

# The Nature School

The 2020 remote teaching period highlighted the need for educators to develop a broad and inclusive set of digital practices to support student learning.

Their approaches needed to enable learning across formal spaces (physical and virtual) such as classrooms and learning management systems, as well as home learning environments. Educators also needed to cater for the needs and circumstances of all students, including those with additional needs, and those with home technology access or connectivity limitations.

Two main school priorities for the remote teaching period for the Nature school was that the teaching reflected school values and catered for the varied needs of a regional community.



## Key factors affecting remote teaching practices:

- Sharing of ideas & expertise helped ensure consistency.
- Deliberate selection of technologies enhanced access & ease of use.
- A minimalist approach to technologies enabled targeted professional learning.
- Learning activities were designed to ensure continuation of authentic, social learning.
- Blending digital and non-digital strategies supported the school philosophy.
- A strategic approach to synchronous online learning met student & family needs.

## Participants' recommendations and lessons learned:

- Use the school's core values to guide planning.
- Teacher wellbeing is critical.
- Maintain balance between online and practical outdoor activities.
- Facilitate student connection to support student wellbeing.
- Be empathetic and understanding of families.
- Targeted use of mobile devices for outdoor learning and support of multimodal communications.

## Practices continuing beyond school lockdown period:

- Increased use of online professional learning.
- Ongoing use of digital incursions.
- Enhanced use of online projects.
- Increased focus on explicit teaching.
- Ongoing use of a more flexible learning program.
- Targeted use of mobile devices for outdoor learning and support of multimodal communications.

## Practices to support student inclusion:

- Engaging with parents of students with special learning needs.
- Group-based Zoom sessions facilitated differentiation.

## Effective digital practices during the remote teaching period:

- Purposefully selecting & using technology.
- Supplementing digital approaches with take-home learning packs.
- Using Sway for communication & learning.
- Prioritising targeted teacher-made videos.
- Strategically designing the number & size of live connections.
- Supporting parents & recognising their critical role.

## Approaches to support wellbeing for students and staff:

- Zoom sessions combined a teaching and wellbeing purpose for students.
- Teachers emphasised quality not quantity of work for students.
- Support for broader family wellbeing was prioritised for students.
- Strategies were adopted to ensure flexibility for students and their families.
- Limited number of Zoom sessions indirectly helped teachers' wellbeing.
- Frequent online staff meetings included wellbeing checks and opportunities for connection.
- Flexibility for staff working from home or school.