

Towards a Model for a Hybrid Delivery of EAL



1. How did Carrington respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns?

Today I'll be speaking on behalf of our organisation and sharing some of Carrington's journey moving to a 'hybrid model' and teaching remotely within the context of Covid 19.

Our experience pivoting to deliver remote lessons has been multifaceted, and we are still very much on a learning journey and are working towards a model or framework for 'best practice'. We definitely don't have all the answers, but I hope you might find it interesting to hear about some of our experiences.

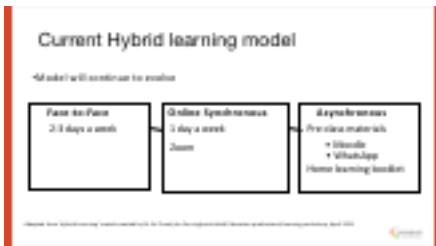
Looking back about 18 months ago to when we first went into lockdown, we didn't have the digital tools in place to teach remotely. It was quite a chaotic time. Teachers were calling individual students and using a range of messaging platforms to connect with them. We sent hard copy workbooks to students' homes and would help them work through these via phone calls. We have a lot of low language and literacy learners, so it was challenging to teach on individual phone calls. But we had to be flexible and meet the students where they were at...

Since those very early experiences of lockdown, Carringbush has made a few changes in response to COVID-19:

- We moved to using Zoom for online synchronous lessons and began to use WhatsApp as the only messaging platform to communicate with students. We set up class WhatsApp groups and teachers reached out to family members to help with downloading Zoom and WhatsApp.
- We set up Moodle as our LMS and have been creating digital learning resources for asynchronous learning. We've also implemented Loom as a video recording and storage platform.
- Carringbush consulted with academics, including the Monash team, about how to improve our remote teaching.
- Carringbush set up a device Lending Library and lends out iPads or laptops to students who don't have a smart phone or a suitable device to study with.
- We organised digital mentors to offer in-class support to students. The mentors have also been supporting students during remote lessons.
- Created a role for a Digital Capacity Advisor to oversee the implementation of the hybrid model
- Carringbush has offered ongoing support to staff through the change period- including more regular meetings, bringing on board expertise and investigating and then trialing different ways of teaching. One example was setting up a 'Community of Practice' to explore Flipped learning. Teachers could opt into it, and those involved were paid an

extra few hours a week for their time. This was important because it did take more time to create custom-made content, and time to think about how to structure learning with this new lens.

2. What is your current approach to EAL delivery?



Due to the impacts of Covid 19, Carringbush has embraced a hybrid learning model which incorporates elements of Flipped Learning.

In our current model we aim to teach face-to-face classes 2-3 days a week, and we teach via zoom 1 day a week. We are incorporating elements of flipped learning by sending pre-class materials before every lesson either via WhatsApp or via our Learner management system Moodle

3. What are the benefits for learners and teachers?



The combination of face-to-face, remote and asynchronous learning has opened up opportunities for our learners to develop their digital and independent learning skills.

We have been explicitly teaching the digital skills alongside language skills, and we feel this has been very positive for our learners. They've really embraced this new way of learning. For example, in our beginner level class, with the support of the bilingual digital support volunteer, learners are now moving into breakout rooms for explicit teaching periods, joining Zoom sessions using a meeting ID and password and sending photos of their work via WhatsApp during Zoom classes for immediate feedback.

One of our aims in embracing flipped learning has been to create a resource bank of custom-made videos for our learners to access at any time. We feel this has helped with their learning, but I am speaking from my perspective as a teacher. Later this term we will be running small focus groups with interpreters to better understand our beginner level learners' experiences learning remotely.

For the staff, this has been a time to really innovate and learn new skills. Although it's been challenging, our teachers are constantly exploring new teaching and learning approaches. We've trialled different ways of structuring our zoom lessons, and have created personalised, digital content that has been relevant to our learners. Teachers have collaborated and really supported each other through this time. Currently, with our level teachers, and in consultation with the Monash team, we're trialling a best-practice model for the structure of

the Zoom sessions for beginner level learners. And as part of our literacy focus, we are implementing a phonics program for our learners using a flipped model.

4. How do you envision the use of this approach post-pandemic?



This has been such a big learning journey for our organization - and post-pandemic we'll maintain a hybrid model (although it will no doubt continue to evolve).

We really believe it is important to continue to provide opportunities for learners to develop their digital skills.

Therefore,

- All classes will have one remote day of teaching / learning
- We'll continue to use Moodle as our LMS and design digital learning resources that are relevant to and meaningful for our learners – and going forward, we're hoping to design materials *with* our students
- We'll continue to resource a device lending program to ensure every learner has access to a suitable device for remote learning
- And Carringbush has prioritised the use of digital mentors and paid staff available to offer digital support to learners

I think it will be interesting to see what stage we're at in a year from now.