



Monday, April 27, 2020

Dear Chatsworth Secondary Parents,

### **Re: Update a few weeks into Home-Based Learning**

I am writing at the end of our third cycle of Home-Based Learning, the end of our second full week of virtual school. As you know, HBL has been extended in Singapore for another month and we hope to be back at school in June.

Our community has done an amazing job of adapting to HBL. Your teachers have spent an enormous amount of time reinventing lesson planning designing HBL lessons. After school, your teachers spend time sharing teaching strategies and best practices with each other, as we adapt more to HBL. Our students have been keeping on track and adapting to the different classroom experience, and our amazing MYP Service students even presented a Virtual Concert on Friday in support of Chatsworth charities. Please be sure to check out the talent of our students in the replay [here](#). HBL is different for parents, and we thank our parents for your support as well.

We have conducted various surveys for continual improvement, and some important parts of our last parent survey are presented below. Please take a moment and complete our current survey for parents [here](#). Thank you. Please address specific requests or questions with specific teachers and staff. We generally use these surveys in big picture planning.

**Some key data from our first parent survey. The percentages below are based on parent respondents to our initial survey, representing about 55% of our student population in Secondary.**

92% of parents were ok/happy/very happy with HBL in the first cycles.

79% of parents felt their kids were engaged / highly engaged in HBL

57% of parents felt their kids had an “about right” amount of work.

### **Some key survey comments from parents (and our responses)**

*Comment: Why does the model have two classes per day? Why not more?*

Reply: Our HBL model was based largely on our learning of best practices from schools in China and Korea who are months ahead of us regarding HBL.

This is a different paradigm, with students and teachers having to deal with issues (both for school and home) that are not part of a normal school day. For greater flexibility in meeting the wide variety of student needs, a two-period timetable allows students to focus solely on two subjects per day and for teachers to more effectively support the needs of every student. With students not having to move between too many virtual environments in a day, we can more

effectively track their progress. We also do not believe it is healthy or sustainable for students to spend a whole day on a computer screen.

*Comment: Can students have more assignments that are not computer-based?*

Reply: In general, this is something that we are looking at. The challenge is the balance between “being with their teacher” and “doing tasks offline”. This is an area of teacher conversation behind the scenes and is something we are looking at.

*Comment: There seems to be very little teacher-parent communication in Secondary [compared with Primary].*

Reply: It was never the plan to have a teacher-parent dialogue about classes. Secondary students have different needs than primary, and our approach is different. By and large, our students have done a great job in adapting to the new school environment. *However*, to further support parents, we are opening up Google Classroom for parents during this period of HBL. Please see Mr Burke’s [email](#) on Friday with information about this.

*Comment: Will our Year 12 class be able to cover their IB Diploma syllabi?*

Reply: This is an important question that every IB school in the world is raising now. The short answer is that we are checking with all subject teachers to make sure that classes are on track and from a syllabus coverage perspective, and the syllabus coverage is going well during HBL. We are mindful of the impacts of HBL on our Y12 IB Diploma/Certificate students and are adapting to the circumstances, hence we are working on revisiting the internal assessment calendar. Our DP coordinator is working closely with other school’s coordinators and continuously is in touch with the IB office. The situation is still evolving and we are adapting as appropriate.

*Comment: Assign more work, please **and** Assign less work, please.*

Reply: We are overall quite happy with our first two weeks and are addressing the question about the amount of work as we go. We have feedback on both ends of the spectrum. We are monitoring and adapting our overall approach to both class delivery and work assigned. When we started HBL, we asked teachers to set deadlines for the next class. This was strategic and we initially opted for the most flexibility of class delivery as we were unsure if students would be able to participate in real-time if their internet access would be sufficient etc. Now we have seen the pace of student workflow, we are asking teachers to set deadlines at the end of classes. We

anticipate this will have the impact of more focused work during class, and less big projects for students to manage at home.

