

includEd Learning

Independent Specialist Education Provider



REMOTE AND BLENDED LEARNING POLICY

At IncludEd Learning we understand the need to continually deliver high quality education, including during periods of remote working.

Linked documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Behaviour and Communication Policy
- Assessment Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- create a common understanding for remote and blended learning at IncludEd Learning
- outline how we expect teachers and all staff to conduct themselves when they are teaching remotely.

This policy is an addition to the existing policies and procedures in place for use of the Internet and ICT.

Aims of this Policy

The primary purpose of the Remote and Blended Learning policy is to establish a defined manner for the school, parents and pupils to work constructively and harmoniously within a remote learning environment.

Consistency within a prolonged phase of remote or blended learning ensures that a high quality of education is provided for all pupils. Furthermore, the physically isolated nature of remote learning necessitates an agreed approach to teaching and learning to ensure safeguarding.

Definitions

This policy uses the term 'remote learning' to mean the learning a pupil undertakes when working away from school.

Remote learning is also used to refer to the situation where the majority of pupils and teachers may be leaning and teaching via the Internet rather than in a face-to-face classroom situation.

The term 'blended learning' is used to indicate both circumstances when:

- a minority of pupils are accessing learning off-site due to special circumstances, whilst most of the class is in school with the teacher;
- the teacher is delivering lessons online, off-site, due to special circumstances, whilst most of the class is in school.

Most of the same guidelines for conduct will apply to blended learning as to remote learning, and it may be more necessary to explain rules to pupils due to the inconsistent nature of absences.

In exceptional circumstances, blended learning may be deemed appropriate for a pupil who, for specialist reasons, is unable to physically attend school for a short, fixed period of time. If there are special circumstances where a pupil is unable to be present in school then the school will consider remote learning. This is to safeguard the wellbeing of pupils.

Implementation of the policy

Safety First

Key e-safety messages and understanding should be reinforced as part of each lesson.

Teachers should reinforce e-safety messages during lessons and when setting work that requires access to the internet. This includes access to messaging systems, internet forums and other internet based educational resource environments.

Pupils should be encouraged to be critically aware of the content they access online and be guided to validate the accuracy of information.

Pupils should also be taught to acknowledge the source of information used – never to plagiarise - and to respect copyright when using material accessed on the internet.

Support for pupils in the online space should never be brokered to any third parties, and any joint support that is effected through the use of Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams should only include IncludEd Learning staff who have been DBS checked.

Bullying is an unfortunate feature of the online environment and the perceived anonymity can add to this. Staff should be alert to pupils working in groups online where suddenly the relationships seem to break down.

If staff feel that the system is not being used appropriately – the same protocols exist as if the school were functioning normally. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the same responsibilities for safeguarding and should be the first port of call for any concerns about the online safety of our pupils.

Behavioural issues should be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy and sanctions can be applied that will come into effect once the school is back in operation on the IncludEd Learning School site.

Code of Conduct for All Staff

Always behave appropriately online as you would do in the classroom, ensuring that you match the standards expected in school.

Set appropriate boundaries and maintain the same professional standards as you would at school. Online working should not lead to a relaxation in teachers-pupil protocols.

Never make inappropriate jokes or comments online.

Any digital communication between teachers and pupils, or parents and guardians should be professional in tone and content. Digital communications must be through IncludEd Learning domain systems.

Contact with pupils should only be through:

- school email accounts
- Zoom screen recordings
- Google Classroom
- Microsoft Teams
- Other methods of contact such as phones, private email or social media accounts should not be used under any circumstances.

Never follow or interact with pupils on your personal social media account.

Working Hours

Working hours during a period of whole school remote learning will be 9.00 am to 2.00 pm.

Staff should be available to support and guide pupils throughout the remote learning working day.

Staff should ensure they are available to communicate and liaise with other staff members during remote learning working day.

Setting of Work

Staff are expected to have knowledge of the individual pupil's programme of study, keeping that pupil up to date with expectations of delivery and assessment and to be proactive in communicating with the pupils in their subject area.

Work will be set to follow the pattern of the pupil timetables.

Activities and tasks will be set by teachers via Google Classroom at a set time each day. Staff who are continuing an existing class specific Google Classroom or alternative platform should provide a copy of all work in Remote Learning Google Classroom as well.

Activities should not be set to last an entire week and should be planned to last the length of the lesson to be taught. To maintain motivation and avoid complacency, consider variation in the types of tasks set for particular teaching groups. Large project style activities will need to be chunked into lesson size activities for setting across a period time following the weekly timetable.

Work activities should not be excessively complex and consider the resources available to pupils at home. Tasks requiring printing, sketching and sending of images should be avoided, if possible. When pupils are expected to send images as a record of work, clear guidance should be provided for how and where images should be stored or sent through the IncludEd Learning domain.

If weblinks or video links are to be used as reference material, ensure they are live, working and the content is age appropriate.

The use of Microsoft Teams is expected for blended learning, where a pupil working remotely may join the live lesson with the rest of the class.

In this case, staff should ensure that pupils have cameras switched off and that the session is recorded. There should be a balance of 50% live teaching and 50% work which can be completed without screen time, to ensure that pupils have variation and down-time from the screen during the school day whilst still engaging with teachers.

Assessment and Feedback

Staff must ensure that pupil work is monitored and assessed in line with the whole school Assessment Policy.

Pupil work should be assessed with constructive comments within one week of the activity being set, if whole school remote learning, or upon the pupil's return to school if blended learning.

Assessment and feedback for online work should be added using the comment facilities for Google Docs or Google Slides. Blended learning may be completed online, or printed and added to and assessed in pupil books or folders.

Microsoft Teams can be used for verbal/audio feedback to groups of pupils only, not individuals.

Zoom screen or other video recordings can be used to give feedback to groups and/or individuals. The teacher video panel should not be used and audio voice content should be used to narrate, unless the teacher is in school.

Google Classroom discussion classes can be used for written feedback to individual or group queries.

Missing or Incomplete Work

Part of our commitment for providing appropriate learning activities and the assessment of work extends to ensuring work is being completed and informing parents if work is not completed.

For whole school remote learning:

Staff should record the subject and teacher for missing or incomplete work against the student on the appropriate missing work registers.

Entries for missing and incomplete work should be added to the Work not completed register at the end of the Monday for the week following when work has been set.

SLT will email all parents a record for all work that has been missed or considered incomplete on a weekly cycle.

Parental inquiries regarding missing or incomplete work will be forwarded to subject teachers to provide details to ensure pupils complete outstanding work.

For blended learning:

Staff should complete a Daybook entry for pupils who have either failed to complete work or failed to attend a live Microsoft Teams lesson. The Head of Centre should be copied in. The Pastoral Lead will monitor this and contact the pupil by email or home by telephone or email to follow up and ensure that all is well. The school recognises that some pupils may be accessing blended/remote learning due to special circumstances, and that they may not necessarily be able to access the work. The school requests that parents inform school if this is the case.

Communication

Enquiries by parents should be responded to within 24 hours. Communication with parents should be conducted through IncludEd Learning domain email.

Staff should be alert to pupils opting to continue their online collaboration on non-protected devices such as smartphones and should only accept work/participation delivered through the Google Classroom / Microsoft Teams / school email. This will ensure that pupils are using school enabled channels and are part of the secured environment. SLT will monitor the use of devices and will check to ensure that lessons are taking place at the appropriate times.

Pupils have a dedicated Google Classrooms and fully functioning IncludEd Learning email and may use this to contact staff for academic support. Staff should regularly check their email accounts during teaching hours and respond to queries in a timely manner.

Video and Audio Conferencing

Online staff meetings will use either the Microsoft Teams or Google Meet platforms for video to video conferencing purposes.

Guidance for video to video meetings:

- Staff should ensure they are in a quiet space, with no ambient noise, and friends and family are never visible during a lesson.

- Staff should ensure that equipment and materials are organised in advance of the lesson and that they are well prepared.
- Staff should ensure that there is never a possibility of strangers having access to their screen.
- Global Microsoft Teams security and privacy settings for teachers and pupils should not be altered.
- Video to video Microsoft Team meetings with individuals or groups of pupils should not be conducted.
- Pupils should have their cameras turned off at all times.
- Audio to audio Microsoft Team meetings should be used when delivering lesson instruction or feedback discussions to individuals or groups of pupils.
- All meetings of this type should be recorded.

Data Protection

Under GDPR all online content from a pupil could be regarded as personal data and is subject to the provisions under the Data Protection Act.

The names, emails and phone numbers of pupils are personal data. This means that only relevant people should have access, and the information should only be kept as long as it is required.

Personal data should only be used to assist teachers to carry out their work. It must not be given out to people who have no right to see it.

All staff should maintain the security of all computerised databases of information on individuals, whether they are staff, pupils or members of the general public. Any queries in this regard should be referred to the Head.

Pupil data should not be kept on the private devices of staff.

Data should only be accessible to those staff that need it.

The information should be deleted after it has been used for this purpose.