

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School
'Park Lodge'

REMOTE LEARNING POLICY

Statement of Intent

In Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, we understand the importance of providing high quality education, including during periods of remote learning. We recognise the importance of maintaining high expectations in all areas of school life and ensuring that all of our children have access to the learning resources and support they need to succeed.

Most children attend school for face-to-face teaching. However, there are times when a small number of individuals or significantly larger groups may be unable to attend school. Because of the risk of localised or national outbreaks of COVID-19, disruption to schooling occurred during the 2019/2020 and the 2020/2021 academic years.

Although not without challenge, remote education makes a significant contribution to enabling children to continue to learn and progress, and to mitigating any widening of the attainment gap for the disadvantaged.

Where a class, group or small number of children need to self-isolate, or there are local and/or national restrictions requiring children to remain at home, the school will have the capacity to offer immediate remote education. Fundamentally, this means implementing a new routine of remote/online learning and teaching and engaging educationally with children in a variety of different ways. The underpinning principle is that all children will have access to high quality learning and teaching opportunities both in school and at home. It will be necessary to identify key learning priorities, without necessarily sacrificing breadth across the curriculum. A pragmatic approach to delivering the curriculum, prioritising key knowledge, understanding and skills in each area of learning will be taken.

Remote learning requires good communications, clarity about what is to be taught by teachers and learned by children in a carefully sequenced curriculum. The effectiveness of remote teaching is determined by many of the same factors as determine the effectiveness of classroom teaching. For example:

- ensuring children receive clear explanations
- supporting growth in confidence with new material through scaffolded practice
- application of new knowledge or skills
- enabling children to receive feedback on how to progress

These characteristics of good teaching are more important than the medium of delivery, be it in the classroom or through remote provision (whether or not that remote provision is live/synchronous or pre-recorded/asynchronous).

Well-planned online learning and teaching can:

- provide opportunities for the development of children's thinking skills and personal capabilities, including critical thinking and evaluation
- encourage independent working and independent thought

- facilitate opportunities for self-assessment and ownership of the learning
- develop digital literacy skills

While children are in school there can be important interaction between teachers and children through such things as questioning, eliciting and reflective discussion. However, these complex teacher skills are not always easy to recreate in a remote environment, but where remote education recreates at least some aspects of this interactivity and intentional dialogue, teaching is likely to be more effective, support child motivation and lead to better progress.

Children in the younger classes are likely to have particular needs which cannot easily be addressed in the same way as older children. Likewise, children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will require specific approaches tailored to their circumstances.

Access to appropriate devices and connectivity is essential for technology-led approaches to remote learning. However, securing access for all children is a significant challenge and the school will endeavour to:

- maintain an up-to-date record of which children and families do not have a device or internet access
- consider how school technology resources could be used to support children without sufficient remote facilities with usage or loan agreements in place to help safeguard school property
- ensure any equipment provided by Department of Education (DE) is clearly identified and ready to be re-distributed for a similar purpose

While there are a number of ways to implement high-quality remote learning, remote-access technology allows schools to continue to teach across all or most curriculum subjects.

Our Lady of Lourdes will use the following interactive platforms:

- Primary 1 and Primary 2 - Seesaw
- Primary 3, Primary 4, Primary 5, Primary 6 and Primary 7 - Google Classroom

It will be necessary to operate more flexibility, for example to accommodate contexts where children are having to share a single device at home, meaning that access to recorded lessons or hard copy resources may be needed.

School staff will want to consider the emotional health and well-being of the children (this includes contacting and engaging effectively to provide the support they may need). Frequent contact between children and teachers and teachers and parents is crucial. This contact may be through presence in a live lesson, questioning, feedback, or some other form of on or off line exchange (e.g. school emails or telephone calls) about school work.

It is important to note that high-quality remote teaching is far more than setting work for children to complete, although setting tasks to complement sequences of teaching plays an important role. Open-ended projects or research activities are less likely to lead to strong progress or outcomes. Therefore, such approaches should be generally avoided in favour of the more interactive, teacher-

led approaches to delivering the school's planned curriculum. The amount of work set for children can be significant; too much can be as much of a problem as too little.

Remote learning and the removal of face-to-face teaching will come into effect in the event of:

1. a full lockdown involving the whole school
2. a partial lockdown involving either a whole class bubble or part of a bubble
3. an individual child being asked to self-isolate

Remote learning should be temporary and last no longer than necessary, and therefore should always remain under review.

Roles and Responsibility

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for adhering to this policy at all times during periods of remote learning.

When providing remote learning, teachers will be available between 9.00am and 2.45pm, when not taking breaks. The rest of the teacher's directed time will be used for planning, preparation, assessment/marking and staff meetings.

If a teacher is not able to work for any reason, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, he or she should follow the normal attendance procedure and report this to the principal.

Teachers delivering remote learning should be aware that the same principles set out in the school's Code of Conduct will apply.

