



**Waltham Forest Local Authority  
Remote Learning Policy**

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## **Waltham Forest**

### **School Remote Learning Policy**

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#### **1. Aims**

This Remote-Learning Policy aims to:

- Clarify the nature and operation of remote learning.
- Outline the school's approach to remote learning for statutory-aged pupils who are not able to attend school, due to self-isolation or restrictions linked to coronavirus.
- Make clear our expectations of staff who are self-isolating but healthy and able to continue planning, teaching and assessing pupils' work.
- Ensure that remote learning is ready to be provided as soon as it becomes necessary.
- Provide consistency in the approach to remote learning for all pupils, including those with SEND, using quality online and offline resources.
- Provide clear expectations for members of the school community with regards to delivering high quality interactive remote learning.
- Ensure that the school continues to deliver a high quality, broad curriculum and support pupils' well-being and learning needs.
- Check that pupils learn new facts and concepts, as well as reinforcing prior learning.
- Ensure that pupils engage in learning they would have completed had they been in school as normal.
- Check that online tools are used effectively to enable appropriate interaction with pupils, the assessment of their work and the provision of feedback.
- Provide training for staff about the appropriate use of online platforms so that pupils and staff are effectively safeguarded and that data protection guidelines are implemented.
- Support effective communication between the school and families so that parents and pupils can access and make the best use of resources.
- Ensure that pupils who lack any necessary equipment have this sourced for them.

## 2. Who is this policy applicable to?

All members of the school community and especially pupils who are absent from school for whatever reason.

## 3. Definition of Remote Learning

Remote learning is the process of teaching and learning performed at a distance. Rather than having pupils and teachers coming together in person, remote learning means that pupils are distanced from their teacher and their peers. Effective remote learning attempts to provide an experience as close to the classroom environment as possible, when the pupil and teacher are in two different places. Technically, no technology is required for remote learning to take place, nor does remote learning have to take place online.

## 4. Provision of Remote Education (England) - Temporary Continuity Direction

The Provision of Remote Education (England) - Temporary Continuity Direction came into effect on 22 October 2020 and places a legal duty on schools in England to provide remote education for statutory school-aged children who are unable to attend school due to coronavirus. This includes where:

- a class, group of pupils or individual pupils need to self-isolate, or
- there are local or national restrictions requiring pupils to stay at home.

Schools must ensure that access to remote education is in place as soon as either of the above situations occurs.

Remote education must be provided to pupils who are of compulsory school age and pupils who are below compulsory school age but who would usually be taught in a class with compulsory school aged children (most commonly in a reception class). This Direction does not apply to post 16 education - further education (FE) colleges, sixth form colleges, school sixth forms or 16-19 Academies.

The DfE Guidance states:

*'In the event that a student cannot attend class as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, ministers have made it clear that schools are required to ensure that they have **"immediate" access to remote learning**. According to the government guidance on opening schools, last updated on 1 October, where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or public health advice, "we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education". On 30 September, the government used temporary continuity direction powers which will place an obligation on schools to provide swift access to remote education if pupils can't make it into school because of the pandemic. These powers **came into effect on 22 October**, and the DfE says.*

- This provision should **start from the first full school day** a child has to remain at home.
- Schools may consider **different forms of remote education** such as printed resources or textbooks, supplemented with other forms of communication to keep pupils on track or answer questions about work.
- Neither the direction nor the expectations set out in guidance require the **live-streaming** of lessons.

