



Remote Learning Policy

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1. Introduction and Aims

At Rugby Free Secondary School, we aim to foster kindness and pride, whilst maximising our academic and personal potential.

We believe that all of our students should be happy and safe, whilst demonstrating the limitless endeavour and resilience required to succeed by striving for excellence. To achieve these goals, our school ethos is underpinned by the foundations of mutual respect, positive relationships, collaboration and genuine curiosity.

In a world in which digital technologies are becoming more prevalent and relevant, we believe that we must prepare our students to be able to take advantage of, and be prepared for, an ever-increasing technological world. These digital technologies can be used as an effective tool to enhance teaching and learning enabling our students to become proficient in the use of these technologies to enhance and improve their learning experience. Crucially, they can also act as a virtual classroom, should the need arise due to COVID-19.

This policy sets out the intentions of the school to ensure all children continue to receive good quality education throughout Covid-19. This policy outlines our contingency plans for the continuity of education, the expectations of students, staff and parents, as well as how the school/academy trust will support staff and students with the provision of remote learning. Staff and students will be briefed and trained on the contents of this policy to ensure the safe continuity of education. This policy works alongside our data protection policy, information security policy, acceptable use of IT policy, behaviour policy and in line with our safeguarding policies and procedures

All relevant resources that are available and will possibly be used by the school to deliver remote learning are listed in Appendix 1 of this policy. This will be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

2. Remote Learning

'Remote Learning' refers to the provision of work, teacher support, assessment and feedback from teachers to students in the event that normal lessons are unable to be delivered 'face-to-face' as normal.

Situations where this policy may apply include:



- A student who is absent from school for 3 or more days for a pre-agreed reason e.g. taking part in a sporting tournament or expedition
- Student exclusion (external exclusion)
- Students unable to attend school due to a period of advised self-isolation but who otherwise remain well
- An extended period of school closure
- A year group or student 'bubble' being forced to self-isolate

This policy does not apply in situations such as:

- A student who absents themselves from school without prior authorisation from the school, with or without parental permission, e.g. a family holiday taken in term time.
- A parental decision to absent their child as a precaution against an outbreak of infectious disease but contrary to official medical advice from Public Health England, the UK Government or the World Health Organisation.

3. What Have We Learned So Far?

Since the start of the first national lockdown for COVID-19 in March 2020, RFSS has quickly established new ways for students to learn remotely. This has combined 'live' teaching via Microsoft Teams, online resources prepared by teachers and online resources via third party providers, such as Seneca and Hegarty Maths. As we prepare for a potential second lockdown (either local or national), and with the Government making remote learning a statutory obligation for schools, it is important, when thinking about our remote curriculum, to remember that:

"As with regards to remote curriculum, it is expected to be the equivalent length of a normal timetable, reflect the ambitions of the school curriculum, and include a range of subjects each day.

How this is achieved is at the discretion of school leaders and might include a range of independent tasks with suggested timings for completion."

(Tom Middlehurst, ASCL curriculum and inspection specialist in Schools Week, 16th October 2020).

4. The Research Behind Remote Learning:



[The EEF study](#) uses evidence from reviews into remote learning (using the full text of 60 reviews) that cover a range of scenarios, some that do not closely parallel the circumstances facing schools responding to COVID-19. This caveat needs to be remembered when looking at the conclusions drawn:

- Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered

The report suggests that students can learn through remote teaching if the following elements of effective teaching are present: clear expectations; scaffolding; feedback. This makes no difference whether teaching is in real time (synchronous) or alternatives to real time (asynchronous).

- Ensuring access to technology is key, particularly for disadvantaged pupils

A lack of suitable technology is the biggest hindrance for remote learning. For example, remote learning using just a mobile phone is not going to help students get the most out of what is provided.

- Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes

The EEF study found that the value of collaborative approaches was emphasised in many reviews, although notably many studies involved older learners. Different approaches to peer interaction are likely to be better suited to different age groups.

- Supporting pupils to work independently can improve learning outcomes

Wider evidence related to metacognition and self-regulation suggests that disadvantaged pupils are likely to particularly benefit from explicit support to help them work independently, for example, by providing checklists or daily plans.

- Different approaches to remote learning suit different tasks and types of content

Approaches to remote learning vary widely and have different strengths and weaknesses. Teachers should be supported to consider which approaches are best suited to the content they are teaching and the age of their pupils.

For example, games for learning were found to have a high impact on vocabulary learning in foreign languages, but there is less evidence related to their use in other subjects.

Likewise, using technology to support retrieval practice and self-quizzing can help pupils retain key ideas and knowledge, but is not a replacement for other forms of assessment.



5. Individual Remote Learning

This section of this policy applies in situations where school remains open and working as normal, but an individual student is unable to attend lessons as normal for a period of 3 or more days but is otherwise well and able to work, e.g. a period of advised self-isolation or an absence that has been authorised by the school in advance.

