

# International School of Stuttgart Online Synchronous Learning Program Handbook

Date: 17 August 2020

The ISS learning statement ‘Learning at the core of all we do.’ is at the heart of our response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Informed by our academic policies and practices as well as our Distance Learning policy, the Online Synchronous Learning policy bridges our belief in the importance of learning onsite (in person and on campus), to local regulations and expectations for student safety. The purpose of this document is to describe the expectations and procedures that have been implemented to support those few students unable to attend our school in person for specific medical reasons.

Our current emphasis is on our onsite learning program as it is important to understand that during this period, the school is not closed and expects its students to be on campus unless there is a medical reason otherwise. However, we have provided access to our classrooms in a synchronous manner and will expect students utilizing our online (off campus) synchronous learning system to maintain communication through our school approved software and learning management tools in the same manner as our onsite students.

The following guidelines apply to the COVID 19 Pandemic Response for the current school year 2020-21.

The guidelines will be regularly reviewed and updated by the school’s Leadership, Academic Council, and IT teams in accordance with changing governmental regulations.

## **Schedules**

Upper School online students will follow their academic schedule in alignment with the onsite students. The Lower Schools will communicate specific online contact expectations through the classroom teachers. This is to ensure continuity of learning and to support connection with both peers and instructors.

## **Confidentiality**

Educators are to continue to follow and be mindful of the current best practice of child and data protection, to help ensure that online students are safe and secure. Both the instructor and the students must follow the instructions and guidance from the IT office about the safety and use of online tools in addition to the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

## **Communication**

Communication between online students and their teachers is expected to be through the officially supported tools of communication as offered by the school, including school email ([@issev.de](mailto:@issev.de) account), Veracross, Microsoft Teams, Toddle, SeeSaw and other approved online tools.

## **Collaboration**

Online planning is a part of the current expectations for collaborative planning, which includes planning for differentiated instruction and evaluation of learning. Educators are to use the preexisting planning platforms for planning, as well as collaborative planning. Teachers will collaborate with online students during class time as they would with any onsite student.

## **Hardware**

Educators will use ISS provided laptops and iPads, in addition to the ISS approved digital tools to communicate, plan and assess student learning. Each educator will have access to an additional device to ‘broadcast’ the classroom experience that will allow for synchronous participation of the online student during our onsite class.

### **Absence/inability to work**

Educators are expected to be on campus for our current school year unless they have an approved medical note as per usual practice outlined in our staff handbooks. Online students must inform the school of their absences in accordance with normal onsite practice as well as in conjunction with local Corona virus regulations.

### **Learning Resources**

The International School of Stuttgart will continue to utilize our comprehensive bank of online resources and materials for its teachers and students. These resources are purchased and supported by the school. Families with online synchronous learning students must provide access to our systems in accordance with the IT learning tool guidelines and our Appropriate Use policies.

### **Students**

Educators are expected to have the same level of expectations of their online synchronous students in terms of learning, assessments, organization, deadlines and commitment to their learning as they do for their onsite students.

### **Well Being and Learning Support**

Learning Support Educators will coordinate and support teachers regarding the well-being of online synchronous students and as well as providing support materials and resources to students through official ISS tools such as Veracross. They may also identify and share resources that support differentiation or develop resources requested by class/subject teachers, as appropriate.

### **Parents**

It is important to understand that during this period, the school is not closed and expects its students to be on campus unless there is a medical reason otherwise. Our online synchronous system does not replace onsite learning as our distance learning program does, but it allows for access to our classrooms. Educators are expected to continue to communicate to the online students as they would normally do during the classroom through the broadcasting device that also allows for online student participation.

### **Support and advice for Educators**

Educators are to follow their regular lines of communication for support and to seek advice from their IB Program Coordinators, Principals and other line managers, as appropriate.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Will remain the same as in our Distance Learning Policies.

#### Available formats for online support

- Live Teams Chat
- Email
- Special Support Channel in each divisional Team
- Webinars and 'streaming'
- Recorded tutorials
- Online Resources (Veracross portal and ZenDesk)
- Helpdesk (ZenDesk)

## Online Synchronous Learning Guidelines for Staff

The ISS learning statement 'Learning at the core of all we do.' is at the heart of our response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Informed by our Distance Learning policy, the Online Synchronous Learning policy bridges our belief in the importance of learning onsite (in person and on campus), to local regulations and expectations for student safety.

Whilst our current emphasis is on our onsite learning program we want to support online synchronous learning for those few students unable to attend our school in person for specific medical reasons related specifically to the Corona Virus. This is why we have provided access to our classrooms in an online synchronous manner and will expect students to utilize our usual school approved software and learning management tools in the same manner as our onsite students.

### General Staff Communication Expectations for Online Synchronous Learning

Teachers will be provided with an additional iPad and stand for each class. The teacher will access the Teams class site to allow for any online student to be able to synchronously access the classroom during the scheduled period of the class.

