

ABBEY SCHOOL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

REMOTE LEARNING POLICY



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Other relevant policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- ICT and Acceptable Use Policy
- E-Safety Policy

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1. Purpose

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Abbey School has continued to be guided by our values and mission. We have also been guided by information, advice and guidance for education providers issued by the Government, Public Health England (PHE), Health and Safety Executive and other key bodies. When taking account of this guidance, our first consideration is the safety and well-being of our pupils and staff. During the pandemic the majority of pupils at Abbey School are continuing to attend school in person following government guidance that this is preferable for all children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

In the event of a whole school closure, bubble group closure or individual pupil isolation requirements, Abbey School are committed to providing continuity of education to all pupils and will do so through a process of individualised and bespoke remote learning.

Remote learning would apply in the following situations:

- The school is closed or partly closed due to government advice in order to reduce the spread of Covid-19 amongst pupils and staff
- When a bubble needs to isolate due to guidance given by Public Health England
- When individual pupils have been in contact with another person or staff member who has tested positive for Covid-19 and then under PHE guidance we are informed that they must self-isolate for a period of time
- When a pupil is absent due to a long-term illness, but the pupil is still able to engage with learning at home

Remote learning will not be provided for the following reasons:

- Pupils who are absent, with or without parental permission, in contravention to school and government guidance or pupils whose parents keep them home as a 'precaution' against the outbreak of infectious disease against the school and government guidance
- Pupils who are taken on holiday during term time

This policy 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

2. Responsibilities

2.1. Teachers

When providing remote learning, teachers must be available during their normal 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:

Setting learning and engagement tasks

- Having an initial phone call with parents/carers at the start of the interruption to consider the home context and how remote learning may be best supported for the pupil and family concerned
- Setting personalised and differentiated learning tasks for all pupils they teach that relate directly to current targets
- Ensuring that all pupils have the necessary resources to engage in learning at home. This may include posting out physical resources, sending electronic resources or loaning out electronic devices from school

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- Coordinating each pupil's personalised remote learning package through the transdisciplinary team
- Ensuring that all pupils (where supportive for them) have the opportunity to join their class peers for a virtual social meeting/activity each week
- Ensuring that EHCP requirements are met and raising with SLT where there are elements that are difficult to embed within remote education

Providing feedback

- Where learning tasks result in permanent products then photographs of these can be sent into school for feedback via Weduc or viewed directly during live 1:1 lessons
- Verbal feedback will be given during all live teaching sessions
- Feedback to parents/carers will occur during weekly phone calls

Keeping in touch with pupils and parents/carers

- Teachers will schedule a weekly phone call home to all parents/carers of pupils who are engaged in remote learning. This phone call will be with the teacher directly or another member of the class team. During these calls staff will check in on progression with learning goals and any pastoral support needs. Staff can then arrange for further input where required e.g., a phone call from a behaviour analyst, speech therapist or occupational therapist
- Teachers should reply to any messages from parents/carers/pupils within 24 hours and during working hours only. Teachers are not expected to communicate with families outside of typical working hours
- All calls to parents/carers should be logged on Arbour
- Where a teacher/class staff are unable to make contact with a family, this should be raised to SLT
- Reporting any concerns raised by parents to the SLT
- Ensuring that personal phones are only used in exceptional circumstances (e.g., when having to work from home). Records of calls must be kept and phone numbers withheld using 141

Attending virtual meetings with staff parents, pupils and external professionals

- Attend any requested meetings with parents/carers/pupils, external professionals and staff dressing appropriately in line with the Code of Conduct
- Ensuring that lessons/virtual meetings take place from an appropriate location. For example, avoid areas with background noise or anything inappropriate in the background

2.2. Learning Support Staff

When supporting remote learning, learning support staff must be available during their 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 supporting remote learning, learning support staff are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils who aren't in school with learning remotely as directed by the teacher or SLT
- Keeping in touch with pupils who aren't in school and their parents as directed by the teacher or SLT
- Sourcing and making personalised resources to supplement home learning for pupils in their class
- Ensuring that personal phones are only used in exceptional circumstances (e.g., when having to work from home). Records of calls must be kept and phone numbers withheld using 141
- Attend any requested meetings with parents/carers/pupils, external professionals and staff dressing appropriately in line with the Code of Conduct
- Ensuring that lessons/virtual meetings take place from an appropriate location. For example, avoid areas with background noise or anything inappropriate in the background

2.3. Transdisciplinary Staff

When supporting remote learning, transdisciplinary staff must be available during their 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 supporting remote learning, transdisciplinary staff are responsible for:

- Liaising with the class teacher regarding how pupils with quantified and individualised therapeutic input can best access this remotely
- Liaising with the class teacher regarding behavioural support needs whilst at home
- Making arrangements directly with parents/carers as directed by the class teacher for any additional support/advice required for pupils to engage with their learning at home
- Responding in a timely manner to requests from the class teacher for advice/guidance and any request to contact a family directly should be responded to within 24 hours
- Ensuring that personal phones are only used in exceptional circumstances (e.g., when having to work from home). Records of calls must be kept and phone numbers withheld using 141
- Attend any requested meetings with parents/carers/pupils, external professionals and staff dressing appropriately in line with the Code of Conduct
- Ensuring that lessons/virtual meetings take place from an appropriate location. For example, avoid areas with background noise or anything inappropriate in the background

2.4. Senior Leaders

Senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning with teachers and whether the tasks set are responsive to the needs of pupils
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations
- Monitoring engagement in the remote learning offer
- Supporting staff with any issues and queries that arise in the course of remote learning
- Ensuring that the offer is universal and accessible to all

2.5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The role and responsibilities of the DSL is set out in the school Child Protection Policy. Ideally, a trained DSL will be on site at all times. Where this cannot be achieved, a DSL will be available by phone (for example, when working from home). The DSL will take responsibility for:

- Maintaining contact, collating and passing on information and responding to any concerns.

2.6. IT Staff

IT staff are responsible for:

- Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work and to deliver live lessons
- 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 and SLT without delay
- Assisting pupils and parents with accessing the internet or devices
- Creating and maintaining staff and pupil accounts for online learning platforms
- Setting up email addresses for parents to contact school staff e.g., owlclassremotelearning@abbeyschool.com
- Keeping operating systems up to date
- Troubleshooting of IT issues
- Alerting the DSL of any safeguarding concerns

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- Supporting admin teams with the distribution of devices to learners at home where appropriate/required

2.7. Pupils and parents

Staff can expect pupils and parents engaged in remote learning to:

- Be contactable during the school day – although consider that they may not be in front of a device due to the personalised nature of how home learning is delivered for our pupils
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers, learning mentors or transdisciplinary staff
- Alert teachers if they are unable to complete or engage with tasks
- Be respectful when making any concerns known to staff
- Read guidance and updates from the school on online safety to support keeping their children and young people safe online at home

2.8. Proprietary Body and Advisory Council

The proprietary body and advisory council 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 about remote learning, they should contact the following people:

- Issues in setting learning tasks – talk to subject lead or SLT
- Issues with behaviour – talk to the Behaviour Analyst
- Issues with IT – talk to IT staff
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – talk to their line manager
- Concerns about data protection – talk to the DPO (School Business Manager) or SLT
- Concerns about safeguarding – talk to the DSL

4. Data Protection

4.1. Accessing personal data

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

- Continue to use Weduc for the majority of communications with families
- Where email is required, use the class remote learning email address
- Only access personal data if necessary, for the purposes of remote teaching and learning
- Only connect to personal data on the school network using approved tools e.g., school office 365 account, Arbour, My concern

4.2. Processing personal data

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as telephone numbers 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. Staff must not put sensitive information at risk of compromise of confidentiality through the use of non-authorised accounts.

4.3. Keeping devices secure

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure that 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
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted – this means that 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 that the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends

5. Safeguarding

Please refer to safeguarding policy which remains fully in force during periods of remote learning.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the SLT and approved by the proprietary body and advisory council.