



**Harbor Country Day School**

*Embracing the extraordinary in every child.™*

**Parent Handbook for Online Learning Program  
Early Childhood Division  
PK2-Kindergarten  
2020-2021 Academic Year**



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## **Online Learning: Introduction**

The goal of our online learning program is to provide students with the same academic rigor, intellectual engagement, and character development that students and families have come to expect from Harbor Country Day School (HCDS). The HCDS Online Learning Program allows students to successfully learn from home when necessary by providing engaging and interactive lessons that are designed to allow students to flourish academically and socially. Maintaining the student/teacher and student/student relationship(s) while learning online is the foundation of this program. We know that every interaction between teachers and students contributes to their success.

Harbor Country Day School believes it is critical to continue to inspire students to become independent, self-aware, and joyful members of our learning community. With these core values in mind, we will continue to provide a learning experience online that will allow students to feel comfortable taking risks, asking questions, and challenging themselves to go further than they ever thought possible.

On the following pages we have laid out guidelines for online learning should we be required to cease face-to-face learning and return to online learning due to COVID-19. We hope to transition seamlessly to online learning, if need be. Your reading through this handbook ahead of time will help allow for that transition for your child.



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## **Online Learning: A Seamless Transition**

At the start of the school year, each family will receive a schedule specific to their child's class. The schedule will go into effect if the school is closed due to an emergency that lasts for more than two days. This includes, but is not limited to, closure due to:

- A contagious outbreak
- A snowstorm (if wifi is available)
- Natural disaster (if wifi is available)

The online school will take place between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. Teachers will also offer daily office hours for parents from 2:30 pm through 3:00 pm, by appointment.

Students will bring all necessary supplies home on the last day of in-person instruction.

Should we need to transition to online learning without warning, the school will organize a supply pick-up schedule.



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## Online Learning: Guidelines

To ensure a successful online learning experience:

1. For simplicity, we will be using one platform throughout the school, PK2 through eighth grade, called Google Classroom. Please check Google Classroom for your child daily. This site will keep students and parents up to date with assignments, schedules, and classroom announcements.
2. Please have a workspace set up for your child. The workspace should:
  - Be in a quiet area of the house and if possible free from siblings, pets, and toys
  - Have work, supplies, and materials organized and ready to access
3. Meals should be provided before or after a Zoom session.
  - Please try to avoid your child eating while on screen.
4. During synchronous learning (ZOOM), students should be fully engaged with the teacher.
  - Parents should be close by to assist with technology *but* students should be working independently with the teacher and class. We ask the parents to do their best to resist the temptation to offer too much assistance to your child during online learning.



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## **Online Learning: Manners and Expectations for Early Childhood Students**

Please log your child into zoom no more than three minutes before the scheduled class time, as it is hard for young children to wait too long and we want them excited and ready to learn.

For our students:

1. Have all needed materials nearby, and a computer or tablet charged.
2. Make sure the teacher can see your whole face and you are sitting at a desk or table.
3. Please finish your food before joining your friends.
4. Your teacher will have everyone on mute. Please stay muted unless asked to unmute.
5. Please raise your hand if you want to answer a question or ask a question.
6. Please do not play with toys or pets during a zoom session, you can play with them after class.



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## **Online Learning: Zooming and Class Communication**

1. All Early Childhood students will be given a Gmail account that will provide parents access to the teacher's Google Classroom and Zoom links.
2. Preschool students will participate in 2 to 4 live Zoom sessions per day.
3. All preschool classes will take place at the same scheduled time each day, including co-curricular classes.
4. All teachers will post on Google Classroom the materials that are required for upcoming classes in advance so parents can prepare students for the lesson.
5. Schedules, monthly newsletters, and other class-specific announcements will be posted on Google Classroom.



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## **Online Learning: Assessments**

Assessments for Early Childhood students will take place throughout the day during online learning and through one to one and small group instruction time.

1. Beginning of the year assessments in a one-to-one meeting with each student.
  - a. For Kindergarten mid-year reading assessments will be done through Raz-Kids.
  
2. Post-assessments will be given after academic lessons to ensure the students are retaining the content that is being taught virtually.



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## **Online Learning: The Role of Parents**

Parents play a critical role in students' online learning success. The goal of this program is to provide your student with a mostly synchronous learning experience that keeps them engaged and fosters independence and a sense of responsibility.

### **Parent Tips**

1. Read over the Online Learning Guidelines as well as the Manners and Expectations sections with your child.
2. Please let the teacher know if your child is missing any materials.
3. Check Google Classroom daily.
4. Monitor your child and correct any behavior that does not display appropriate online etiquette.
5. If there are multiple learners in your household, try to separate each child or provide them with headphones to listen to their lesson.
6. Resolve any technical issues as soon as possible so your child can seamlessly transition to online learning (Mr. Weissbach, the Director of Technology is available for any assistance)
7. Talk with your child daily about their online experience. Share any concerns or insights with the classroom teacher as soon as possible.
8. Charge devices necessary for online learning each night.
9. The teachers are here to support your children, if everyone follows the guidelines, children should be able to have a successful online learning experience.
10. Do your best, we are all in this together!



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## **Online Learning: Building a Classroom Community**

Building a classroom community is essential to the success of an online program. In order to connect and build a relationship with parents and students, we will be hosting some fun social events for early childhood students. Some examples of this will include:

- Class Lunches through Zoom
- Class Spirit Days
- All School Meetings
- Buddies Program with Upper School Students



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## Online Learning: Technology Checklist

Required:

- Either a Desktop Computer with a camera, a Chromebook, Macbook Laptop, Windows Laptop, or iPad.
- Internet access at home. If using WiFi be sure that you have a strong signal where your child/children will be working.
- An area for your child/children to work interruption-free.

If you are in need of a laptop for your child/children please contact Artie Weissbach for a loaner at [aweissbach@hcdsny.org](mailto:aweissbach@hcdsny.org).