



Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre

Remote Learning Policy

January 2021

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Remote Learning during the Coronavirus pandemic:

In line with the recent government announcement, the school will be closed throughout the present national lockdown, which is currently expected to last until mid-February, to all but vulnerable pupils and critical workers' children. The school has implemented provision for remote learning to ensure pupils never miss education during this challenging time. We will ensure that our curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all and will endeavour to support all of our pupils and staff as they learn and work from home. This policy outlines the measures that will be implemented for delivering remote learning during the pandemic.

1. Legal Framework

- 1.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation, statutory and good practice guidance, including but not limited to, the following:
- Coronavirus Act 2020
 - DfE (2020) 'Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)'
 - DfE (2020) 'Adapting teaching practice for remote education'
 - DfE (2020) 'Get help with remote education'
 - DfE (2021) 'Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools'
 - DfE (2020) 'Get help with technology during coronavirus (COVID-19)'
 - DfE (2020) 'Get laptops and tablets for children who cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19)'
 - DfE (2020) 'Laptops, tablets and 4G wireless routers provided during coronavirus (COVID-19)'
 - Department of Health & Social Care (2020) 'COVID-19 contain framework: a guide for local decision makers'
 - DfE (2020) 'Remote education good practice'
 - DfE (2020) The Coronavirus Act 2020 'Provision of Remote Education (England) Temporary Continuity Direction'
 - DfE (2020) 'Contingency framework: education and childcare settings (excluding universities)'
 - DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
 - DfE (2019) 'School attendance'
 - DfE (2017) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
 - DfE (2018) 'Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools'
 - DfE (2018) 'Health and safety for school children'
 - DfE (2016) Children missing in education'

1.2 The headteacher, in collaboration with the governing body will ensure that the school follows the legal obligations regarding remote education, as outlined in The Coronavirus Act 2020: 'Provision of Remote Education (England) Temporary Continuity Direction'. This includes:

- Providing remote education to all pupils of compulsory school age.
- Providing remote education where it would be unlawful, or contrary to the guidance issued from public authorities, for a pupil to travel to and attend school.
- Having regard to government guidance issued, regarding the delivery of remote education, e.g. the DfE's 'Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools'.

1.3 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- GDPR Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Children Missing Education Policy

2. Contingency Planning

2.1 The school will work closely with Birmingham Local Authority, to ensure the premises are COVID secure and will complete all necessary risk assessments; results of the full opening risk assessment will be published on the school's website.

2.2 The school will work closely with the local health protection team (HPT) and the DfE when the 'Contingency framework' is applied and implement the provisions set within the Coronavirus (COVID-19): Contingency Plan.

2.3 The school will communicate its contingency plans to parents/carers, including to which pupils it will remain open under the DfE's contingency framework and which pupils will receive remote education.

2.4 The school will ensure that remote training is regularly refreshed for teachers.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school has robust risk management procedures in place. Ensuring that the school has a business contingency plan in place, where required.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the school's remote learning arrangements.

3.2 The headteacher is responsible for:

Education:

- Ensuring that staff, parents/carers and pupils always adhere to the relevant policies.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements in place for identifying, evaluating, and managing the risks associated with remote learning.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements in place for monitoring incidents associated with remote learning.
- Overseeing that the school has the resources necessary to action the procedures in this policy.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of this policy every year and communicating any changes to staff, parents/carers and pupils during the period of remote learning.
- Conducting weekly reviews of remote learning arrangements to ensure that pupils' education does not suffer.

3.3 Health and Safety:

- Ensuring that the relevant health and safety risk assessments are carried out within the agreed timeframes.
- Putting procedures and safe systems of learning into practice, which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with remote learning.
- Ensuring that pupils identified as being at risk are provided with the necessary information and instruction, as required.
- Managing the effectiveness of health and safety measures through a robust system of reporting, investigating, and recording incidents.

3.4 ICT:

- Overseeing that all school-owned electronic devices used for remote learning have adequate anti-virus software and malware protection.
- Ensuring all staff, parents/carers and pupils are aware of the data protection principles outlined in GDPR.
- Ensuring that all computer programmes used for remote learning are compliant with the GDPR and Data Protection Act of 2018.
- Overseeing that any ICT equipment used for remote learning is resilient and can efficiently recover lost data.

