

Grendon CE Primary School

Remote Learning Policy

It is a statutory requirement for schools to agree and publish their Remote Learning Strategy. This policy reflects DfE guidance and available research evidence on the most effective remote learning methods. It also incorporates guidance from Ofsted's publication **What is working well in remote education?** which was published on January 11th 2021 (Appendix 1).

The school will seek to gather and act appropriately on any feedback or emerging evidence that it believes will enhance the remote learning offer and senior leaders will conduct fortnightly reviews of its strategy.

1. Aims

This remote learning policy aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning for pupils who are not in school due to self-isolation or whole school closure
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to remote learning
- Provide appropriate guidelines for data protection

2. Roles and responsibilities

All teaching staff will be responsible for remote learning.

The Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, SENCO and Teaching Assistants will support, where required.

2.1 Teachers

When providing remote learning, teachers must be available during their agreed contracted hours.

If they are unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

When providing remote learning, teachers are responsible for:

- Setting work:
 - For the class they are responsible for.
 - Including a broad range of learning, across all curriculum areas, linked to the current curriculum theme and our World Class Curriculum Framework.
 - Using Microsoft Teams, which parents and children can access as appropriate.
 - Which includes clear instructions/expectations.
 - Which acknowledges that the school will need to provide hard copies of work where possible, for those children without online access (to be collected from school).
 - Which enables parents or children to communicate with the school and receive appropriate feedback through Office 365 (Years 1-6) and Tapestry (EYFS).

In the event of an individual child working remotely, work will be set daily by their class teacher based on the learning in school. This will be provided within 24 hours of school being informed of the child's absence.

In the event of a class 'bubble' working remotely, the class will be set a fortnightly skills grid by their class teacher, including a broad range of learning, across all curriculum areas and linked to the current curriculum theme. Links to teaching videos such as BBC Bitesize will be provided as appropriate.

In the event of a whole school closure, children will be set a fortnightly skills grid by their teacher based on the current curriculum theme. This work will be supplemented by daily video calls via Microsoft Teams to introduce activities from the skills grid and respond to questions so that children can independently access tasks.

Plans may be adapted to ensure the curriculum is accessible and inclusive.

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

- Work should be returned by pupils daily, via Teams (Years 1-6) or Tapestry (EYFS), and feedback provided by teachers at the end of the working day or, in the event of whole school closure, by the end of their next non-teaching day.
 - Children who do not return work on a given day will be contacted by the teacher. In the first instance this contact will be via email and if necessary by telephone.
 - Although the school acknowledges that work may not be completed or submitted due to illness, staff will advise the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher when work is consistently not returned.
 - Parents of vulnerable children will also be contacted directly by the Head Teacher or Deputy Headteacher.
 - Safeguarding concerns should be passed directly to the DSL or DDSL.
- Attending virtual sessions/meetings with staff, parents and pupils
- Professional standard of clothing will be worn, in line with the school's Safe Behaviour Policy.
 - Whether at home or in the school building, school laptops will be used.
 - Backgrounds will be neutral, where possible.

2.2 Teaching Assistants

Teaching assistants may be required to support remote learning of pupils, as guided by the teacher. Typically, this might include Teams video sessions or preparation of resources.

If TAs are unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

2.3 Head Teacher

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning and conducting regular reviews of the policy
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations
- Promoting safe learning online

2.4 Safeguarding and Child Protection

The school's DSL is John Wayland (Head Teacher) and the Deputy DSL is Charlotte French (Deputy Head Teacher).

The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding. During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff or parents to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL can also be contacted by email (head@grendon.northants-ecl.gov.uk) or telephone (01933 663208). If the DSL is absent then the Deputy DSL will act as cover.

If the DSL and Deputy DSL are not available, Julia Brown (Chair of Governors) will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

2.5 Pupils and parents

Staff can expect pupils learning remotely to:

- Complete work daily
- Seek help if they need it from teachers
- Alert teachers if they are not able to complete work
- Attend daily Teams video calls

Staff can expect parents with children learning remotely to:

- Make the school aware if their child is sick or otherwise cannot complete work
- Seek help from the school if they need it

- › Be aware of how to keep their child safe online
- › Support their child's remote learning
- › Facilitate the effective use of Microsoft Teams (Years 1-6) and engagement with Tapestry (EYFS)
- › Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff

2.6 Governing body

The governing body is 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 or parents have any questions or concerns about remote learning, they should contact the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

4. Data protection

4.1 Accessing personal data

When accessing personal data for remote learning purposes, all staff members will contact the school office; Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

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 will not need to give permission for this to happen. However, staff are reminded to collect/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. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed at least monthly and fortnightly during extended periods of remote learning.

6. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- › Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- › Child Protection Policy
- › GDPR Policy
- › Online Safety Policy
- › Safe Behaviour Policy
- › Inclusion Policy

Appendix 1 – What’s working well in remote learning? Ofsted, January 11th 2021

In this guidance, Ofsted seek to dispel common myths about remote education whilst also providing guidance to schools on their evolving Remote Learning Strategies. The publication draws on findings from Ofsted’s interim visits to schools, research and literature review. The full publication can be found [here](#). Excerpts from the publication are shown in blue italics alongside the school’s response in black type.

Some common myths about remote education

Some unhelpful myths exist about remote education, which are not based on evidence. These include that:

- remote education is fundamentally different to other forms of teaching/learning*
- remote education is a different curriculum/offer to the content that would be delivered normally*
- the best forms of remote education are digital*
- the best way to deliver remote education is always through live lessons*
- the most important thing is pupils’ engagement*

1: Remote education is a way of delivering the curriculum

The aim of education is to deliver a high-quality curriculum so that pupils know more and remember more. Remote education is one way of doing so. This means that everything we know about what a quality curriculum looks like still applies.

The remote education curriculum needs to be aligned to the classroom curriculum as much as possible. And, just like the classroom curriculum, it needs to be carefully sequenced and ensure that pupils obtain the building blocks they need to move on to the next step.

Learning Grids are carefully designed by teachers not only to provide a rich, broad and balanced curriculum provision but to also link explicitly to the school’s World Class Curriculum Framework and the current curriculum themes that the children were working on prior to school closure. This is because the school believe it is not only possible but in the pupils’ best interests to follow the school’s core curriculum provision.

Remote education is not the same as digital education. Sometimes, it may be more effective to deliver remote education through worksheets or a textbook.

The school understands the difference between remote learning and digital learning and has provided a blended approach to include digital and physical components.

All schools/colleges should have access to a digital platform so they can provide online education where that is the most appropriate method.

In the weeks preceding lockdown, the school invested heavily in the provision of Microsoft Teams across Key Stage 1 and 2. This included the wide provision of hardware and extensive staff and pupil training to support the various aspects of the Microsoft Teams platform.

A good textbook [hard copies of work] can provide the curriculum content and sequencing pupils need. It can also be easier to access for some pupils.

Any worksheets should be aligned with the curriculum and provide meaningful work.

Hard copies of all Learning Grids and associated resources are available upon request to any pupil in the school. As the Learning Grids mirror the World Class Curriculum Framework, hard copies are effectively aligned to the curriculum.

2: Keep it simple

We don't have to make huge changes to the way we teach.

One guiding principle of the school's Remote Learning offer is that it should accurately reflect the content of their current curriculum theme so that is already familiar to pupils.

When using digital remote education, the platform we use shouldn't be too complicated to use. Just as we don't need 'all-singing, all-dancing' lessons in the classroom, remote education often benefits from a straightforward and easy-to-use interface.

The school's chosen learning platform is Microsoft Teams and all children from Years 1-6 are able to access and use it. We know this because children have been taught in school to use it regularly. Pupil engagement with this strategy is very high.

It's useful to provide pupils with an overview of the bigger picture and where a specific lesson or activity sits within a sequence of lessons or activities.

It's also vital to have clear and high expectations and to communicate these to pupils.

Learning Grids are designed to provide a fortnightly overview of pupils' work, with ambitious expectations for all pupils and a clear sequence of learning within the wider World Class Curriculum theme.

It's harder for pupils to concentrate when being taught remotely, it's often a good idea to divide content into smaller chunks.

Incorporated into the Learning Grids and the associated guidance from teachers is the expectation that pupils will access the majority of work asynchronously at a time and within a structure of their choosing.

3: When adapting the curriculum, focus on the basics

We will often need to adapt our subject curriculum when moving to remote education, for example because some topics are hard to teach remotely. When we do this, we need to focus on the basics:

- *Beware of offering too much new subject matter at once. Make sure key building blocks have been understood fully first. We need to assess pupils' knowledge to determine this.*
- *Consider the most important knowledge or concepts pupils need to know. Focus on those.*
- *Consider what alternatives exist for traditional practical activities. What can be done at home, or using simulations, for example? Worked examples and modelling can work very well in remote digital education.*
- *In many cases, practising and a focus on developing existing knowledge and skills, such as handwriting or simple arithmetic, may be useful.*

Learning Grid activities are designed with all of the above considerations in mind. For example, alongside new content, Learning Grids also include opportunities for consolidation of existing knowledge and links to prior learning and between subjects. Activities also cater for a range of learning styles and approaches from practical activities to paper based tasks.

