



Learning from Home: Establishing Safe Online Environments using Video Conferencing

When video conferencing software is in use, the following considerations will help promote a responsible and safe learning environment for students, teachers, parents and administrators. All participants should be mindful of existing school policies and practices around IT, Social Media and Child Protection, as well as Codes of Conduct, as these have particular applicability. Privacy protocols will also need to be considered.

This information is intended to support Principals and teaching staff when using live video with students for various purposes, including but not limited to:

- delivering live lessons/sessions via video conferencing;
- prerecording delivery of lessons/sessions for students to watch at a later time;
- recording the delivery of a lesson/session as it is being delivered including student responses, comments and questions;
- conducting one-to-one learning sessions.

Not all students or teachers will have the ability to connect to live video due to limited access to digital learning devices or to inadequate internet service in their geographical area. In order to maintain contact with these students and their families it is suggested that alternative tools such as a telephone call or email, be used.



Considerations for staff

- Professional attire as per usual dress code.
- Select an appropriate location for hosting a meeting. Virtual backgrounds may be utilised.
- Familiarise self with functions available to 'manage participants' prior to first live meeting. Examples may include:
 - locking a meeting to prevent new participants joining,
 - muting students on entry,
 - muting individual students,
 - turning student cameras off,
 - removing students from the meeting,
 - add a password to the room for additional security.
- Avoid any photography/screenshots during zoom meetings, webinars, or other sessions as personal details of students may be visible.
- Include only relevant participants in the sessions i.e. students, parents (if appropriate), staff working directly with the students.

- Check if there are any adults present/supervising the student during the online session/communication.
- If conducting one-on-one learning sessions, ensure the purpose of the session is clearly communicated to the parent, parental consent is sought and details are provided about how long the session will run for, how the session will be conducted as well as what supports are available for the student (if a parent/carer will not be present/available for the student).
- Use platforms that are registered with a school email account not a personal account.
- Clarify the school's reporting protocols in the event of a concern arising during any contact or communication via video conferencing, online learning and/or telephone contact.
- Contact with students via text message, messenger, or other social media platforms should always be guided by the school's Code of Conduct, Child Protection and Social Media Policies.
- Abide by the school's IT/Media Policies and Acceptable Use of Digital Communications agreements.



Considerations for students

- Dress in appropriate attire.
- Use an open and/or supervised space/location in the home (not bedroom or other private area).
- Provide consent, if appropriate, for any sessions to be recorded.
- Abide by the school's IT/Social Media Policy and Acceptable Use of Digital Communications agreements.
- Do not record or take photos or share any images on any social media platform during online learning sessions.



Considerations for parents / carers

- Consent to be provided for:
 - their child/children to participate in live-conferencing, one-on-one learning sessions, telephone contact or other online contact/communication.
 - the school to record online learning sessions.
- Abide by the school's IT/Media policies and acceptable use of digital communications.
- Do not record or take photos or share any images on any social media platform during online learning sessions.



Pre-Recording and /or Recording Video Conferencing

It is not expected that sessions will be regularly recorded. However, where it is felt necessary to provide parents (particularly parents of younger school age children) with options regarding when their child may access the content, if sessions are to be recorded, it is important to consider the following:

- Schools are advised to inform parents and students that online lessons and one-on-one lessons may be recorded in a general letter. It is important that this be clearly indicated again at the beginning of the lesson.
- There is the option for parents to turn off the camera if they do not want their child to be seen online.
- Files containing recorded and/or live learning sessions should be placed in a Supervisor's electronic folder or other school authorised IT system and not held on the teacher's personal drive. The file/s should be removed within a set period of time.
- The recording should not be able to be downloaded.
- In addition to this letter, ensure there is a notification at the beginning of the online session. This may involve the teacher making a clear statement.
- Schools may think it prudent to amend their Privacy Policies to state that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the school may record some lessons and that such recordings will not be retained for longer than a specified timeframe.
- Recordings should commence prior to the students entering the lesson and continue until all students exit the lesson or the lesson is closed.