

Hitchin Girls' School

Remote Learning Policy



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1. Aims

This remote learning policy for staff aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning for pupils who aren't in school
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to remote learning
- Provide appropriate guidelines for data protection

2. Use of remote learning

All pupils should attend school, in line with our attendance policy. Remote education is not viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school.

Pupils receiving remote education will be marked absent in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations.

We will consider providing remote education to pupils in circumstances when in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government guidance.

This might include:

- Occasions when we decide that opening our school is either:
 - Not possible to do safely
 - Contradictory to guidance from local or central government
- Occasions when individual pupils, for a limited duration, are unable to physically attend school but are able to continue learning, for example because:
 - They have an infectious illness
 - They are preparing for or recovering from some types of operation
 - They are recovering from injury and attendance in school may inhibit such recovery
 - Their attendance has been affected by a special educational need or disability (SEND) or a mental health issue

The school will consider providing pupils with remote education on a case-by-case basis and this will be considered in line with the Medical Needs Policy and will require medical evidence if a referral to Education Support for Medical Absence (ESMA) is to be submitted. If ESMA are able to provide education during the medical absence, the pastoral team will co-ordinate this provision and reintegration plan.

In the limited circumstances when remote learning is used, we will:

- Gain mutual agreement of remote education by the school, parents/carers, pupils, and if appropriate, a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or social worker, the local authority (LA) will also be involved in the decision
- Put formal arrangements in place to regularly review it and identify how to reintegrate the pupil back into school
- Identify what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help reintegrate the pupil back into school at the earliest opportunity
- Set a time limit with an aim that the pupil returns to in-person education with appropriate support

Remote education will not be used as a justification for sending pupils home due to misbehaviour. This would count as a suspension, even if the pupil is asked to access online education while suspended.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Teachers

When providing remote learning to the whole school due to closure, teachers must be available between 8.30am and 3.30pm as a minimum.

If they're unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

When providing remote learning, teachers should:

- Provide pupils with access to remote education as soon as reasonably practicable, though in proportion to the length of absence and disruption to the learning of all learners
- Make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND to access remote education, where required, informed by relevant considerations including the support families will require and the types of services that pupils can access remotely

They are also responsible for:

- Setting work in line with the daily school timetable - this will include an online form time check-in with tutees if the school closure is longer than 24 hours.
- Work needs to be posted on Google classroom in time for the beginning of the lesson (as would be expected in school e.g. period 1 work would be posted by 9.10am etc.)
- If the whole school is going to be closed for an extended period of time (longer than 72 hours), staff may be directed to deliver live lesson content via Google Meet. This will be directed by the Headteacher and will be communicated to all staff as soon as is reasonably achievable.
- Teachers are encouraged to share resources within departments to ensure consistency of remote provision for each year group. This should be coordinated by the Head of Department.
- Providing work which can be completed on the Google classroom or in school books and staff should avoid the necessity of printing for students.
- Making sure that work provided during periods of remote education is of high quality, meaningful, ambitious:
 - This includes considering the needs of individual pupils, such as those with SEND or other additional needs, and the level of independent study skills
 - This also includes considering the needs of pupils' families or carers, including how much adult involvement is needed in each activity and whether pupils have a suitable place to study
- Providing feedback on work:
 - This will occur via the Google classroom, as appropriate and will involve checking students have been completing work and sending reminders if they have not.
 - Adding comments to any assessed work in line with school expectations.
- Keeping in touch with pupils who aren't in school and their parents (as necessary):
 - Having a 'live' registration via Google Meet each morning at 8.40am if the school will be closed for longer than 72 hours. This should allow for communication between students in the form group.
 - Answering emails from parents/carers within 72 hours in line with normal school procedures.
 - Reporting any safeguarding concerns via CPOMS and if urgent, emailing or calling a DSL.

- Sharing any other concerns with Head of Department, Head of Year or Pastoral team as would occur if in school.
- Reminding students to complete and submit work via Google classroom.
- Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents/carers and students:
 - Ensure that the location of these is appropriate and cannot be overheard by people who are not members of the school community (e.g. use headphones as necessary)
 - Only arranging Google Meets using school email addresses and ensuring these are to student school email addresses.

If the remote provision also requires some staff to be in school supervising smaller groups of students, these staff would not be expected to deliver 'live' lessons on these days and work should be posted on Google classroom which can be completed independently by students. The school will avoid using classroom teachers to supervise the in school provision.

3.2 Learning Support Assistants

When assisting with remote learning, Learning Support assistants must be available on their normal working days from 8.30am until 3.30pm.

If they're unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

When assisting with remote learning, Learning Support assistants are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils who aren't in school with learning remotely:
 - This will focus on those students who have an EHCP and if there is any further capacity will involve SEN support students as required.
 - This could involve check-in's with students via email, adapting the classwork provided by the teacher to ensure it is accessible, delivering intervention sessions if appropriate following liaison with the SENCO.
- Attending virtual meetings with teachers, parents/carers and students:
 - Ensure that the location of these is appropriate and cannot be overheard by people who are not members of the school community (e.g. use headphones as necessary)
 - Only arranging Google Meets using school email addresses and ensuring these are to student school email addresses.

If necessary, Learning Support assistants will be asked to work in school with key students. The tasks at this point will include registering students, helping them to log into the work provided by teaching staff, covering lunch/break supervision, adapting work to ensure it is accessible.