4: Feedback, retrieval practice and assessment are more important than ever

Feedback and assessment are still as important as in the classroom. It can be harder to deliver immediate feedback to pupils remotely than in the classroom, but teachers have found some clever ways to do this.

The school invested a significant amount of time in staff and pupil training in the use of Microsoft Teams and this includes the facility to provide prompt and effective feedback to pupils. All pupils have access to a secure email which promotes regular dialogue with the class teacher and peers. Pupils have also been allocated a private Teams 'channel' through which work can be submitted and responded to in the form of teacher acknowledgement and assessment.

Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes. They will also help pupils maintain their social skills.

Pupils have safe and unlimited access to digital interaction with their peers through Microsoft Teams. This, and the introduction of daily video calls provides regular opportunities for peer interaction.

It is important for teachers to stay in regular contact with pupils. If necessary, they can even do this by using technology to automate communication. This also gives a perception that teachers are 'watching' while pupils learning remotely.

The school's Remote Learning Policy requires daily contact and submissions of work from all pupils. In turn, teachers are responsible for providing prompt feedback to work and responses to questions posed in emails from pupils. Unless involved in whole day, face-to-face teaching, teachers respond by the end of the next working day.

It can be helpful to make sure pupils are 'warmed up' and 'readied' for content through an introductory task or scene-setting.

Daily Teams video calls for all pupils from Year 1-6 will provide specific learning input from WB 18th January 2021.

5: The medium matters (a bit)

Quality of teaching is far more important than how lessons are delivered. But there is some evidence that the medium does matter, especially in digital remote education. Pupils tend to spend longer accessing a remote lesson when they are using a laptop than when using a phone.

School has launched its own iPad loan agreement which has already put iPads quickly into the hands of pupils so that they can access the digital aspects of remote learning in an effective way.

This means that we need to think carefully about whether pupils have access to the right kind of device when we're using digital remote education. If they don't, and we can't provide enough devices, it might be better to consider non-digital approaches as well.

Paper copies provided to any family who request these, normally same day or within 24 hours, and often delivered to homes

When using digital remote education, we often rely on internet access. Again, we need to consider whether pupils have this and what we can provide if they don't.

Families who have no or limited Internet access are already attending the school as per DfE guidance

It is also worth considering where to host content. In the battle for attention against the internet, we need to consider whether we avoid hosting video lessons on certain platforms like YouTube, for example, because of their advertising algorithms distracting pupils.

The vast majority of remote learning digital content is linked to either the school's secure Microsoft Teams platform or to approved sites like BBC live lessons.

6: Live lessons aren't always best

Some think that a live lesson is the 'gold standard' of remote education. This isn't necessarily the case. Live lessons have a lot of advantages...but are not always more effective than asynchronous approaches.

The school acknowledges that remote learning is different from digital learning. Guided by the principles of inclusivity (so that no child is left behind), consistency of approach and the delivery of a high quality education, the school has opted for a blended approach which incorporates synchronous and asynchronous methods. Staff capacity in terms of their wider school responsibility to teach the high number of children in the key worker/vulnerable children group is another factor.

Because evidence suggests that concentration online is shorter than the length of a typical lesson, filming a [or delivering a full] classroom lesson may be ineffective.

Short, daily timetabled sessions to provide teaching input for a specific activity from the Learning Grid has been incorporated into the school's approach.

7: Engagement matters, but is only the start

While it is important to engage pupils, this is only a precondition for learning, not the thing itself. There is only so much a teacher can do to engage pupils remotely. We therefore need to make sure that efforts to engage don't distract us from teaching the curriculum. We also need to check whether pupils have actually learned the content we want them to through assessment.

The school does accurately log which children are actively engaging with remote learning. All work submitted is acknowledged and assessment feedback is provided to pupils. School expectations or the submission of work are high.

Glossary

- *Remote education: a broad term encompassing any learning that happens outside of the classroom, with the teacher not present in the same location as the pupils.*
- *Digital remote education: often known as online learning, this is remote learning delivered through digital technologies.*
- *Blended learning: a mix of face-to-face and remote methods.*
- *Synchronous education: this is live; asynchronous education is when the material is prepared by the teacher and accessed by the pupil at a later date.*