3.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- Attending and arranging, where necessary, any safeguarding meetings that occur during the remote learning period.
- Liaising with the ICT technicians to ensure that all school-owned technology used for remote learning is suitable for its purpose and will protect pupils online.
- Identifying vulnerable pupils who may be at risk if they are learning remotely.
- All vulnerable pupils will be expected to attend school unless there are specific reasons as to why this is not authorised by parents/carers. The DSL will notify relevant external agencies if the pupils does not attend school.
- Ensuring that child protection plans are enforced while pupils are learning remotely, and liaising with other organisations to make alternative arrangements for pupils who are at high risk, where required.
- Identifying the level of support or intervention required while pupils learn remotely and ensuring appropriate measures are in place.
- Liaising with relevant individuals to ensure vulnerable pupils receive the support required during the period of remote working.
- Ensuring all safeguarding incidents are adequately recorded and reported on CPOMS.

3.6 The SENCO:

- Liaising with the ICT technicians to ensure that the school-owned technology used for remote learning is accessible to all pupils and that reasonable adjustments are made where required.

- Ensuring that pupils with EHC plans continue to have their needs met while learning remotely, and liaising with the headteacher and other organisations to make any alternative arrangements for pupils with EHC plans.
- Identifying the levels of support and intervention that is required while pupils with SEND learn remotely.
- Ensuring that the provision put in place for pupils with SEND is monitored for effectiveness throughout the duration of the remote learning period.

3.7 The School Business Manager:

- Arranging the procurement of any equipment of technology required for staff to teach remotely, enabling pupils to learn from home.
- Ensuring value for money when arranging the procurement of equipment or technology.

3.8 The ICT technicians are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all school-owned devices used for remote learning have suitable anti-virus software installed, have a secure connection, can recover lost work, and allow for audio and visual material to be recorded, where required.
- Ensuring that any programs or networks used for remote learning can effectively support many users at one time, where required.
- Working with the SENCO to ensure that equipment and technology used for remote learning is accessible to all pupils and staff.

3.9 Staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy always during periods of remote learning.
- Reporting any health and safety incidents to the headteacher and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Reporting any safeguarding incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Taking part in any professional development training to meet the requirements of this policy, including training on how to use the necessary electronic equipment and software.
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify, as well as any concerns they may have about remote learning to the headteacher.

- Reporting any defects on school-owned equipment used for remote learning to an ICT technician.
- Adhering to the Staff Code of Conduct always.

3.10 Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy always during periods of remote learning.
- Ensuring their child is available to learn remotely, that their schoolwork set is completed on time and to the best of their child's ability.
- Notifying the attendance office, if their child is feeling unwell or are unable to complete any schoolwork they have been set. A phone call to the school should be made or an email should be sent to: enquiry@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk
- Reporting any technical issues to the school as soon as possible.
- Ensuring that their child has access to remote learning materials or informing the school that they require paper-based learning resources.
- Ensuring their child uses the equipment and technology used for remote learning as intended.
- Adhering to the Parents/Carers Code of Conduct and Remote Learning Guide for Parents/Carers to support their child during remote learning.

3.11 Pupils are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy always during periods of remote learning.
- Ensuring that they are available to learn remotely and that their schoolwork is completed on time and to the best of their ability.
- Reporting any technical issues to IT Support as soon as possible: enquiry@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk
- Ensuring that they have access to remote learning materials and notifying their College Leader if they do not have access.
- Ensuring that they use any equipment and technology for remote learning as intended.
- Adhering to the Microsoft Teams Code of Conduct.

4. Teaching and Learning

- 4.1 The school will ensure that staff and pupils follow the school's Online Safety Policy when working and learning remotely.
- 4.2 All pupils will have access to high-quality education when learning remotely.
- 4.3 The school will prioritise factors that have been found to improve the effectiveness of remote education. These include, but are not limited to:
- Implementing guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation: 'Best evidence on supporting students remotely'. (April 2020)
 - Application of Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and Teach Like a Champion to the online classroom.
 - Provide responsive teaching
 - Ensure pupils receive clear explanations.
 - Ensure pupils are supported through scaffolding
 - Deliberate practice
 - Pupils receiving weekly feedback
- 4.4 In line with DfE's: 'Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools', the school will:
- Teach a well-planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are build on incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught, practiced and assessed in each subject so that pupils can progress through the school's curriculum.
 - Use Microsoft Teams and Show my Homework for remote education provision that will be used consistently across the school in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback.
 - Work to overcome barriers to digital access by; distributing school-owned laptops accompanied by a user agreement or contract, provide printed resources, such as booklets and textbooks to structure learning with other forms of communication to keep pupils on track with work.
 - Ensure staff are adequately trained and confident in the use of Microsoft Teams and SMHW.
 - Check whether pupils are engaging with their work daily, and work with families to identify effective solutions were engagement is a concern.
 - Ensure that there is a senior leader with overarching responsibility for the quality and delivery of remote education, including that provision meets expectations of remote education.