- *If some pupils **do not have access to devices**, schools can distribute school-owned laptops accompanied by a user agreement or contract. They can also remind pupils that access is also possible through large-screen smartphones. Additionally, textbooks can be used at home to provide a structure to learning, supplemented with other forms of communication to keep pupils on track or answer questions about work.*
- *When teaching pupils remotely, the DfE expects schools to plan a programme that is of **equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school**, ideally including daily contact with teachers.*
- *The requirement for schools to use their best endeavours to secure the **special educational provision** called for by the pupil's special educational needs remains in place. Schools should work collaboratively with families, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that pupils with SEND can successfully access remote education alongside their peers.*
- *Schools will be signposted to **the remote education support package** and encouraged to access these resources. Regional schools' commissioners (RSCs) can also take supportive measures to help schools in their region with remote education.'*

## 5. Good Practice

The DfE has very recently published a guide to good practice in remote learning. The salient points include:

- The period since 23 March 2020 has been one of great innovation in remote learning.
- This has enabled students to continue to learn and progress and mitigate any widening of the gap for the disadvantaged.
- A carefully sequenced curriculum is necessary so that remote learning has a clear role.
- Effectiveness of remote learning is determined by many of the same factors that determine the effectiveness of live classroom teaching, such as: ensuring pupils receive clear explanations; supporting growth in confidence with new material through scaffolded practice; application of new knowledge and skills; enabling pupils to receive feedback on how to progress.
- Where remote learning can recreate interaction seen in the best live classrooms, teaching is likely to be more supportive, support pupil motivation and lead to better progress.
- Access to appropriate devices and connectivity is essential for technology-led approaches to remote learning and thus it may be useful for schools to: maintain an up-to-date record of which pupils and families do not have device or internet access; provide laptops and chargers to identified families with usage or loan agreements; ensure full engagement with the DfE Get help with technology programme .
- Interactive platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Google Classrooms are increasingly popular in creating virtual classes by drawing information from schools' Management Information Systems, enabling a single point of access for all lessons and resources and allowing teachers to host both live and recorded explanations and lessons.
- Schools can apply for government-funded support through The Key for School Leaders and access one of two free-to-use digital education platforms: G Suite for Education or Office 365 Education.
- These platforms can be enhanced by using applications which allow for easy video recording of teaching, explaining and questioning – tests and quizzes are easily available.
- Textbooks can be issued to pupils to complement and support lessons.

- Recorded lessons can be accessed later by pupils and teachers can rate progress and adapt future learning.
- These platforms can be also used for assemblies, professional development and whole staff briefings.
- Frequent contact between teacher and pupil is crucial in remote learning.
- Continuing to teach most or all of the normal planned curriculum is important – video demonstrations can often help with more practical work.
- Schools can spend their catch-up funding on contingency planning for remote learning.
- On communication, it is important to use school email addresses. Groups can be set up to streamline communication.
- More interactive, teacher-led approaches tend to work better than lengthy open-ended projects and research.
- School-owned laptops can be distributed with a user agreement or contract. Large-screen smartphones also provide access.
- Pupils can submit work through a variety of methods such as using multi-functional remote platforms.
- Schools should monitor pupil engagement in remote learning – participation and motivation levels and feedback to pupils and parents.
- Assessing pupil progress can be managed through tests and quizzes pre and post lesson.
- Very young pupils should be engaged in early reading work and parents informed of the most effective ways of working with their children.
- Pupils with SEND may need specific individualised planning – support of adults in the home will be significant.
- The Oak National Academy delivers a sequenced curriculum, with some elements of choice, which can be used by schools as the main remote provision or to complement provision.
- Good communication between parents and schools is vital and could involve group seminars.

## **6. Waltham Forest LA expectations**

It is envisaged in Waltham Forest that remote learning will typically be delivered to the same groups that would normally receive teaching and learning, i.e. it will not give rise to a shift to small group or individualised learning.

Waltham Forest is committed to ensuring the highest quality learning experience for all children and young people, be it through childcare, early learning, primary and secondary schools, post-16 provision and into adult learning. Children and young people will be healthy, safe and successful in all settings.

## **7. Approaches to Learning: Our Principles**

The following principles, informed by the DfE's requirements in respect of remote learning, underpin our approach:

- Previous remote learning will inform planning.
- Pupils will study a broad range of subjects, including all aspects of the National Curriculum.
- Pupils will learn new facts and concepts, as well as completing activities that reinforce their prior learning.
- Those who cannot attend school will access similar learning to that which their peers or bubble are completing within school wherever possible.

