Remote Education Policy

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Shaw Education Trust

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Purpose and Principles

Shaw Education Trust (SET) is committed to providing ambitious, inclusive education and maintaining pupils' connection to school where circumstances prevent attendance. Face-to-face attendance remains the priority. Remote education is not an equivalent substitute for attending school, a routine response to absence, or a means of managing unmet needs, behaviour, staffing or placement difficulties.

In line with the Department for Education (DfE) non-statutory remote education guidance, remote education is considered only as a last resort, after it has been established that a pupil cannot attend but is well enough to learn, and where the alternative would be no education. Decisions are individually assessed, proportionate, time-limited and regularly reviewed. The school remains responsible for promoting attendance and removing barriers to return.

Scope and Circumstances

This policy covers contingency provision during unavoidable full or partial school closures, and exceptional short-term provision for individual pupils who are absent but able to learn. It applies across primary, secondary and specialist contexts, including pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), but the mode and expectations must be adapted to age, developmental stage, health, communication and access needs.

- **Whole-school or cohort disruption:** for example, emergency closure, unsafe premises, severe weather, or a public health direction. Schools follow their emergency/continuity plans and communicate the arrangements promptly.
- **Individual short-term absence:** for example, recovery from an infectious illness, operation or injury, only where a pupil is sufficiently well to participate and education remotely will be beneficial.
- **Exceptional SEND or mental-health-related absence:** consider case by case only after absence is established, as part of a coordinated, time-limited reintegration plan where remote provision will not hinder return to school.

Remote provision must not be used to normalise persistent absence, replace a suitable placement, justify an unofficial exclusion, or substitute for the local authority's duties. It does not alter the school's duties regarding inclusion, reasonable adjustments or safeguarding.

Where pupils are suspended or permanently excluded, schools must follow the relevant statutory guidance, including arrangements for setting and marking work during the initial period of absence. Remote education must not be used as an alternative to formally recording a suspension or exclusion.

Decisions, Attendance and Reintegration

The Headteacher or delegated senior leader authorises individual arrangements, recording the reason, start date, expected end or review date, education offer, named lead, communication plan, assessment of risks and barriers to attendance, and the actions to support reintegration. Arrangements should be agreed with parents or carers and, where appropriate, the pupil and relevant health professionals. Where a pupil has an EHCP or social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision. All arrangements should be regularly reviewed, with a clear focus on supporting the pupil's return to school at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

The school must continue to enter the correct absence or attendance code in the statutory register under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current statutory attendance guidance. Completing remote work does not, of itself, count as attending school. The attendance lead will review attendance and maintain contact with relevant external services.

A formal plan must set a time-limited review point, ordinarily at least weekly for an individual arrangement unless an earlier review is needed. Each review checks educational access, safeguarding, wellbeing, the ongoing necessity of remote provision and practical steps towards return. Plans must not roll forward indefinitely without active assessment and support.

Where a compulsory-school-age child with health needs is likely to be without suitable education for 15 school days or more during a school year, whether consecutive or cumulative, the school must engage promptly with the local authority regarding its section 19 Education Act 1996 duty, without waiting until the fifteenth day. Schools should contribute information and work with health professionals and families on a suitable plan, including arrangements for return. Other section 19 circumstances should also be escalated appropriately.

Quality and Curriculum Expectations

Remote education should be high quality, meaningful and ambitious, enabling pupils to continue accessing the school's planned curriculum as far as reasonably possible. Schools should provide learning that is appropriately sequenced, covers a suitable range of subjects and builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding.

The provision should aim to reflect the breadth and length of education pupils would ordinarily receive in school, where possible, while recognising that adaptations may be necessary to meet individual needs and circumstances. This includes consideration of pupils' age, stage of development, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), medical needs, access to technology, home environment and the level of support available from parents and carers.



Schools should ensure that:

- Learning activities are appropriately challenging, accessible and aligned with the school's curriculum, with suitable adaptations to meet individual needs
- Pupils receive clear explanations, instructions and resources that enable them to engage with their learning
- A range of approaches is considered, including live or pre-recorded teaching, independent activities, reading, practical learning and offline resources, depending on what is most appropriate for pupils
- Opportunities are provided for regular interaction with teachers and peers, assessment of understanding and timely feedback to support progress
- Expectations around the amount of work, screen time and parental support are realistic and proportionate to individual circumstances
- Suitable arrangements are in place to monitor pupils' engagement, identify barriers to learning and make necessary adjustments to the provision
- Systems are in place for daily checks on pupils' safety and engagement, with any concerns followed up through established safeguarding and attendance procedures
- Pupils are not disadvantaged because of limited access to technology, unsuitable home learning environments or additional learning needs

For pupils with SEND, including those attending special schools, remote education should be appropriately personalised. Schools should consider individual communication, sensory, physical, developmental and learning needs, recognising that some aspects of the curriculum and specialist provision may not be suitable or possible to deliver remotely. Where appropriate, learning may focus on individual EHCP outcomes, communication, independence, practical activities and maintaining previously acquired skills.

Schools should work collaboratively with families and relevant professionals to determine what is achievable, without placing unreasonable expectations on parents and carers to deliver specialist teaching or support.

Where remote education is required because of a temporary school closure or wider disruption, the Headteacher will ensure that appropriate arrangements are communicated to pupils, parents and carers as soon as reasonably practicable. This should include expectations for accessing learning, opportunities for contact and feedback, and arrangements for pupils who are unable to access digital provision.

Where pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals are receiving remote education, schools should work with their catering provider to ensure appropriate arrangements are made in accordance with current DfE guidance. This may include

suitable food parcels or vouchers, where appropriate, taking account of individual dietary and medical needs.

The quality and effectiveness of remote education should be monitored by school leaders, with appropriate adjustments made in response to pupils' engagement, progress and individual circumstances.

SEND, Accessibility and Specialist Provision

Schools must anticipate and remove barriers to accessing education. Planning should consider reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010, applicable SEND Code of Practice requirements, the pupil's EHCP outcomes and provision, communication preferences, sensory needs, assistive technology, literacy level and capacity for independent learning. A remote activity alone cannot be assumed to deliver the special educational provision specified in an EHCP.

The SENCo and relevant teachers/therapists should decide how to adapt learning, including accessible formats, symbol or visual prompts, captioning, differentiated materials, practical activities, alternative communication and appropriate adult-mediated support. Families must not be expected to deliver specialist teaching, therapy, complex healthcare or delegated clinical tasks without appropriate arrangements.

For pupils who require high levels of support, learning may be personalised, short, practical and focused on individual communication, independence, physical, sensory or EHCP-linked outcomes where educationally appropriate. Schools should work with the local authority, families and professionals to identify provision that cannot be delivered remotely and the actions required to secure it.

Digital Access, Equity and Home Circumstances

Before arranging online provision, the school will check whether the pupil has a suitable device, connectivity, required software and assistive technology, and a safe space to participate. Where these are lacking, arrange a suitable loan, support, accessible offline materials or another equitable solution through the school's agreed processes. No pupil should be disadvantaged solely because of digital exclusion.

Staff should recognise constraints such as shared devices, caring responsibilities, limited space and language barriers. Appropriate flexibility and alternative formats must be available. Parents and carers should be given accessible guidance and a clear contact point for learning, safety and technical issues.

Safeguarding, Contact and Wellbeing

The school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, staff code of conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) apply fully to remote education. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) retains oversight of safeguarding concerns and works with children's social care, local authority services and other partners as appropriate. Staff must record and report concerns promptly through the established route, including when pupils do not engage or cannot be contacted.

Before any live or recorded activity, staff must use school-authorised accounts/platforms, appropriate privacy settings and age-appropriate behaviour expectations. Invites must be controlled, participants verified where proportionate, and chat, screensharing, camera, microphone and recording features appropriately managed. Staff should avoid revealing personal locations or information and ensure that backgrounds and materials are suitable.

Staff must use approved communication channels, maintain professional boundaries and should not contact pupils using personal accounts or unauthorised messaging services. Individual live meetings should be planned, justified and risk assessed, with appropriate safeguarding measures agreed through leadership and DSL oversight. These may include the presence of a second adult or alternative protective arrangements, depending on the individual circumstances and identified risks.

A pupil's camera should not routinely be compulsory. Decisions must consider privacy, safeguarding, accessibility and pupil need. Do not publish or distribute identifiable images or recordings except through approved procedures and with a suitable lawful basis. Inappropriate captures, uploads or sharing by anyone involved should be reported and addressed.

Schools must have systems for checking daily whether pupils receiving remote education are safe and engaging with their learning. The nature and frequency of direct contact should be proportionate to individual circumstances and risk, with additional arrangements for pupils who are vulnerable, have a social worker, have an EHCP, or have emerging attendance or safeguarding concerns.

Data Protection, Approved Technology and AI

SET and its schools must comply with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and relevant changes under the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, reflecting the DfE data protection in schools' guidance. All pupil and staff information must be accessed, shared and retained only where necessary, through authorised systems, with role-based permissions and appropriate security. Privacy information should be understandable and accessible to children and families.

New remote-education platforms, video tools, monitoring technologies, cloud applications and generative AI services must go through the Trust/school digital and

data protection approval process before use. The data protection officer or relevant lead determines whether a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) is legally required, especially where processing may be high-risk. A DPIA is not automatically required for every website, but it must be completed where the risk threshold is met. Procurement, contracts, processor terms, international transfers and retention must be considered.

Recordings must have a clearly defined purpose, authorised access, proportionate retention schedule and secure deletion. Any retention period must be justified and documented in the relevant records schedule. Staff must not download pupil data onto personal devices or use unauthorised storage.

