

Curriculum Guidance

Ratified by BOM on 1st Sept 2020

Students have not been present in MAMJS since 12th March and consideration kept to the fore that they are returning to a school with new measures in place and contingency plans in place for curriculum teaching and learning where there might be an unexpected period of school closure.

MAMJS is cognisant that the MAMJS community must be supported to settle happily back into school life and supported to deal with the changes to everyday school life.

Rationale/Principles

Managing Transitions

To support staff and students to make the transition back to school: an induction PowerPoint and Zoom meeting for students and parents, and an induction PowerPoint, policy document and induction day for MAMJS staff. The induction sessions aim to reconnect the MAMJS community, establish new routines, become familiar with operations/layouts and support dialogue to develop the working policy document.

It will be important to support students to reconnect with fellow students and staff members. It is advisable to 'slow down to catch up' (NEPS, 2020) which refers to including routines for students to openly communicate their needs/thoughts/emotions (see pdst.ie/nodes/5897 for ideas)

Discuss with previous class teacher and Support teacher the support new students and particular focus on students with particular needs.

Communication with Parents

Establishing and maintaining two way communication: e-mail, phone, school/teacher correspondence

If a school has to close, either localised or national:

- Planned curriculum model
- Use of digital technologies
- Method to alert parents to where the student is at in their learning
- Outline system/schedule for learning to occur at home

With students that are 'very high risk', it will be important that they receive appropriate support for their learning which will involve a team approach.

Communication with Students

Re-establish feedback sheets for students

Platform in classroom to discuss the new school year and give feedback to staff/principal to improve school life.

Teaching and Learning

The starting point: discuss with previous teacher, see fortnightly plan from March, common practice to review maths and languages for September, observation and assessment of pupils work to see where the development point of teaching is before introducing new learning.

Care should be taken to avoid using phrases like 'catch up' or 'cover lost ground', rather use terms like revisiting, consolidating and relearning concepts. The NCCA wall-chart overview of Curriculum may be helpful to see the developmental map of concept learning.

MAMJS have a vast outdoor environment and an increase us of outdoor space for the curriculum should be considered e.g. outdoor classroom, environmental trail

Collaboration of work can happen successfully in the new classroom layout, even in the constraints of social distancing.

SPHE will have particular reinforcement in the first first to support our students settle back into the 'new normal': Hand hygiene, Stay Safe programme, Role-play, friendships and reconnecting, Weaving programme

An emphasis on the Strand 'Games' may support students' play in the yard. Athletics or outdoor and adventure activities may support suitable learning experiences. This will mean minimal equipment needed, as after each lesson, all equipment must be cleaned e.g. 'Move Well Move Often' PDST resource.

To enable students to interact and engage with each other, a focus on Language (Teanga 1 & 2) will be important.

Classroom Layout

Refer to the DES classroom sample layouts to support the optimal layout for the class teacher and students (2m teacher zone and 1m spacing for students).

All soft furnishing should be removed

School library should not be in use and encourage students to read from their own repertoire of novels.

The cubbies should be split in the classroom to ensure they are near to where the students are sitting in the room

Daily Irish, English and Maths textbooks will be left in students' school bag which will remain at the students' desk. Other textbooks can be placed in the students' individualised cubbies.

Copies: