

Remote Learning Policy for Monkton Academy



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Date of Review: September 2022

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure consistency in our approach to remote learning during the Covid-19 outbreak in particular, and sets out our expectations and obligations with regards to remote learning and provision of suitable education in general. The policy aims to provide appropriate guidelines for the use of hard copy and electronic means of remote learning.

2. Background

On 20 March 2020, all schools in the UK closed to the majority of pupils as strict social distancing guidelines were implemented to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19). As a result, Central Government guidance subsequently enacted into secondary legislation meant that all schools must close to the majority of pupils. Pupils whose parents/carers were classed as key workers, or who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or who are vulnerable (social worker involvement) were entitled to continue to attend school during the outbreak.

Since September 7th 2020, all children were expected to attend school however with strict social distancing in bubbles in place. In cases where a member of a bubble shows symptoms and there is a positive test result, the bubble are sent home. School leaders and teachers are adjusting to remote learning strategies, which may continue long-term. The school is committed to ensuring, wherever possible and reasonable, continuity in pupils' education during the extraordinary circumstances which have dictated the closure of schools with pupils required to stay at home.

This policy outlines the school's approach in managing the demands of remote learning, maintaining continuity of suitable education whilst ensuring that all members of our school communities remain safe.

This policy does not apply to individual students who are unwell and are unable to attend school for short periods or to pupils who take holidays out of published school term time.

3. Suitable provision

Normally it will be for schools to determine what suitable educational provision for their pupils is, based upon age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs the pupil may have. Where education is being provided remotely schools will curate a curriculum which meets the needs of their children and takes account of the requirement for remote learning on a large scale.

4.1 Staffing

The school recognises that all school staff may not all be available to work during this time for example due to illness, shielding or caring for a dependent.

During the coronavirus outbreak, teachers remain responsible for setting work for their pupils and for providing feedback on completed work. Teaching assistants remain responsible for supporting pupils with their learning through remote methods. It is acknowledged that teachers and teaching assistants may need to provide cover for other classes where colleagues are absent.

Keeping teachers and pupils safe when providing remote learning is essential. Remote learning on a large scale is a new experience for both staff and pupils, so it is important that schools include suitable safeguarding procedures for remote learning.

4.2. Roles and responsibilities

4.2.1 Teachers

Teachers must be available between 9am and 3pm. If they're 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 procedures between 9am and 3pm on the designated absence number if it affects the completion of any work required. They should also ensure that arrangements have been made with year group partners or SLT to ensure work is completed.

Teachers are responsible for:

Setting work:

- Creating a weekly timetable of work for their year group in liaison with year group partners. This must include subjects from across the curriculum.
- Set differentiated English and Maths activities
- Working as a year group team to ensure the above work is planned and ready

Providing feedback on work:

- Pupils can send any completed work to teachers via google classroom
- Teachers can respond with feedback if appropriate
- Teachers may need to respond to emails sent to the office email address
- There is no expectation that teachers will respond out of school hours

Keeping in touch with pupils and parents:

- Weekly pastoral communication to be sent to classes
- Emails received from parents and pupils are to be checked between 9am and 3pm, Mon- Fri. Emails must be replied to within 48hrs. Only send replies between these times. Anyone can respond to year group enquiries it does not have to be the actual class teacher.
- Any issues that are received are to be dealt with professionally by the class teacher and the Principal should be BCC'd in the communication. If necessary teachers to contact a member of SLT for advice
- Record all contacts with parents on CPOMs and add any relevant actions.
- If there is a safeguarding concern alert the Principal or member of the safeguarding team

- Contact should be polite and encouraging. Teachers must adhere to all relevant policies and not give out any personal details. Any concerns should be forwarded to a member of SLT who may choose to contact the parents directly

Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents and pupils:

- If virtual meetings are arranged, follow guidelines on good practise.
- Locations (e.g. avoid areas with background noise, nothing inappropriate in the background)

4.2.2 Teaching assistants

Teaching assistants must be available between their normal working hours. During this time, they are expected to check work emails and be available when called upon to attend school. If they're 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.

Teaching assistants are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils with learning remotely: when requested by the SENCO attending virtual meetings with teachers, parents and pupils

4.2.3 Subject leads

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, as outlined above, subject leads are responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing the work set by teachers in their subject
- Review your current subject in the light of home learning during the school closure
- Evaluate what changes will need to be made for creating a subject action plan

4.2.4 Senior leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning – reviewing work set by teachers weekly, monitoring
- Monitoring email correspondence between parents and teachers
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations

4.2.5 Designated safeguarding lead

The DSL is responsible for:

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

See the COVID-19 amendments to the Child Protection Policy

4.2.6 Pupils and parents

Staff can expect pupils to:

- Be contactable during the hours of the school day 9am – 3pm – although they may not always be in front of a device the entire time
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers or teaching assistants
- Alert teachers if they're not able to complete work

Staff can expect parents to:

- Seek help from the school if they need it
- Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff

4.2.7 Governing board

The governing board 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 systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons

5. Remote Learning: “no or low tech” resources to continuing education

The school will provide a curriculum sequence that allows access to high quality online/off-line resources. It may include teaching videos. The learning sequence will consist of 10 days curriculum provision. There will be an English and Maths focus everyday and another area of the curriculum will also be catered for. Across the 10 days, a range of subjects will be taught. This will be inline with each year's curriculum plan. Additional provision may also include PE, PSHE or research activities. Two reading books will be sent home (one for each week) and the pupil's stationary pack (if required).

The school recognises that not every family and pupil will have access to online resources and we will offer a “no or low- tech” solution to parents and pupils. Send-home resource packs are a manageable, low-tech solution to continuing suitable educational provision during the school closure.

We will compile resource packs to be communicated to pupils and assess this work once it has been completed and submitted. These resources packs may contain a combination of online and off-line resources.

Send-home resource packs should mirror as far as possible any online tasks and activities that are available to the pupils who are able to access online learning, so that each child receives a consistent suitable education.

It is acknowledged that the manner in which children will learn skills may differ between send-home resource packs and online resources, however, it is expected that pupils should be able to learn the same skills regardless of the method of access.

Send-home resources should be prepared ready for collection by parents/carers and should contain sufficient work for at least one week of activities but preferably two weeks' worth, so as to avoid parents having to make several trips to collect resource packs. These packs may also be posted if the need arises.

Appropriate social distancing measures are in place for collection.

Where families are isolating and cannot leave the home due to illness or are shielding, we will endeavour to deliver the packs to pupils' homes or use the postal service.

6. Remote Learning: online generally

There is no expectation on teachers and teaching assistants to deliver live stream or recorded teaching sessions online.

Schools have access to a wide range of online resources and may wish to use their own websites as a broadcast for resources and learning links for pupils and their families to engage with from home. The DfE has published a list of online educational resources covering various subjects and age groups that have been recommended by teachers and school leaders.

7. Remote Learning: support for parents and carers

We will endeavour to identify those families who have no or limited access to online learning resources. These families may be those who have no broadband or 4G internet access in the home, no suitable devices on which to access the internet in the home or who have a larger number of children of compulsory school age who are sharing a device in the home.

The school is committed to supporting schools and families to access remote learning, particularly in circumstances where school closures are likely to persist for some time and will work with parents to ensure that all pupils can access provision using existing ICT estate in schools and through the Government's recently announced, but separate schemes, for digital devices. Pupils who are eligible for digital devices and internet access under the Government scheme are expected to use that scheme rather than the school's scheme.

In the event that a pupil is unable to access online educational content the school will take reasonable steps to intercede. This may include:

- Providing support and advice to parent/carer on how to safely access online content by means other than a dedicated device (such as a laptop or desktop PC). This might include accessing the internet through a web enabled smart TV or games console, family tablet device (e.g. Kindle fire) or a smart mobile phone
- Loaning a suitably configured device to a pupil or family for the duration of the period of school closure where that family has no or limited access to suitable devices in the home

- Arranging for the provision of broadband or 4G internet access to the home where no internet access is currently available

We will endeavour to use existing resources within the school that are presently unused to meet pupil need. It is anticipated that these resources may include iPads, chromebooks and laptops. It is not thought practicable to lend out desktop PC's.

In making its assessment of need, the school will take into account the number of children in the household and the general availability of devices within the family. Priority for devices will be given so as to ensure that each household has access to at least one viable device and to a broadband or 4G internet connection to access content through that device.

If necessary application will be made to the Council to provide a means of making a broadband connection such as a dongle which places no additional financial burden on the recipient family.

The schools will work with parents and carers to identify families who require a device and/or internet connectivity. The school will assess applications for eligibility to its own scheme which will include:

- the number of pupils of compulsory school age within a household
- whether the pupil is eligible for Free School Meals
- whether the pupil has an EHCP
- whether the pupil has current social worker involvement
- whether the family are demonstrably "digitally poor"
- the school classes the children as vulnerable

The loaning of devices and internet connectivity solutions will be dependent upon whether:

- the home has a broadband or 4G internet connection
- whether the pupil has access to a 4G or similar device to access the internet at home
- the type and number of devices in the home (including / smart TV, tablet, iPad, laptop, desktop PC and web browsing enabled devices such as games consoles and e-book readers)
- the online learning content that is being set by the school and the platform that is being used

The school will work with families to identify the number of devices that should be loaned to a particular household. The school may not loan devices on a 1:1 basis, but may require families to share a loaned device between their children.

Devices and broadband/4G internet connections will be provided for educational use only and families will not be able to use these items for non-educational purposes. Devices and broadband/4G internet connections will be subject to monitoring by the school for safeguarding purposes using a programme such as E-safe.forensic monitoring software. Use of the device for non-educational, inappropriate or unlawful purposes may lead to the device being withdrawn.

Parents/carers who receive a loaned device will be asked to sign up to an Acceptable and Responsible User Policy, Terms and Conditions with a Loan agreement Agreement attached.

Parents/carers will be responsible for keeping the device safe from damage and must report any damage immediately to their school.

8. Duration and review

This policy will operate for the period of the Covid-19 outbreak and for the period of time whilst schools are closed to the majority of pupils.

At the end of the closure period all devices will be required to be returned to schools within five school days of re-opening for the child who is benefitting from the loan of the device. This is to enable schools to recommence their normal, in-school use of the devices for the provision of education.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's ongoing response to the Covid-19 outbreak and in circumstances where there may be a further amendment to Government policy and/or legislation in respect of continuing education provision for pupils.

Equipment Acceptable & Responsible Use Agreement

Please read this Acceptable & Responsible Use Agreement that has been shared with you via email.

If you require a paper copy, please ask the school office, who will provide this for you.

Once you have read and agreed to the terms, please discuss this with your child so that they also understand how they are to use the equipment.

On first start-up of your loan device, you will be asked to agree to these terms before your child can access any applications.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Appendix 1

Loan Equipment Acceptable and Responsible Use Policy

This policy complements and supports South Tyneside's Remote Learning Policy and forms the basis of how the school will loan devices to households. This policy is designed for an equipment loan where the school retain ownership of any device.

At Monkton Academy, we are committed to using educational technology to improve further the learning experiences and achievements of all of our pupils. Technology provides us with opportunities to inspire and motivate our young people to achieve their full potential and engage them fully in their learning. We believe that the use of technology will enhance everyday learning and teaching and in particular will:

- Raise educational attainment
- Create a pupil centred curriculum, which will provide engaging pupil centered lessons
- Enable pupils access to the most up to date educational resources
- Raise levels of engagement, motivation and interaction
- Improve facilitation of different learning styles
- Promote remote & independent learning
- Develop children's confidence levels

We recognise and encourage the safe use of technology in the home to promote remote learning.

This policy applies to all pupil users and parent/carers accepting it wherever they are physically located - either within the school or at home. It is intended to complement the school's wider e-Safety, Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies.

Due to the changeable nature of technology, this policy will be reviewed regularly and as such, the school reserves the right to amend any sections or wording at any time. The following details define the proper use of the device both in and out of school hours.

Device Loan

The school will retain complete ownership of the device.

If a child leaves the school the device must be returned to the school immediately.

Pupils should not loan or share the device with other people without the agreement of the school. Devices loaned and to be shared between pupils can be used by all of the pupils in the household. Parents should not use the device for non-educational related purposes (such as internet browsing, online shopping etc).

Passwords and Logins

Children should take reasonable measures to secure access to the device by using a password.

Children are not allowed to remove the password from the device or share this password with anyone else except their parents/carers, and a designated member of staff (this will be requested during the initial set-up process).

