

## How to Thrive During Remote Home Learning

### Practical Strategies to Help You and Your Family Create a Calm and Productive Workspace

At Emmaus Christian College our mandate has always been to support you, and work in partnership with you, in the education of your children. We are dedicated to continuing to provide an exceptional educational programme for your children. You are not alone.

We recognise however, that change is difficult, and so to minimise the pressure that comes with remote learning, and to maximise your child's learning and wellbeing we have some strategies for you to consider. We know that each family and their home and work situations are diverse so please use this as a guide, and above all, remain flexible.

- 1. Set up a routine** – Children thrive on routine. Work out what schedule is viable in your household, write it down and display it somewhere in your house for you to refer to. Have specific start and end times to your work day. Set aside several hours a day to focus on supporting your child in the curriculum the teachers have sent you, interspersed with several relaxation and eating breaks.
- 2. Set up a workspace** – It's important that each person who is working in the household has a designated workspace. This could be an area that is shared or set aside for individuals. The size of your house doesn't need to be an issue. A designated workspace could be as simple as placing a towel/rug on the floor with pencils, paper and any other stationery required.
- 3. Create a symbol to signify work time** - Make it clear when work time has started. Think of a symbol that your children will recognise as the start of formal lessons. It could simply be turning on a lamp or fairy lights, or putting the school uniform on. You can be as creative as you like. You may like to set up an area where all your children have a set workspace in the one room, so you can oversee them at the same time.
- 4. Schedule break times** – Like adults, children need brain breaks. Schedule in a recess and lunch break and at least one relaxation/quiet time break. The relaxation break is essential, ensuring that all people in the household have a break from each other. This allows time for everyone to reset and de-stress from the demands of everyday life. There is no set time limit on a relaxation break but for Junior Primary students, up to a half an hour would be a realistic suggestion. You may need to start with a smaller time allocation until your child is use to what this break looks and feels like. Ideally the relaxation break is to be undertaken individually, with only calming activities that do not require adult supervision. For example, colouring in, drawing, writing a story, reading, Lego construction, stretching or even just resting listening to quiet music are great calming down activities.
- 5. Communication is Key** - Be honest with the adults in your home and check in regularly with them about how you are coping. Encourage them to do the same. Set up a signal with your spouse, partner or extended family member, that tells them that you need a break. There is no shame in reaching your limit and asking someone else to share the workload whilst you regroup.

If possible, find a small support network that you can call for a few minutes several times a week, to debrief on how you are going. Sharing this time with others reminds you that you are not alone and we are all in this together. Dependant on your child's ages, you can set up a roster of friends they can communicate with for 15 minutes or so a day. This not only connects your children to their peer groups but may give you some downtime.

- 6. Be flexible and realistic** – I don't believe that any teacher has ever said that every lesson, let alone every school day has always gone to plan. Our greatest secret is being flexible and rolling with the punches. There will be days that nothing comes together and you may be tempted to feel like you have failed. These are the days that you dust yourself off, adjust your expectations and know that tomorrow you will get another opportunity to try again. If you have to make some changes just to get through the day then that is perfectly normal and acceptable. Be kind to yourself.