you to be patient with changes as it takes some time for deciding and rolling out any changes to our existing processes.

The note below explains the immediate steps that are being taken to smoothen the process further for students and parents. We will keep on reviewing and improvising our approach as we move along.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Best regards,

Sutapa Mishra

Principal

Redbricks School

REMOTE LEARNING: COMMON CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

A note on the terms used: **Sync Session** means *Live video classes* and **Async Work** means *Independent study work*.

Challenge 1: The assignments are being posted at different times without a fixed schedule.

To streamline the posting of assignments, the following schedule will be followed henceforth:

- *Pre-session tasks of all subjects will be posted on **Thursday of each week** for the coming week (latest by 5 pm).*
- *Post-session tasks will be **posted 1 day in advance of the respective sync session (by 5 pm)**.*
 - *So each day, students will receive 2 or 3 tasks, depending on the number of classes the day after.*
 - *It will create a predictable routine for students, and help them to immediately work on the task after the completion of the respective sync session.*
 - *Students can work upon these tasks after the sync session, within the same day afternoon as daily H.W., or during the next day's morning hours 8 am-1:15 pm (when there are breaks between sessions).*

Pre-session Tasks and Post-session Tasks Posting Schedule – A Visual Picture

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<i>One week prior</i>	-	-	-	<i>All Pre-session tasks of coming week will be posted-latest by 5 pm</i>	-	<i>Post-session tasks of Monday posted-latest by 5 pm</i>
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<i>Learning Week</i>	<i>Post-session tasks of Tuesday posted-latest by 5 pm</i>	<i>Post-session tasks of Wednesday posted-latest by 5 pm</i>	<i>Post-session tasks of Thursday posted-latest by 5 pm</i>	<i>Post-session tasks of Friday posted-latest by 5 pm</i>	-	-

Challenge 2: The submission dates are scattered and unpredictable which makes them difficult to track.

To streamline the tracking of submission dates, the following schedule will be followed henceforth:

- **Mondays:** *All Maths tasks and all Self-Enrichment (SE) /Creative and Physical Projects (CPP) tasks of the previous week to be submitted.*
- **Tuesdays:** *All post-session tasks for sessions conducted from **Mon-Wed** of the previous week to be submitted (except Maths, SE, CPP).*
- **Fridays:** *All post-session tasks for sessions conducted on **Thursday and Friday** of the previous week to be submitted (except Maths, SE, CPP).*

- For specific tasks which require a longer time (like performance tasks), teachers may give an extended due date which is beyond the above schedule.

Note: Tasks will be accepted for upto 2-3 days beyond the submission deadline. For any predicated delays beyond this time, students should seek prior permission from the subject teacher for a late submission. Tasks submitted beyond this time, may be returned back without correction and feedback.

Post-session Tasks Submission Schedule– A Visual Picture

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Week 1,3,5	Maths Tasks Submission (All tasks of the week)	Post session tasks related to previous Mon-Wed sessions (for all subjects except Maths, CPP, SE)	-	-	Post session tasks related to previous Thurs-Fri sessions (for all subjects except Maths, CPP, SE)	-
Week 2,4	Maths Tasks Submission (All tasks of the week)	Post session tasks related to previous Mon-Wed sessions (for all subjects except Maths, CPP, SE)	-	-	Post session tasks related to previous Thurs-Fri sessions (for all subjects except Maths, CPP, SE)	-
	Self-Enrichment, CPP Dance, Art, Music Tasks Submission					

Please note:

- We encourage students to complete the assigned post-sessions tasks **daily or by the very next day** of the respective sync session.
- We also encourage them to **submit their work** as and when they complete it rather than waiting for the submission date.
- However, the above fixed days for submission is to provide flexibility to students and parents, who would like to submit everything together for logistical reasons.

Challenge 3: Due to multiple Google classrooms, it is difficult to track all the assignments.

We are working on creating a consolidated '**Weekly Planner**' for students and parents. This planner will showcase the entire week's plan for all subjects at a glance – that is, all the pre-session tasks, post-session tasks with due dates, as well as materials required for each sync session.

We will be able to soon roll this out, and we hope that this will greatly help the students and parents to view and track everything in a consolidated manner.

Challenge 4: There is a lot of assignment workload, especially in extra-curricular activities.

We have a planned weekly workload chart for each grade and subject (in average mins/week) and teachers are following the same in their planning. However, we are also conducting an internal review to check whether we have been consistently able to follow this policy so far. We will also continue to monitor this going forward, so that students are not overburdened with work.

*For Self-enrichment and Creative and Physical projects, we have also decided to reduce the number of assignments. Instead of assignments every week, **students will now receive ‘assignments which require submission’ every alternate week (once in 15 days).***

*Unfortunately, during remote learning, one main method of learning is **Independent study**. Since the available screen time with students is limited, our teachers are trying their best to deliver the program through a combination of sync sessions and assignments/tasks. We understand that this puts a lot of pressure on parents and independent learning expectations from students. We hope and wish that we will be in a situation where students can learn in the physical presence of a teacher soon.*

Until then, let us use this situation as an opportunity to train our children to become more independent learners. For younger students, adult support becomes important and we request families to provide for such support in a manner possible. Students are also encouraged to attend office hours if they need support from their teacher in understanding/completing their work.

Challenge 5: Students are given a lot of videos to watch as assignments, which increases their screen time and also poses device availability challenges.