Photographs and Images (still & moving)

Photographs/Images stored on the device must be appropriate; the school reserves the right to randomly check any device for unsuitable content. Recording, photographing or filming of any other children or school staff is strictly forbidden, unless specifically permitted by the class teacher. No images or video material taken in school may be uploaded from any device to social networking sites.

Photos and videos should be deleted regularly by pupils for safeguarding and data storage reasons.

Software and Applications

Children will not be given the ability to install or delete any applications on the device. The device will be locked down so that non-education related applications cannot be installed onto the device.

If this agreement is breached in any way, school may apply additional restrictions to the device to safeguard your child.

Applications provided by the school for educational use, remain the property of school at all times.

The School will provide software on the device. The Software originally installed by the school must remain on the device in a usable condition and be easily accessible at all times.

From time to time, the school may add or modify software applications. The school's remote management system monitors all devices and may be flagged if inappropriate material is accessed at home. Periodic checks of the device will be made to ensure that students have not removed required software or downloaded applications which are deemed inappropriate (either by their age-restriction or content).

Internet Access

The school will monitor and filter internet access.

The device provided has been set up to filter internet content. It must not be tampered with in any way to try and link to the internet unfiltered through a router or 4G dongle at home. Children may only access the internet through secure access provided by the school. Pupils are not permitted to access the internet via their own mobile connection 3G/4G functionality (or otherwise/ personal hotspotting), as this is unmonitored and unfiltered access.

Monkton Academy will not accept responsibility for personal data that children store on their device. We assure you that we comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act; we will process any data lawfully and fairly and any data held will be kept secure and safe within our managed system and shall process the personal data for the purpose of educational provision, monitoring education provision and for the purposes of safeguarding children, reporting to the Department for Education and the Council.

The school uses Google Classroom. Virtual lessons and contact with teaching staff will only be made using these platforms.

Games, video conferencing and Social Media

Children are permitted to access gaming sites at home on the device providing they:

- Do not violate any terms of this agreement
- Are age-appropriate
- Do not contain social networking of any kind (these sites are not permitted)
- Do not affect the amount of storage needed in order to run applications needed for educational purposes

The device can be used to join a video conference with the class teacher via an approved platform designated by the school. These sessions will be set up by the school and monitored and controlled by them. Children are not permitted to create or continue in their own video conference sessions using the loaned device.

Social media of any kind is not permitted on the device. Filtering of internet access does not permit access to social media sites, sites with chat facilities, gambling sites, or other sites that are illegal or inappropriate for children.

Inspection of devices

Pupils may be selected at random to provide their device for inspection so that the school can ensure they comply with the safeguarding measures outlined in this policy.

Procedure for reloading software

If technical difficulties occur, or inappropriate software/applications/content is discovered, the device will be restored to the default factory settings and additional restrictions applied to safeguard your child. The school does not accept responsibility for the loss of any software or data deleted due to a re-format and re-image.

Regular Software Updates

Upgrade versions of licensed Software/Applications are available from time to time. These will be managed by the school.

Device identification

The device will be labelled in the manner specified by the School. Equipment can be identified in the following ways:

- Serial Number or asset number badging
- The device will be named in accordance with school's procedures, and this must not be changed
- The school may enforce the enabling of Location Services on devices in order to locate devices. This will be used as a security measure to minimise loss or theft

Device Security

All equipment will be managed centrally by the school. This management system allows the school to send out applications, reset passcodes, update software and set restrictions. This management system must never be removed from the device.

The equipment is installed with forensic software that monitors activity on the device. All keystrokes are continually monitored and a report generated detailing any activity that is suspicious or illegal or inappropriate. The report is sent to the designated member of staff at the school, usually the Principal, who will then decide on what action to take.

The school's acceptable behaviour, bullying and exclusion policies apply to educational activities undertaken through remote learning. Pupils who breach the schools policies and acceptable behaviour standards could be subject to disciplinary action as if that behaviour took place within school.

The school's policies on safe online behaviour apply to educational activities undertaken through remote learning.

Legal & Proprietary

All pupils and parents/carers should comply with trademark and copyright laws and all license agreements. Ignorance of the law is not immunity. If any parties are unsure, they should seek advice. Use or possession of hacking software is strictly prohibited. Violation of the law may result in criminal prosecution or disciplinary action.