- 4.5 The school will use a range of teaching methods:
- The school will provide a varied approach to teaching and learning. Pupils in all year groups will receive some live teaching, pre-recorded lessons from the school's teaching staff, use of pre-recorded video lessons from both The Oak National Academy and Greenshaw Learning Trust (where they align with departmental curriculums) and set work on Show my Homework. Pupils will have a daily roll call and will continue remotely with the school's 'Read Aloud' programme.
- 4.6 Teachers will ensure that where possible, a proportion of their lessons are designed to promote interactivity amongst pupils and between pupils and staff, e.g. live lessons, or the use of the 'chat' function on Microsoft Teams to lessen feelings of isolation and to promote pupil progress and motivation. Teachers will use effective questioning strategies, such as 'cold call' to check for understanding.
- 4.7 Teachers will ensure lessons are inclusive for all pupils and can be adapted to account for needs of disadvantage pupils and pupils with SEND.
- 4.8 When teaching remotely, teaches will:
- Set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a range of subjects.
 - Set work that is equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and, as a minimum, five hours per day with support for pupils working towards qualifications this academic year.
 - Provide frequent, clear explanations of new content through high quality curriculum resources, including videos.
 - Provide opportunities for interactivity, including questioning, eliciting and reflective discussion.
 - Provide scaffolded practice and opportunities to apply new knowledge.
 - Continue to develop and enhance student's long-term memory.
 - Enable pupils to receive on-going feedback, both verbally through whole class feedback, and using online platforms.
 - Avoid an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities.
 - Be responsive; re-teaching concepts where necessary.
 - All provisions for remote learning will take account of age, ability and/or any pupils with SEND.

- 4.9 In exceptional circumstances, the school may reduce its curriculum offering to enable pupils to cope with the workload. Departments may build time into their plans for consolidation periods for pupils.
- 4.10 Teachers will make use of online software for purposes of formative assessments throughout the period of remote learning. These will include: Hegarty Maths, Seneca Learning, Spiral, Active Learn, Microsoft Forms, Google Forms, Brainscape, Kahoot, Quizlet, Mentimeter, Whiteboard.fi and other agreed software.
- 4.11 The school recognises that certain subjects are more difficult to teach remotely, e.g. music, sciences (experiments) and physical education. Teachers will provide effective substitutes for this.
- 4.12 Pupils will be encouraged to take regular physical exercise to maintain fitness, and time will be allocated within the school week for pupils to focus on this.

5. Safeguarding

- 5.1 This section of the policy will be enacted in conjunction with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will identify vulnerable pupils (who are deemed as vulnerable or at risk of harm) via risk assessment prior to the period of remote learning.
- 5.3 The DSL will arrange for regular contact to be made with vulnerable pupils during the period of remote learning.
- 5.4 Phone calls to vulnerable pupils will be made using school phones where possible.
- 5.5 All contact with vulnerable pupils, will be recorded on CPOMS.
- 5.6 Contact with all students is recorded on trackers in Microsoft Teams.
- 5.7 The DSL will keep in contact with vulnerable pupils' social workers or other care professionals during the period of remote working, as required.
- 5.8 Vulnerable pupils will be provided with a means of contacting the DSL, or other member of the safeguarding team, this arrangement will be set up by the DSL prior to the period of remote learning.

- 5.9 The DSL will meet weekly with the safeguarding and pastoral team to discuss new and current safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable pupils learning remotely.
- 5.10 Teachers will be engaged in safeguarding training online to support identification of risks and vulnerabilities during remote learning.
- 5.11 All members of staff will report any safeguarding concerns to the DSL immediately.

6. Online Safety

- 6.1 All staff and pupils engaged in live lessons should:
- Be situated in a suitable public area within the home with a Microsoft Teams blurred background if their camera is on.
 - Wear suitable clothing – this includes others in their household.
 - Maintain the standards of behaviour expected in school.
 - Use appropriate language – this includes others in their household.
 - Use the necessary equipment and computer programmes as intended.
 - Not record, store or distribute video material without permission.
 - Always remain aware that they are visible.
- 6.2 Pupils not using devices or software as intended will be disciplined in line with the school's 'Getting it Right' policy.
- 6.3 The school will risk assess the technology used for remote learning prior to use and ensure that there are no privacy issues or scope for inappropriate use.
- 6.4 The school will communicate to parents/carers via ParentMail about any precautionary measures that need to be put in place if their child is learning remotely using their own family/owned equipment and technology, e.g. ensuring that their internet connection is secure.
- 6.5 The school will not be responsible for providing access to the internet off the school premises (other than to pupils where internet dongles have been provided) and will not be responsible for providing online software safety, e.g. anti-virus software, on devices not owned by the school.

7. Data Protection

- 7.1 This section of the policy will be enacted in conjunction with the school's GDPR Data Protection Policy.
- 7.2 Staff members will be responsible for adhering to the GDPR when teaching remotely and will always ensure confidentiality and integrity of their devices.
- 7.3 Sensitive data will only be transferred between devices if it is necessary to do so for the purpose of remote learning and teaching.
- 7.4 Parents/carers and pupils' up to date contact details will be collected prior to the period of remote learning.
- 7.5 All contact details will be stored in line with GDPR Data Protection Policy.
- 7.6 The school will not permit paper copies of contact details to be taken off the school premises.
- 7.7 Pupils are not permitted to let their family members or friends use any school-owned equipment which contains personal data.
- 7.8 Any breach of confidentiality will be dealt with in accordance with the school's normal policies.

8. Health and Safety

- 8.1 This section of the policy will be enacted in conjunction with the school's Health and Safety Policy.
- 8.2 Teaching staff and ICT technicians will ensure pupils are shown how to use the necessary equipment and technology safely and correctly prior to the period of remote learning.

9. Access to technology

- 9.1 The school will remain cognisant of families who do not have access to the resources required for remote education and will ensure an up to date record of which pupils do not have appropriate devices or internet access is maintained.
- 9.2 The school will utilise the support available through the DfE's 'Get help with technology during Coronavirus (COVID-19) scheme'.
- 9.3 Under the scheme, the school will order laptops, tablets and 4G wireless routers to support the following groups of pupils if they do not have access to a digital device or the internet through other means:
 - Vulnerable pupils across all year groups
 - Pupils in all year groups who are unable to access remote education whilst attending a school on a hospital site where required.
- 9.4 Before distributing devices, the school will ensure the devices are set up for remote education and that appropriate safeguarding controls and support are in place to help pupils use the devices safely.
- 9.5 Once devices are ready for collection, the school will either arrange for them to be collected by pupils or their parents/carers from school, or delivered to pupils' homes, ensuring infection control measures are adhered to as part of this process.
- 9.6 The school will work with disadvantaged families to provide access to DfE schemes.
- 9.7 The school will approach remote learning in a flexible manner where necessary, e.g. ensuring that lessons, live or otherwise, are recorded to accommodate contexts where pupils have to share a single device within the home.
- 9.8 Where lessons are recorded, the school will ensure all recording procedures have due regard for the relevant data protection legislation, including the Data Protection Act 2019 and the General Data Protection Regulation.

10. Returning to School

- 10.1 The school will remain in contact with pupils who are remote learning to ensure that when the period of national lockdown ends, pupils are supported to return to school as and when it is safe for them to do so.
- 10.2 The headteacher will ensure that pupils who are permitted to attend face-face learning at school, but are required to self-isolate, will only return when it is safe for them to do so.
- 10.3 If a pupil who is attending face-face learning at school is required to self-isolate with symptoms of Coronavirus, the school will agree with the parent/carer or social worker of the pupil the best way to maintain contact and offer support.
- 10.4 The headteacher will listen to all concerns that parents/carers may have about their child returning to school after a period of self-isolation and will advise them of the measures in place to ensure the safety of their child.

11. Communication

- 11.1 The school will ensure adequate channels of communication are arranged in the event of an emergency.
- 11.2 The school will communicate important safeguarding and teaching and learning information via ParentMail and the school website.
- 11.3 The senior leadership team will communicate with staff via email and live staff briefings over Microsoft Teams about updates to remote education.
- 11.4 Members of staff will have communication with their line manager once per week.
- 11.5 Issues with remote learning and data protection will be communicated to the child's College Leader as soon as possible so that they can investigate and resolve the issue.
- 11.6 The school will keep parents/carers and pupils informed of any changes to the remote learning arrangements.
- 11.7 The senior leadership team will review the effectiveness of communication on a weekly basis and ensure measures are put in place to address gaps or weaknesses in communication.

12. Monitoring and Review

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher.
- 12.2 Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and other stakeholders.
- 12.3 The next scheduled review date of this policy is March 2021.