In these cases, the school may provide the following, coordinated in the first instance by the student's Head or Assistant Head of Year:

- HoY/AHoY will request that subject teachers provide a suitable task or tasks and will share these with parents via an appropriate means.
- Class teachers will coordinate the relevant material and liaise with students through Microsoft Teams and/ or ClassCharts, as well as through email.
- If an absence of this type continues for more than one week, additional work should be requested and provided on a weekly basis until the student is able to return to school.

Excerpt from RFSS Letter to Parents/Carers:

What if an individual or a small group of students are forced to self-isolate?

Our teaching staff have been working hard to ensure that there is a provision in place for instances such as this. Although 'live' lessons may not be able to take place as teachers will still be teaching those in school, students should refer to their respective Microsoft Team group. In this section, students will find the work for the half-term in the tab marked 'Files'. Students can choose to return this work through Microsoft Teams, by uploading it to ClassCharts, or by emailing this into their respective subject teachers.

Students can also access Homework and other Home Learning materials through ClassCharts, in the normal manner. Teachers are available to respond to emails, and we aim to respond to all email requests within 24 hours, where possible.

6. Group Remote Learning

This section of this policy applies in situations where school remains open, but at a reduced capacity due to student and/or staff self-isolation. Most likely, this reflects the needs of the school should a year group 'bubble' be required to self-isolate.



- A 'Live Lesson' timetable will be issued, starting from the day after the students were unable to come into school.
- Work will be uploaded by class teachers on to ClassCharts and Microsoft Teams, in addition to the 'Live Lessons'.
- Quality Assurance from SLT and HoY/AHoY will take place during this period.

Excerpt from RFSS Letter to Parents/Carers:

If a year group has to self-isolate due to a confirmed positive COVID-19 case, then work will be uploaded to ClassCharts by subject teachers. This will work in the same way as homework, with students accessing the work through the same tab as usual. Students can then choose to upload their finished work to ClassCharts or email it to the relevant teacher using their School email account.

In addition to this, we will provide students with a timetable for 'live' lessons which will be delivered on Microsoft Teams. Please note that students can choose whether to have the camera and microphone switched on or off during the live lesson. They do not need to be seen or heard during the lesson if they do not wish to.

Subject teachers have set up individual Team groups and will deliver lessons according to the 'live' lessons timetable that will be published at the time of self-isolation. This may not be for all lessons as some teachers may need to cover lessons in other year groups if staff are unwell.

7. A Period of School Closure

RFSS is committed to providing continuity of education for its students in the event of an extended school closure. While such situations are inevitably highly varied in their causes and ramifications, we will endeavour to provide continued learning for our students during any period of closure in the following ways:

- The provision of relevant, developmental written work for each subject area and each year group which enables students to make continued progress.
- Regular, live instruction from staff (where possible), with the ability for students to ask questions of their teachers in through a 'Live Lesson' programme
- The opportunity for students to have their work assessed by their teachers and



receive feedback on it.

- Students, parents and carers to receive regular 'Announcements' about work through the ClassCharts programme.

Addendum – January 2021:

- Due to the enforced closure of schools announced by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Microsoft Teams will be used to deliver Live Lessons to all year groups. We will follow the methods outlined above, but lessons will move to 45 minutes in length, due to the Sutton Trust's research, which has outlined this idea as best practice for both students and staff.

8. Technological Concerns / Issues

Any provision of remote learning to achieve these three aims assumes that students and staff have access to the internet at home. All RFSS staff are provided with a Laptop, which they can use to access any of the services by which remote learning will be provided. However, we cannot assume that everyone has access to printing facilities, so any work set and submitted for assessment will be entirely electronically set and distributed. In the event of students who are unable to access the internet, or have a Laptop, the ICT Manager will liaise with the student / parent / carer in order to ascertain a programme of support. Hardcopy work will be printed in the first instance.

Microsoft Teams is a collaborative platform which allows for contemporaneous, real-time communication and sharing of resources between teachers and their classes. Every member of the RFSS community has been set up on Teams and pre-registered to each of their classes.

9. Expectations and GDPR:

Live lessons are a useful way to replicate the classroom experience and allow for students to ask questions in 'real time'. Microsoft Teams allows for the setting of assignments, sharing of resources and for teachers to schedule and deliver lessons virtually yet in a similar way to how they would in the classroom. Learners will be provided with a school email address to avoid any issues with data protection. Parents and students will not be required to provide their personal email addresses. The school and the academy trust have consulted with their IT support and safeguarding team to ensure the use of a safe and secure platform.



The school/academy trust has consulted with the school's Data Protection Officer to ensure GDPR compliance. Live lessons will be not be recorded for safeguarding and GDPR purposes. At points where children are asked to participate, the class teacher will invite them to unmute their microphones or to type their responses in to the chat function. Use of the chat function will be enabled for the duration of the lesson. Students will be invited to use this function as and when appropriate. Students can also use the chat function to engage with their teacher. Students should not use the chat function once the lesson has ended.

