



The STAR Multi-Academy Trust

REMOTE LEARNING POLICY

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Reviewed July 2021 Reviewed July 2022	
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Remote Learning Policy

Rationale

This policy was originally written to support our school communities as part of the response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. It has since been evolved with regard any need to deploy remote learning in future eventualities for either individual student or wider need.

Where a class, group or individual pupils/students need to remain at home for a sustained period, schools may choose or be required (either through act of Parliament or as part of an agreed partial timetable offer) to offer remote education.

Our Trust schools have considerably evolved their 'traditional' on-site curriculum, for example through technology, and have in place strong contingency planning for remote education provision. *This planning is particularly important and indeed most viable to support scenarios in which the logistical challenges of remote provision are greatest, for example where large numbers of pupils/students are required to remain at home.*

This policy outlines those many areas of commonality across our Trust schools, but of course there are also areas of unique individuality within our 11 member schools with regard to their Remote Learning delivery; where these are significant they may be added as a school level appendix and placed on the local school website.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has found that the effectiveness of remote teaching is determined by many of the same factors as determine the effectiveness of live classroom teaching. For example:

- ensuring pupils/students receive clear explanations;
- supporting growth in confidence with new material through scaffolded practice;
- application of new knowledge or skills;
- enabling pupils/students to receive feedback on how to progress;

All the schools across the Trust will ensure that these key aspects are supported in the ways described below:

Continuity of Curriculum Provision

All of the schools in the Trust will make provision for educational continuity. The provision will allow for a student to study across a range of curriculum subjects, and will provide for, wherever possible:

- Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with less for younger children
- Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day
- Key Stages 3 and 4: 5 hours a day

The study will be a blend of designated study including core curriculum, foundation subjects and optional study. It may utilise existing curriculum study units, but also build in available high-quality digital resources and online study tools as appropriate. We expect schools to avoid an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities.

All of our schools will ensure that e-safety coverage is maintained to ensure our pupils/students make safe and responsible use of technology at all times.

Depending on the age, stage and educational setting the child attends, the content will be provided through:

- Tapestry – early years
- Google Classroom
- A variety of live or recorded instruction and engagement activity
- Emailed specific assignments and tasks
- Where printed resources such as text books and workbooks are required, schools will make arrangements for safe handover of such resources to students

All students in the Trust who are expected to engage in any type of 'live' engagement activity will need to sign an Acceptable User Agreement [click here](#) as will their Parents and Carers.

In the Trust, we use Google Meet for live engagement as the activity can be captured within the Google Classroom 'stream' to protect everyone's wellbeing and safety. Access to such activity is via the student Gmail account and can only be made via specific invite via the teacher Gmail account. The extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school/group closure and the ability of both pupils/students and teachers to participate in remote learning. Schools may vary the range of methods used to provide remote learning tasks, feedback and interaction, based on the particular circumstances of any closure and based on our experience over time. In turn, changes made will be communicated to the school parent/carer community through newsletter and variance to any appendix to this policy.

Very young pupils are likely to have particular needs which cannot easily be met in some of the ways described above. For such pupils, it is likely that the priority will be progress in early reading. Ensuring continued access to appropriate reading books and resources for early readers should be considered as part of contingency planning.

Helping parents, carers or other adults at home to continue to support children in their early reading, where appropriate and practical through structured practice of phonics content, is another important part of contingency planning for children at this stage. Other content for these pupils is likely to include providing guidance for supervising adults to ensure that time is used as productively and developmentally as possible.

Providing Feedback to Students

All of our schools aim to provide regular feedback to students. Feedback is broad in definition. It ranges from whole class feedback on a task within the 'Google Stream' through detailed individual marking, to possibly arranging a small group seminar on Google Meet in year 13 in the lead up to level 3 assessments. Under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers and this would continue to be the case should the school employ remote learning.

Shared Expectations

It is of fundamental importance that all pupils/students, staff and families within the STAR MAT community share the same expectations for educational continuity.

Assuming that a pupil/student is healthy and well enough to work, pupils/students will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Pupils/students will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a form tutor) on a regular basis.

In the event of an extended school closure, staff will deliver content in line with this Policy, with the intention to provide curriculum continuity until the school is reopened; if any pupil/student misses significant parts of the content, they should be able to view material posted online or via the Google Classroom and the school will give consideration to the practicalities of helping pupils/students to catch up once the school reopens.

Parents and carers are expected to ensure their child is available to learn remotely at all times during the school day unless they are unwell. Parents/carers should ensure students actively and fully engage with work content and in the event of any concern, engage in pro-active dialogue with school to discuss and find a solution. In turn, school staff will check on engagement and activity, having systems for checking, daily, whether pupils are engaging with their work, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern.

Work set for pupils/students is not considered optional, unless otherwise stated.

As part of each school's remote learning provision, communication channels for parental query are in place. If parents wish to raise formal concerns with regards to a school's remote learning provision, this should be done via the Headteacher, with reference to the Trust Complaints Policy.

It is expected that pupils/students continue to adhere to the School Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct at all times when engaging with remote learning activity.

Equality of Access and Support for SEND

In the event of partial or full school closure we need to work with each and every individual family to ensure equality of access. The reality is that much of our school provision will be online. Every school has available a small number of loan Chromebooks and will also investigate internet provision where this may be an issue for a family. We will work proactively with the information we have available to ensure that best possible access is available for every student from the first day of isolation. If a family feels that they are struggling to provide access, we also ask them to self-identify to their own school – we will of course treat such information in confidence.

We recognise that many families may not have home printers and will not normally require the printing of material at home. Teachers must ensure that work is appropriately differentiated as required for all learners when setting online and distance learning tasks.

In addition, in each of our Trust schools every pupil/student identified as needing SEND support will have additional contact support from the school, by Google Classroom, email or phone to check on learning and wellbeing and adapt support as required.

Wider aspects of School Life and staff support.

It is important that our schools across the Trust maintain the wider aspects of school life during any prolonged closure. Online platforms should also be used beyond the individual lesson context for other events such as whole staff briefings and professional development sessions, and for teachers to lead events such as year or whole school assemblies, form discussion groups and so on.

Frequent contact between pupils/students and teachers is crucial and supports family well-being and connection to the school.

An important part of contingency planning is ensuring that training is regularly refreshed with teachers, and that appropriate trouble-shooting support is available where needed, so that transfer to the remote environment can happen seamlessly when needed.

Safeguarding

In the event of a school closure the Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between pupils/students and staff. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which staff must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school.

In event of a school closure or if an individual pupil/student is working remotely, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a pupil/student rests with their parents/guardians.

However, each individual Trust school has in place a 'check in system' under the supervision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to monitor both academic progress and the general wellbeing of all pupils/students who are working remotely under the auspices of this Policy. Class teachers, form and subject tutors are expected to pass on feedback, concerns through designated channels, particularly if there is lack of communication and engagement. Where concerns are escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, then appropriate action will be taken.

When a vulnerable child (a child who has a social worker or may be linked to multiple external agencies) is working remotely, schools will notify their social worker. School leaders should then agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support to the vulnerable child or young person. Schools should also have in place procedures to check if a vulnerable child is able to access remote education support, to support them to access it (as far as possible) and to regularly check if they are doing so.