Since the screen time between teacher and students is limited, sometimes videos are required for students to listen to and understand explanations. The sync session time is not enough to cover all explanations. However, we will be mindful going forward to minimize such requirements and limit them to crucial needs.

Challenge 6: There is no specific/fixed time given during the school hours for completing assignments.

The remote learning experience is purposefully designed to provide more flexibility to students and parents. Given the diverse backgrounds and routines of all families, it would not be right for the school to define specific times for everything that happens at home. Students and parents have flexibility in creating their own independent study timetable, to suit their own schedules.

*However, what the school expects is that children complete their **daily post-session tasks** within the **same day afternoon or the next day morning**. Between 8 am to 1:15 pm, students are attending sync sessions for only a portion of the time. They have significant time in-between sessions when they can plan to complete their previous day’s tasks. If children follow this routine, they will be able to manage things smoothly.*

Challenge 7: The Sports session timings in the evenings are not suitable. Those can be during the morning hours.

We have tried to limit screen time for children and therefore there are not more than 2-3 classes per day during the morning official school hours. However, we will look into this suggestion of parents and try to work out possibilities for accommodating sports during morning hours.

Challenge 8: The Unit-end Quiz/ Cycle test timings in the afternoon are not suitable and are preferable in the mornings.

While scheduling the Quiz/Tests, we found the office hours most suitable for logistical reasons. However, from the next Quiz/Tests, we are planning to consider other timetabling solutions to try and move them to the morning hours. We will inform parents about this well in advance of the next Quiz/Test.

Challenge 9: Worksheets which require printing should be shared together and well in advance.

With remote learning, teachers are having to completely re-work on their lesson plans. With this emergent curriculum planning, it was not possible for us to compile and share all the learning resources in advance. However, from the upcoming units, we are trying to get our plans and resources ready in advance, to be able to share the entire unit's compiled learning resources together (for subjects which may require printing). We request parents to be patient in this regard – our teachers will try their best to share as much in advance as they can.

Challenge 10: Students are not receiving timely feedback on their assignments.

During remote learning, teachers are overloaded with documentation – it is significantly higher than in regular school. Creating lesson plans, resources, maintaining various records, managing google classrooms, tracking and correcting many more tasks/assignments, etc., are on their shoulders in addition to preparing for and conducting the sync sessions. Needless to say, the requirement of additional psychological adjustment to a completely new approach to teaching and using technology.

Therefore, they may not have been able to correct student work and provide timely feedback. We do understand the value of timely feedback in student learning. Our attempt is to streamline this process further, and hopefully teachers will be able to provide regular timely feedback soon. A minimum of 6-7 days time gap should be considered before receiving teacher feedback from the date of submission by the student.

Challenge 11: On certain days, there is a long gap between sessions which can be reduced (example- HRT and a session or between two particular sessions)

Timetabling for remote learning has been a very complex exercise- and one which has taken more than a month's time to put into place. During timetabling, many variables are considered to create the best possible schedule. The most critical variable is the sharing of teachers between different classes, which puts a limitation on designing an ideal timetable from a student perspective.

We have reviewed the various requests that have come from parents to reduce gaps between sessions – but unfortunately we won't be able to make such changes – due to the constraints of shared teachers between classes. We will continue to review specific requests as received, and surely make adjustments where it seems possible.

We suggest that parents help children create their own timetables of how they will spend 8 am – 1:15 pm. As shared in the above sections, the in-between session gap times can be utilized by students to complete their independent study work. Some of those breaks can also be utilized by students to help with household chores, do some physical exercise or practice a personal hobby.

Challenge 12: Teachers don't spend enough time with students on revising concepts, like it used to happen in regular school.

The first month has been a learning experience for all of us. With the upcoming months, teachers will also be mindful of including revision of concepts and skills, wherever possible. Students can also attend office hours if they need the teacher's help in revising something.

However, it is to be noted that it is not possible to spend a lot of time on revision during remote learning due to limited sync session time. Teachers may also assign async tasks for revision, and students will also need to be guided by parents to do their own self-directed revision.

Challenge 13: The extra-curricular assignments are challenging given the age of students.

We are reviewing the extra-curricular assignments (SE and CPP) for their complexity levels. Going forward, we will be mindful about this.

For these subjects, a lot of learning will be through independent study and therefore students will need adult guidance from time to time. We would like our students to derive quality learning from these projects, keeping up with the standards of Redbricks. Therefore, we request parents to extend more support in this matter.

If students are unable to manage all the workload, then we highly recommend that the student pursues only 1 CPP project, instead of 2 or 3 CPP projects. It is better to do one thing well, rather than try to do everything and struggle in managing the same. Students will only be expected to complete 1 CPP project satisfactorily, so there will be no attendance tracking and evaluation of the other 2 CPP projects.

*We have put together a specific document which provides an overview of the extra-curricular program during remote learning. We request parents to go through this document closely, and also **indicate their choice for the Creative and Physical projects through the Google Form link provided in the document on page 3.***

Access the document here: [EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES DURING REMOTE LEARNING](#)

Google Form links for the 'Project choice' can also be accessed here:

- **[Form link for Classes 1 - 4](#)**
- **[Form link for Classes 5 - 8](#)**

Conclusion:

We hope we have been able to address most of the common and general challenges of students and parents through this document. In addition, we have received certain subject-specific suggestions, which are being looked into by the subject-level teams. We thank you for your patience and understanding. We are looking forward to positive changes with these planned actions, and we will be happy to make further improvements with time.