3.3 Heads of Department (including Learning Support)

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Considering whether any aspects of the subject curriculum need to change to accommodate remote learning
- Working with teachers teaching their subject remotely to make sure all work set is appropriate and consistent
- Working with other heads of department and senior leaders to make sure work set remotely across all subjects is appropriate and consistent, and deadlines are being set an appropriate distance away from each other

- Monitoring the remote work set by teachers in their subject through team meetings and visiting Google classrooms to audit provision
- Alerting teachers to resources they can use to teach their subject remotely
- Making decisions about the use of online video lessons such as Oak National Academy
- The SENCO will ensure that relevant information about SEND students is shared with heads of department and will collaborate to establish any resources which need adapting by the LSA team.
- The SENCO will work with senior leaders to identify any students who may require in-school provision if this is feasible during the period of remote learning.

3.4 Senior leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders should continue to use the school's digital platform for remote education provision and make sure staff continue to be trained and are confident in its use.

They should continue to overcome barriers to digital access where possible for pupils by, for example:

- Distributing school-owned laptops accompanied by a user agreement or contract if a student's device is not working
- Securing appropriate internet connectivity solutions where possible for students who do not have access
- Having systems for checking, ideally on a daily basis, whether pupils learning remotely are engaging in its use, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern

They are also responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school – the Pupil Premium Lead will ensure students have access to devices and the internet and leading the planning for food provision for FSM students, the Curriculum Lead will co-ordinate the heads of department and the Learning Support lead will co-ordinate SEND and pastoral provision
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning – through regular meetings with teachers and heads of department, reviewing work set and if the provision is continuing for an extended period, reaching out for feedback from student and parents/carers
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations
- Ensuring staff remain trained and confident in their use of online digital education platforms
- Training staff on relevant accessibility features that your chosen digital platform has available
- Providing information to parents/carers and pupils about remote education – via the school website and email communication
- Working with the catering team to ensure pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals (FSM) are provided with good quality lunch parcels or food vouchers

3.5 Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring the DSL team are briefed about any emerging safeguarding concerns linked to students not accessing the remote provision
- Ensuring there is a rota for monitoring and responding to CPOMS alerts
- Co-ordinating any welfare checks that need to take place
- Briefing any staff in school about safeguarding concerns for students in school as appropriate
- Liaising with external agencies working with students to support safeguarding

- Co-ordinating pastoral welfare check-ins
- Ensuring the classroom cloud is being monitored and any safeguarding alerts are followed up

3.6 IT staff

IT staff are responsible for:

- Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work
- Helping staff and parents/carers with any technical issues they're experiencing
- Reviewing the security of remote learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the data protection officer (DPO)
- Assisting pupils and parents/carers with accessing the internet or devices in co-ordination with the senior leaders

3.7 Students and parents/carers

Staff can expect students learning remotely to:

- Be contactable during the school day – and attending the remote registration on time and appropriately dressed for school (uniform is not required during remote learning)
- Complete work to the deadline set by teachers
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers or learning support assistants
- Alert teachers if they're not able to complete work
- Act in accordance with normal behaviour rules / conduct rules of the school - this includes the ICT acceptable use policy

Staff can expect parents/carers with children learning remotely to:

- Engage with the school and support their children's learning, and to establish a routine that reflects the normal school day as far as reasonably possible
- Make the school aware if their child is sick or otherwise can't complete work
- Seek help from the school if they need it
- Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff

3.8 Trustee board

The trustee board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains of as high a quality as possible
- Ensuring that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons

4. Who to contact

If staff have any questions or concerns about remote learning, they should contact the following individuals:

- Issues in setting work – contact the relevant head of department or SENCO

- Issues with behaviour – contact the relevant head of year who will liaise with their senior lead link
- Issues with IT – contact IT staff
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – contact their line manager
- Concerns about data protection – contact the data protection officer
- Concerns about safeguarding –contact the DSL team

5. Data protection

5.1 Accessing personal data

When accessing personal data for remote learning purposes, all staff members will:

- Use the Google drives and classrooms on their school devices, using their school log-in details rather than any personal devices
- Ensure that any data that is being accessed is not in a public space where it could be viewed and is using a secure internet connection rather than an open wifi network.

5.2 Processing personal data

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data as part of the remote learning system. As long as this processing is necessary for the school's official functions, individuals won't need to give permission for this to happen. The school will follow its data protection policy / privacy notice in terms of handling data.

However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online, and to remind themselves of their duties in terms of data protection in accordance with the school's policies and procedures.

5.3 Keeping devices secure

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters (e.g. asterisk or currency symbol)
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends
- Installing antivirus and anti-spyware software
- Keeping operating systems up to date – always install the latest updates

6. Safeguarding

Safeguarding procedures will continue to follow the Child Protection Policy and staff will be expected to report concerns via CPOMS as they would when not working remotely. The DSL team will triage concerns and allocate actions to be completed whilst working remotely. If there are safeguarding concerns regarding non-engagement with remote learning, these will be triaged and staff will follow best endeavours to make contact with students and their families. If this cannot be achieved, welfare checks will be requested through the police or will take place with the DSL team if the circumstances for closure would permit this.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years (or sooner if deemed necessary) by the headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the Trustee board.

8. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Home-school agreement
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Online safety policy
- Supporting students with Medical Needs policy