

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

Pupils may not be able to attend their provision for a number of authorised reasons. They may be ill (non Covid related), they may be having a period of forced isolation, or the provision may be closed to their particular group or to the entirety of learners. Whilst guidance states that provisions need to be able to provide their curricula remotely to those students unable to attend, it is important to be mindful that for those within Horizon Care and Education, and indeed for any educational establishment, it cannot be 'a one size fits all' in relation to departments, subjects, students, or staff.

Some students will not access work at home as 'home is home and school is school.' This was something experienced by many schools over the first lockdown period, even those with the most able and well-motivated students. Other students who rely on one-to-one support in the school will not have this at home, and parents may not be able to provide it. Other students may not be able to log on at home as they have difficulty remembering how to, and/or may not have the necessary equipment.

The school is gathering as much detail as it can about family's abilities to access online material. At the same time, it is trying to reduce the numbers of students that do not have remote access. Apart from the loan of the equipment, the other identified issues are difficult to overcome.

Horizon Care and Education understands that students that experience or need the following are unlikely to be able to access any or very limited online activities:

- Those whose diagnoses cause them to compartmentalise the school and home meaning that ordinarily students do not complete work at home without significant anxiety.
- Those whose refusal to engage results in behaviours that puts the student, or others at risk.
- Those that require 1:1 support to engage in learning.
- Those that are unable to access remote learning independently.
- Those that require sensory input to engage in activities.
- Those where a low demand strategy is used at home to avoid physical aggression towards family; or is used to prevent a flight mode trigger causing the student to run away; or is used to prevent the destruction of an environment.

Schools will make online learning available to all, however it understands that for some students, opportunities for paper based tasks and activities which focus on supporting student needs in the areas of: life skills, sensory processing or social communication would be more appropriate. These resources will be made available, even though in some cases this will still result in no engagement.

Some subject areas will find it easier than others to provide work. Practical subjects will find it difficult if not impossible to meet all of the elements of their curricula online. Performance subjects currently require group singing or performance and students who are isolating will not be able to do this. This will then not be something that can be assessed online.

The group is also not in a position to provide every household with the materials that they would need to complete practical qualifications online. In addition, safety guidance has been published stating that some subjects should not be setting practical activities to be attempted at home. In order to support students that can access remote learning materials the group has committed to providing ongoing training and development for staff.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Teachers

When providing remote learning, teachers must be available during their contractual working hours.

If they are 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 are responsible for:

Planning and developing resources and activities that can be delivered as part of an online learning experience.

Planning and developing assessment materials that will track students' progress with topics delivered as part of a remote learning curriculum.

Planning and delivering online lessons that support the learning of those students within the school or those accessing it at home.

Delivering lessons (if possible) through the online resources. If this is not possible use the online resources to upload work for others to deliver.

If teachers are working from home then they must ensure they are available during the school working day and are able to support the online learning of those students who are learning from home or in the school still. This is likely to be through TEAMS and Google Classroom but could be via email in certain circumstances.

Maintain contact with students to monitor, engagement, progress and wellbeing.

Adhering to the school's policies, including the staff conduct policy, which must be adhered to at all times

Responding to parental complaints in line with the school's complaints policy.

Ensuring parents are aware of which staff will be teaching their children and when.

Alerting senior leaders to any issues regarding pupils' behaviour and engagement in remote learning.

Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents, and pupils:

- Ensuring background filters are used when attending virtual meetings.
- Avoiding carrying out meetings in areas with background noise.
- Adhering to school/group policy regarding conduct.

2.2 Teaching assistants

When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants must be available between their usual contractual hours.

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, teaching assistants are responsible for:

Supporting pupils who are not in school with learning remotely under the guidance of teachers and senior leaders.

2.3 Senior leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

Considering whether any aspects of the curriculum need to change to accommodate remote learning.

Working with teachers teaching their subject remotely to make sure all work set is appropriate, consistently meets the needs of individual students.

Working with staff 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.

Ensuring parents are aware of parental controls in order control students access to the wider internet.

Alerting teachers to resources they can use to teach their subject remotely.

Making sure pupils and parents are aware of the school procedures for reporting incidents of online bullying.

Ensuring pastoral support for pupils remains accessible.

Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school

Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning –through regular meetings with teachers, reviewing work set or reaching out for feedback from pupils and parents.

Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations

2.4 Designated safeguarding lead

The DSL will:

- Monitor and record the frequency of contact with families.
- Assess and report any risks that are identified.
- Refer any safeguarding concerns that meet threshold, that are highlighted.
- Record any contact made during a period of enforced closure.

2.5 IT staff

IT staff are responsible for:

Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work

Helping staff and parents 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

Assisting pupils and parents with accessing the internet or devices

2.6 Pupils

Pupils will:

- Follow their timetable, as far as is possible, when accessing remote learning and as such access the material during the correct time of the day.
- Ensure that their online behaviour meets the same standards as expected within their usual learning environment. Failure to meet these standards means that the student is subject to the terms of the Behaviour Policy and as such can face the consequences and sanctions outlined within (as appropriate to each students' stage, age and needs).
- Take all reasonable precautions to keep themselves and others safe online.
- Alert staff if they have any difficulty in accessing or completing the work.

2.7 Parents/carers

Parents and Carers will:

- Support the students and the school by ensuring that students keep to a school day routine.
- Report any issues, concerns or difficulties to the school so they can be addressed as quickly as possible.

2.8 Directors

Directors are responsible for:

Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible.

Ensuring that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons.

3. Who to contact

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

Issues in setting work – please email/call or speak to your headteacher.

Issues with behaviour – please email/call or talk to your deputy headteacher and/or pastoral lead.

Issues with IT – please email/call or talk to the Group ICT Manager, who will direct you to the correct person.

Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – please email/call or speak to your line manager.

Concerns about data protection – please email/call or speak to the headteacher.

Concerns about safeguarding – please email/call or speak to the DSL, see the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

4. Data protection

4.1 Accessing personal data

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

- Record any parent contact or concerns about students.
- Ensure third parties do not have access to the site or to individual data records.
- Ensure strict adherence to the school and group policy.

4.2 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.

However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online.

4.3 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

5. Safeguarding

Statutory guidance for online safety can be found in Annex C of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and in School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. These must be read and adhered to by all staff prior to engaging in the delivery of remote education. Parents/Carers should also be supported in understanding online safety and how to effectively monitor their child's use of the internet and online activity.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as government guidance changes and at least annually. At every review, it will be approved by the Managing Director of Education Services.

7. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy