

## Remote Learning Policy

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### 1. Introduction

This policy is based on **DfE Non-statutory guidance for schools January 2023**.

Remote learning should only ever be considered as a last resort where a decision has already been made that attendance at school is not possible, but pupils are able to continue learning.

#### **Prioritising attendance**

Attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including for their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Remote learning should not be viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school. For this reason, HGPS will consider it only as a last resort when the alternative would be no education, and only after it has been established that the pupil is, or will be, absent from school.

In such cases, remote learning can have the benefit of allowing absent pupils to keep on track with their education and stay connected to their teachers and peers.

HGPS will consider the approaches set out in this January 2023 guidance while also working closely with pupils, parents, carers, and any other relevant partners such as the local authority, to remove any barriers to attendance as detailed in the **Working together to improve school attendance guidance**.

Pupils absent from school and receiving remote learning will still be marked as absent in the register. HGPS will continue to record pupil absence in the register in line with the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** and attendance guidance, using the most appropriate code.

## **2. Scenarios where remote learning should be considered.**

Circumstances where it might not be possible for pupils to receive in person education fit into two broad categories:

- School closures or restrictions on attendance, where school access for pupils is restricted.
- Individual cases where a pupil is unable to attend school but is able to learn.

## **3. School closures or restrictions on attendance**

Providing remote learning does not change the imperative to remain open or to reopen as soon as possible. Every effort should be made to ensure pupils can be taught in person by attending their school or if appropriate and possible, attending a safe alternative site. After exploring all options to ensure the school remains open to all pupils, there may still be some exceptional occasions when school leaders or the local authority decide that it is not possible to open safely, or where opening would contradict guidance from local or central government.

If restricting attendance for pupils is the only viable option, HGPS will consider providing remote learning to help pupils stay on track with the education they would normally receive. HGPS will consult DfE Emergency Planning guidance in the event of school closures or restrictions on attendance.

## **4. Individual cases where a pupil is unable to attend school but is able to learn.**

There should only be limited circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend school but is able and well enough to continue their education remotely. These circumstances should only involve a short-term absence and might include:

- pupils recovering from short term infectious illnesses, pupils preparing for or recovering from some operations,
- or pupils recovering from injuries where attendance might inhibit recovery.

In some exceptional cases, these circumstances might also include pupils whose attendance has been affected by a special educational need or disability (SEND) or a mental health issue.

In these circumstances, and after the pupil's absence from school has been established, HGPS will consider providing pupils with remote learning on a case-by-case basis. This should be part of a

plan to reintegrate back to school, and only when it is judged that providing remote learning would not adversely affect the pupil's return to school.

Further support on dealing with mental health and attendance challenges can be found in the **Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools**.

Provision of remote learning should be made as a short-term solution allowing absent pupils to keep on track with their education and stay connected to their teachers and peers. Pupils with long-term medical conditions or any other physical or mental health needs affecting attendance may require additional support to continue their education.

## **5. Working with the local authority**

Under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (s.19 duty) local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health or other reasons, would otherwise not receive a suitable education.

Statutory guidance sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 school days or more during the school year, whether consecutive or cumulative. While the s.19 duty sits with the local authority, HGPS will work closely with them and any relevant medical professionals to ensure that children with health needs are fully supported at school, including putting in place individual healthcare (IHC) plans if appropriate. This may involve, for example, programmes of study that rely on a flexible approach which include agreed periods of remote learning.

## **6. What to consider when providing remote learning to individual pupils**

When a pupil is absent, HGPS will always seek to overcome the barriers to attendance and provide support for the pupil to attend, regularly reviewing any barriers in conjunction with the pupil, parents or carers, and if appropriate, a relevant medical professional.

Remote learning should not be viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school, and providing remote learning during a pupil's absence does not reduce the importance of bringing that absence to an end as soon as possible. In the limited circumstances when the school decides to use remote learning for individual pupils when they are absent, the following should be considered:

- Ensuring mutual agreement of remote learning by the school, parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision.
- Where remote learning is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying

what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity.

- Setting a time limit within which the period of remote learning provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.

## **7. Good practice**

HGPS will

- continue to review and update practice in line with current context and availability.
- review in consultation with staff and should demonstrate a consideration of any additional burdens that providing remote learning may place on staff and families.
- Provide work of high quality, which is meaningful, ambitious, and cover an appropriate range of subjects to enable pupils to keep on track with their education.
- Consider a range of options appropriate to the needs of the pupil and their learning needs. This might include.
  - Recorded and / or live direct teaching time, (Teams/Zoom) as well as time for pupils to complete tasks, reading, and assignments independently, depending on their age and stage of development. These maybe recorded by staff or from online appropriate material.
  - Access to online learning platforms/schemes of work used in school (Purple Mash, Kapow, TT Rock Stars)

**Further considerations will be given to...**

- Provision being ready for pupils to access as soon as reasonably practicable, though in proportion to the length of absence and expected disruption to education.
- Providing remote learning that is equivalent in length to the core teaching time pupils would receive in school where possible, being mindful of the individual needs and circumstances of the pupil and their families. These include but are not limited to: – Consideration of age, stage of development, and independent study skills. – Any SEND or other additional needs the pupils might have.
- The pupils' home environment, which includes having a suitable place and opportunity to study. – Screen time, making reasonable allowances for adequate breaks for pupils and staff during digital remote learning.
- Any significant demands on parents' or carers' help or support. Younger children, especially pupils in primary schools and some children with SEND, might require high levels of adult involvement to support their engagement with remote learning, which can make it a particular challenge for these groups.
- Working to overcome barriers to digital access where possible for pupils by, for example:
  - Auditing access to devices and connectivity across the school as part of wider emergency planning.

- Distributing school-owned devices accompanied by a user agreement or contract if and where necessary and possible.
- Supporting families to find appropriate internet connectivity solutions if and where necessary and possible.
- If required, ensuring equal access through the provision of printed resources, supplemented with other appropriate forms of communication between the school and pupils.
- Planning opportunities for regular feedback and interaction with teachers and peers during the school day.
- Identifying a senior leader with overarching responsibility for the quality and delivery of remote learning. Responsibilities may include consulting with staff and relevant leaders within the school or trust to develop any remote learning plans, ensuring they are relevant and up to date.
- Having an understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online, and having systems for checking, daily, whether pupils are safe at home and engaging with their remote learning.

## **8. Providing information about remote learning**

The Remote learning Policy will be shared on the school's website for the school community. It will also be made available to parents appropriate to need.

## **9. Free school meals and remote learning**

Where pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals are receiving remote learning, HGPS will work with their school catering team (Taylor Shaw) either to provide good quality lunch parcels or to issue a food voucher if available. This will ensure that eligible pupils continue to be supported for the period they are unable to attend school.

## **10. Remote learning during a suspension or permanent exclusion**

As outlined in the Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance, headteachers should take steps to ensure that work is set and marked for pupils during the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion. Remote learning should not be used as a justification for sending pupils home due to their misbehaviour. Any time a pupil is sent home due to disciplinary reasons, this is a suspension and must be done in line with the law on disciplinary suspensions. This is the case even if they have been asked to log on or access online education while suspended. After a period of off-site direction or suspension, a pupil is expected to attend fulltime. The school's legal duties to pupils with SEND remain in force.

## **11. Provision for pupils with SEND**

If pupils with SEND are not able to attend school and require remote learning, class teachers are best placed to know how their needs can most effectively be met to ensure that they continue to access the curriculum. HGPS will put in place an appropriate curriculum, teaching and support that will enable the pupil to continue learning effectively.

Some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote learning without adult support. HGPS will work collaboratively with families and put arrangements in place that allow pupils with SEND to access remote learning successfully. In this situation, decisions on how provision can be delivered should be informed by relevant considerations including the support families will require and types of services that the pupil can access remotely.

The duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 for mainstream schools to use their 'best endeavours' to secure the special educational provision called for by a pupil's special educational needs continues to apply when remote learning is in place.

In addition, if a pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan, whether they are in a mainstream or special school, HGPS will work with the local authority to ensure that all the relevant duties under the 2014 Act continue to be met.

The duties under the Equality Act 2010 relating to disability (and more broadly) also continue to apply, such as to make reasonable adjustments, not to discriminate and to have due regard to the statutory objectives in the public sector equality duty. It may be challenging or impossible for the school to deliver remotely the kind of approach that it does in the classroom, for example the provision of certain differentiated resources and the support of a Teaching Assistant. If this is the case, the school must instead consider, in cooperation with the local authority (if the child has an EHC plan), other ways in which it and the local authority can meet its statutory duties, working closely with the parents or carers.

## **12. Delivering remote learning safely**

Keeping children safe online is essential. HGPS will ensure that Online Safety policies are up to date and in line with keeping children safe online. This includes.

- Accessing safe remote learning
- virtual lessons
- live streaming
- information sharing with parents and carers to support them in keeping their children safe online.

HGPS will ensure that child protection policies are up to date and reflect the potential need for remote online education provision and the fact that pupils might be learning both online and in the classroom.