- Activities will be varied and not solely consist of 'screen time'; for example practical research activities, reading real books, home-based problem-solving.
- Teachers will have access to a wide variety of resources to share remotely, such as The Oak National Academy, Google Classrooms etc.
- Staff must have the training they need to provide online learning safely, including regular updates, whole school INSET, individual advice and guidance.
- Teachers will communicate the purpose of activities and their success criteria for pupils, by sharing learning objectives and anticipated outcomes, as appropriate.
- Pupils will access remote learning resources as part of in-school delivery, so that they become used to these ways of working, by blending their learning and experiencing a wide range of learning styles.
- SEND will not be a barrier to accessing the curriculum at home, because the school will work in partnership with families by ensuring full engagement in activities and programmes.
- COVID catch-up funding will be used effectively to support pupils to progress along with their peers and not fall behind.
- Staff workload will be managed by senior leaders.
- Leaders will measure pupil engagement in remote learning by various means and use this information to review the format and delivery of provision and make changes as necessary.

## **8. Resources**

Resources to deliver Remote Learning within our school may include online tools/school subscriptions: e.g. Google Classrooms, Busy Things, J2E, Mathletics, Reading Eggs, Smartick. Other resources include:

- Use of video and / or audio for exploring aspects across the curriculum.
- Printed learning packs to supplement remote learning and ensure participation.
- Books and other physical learning materials to ensure a wide range of learning styles is undertaken.
- Information for parents on remote education and their role within this.
- Staff CPD on various aspects of remote learning.

## **9. Working with Parents**

Our school is committed to working in close partnership with families, and providing remote learning in different ways, including when that is necessary to suit the needs of particular pupils, such as those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We will provide guidance to parents on how to use remote learning to support and guide their children.

Resources will be shared with pupils and parents through a range of methods.

We would encourage parents to support their children's work and to establish a regular routine based around the school day wherever possible.

Should parents be unable to access online work for any reason, they should contact the school so that other arrangements can be made.

Schools must have an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) to reflect expectations and boundaries.

Children and parents are also to sign and implement the Remote Learning Home school agreement.

Communication between families and the school will continue to follow the school policies and protocols. The School will attempt to respond promptly to requests for support from families at home by effective communication and updates.

## 10. Roles and responsibilities

Any complaints or concerns shared by parents or pupils should be reported to the school in line with the complaints policy, which initially seeks to resolve issues informally. Any safeguarding concerns, should be dealt with immediately following the **Safeguarding Policy: Remote Learning Addendum** [\[add hyperlink to school's policy\]](#)

Staff who are required to self-isolate are expected to continue to undertake their working duties wherever possible.

Keeping in touch with pupils who are not in school and their parents:

- If there is a concern around the level of a pupil's engagement, the teacher should discuss this with senior colleagues.
- Everyone should follow the school policies and protocols with regard to communication.

### Senior/ Middle/Subject Leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior/middle/subject leaders may also be responsible for:

- Adapting schemes of learning so that teachers are aware of how the intended key components can be taught remotely.
- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school including monitoring pupils' engagement.
- Leading virtual meetings to ensure consistency across the year/subject,
- Overseeing the quality and effectiveness of remote learning through a range of means.
- Ensuring that staff, pupils and parents benefit from appropriate guidance about remote learning.
- Ensuring that resources fully support teachers and pupils so that remote learning can take place without hindrance in this respect.
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.

### Teachers

Teachers will be provided with the necessary training on how to use the platforms chosen to deliver any online learning.

Teachers unable to work for any reason during this time should contact the school.

When providing remote learning, teachers may also be responsible for:

- Setting work:
  - Teachers will set work for the pupils in their classes appropriately to equate for a full day of learning.
  - In secondary the work set should follow the usual timetable for the class had they been in school.

- Teachers will set work using the agreed-online platform or other means.
  - Daily English and mathematics work and one other subject may be appropriate for some classes.
  - Teachers will ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn new facts and concepts, as well as reinforcing prior learning.
  - Teachers will do what they reasonably can to ensure that pupils engage in learning they would have completed had they been in school as normal.
- Providing feedback on work:
    - The frequency with which teachers will provide feedback will be guided by the school's policies.