Students are expected to work on their learning tasks during the week in which they are set. During this time, teachers are expected to have an online presence via Microsoft Teams at the time they would normally have a lesson with that year group to be available for students to ask questions in real time. Students can choose whether to have the camera and microphone switched on or off during the live lesson. They do not need to be seen or heard during the lesson if they do not wish to. Students are encouraged to take part in the 'Live Lessons' that are available, if they are well enough to do so.

When engaging a third-party data processor to provide us with a platform to deliver remote education, the school and academy trust will:

- Ensure the service provides sufficient guarantees of their GDPR compliance.
- Share only information that is considered necessary for the system to work and operate in order to achieve the required purpose.
- Conduct a Data Protection Impact Assessment to identify and minimise risk.
- Inform individuals of the details of any third-party processor and the data to be processed for these purposes by updating your privacy notices.

When staff are required to work from home in order to deliver education, the school and academy trust shall:

- Provide staff with a secure, school registered device to work from.
- Ensure any information taken off school site is done so in accordance with our Information Security Policy.
- Ensure staff are briefed and familiar with the school's remote working policy.
- Ensure all staff are up to date with data protection training. When implementing a platform where students are required to engage in online activities, the



school/academy trust will:

- Ensure parents are informed of the type of work children are being asked to do.
- Provide information on who is likely to engage with pupils online in order to deliver online teaching.
- Share information and guidance with parents to ensure they are able to effectively monitor their children's safety online.
- Review settings to ensure they are set to the most secure and practical format that is possible.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that risks of harm to children through inappropriate access via online portals are reduced as far as possible.
- Continuously liaise with our safeguarding team to ensure we are following all relevant safeguarding guidance.

b) Assessment and Feedback

The work that is set will, as far as is possible, include one piece of work in each subject each week (though with varying demands depending on how frequently a particular subject is taught) which is to be submitted for teacher feedback.

Work can be submitted to teachers via Microsoft Teams, ClassCharts and/or email. Teachers will assess the work and return it to students with feedback attached in a timely fashion. The Assignments Tab on Microsoft Teams can now be used for 'live' feedback during a lesson, due to Teams' new features that were released in January 2021.

Where a year group 'bubble' is out for an extended period of time (longer than 7 days), teachers will be instructed to ensure low-stakes AFL quizzing occurs when students return, in order to ascertain progress and knowledge gaps.

c) Expectations of Students

Assuming they are well enough to work, students are expected to:

- Complete all work set for them and submit this work in the specified ways
- Check emails regularly and read and respond to communication from the school
- Where students experience problems with IT systems, they should proactively inform ICT support through the ICT Manager, HoY / AHoY / Form Tutor / Class Teachers
- Students are expected to uphold the same standards of conduct and behaviour



during live online lessons as they would be expected to in school.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Ensuring appropriate language is used in Teams comments or emails, and that any comment is on-topic and relevant to the task in hand.
- Ensuring full engagement with the tasks in hand, including submission of any required work by the deadline that has been set.
- Ensuring that clothing is appropriate, following the same guidance as a normal "non-uniform" day in school.

d) Expectations of Staff

Assuming they are well enough to work, staff are expected to:

- Ensure that work is set and made available through the specified methods at the start of each week to cover the calendar week ahead, and that sufficient resources are made available to students via electronic means to allow them to carry out this work at home. Where textbooks are not available online, staff should at the very least scan relevant pages and share them with students along with the resources for that week's lessons, or signpost where this can be found electronically.
- To be familiar with the use of ClassCharts and Microsoft Teams, and to be available online through Teams at the times they would usually have lessons to engage in live support with their students, where possible.
- To set, assess and return work to students promptly by electronic means.

Directors of Learning are required to liaise with their Departmental staff through regular (at least weekly) contact to ensure that:

- Sufficient work is being set to cover ongoing periods of closure
- Students causing concern through a lack of engagement with live lessons or assignments requiring submission are flagged with SLT on a weekly basis.

10. Safeguarding

Any online contact between students and staff must only take place through official school channels, which are:

- RFSS email address only



- No personal email addresses must be used by either staff or students
- Microsoft Teams chat or video conference (through RFSS email address only)
- ClassCharts messaging

Contact between students and staff through personal telephones or personal email accounts, or any other third-party messaging software or video conferencing software (e.g. WhatsApp, Skype etc.), is strictly prohibited.

Staff and students are encouraged to speak to the relevant member of staff should anything untoward occur.

During any period of school closure, the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' policy still applies, as does the Staff Code of Conduct.

Parents and carers have been made aware of this.

Excerpt from RFSS Letter to Parents/Carers:

Below are links which explain how to use Microsoft Teams and information on how to keep your child safe online.

<https://youtu.be/njXDEkpyFdU>

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides/what-parents-need-to-know-about-microsoft-teams>

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

11. How can I further support my child to work at home in a remote way?

The attached Home Learning booklet is our new home learning guide for parents and carers which should provide some useful hints and tips for ensuring your child has a productive spell of Remote Learning. This guide details some key tips and hints around working online, as well as other strategies for homework and learning discussions.



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Secondary School