Filtering and monitoring and cyber security arrangements should align with KCSIE and the DfE digital and technology core standards. Technical protection used on school-managed devices must be appropriate to risk; schools must also explain that controls may differ on personal devices and home networks and give families practical online safety advice.

Generative AI must not be introduced into remote teaching simply because it is available. Only approved, age-appropriate tools with suitable oversight may be used, consistent with DfE AI guidance and product safety expectations. Staff must not enter identifiable or sensitive pupil information into unapproved AI tools; outputs require professional checking and must not replace teacher judgement or safeguarding decisions.

Roles and Accountability

- **Trust** establishes the common policy framework, oversees safeguarding, data protection and digital assurance, and supports school leaders with quality assurance and contingency planning
- **Headteacher and senior leaders** approve arrangements, ensure attendance and reintegration decisions are recorded, coordinate staff workload, communicate with families and monitor the quality, accessibility and safety of provision
- **Attendance lead** checks statutory coding and leads attendance support and liaison with the local authority where appropriate
- **DSL** oversees safeguarding and welfare contacts, concerns, escalation and online risk assessments
- **SENCo and relevant specialist leaders** ensure accessible provision and appropriate multi-agency work for pupils with SEND and EHCPs
- **Curriculum/subject leaders and teachers** plan and deliver appropriate work, give feedback, check engagement, adjust provision and report concerns

- **Digital/IT and data protection leads** oversee platform approval, security, filtering/monitoring, incidents, privacy and DPIA decisions
- **Pupils and families** communicate barriers and absence, follow agreed safe-use expectations and seek support where needed; home circumstances and adult availability must be taken into account

Quality Assurance and Review

The Headteacher will periodically review the school's readiness for disruptions and evaluate remote provision through checks on access, curriculum quality, engagement, safeguarding, workload and reintegration. Trust quality assurance may sample this alongside wider school improvement, using the relevant sector-specific framework. Significant concerns are escalated through established Trust processes.

This policy will be reviewed where changes to legislation, statutory guidance or operational requirements make this necessary. Schools are responsible for ensuring their local arrangements remain accurate, accessible and consistent with Trust expectations.

Principal Sources and Guidance

DfE, Providing remote education: guidance for schools (updated 19th August 2024) | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools

DfE, Working together to improve school attendance (updated 9th July 2026) | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

DfE, Keeping children safe in education 2026 (effective 1st September 2026) | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

DfE, Safeguarding and remote education | https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education

DfE, Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

DfE, Meeting digital and technology standards, including filtering and monitoring (updated 16th September 2026) | https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges

DfE, Data protection in schools (updated 14th October 2026) | https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools

DfE, Generative AI in education and safe use guidance | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education

Appendix 1

School-specific Remote Education Arrangements

School details and personnel

School information / role	Local details
School name	[School name]
Headteacher	[Name and school contact]
Remote education lead / authorising senior leader	[Name, role and contact]
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / deputy	[Role-based school contact / approved internal directory reference]
SENCo / specialist provision lead	[Name, role and contact]
Attendance lead	[Name, role and contact]
Digital / IT support	[Approved helpdesk or contact]

Delivery and contact arrangements

Briefly identify what staff and families should do. Refer to existing school systems where these already provide the required procedure; avoid duplicating lengthy policies.

Requirement	School arrangement
Authorisation and review	[Who decides, where the decision is recorded, how often it is reviewed and who coordinates reintegration]
Emergency or partial closure	[Who activates the offer, when and how families are contacted, where updates will be published]
Approved learning platform and resources	[Platform / website / resource; how work is set and accessed]
Learning offer and feedback	[Age/stage or pathway differences; methods of teaching, feedback and help; expected communication]
Offline learning and digital access	[Device/connectivity support; how printed or accessible materials are provided]



Parent/carer communication	[Main channel, school contact, response expectations and accessible/translated formats]

Safeguarding, attendance and reintegration

Requirement	School arrangement
Daily safety and engagement checks	[How checks are made and recorded, named lead, escalation for non-response]
Vulnerable pupil oversight	[How the DSL coordinates additional contact with relevant professionals; reference the school safeguarding procedure]
Online/live session safeguards	[Approved settings, staff supervision or risk assessment, recording arrangements, or "Not applicable"]
Attendance coding and monitoring	[Responsible role and recording system; links to attendance policy]
Reintegration and local authority liaison	[Who coordinates review and return-to-school actions, including EHCP, social worker and section 19 pathways where relevant]

SEND, specialist provision and access

Requirement	School arrangement
Inclusive and accessible resources	[How reasonable adjustments, alternative communication, assistive technology and accessible formats are secured]
SEND / EHCP-linked adaptations	[How pupils' curriculum pathways, outcomes and practical learning are considered; who coordinates]
Specialist or therapy provision that cannot be remote	[How gaps are recognised, documented and escalated to relevant professionals / local authority]
Family support and expectations	[How support needs are identified without expecting families to deliver specialist teaching, therapy or clinical tasks]



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