- Veracross will continue to be used for taking attendance and assigning classwork and assessments, and grading, according to divisional expectations.

Teachers should monitor relevant ISS communication channels such as email, Veracross portals and Teams

- Every class in Veracross, EY – grade 12, has an associated Class Website. This allows for further communication with online students.
- Teams is not a tool for communicating with parents, however, parents will have access to this tool through their children.
- Third party tools should not be used for communications.

ISS expects all teachers to follow the instructions from the IT office regarding the safety and use of online tools in alignment with the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

## **Online Synchronous Learning Guidelines for Students and Parents**

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### **Structures and Routines for Online Synchronous Learning Student**

According to local regulations, it is possible for parents to choose not to send their children to ISS for reasons due to COVID-19. In this scenario the following will be offered for those children:

The regular classroom activity will be ‘live broadcast’ through Microsoft Teams, particularly at times that involve direct instruction, as well as when there are opportunities for inclusion in smaller group collaborations.

The students are expected to be online for the duration of the class unless otherwise agreed with the class teacher.

Students are expected to follow all regular expectations for assignment completion, as communicated through Veracross and other teacher communications.

### **Expectations for Students**

#### ***Early Years (EY 3- KG)***

- It is not required, though strongly suggested, that teacher-developed learning engagements are completed.
- Play, reading to, with, and by your children, simple counting, letter play and creative activities should take priority.

#### ***Primary Schools (Grades 1-5)***

- Follow the daily plans posted by teachers
- Join scheduled class sessions
- Upload or otherwise share assigned work as instructed through our Toddle and Seesaw Systems

#### ***Upper Schools (Grades 6-12)***

- Follow the regular academic and homeroom class schedule
- Be online in Teams Virtual classroom at the beginning of scheduled class
- Adhere to deadlines and any expectations set by teachers
- Monitor Outlook emails (issev.de), Veracross, and Teams classroom daily
- Respond to teachers and fellow students as needed or requested during the “live” classes.
- Communicate proactively with teachers for support and guidance during class
- Collaborate with and support peers as needed
- Comply with the ISS Acceptable Use Policy (TCUP)
- Adhere to Academic Honesty expectations
- Endeavour to balance your own screen-time and ask for support if needed
- Identify a comfortable, quiet space so that you can work effectively and successfully with minimal distractions.

## Expectations for Families

The guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in synchronous online learning but also maintaining connections to their peers in school.

- Monitor communications through email and Veracross
- Help students to establish routines and understand expectations
- Ensure students have a dedicated space that is well lit, quiet, with no distractions
- Check-in regularly with child, ideally at the start and end of a learning task, and at beginning and end of each 'school' day
- Encourage a daily routine of physical activity and exercise
- Be an advocate and support if your child is feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or disconnected
- Monitor necessary screen time and limiting screen time as appropriate for health purposes.
- Communicate with the school when child is not able to attend scheduled classes online
- Especially in the MYP and DP years, be aware of deadlines and help to ensure that these are met
- Support primary school students in their online activities and use of school tools

Daily conversations matter. It allows children to process the instructions they've received from their teachers. It helps them organize themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents, but they should, nevertheless. Parents should establish these check-ins or conversations as regular parts of each day.

## Child Protection online and GDPR

This portion of the policy applies to all the ISS staff, students and parents/guardians of ISS students, and/or anyone who partakes in the ISS distance learning activities and will be referred to as Distance Learning Participants in the further text.

Distance Learning Participants should only use ISS approved communication tools for online communication and collaboration. When unclear if a tool can be used for online communication, you can get in contact with the ISS Data Protection Officer at [dpo@issev.de](mailto:dpo@issev.de). Use of the social media for purposes of online communication and distance learning, such as Facebook, WhatsApp and similar is forbidden.

Students and parents are strictly forbidden from recording live online interactions and sharing of those interactions, unless such interactions is against ISS published [Child Protection Policy](#), [Student Code of Conduct](#), and/or [Professional Code of Conduct](#). In case there are concerns where these policies are getting violated, Distance Learning Participants should immediately contact a member of the ISS Leadership Team, school counselor or in cases of ISS staff, their direct line manager.

When conducting Distance Learning live sessions, participants should maintain privacy of such sessions by not conducting them in public places, broadcasting, or in any other way break privilege and confidentiality of such communication.

### For Questions About:

A piece of work, task clarity, resources, learning activity or class:

Contact the teacher of the class

A technology-related question or issue:

Email [itsupport@issev.de](mailto:itsupport@issev.de)

A personal, pastoral or academic concern:  
Resource specialist

Contact the divisional Educational Psychologist or Learning

Academic or program/curriculum concerns:

The PYP, MYP, DP or program coordinator

Data Protection:

Email [dpo@issev.de](mailto:dpo@issev.de)

Other issues related to distance learning:

Contact Division Leader or School Director