### **Teaching Support Staff**

Teaching support staff-must be available during their usual 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.

During the school day, teaching support staff must complete reasonable tasks as directed by a member of their line manager. The following tasks/roles are examples:

- Working in other areas of the school as directed.
- Assisting the class teacher with supporting pupils.
- Preparing home learning resources.
- Undertake remote and/or online CPD training.
- Attend virtual meetings with colleagues.
- Completion of work reasonably identified that accords with school improvement priorities.

### **Designated safeguarding lead**

The DSL is responsible for managing and dealing with all safeguarding concerns. For further information, please see the **Safeguarding Policy - Remote Learning Addendum** (Appendix 1).

### **SENCO / Inclusion Lead**

The SENCO is responsible for managing and dealing with all inclusion concerns.

### **Pupils and parents**

Subject to accessibility staff can expect pupils learning remotely to:

- Be contactable during the school day
- Complete work to the deadline set by teachers
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers or teaching support staff



- Alert teachers if they are not able to complete work

Staff can expect parents with children learning remotely to:

- Wherever possible, maintain a regular and familiar routine, using model timetable provided by the school to support this.
- Support their children in their reading as far as they are able, so that they continue to read their home reading book or access online reading resources.
- Support their children's work as far as they are able, by discussing the work together and making appropriate plans for its completion. This can include providing a suitable place to work and encouraging their children to focus.
- Make the school aware if their child is sick or otherwise cannot complete work, or if the online platform does not work on their devices, whereupon alternative resources will be offered.
- Seek help from the school if they need it, contacting the school through agreed communication methods.
- Be respectful when raising any concerns or making any complaints staff.

### **Governing Body**

The governing body is responsible for:

- Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure standards are high.
- Ensuring that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons.

### **11. Personal Data**

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data, such as information on pupils' attainment or their contact details. This is necessary to fulfil the school's official functions and therefore individuals will not need to provide authorisation for this to happen. However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online and should speak to their line manager if they are unsure. Teachers and teaching support staff should not store pupils' personal data on their own electronic devices.

### **12. Privacy & General Data Protection Regulation Compliance**

All members of the school community, including parents and carers are reminded that:

- It is prohibited to share documents and/or communication that are exclusive to the school with outsiders or third parties.
- Staff must only use the school platform accounts during the school day.
- It is prohibited to take screenshots of, or record any of the e-resources used.
- The school, pupils and parents will handle privacy issues responsibly.

### **13. Keeping Devices Secure**

Where staff members have devices provided to them by the school, they will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes but is not limited to:

- Using strong password protection, with passwords that are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters.
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted, so that if the device is lost or stolen, the files on the hard drive cannot be accessed by attaching it to a new device.
- Making sure the device locks automatically if left inactive for a period of time.
- Not allowing family or friends to use the device.
- Storing the device securely to avoid theft.
- Ensuring that anti-virus and anti-spyware software is up to date.
- Installing updates to ensure that the operating system remains up to date.

#### **14. Safeguarding**

Staff should ensure that all safeguarding concerns are reported immediately to a safeguarding officer. If you are unable to contact someone and it is an urgent matter, speak to a member of the senior leadership team.

All safeguarding policies and procedures continue to apply., alongside the ***Safeguarding Policy - Remote Learning Addendum.***

Please follow the guidance that you were given during the annual update training.

Staff must ensure all communication with parents and pupils is conducted through the school email following normal guidance and ensure this remains professional.

#### **15. Expectations of staff during online meetings**

When attending virtual meetings all staff should follow expected professional standards in relation to:

- Dress code
- Location, e.g. avoid noisy areas, nothing inappropriate in the background

#### **16. Links with other policies and development plans**

This policy is linked to our:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Online safety acceptable use policy
- Digital and hardware Development Planning
- Code of Conduct for Phone calls, Video conferencing and recorded video
- Home School Agreement