SECONDARY HOME BASED LEARNING CHATSWORTH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - DAILY TIMETABLE		
8:50am	Homeroom	Check in with your HR teacher and see the daily chatter, start the day connecting with your classmates.
9:00am	Period 1	Go to Google Classroom, join the class, connect with your teacher and classmates and participate. Teachers will structure the 3 hours to include face-to-face time and independent working time. This will be flexible depending on the needs of the subject.
10:00am		
11:00am		Upload "classwork" to Google Classroom by the end of the period.
12:00pm	Lunch & Exercise	Don't forget to take a break, get some fresh air, and remember to always practice physical distancing.
1:00pm	Period 2	Go to Google Classroom, join the class, connect with your teacher and classmates and participate. Teachers will structure the 3 hours to include face-to-face time and independent working time. This will be flexible depending on the needs of the subject.
2:00pm		
3:00pm		Upload "classwork" to Google Classroom by the end of the period.
4:00pm	Events	After school events will be open for people to join. Check the HBL site and Daily Chatter, stay connected!
5:00pm	Evenings	Do homework and spend quality time with your family.
ITEM COLOUR KEY: Red = Mandatory Green = Flexible time Blue = Community		

Our updated HBL model (above) is also available for viewing on [Secondary's Home-Based Learning site](#). Our focus is to have more "check-in" points with work submission to better help manage student workflow.

Future parent surveys will ask parents to indicate the year level of their child so we can have more precise data.

*Comment: Can we receive a discount on fees during this period of HBL?*

Reply: The purpose of this survey is academic, to help guide us for changes to our academic program. However, parent feedback on surveys re school fees was forwarded. A letter from Mr Sherwood's office addressing fees was sent at the end of last week. I can advise that your teachers are putting in a lot of extra work to keep HBL running smoothly and to stay connected with our students. It is ironically more time consuming to run HBL than regular classes.

**There are a few areas where we need increased parent support to support the academic learning of your sons and daughters during Home-Based Learning.**

Now that the novelty of HBL has worn off, like all schools in similar situations, we are starting to see a small but noticeable drop in some student behaviour. Our Dean of Students, Mr. Newberry, [wrote](#) to students last week outlining our expectations. We ask that parents have a conversation with their children about treating HBL with the same seriousness, dedication and purpose as face-to-face learning at school. School starts at 8:50am.

Some of the new behavioural issues we have observed include students:

- Attending class in bed
- Bringing pets to class, eating in class
- Applying filters on their camera
- Missing homeroom, coming late, disappearing from class partway through
- Being on multiple devices (and off-task)

While it is a minority of students, we want to address this new behaviour immediately. Schools are facing similar situations, and we seek parent support in setting expectations with their sons and daughters. Even though we are at home, learning continues as does the same expectation for great behaviour and respect for teachers and students that we typically see. Thank you.

### Communication from the School

I do have one more request for parents and need your help, please. If a teacher or the Secondary Office contacts you with information specific to your child, please reply even if just to acknowledge the email. This might sound obvious, but we are hearing stories of teachers who have emailed out 10 parents and only receive two replies. Also, our Secondary Office Secretary Ms Zaheera follows up daily with emails and phone calls (from our school handphone number: 93799252) as we must have accurate attendance records.

Thank you for your continued support in these unusual times. Please remember to complete our second HBL parent survey, via the link [here](#).

We are looking forward to seeing everyone back in school soon.

**Mark McCallum**  
Campus Principal  
Head of Secondary

---

**Chatsworth International School Pte Ltd**  
UEN: 199405288W | GST Reg No.: M2-0126395-6

[www.chatsworth.com.sg](http://www.chatsworth.com.sg)

**Bukit Timah Campus (K1 - Y13)**  
72 Bukit Tinggi Road, Singapore 289760  
Tel: (65) 6463 3201 | Fax: (65) 6463 3202 | Email: [information.bt@chatsworth.com.sg](mailto:information.bt@chatsworth.com.sg)

**Orchard Campus (K1 - Y6)**  
37 Emerald Hill Road, Singapore 229313  
Tel: (65) 6737 5955 | Fax: (65) 6737 5655 | Email: [information.orchard@chatsworth.com.sg](mailto:information.orchard@chatsworth.com.sg)