Keeping children motivated online can be more challenging than in a face-to-face learning environment. When providing remote learning, teachers are responsible for monitoring the engagement of the children and for reporting any children that are not responding. In the first instance they should contact the parent/guardian of the child and if there is no improvement in engagement notify the principal. Any child who is hard-to-reach or does not engage with remote learning will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Teachers will monitor the academic progress of children with SEN and discuss additional support or provision with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). For many children with SEN, the teaching and learning will need to be adapted to meet the wide range of specific needs. It is likely that more individualised planning may need to happen in many cases, and that the support of adults in home will be a significant advantage where that is possible.

Teachers will set differentiated work, to reinforce concepts or develop skills, for the children in their own classes and where applicable, their year group. This work will be shared on Seesaw or Google Classroom. It is recognised that younger children are likely to have particular needs which cannot easily be met through remote learning. For such children, it is likely that the priority will be progress in early reading. Ensuring continued access to appropriate reading books and resources for early readers will be considered a priority. Helping parents/guardians, at home to support children in their early reading will be important and teachers may provide guidance for parents/guardians to ensure that time is spent productively and developmentally at home.

If parents/guardians require hard copies of online resources, these will be provided. Additional hard copy learning packs may also be provided as required to supplement online resources. Teachers will make hard copies available at school to be delivered or posted, as not all parents/guardians will have access to printing facilities.

While teachers will want to retain the tried-and-tested resources they already use, some may find they need to be adapted for remote learning. For example, providing children with handouts that would have been used in the classroom can be confusing without the teaching to accompany them. Teachers may wish to consider adapting handouts to ensure they stand alone to provide simple and clear explanations of work. Teachers may also find it helpful to use resources such as BBC Bitesize, C2k Newsdesk and the Oak National Academy to complement remote provision.

The work set should follow the usual timetable for the class had they been in school, wherever possible. Teachers should coordinate with their colleagues to ensure consistency across the year group/key stage.

Live/synchronous sessions are a way of keeping in touch with children and motivating them to be engaged. Such lessons need to be carefully planned and should never be one-to-one sessions unless in special circumstances. For example, to provide support for children with SEN. It is important to determine the level of support or intervention that is required for a child with SEN learning remotely. Teachers and the SENCO should make sure that remote learning is accessible to all children and that reasonable adjustments are made where required.

Synchronous or asynchronous approaches can be used to teach new content or to convey a particular concept for children.

During live lessons teachers need to consider if it is necessary for webcams to be on and whether children should be muted.

Teachers will respond to work from children either as immediate oral feedback during live teaching sessions or parents/guardians or children may choose to send work via the learning platform or email, for teachers to respond to, where appropriate. This might be as simple as the parent/guardian taking a photograph or video of their child's work which can be shared with their teacher.

For each child, teachers should request at least two samples of work be sent by the end of each week (one language and literacy and one mathematics and numeracy). This should be communicated clearly in the weekly schedule and that it should be the children's own work, annotated with any input from parents/guardians if required.

Teachers are not expected to answer emails outside of working hours. It is essential that teachers protect their own well-being, engage with colleagues and school leadership to ensure collegiate support and access support as necessary.

Classroom Assistants

Classroom Assistants are responsible for adhering to this policy at all times during periods of remote learning.

Classroom assistants must be available during the week for their contracted hours, when not taking breaks.

If a classroom assistant is not able to work for any reason, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, he or she should follow the normal attendance procedure and report this to the principal.

During the school day classroom assistants will work on a rota to supervise the learning of vulnerable children or the children of keyworkers who are attending school.

If classroom assistants are not involved in the supervision of children in school, they will be instructed by the class teacher and/or SENCO how best to assist remote learning for a particular child or group of children.

In some instances, classroom assistants will work with the class teacher or SENCO to deliver remote learning for identified children.

The emotional health and well-being of all the children will remain a main priority. Conversely, it is also essential that classroom assistants protect their own well-being and access support as necessary.

School Management Team

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, the school management team are responsible for coordinating the remote learning approach across the school.

They will reinforce the importance of children staying safe online and make sure children are aware of the school's E-safety policy and how to stay safe online.

With assistance from the IT technicians, the school management team will monitor the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.

From the samples already collected, each teacher should provide four random samples of work (two language and literacy and two mathematics and numeracy) to the principal by the end of each week.

They will monitor the effectiveness of remote learning through regular virtual meetings with teachers, the level of child engagement, reviewing the work set, reaching out for feedback from children and parents/guardians.

The school management team will ensure parents/guardians are aware of what their children are being asked to do e.g. sites they have been asked to use and staff they have to interact with.

The school management team will focus on the emotional health and well-being of the children (this includes contacting and engaging effectively to provide the support they may require).

Designated Teachers

The designated teacher and the deputy designated teacher are responsible for all safeguarding concerns.

Teachers will be asked to follow the procedures set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy to report any concerns they have.

The designated teacher or the deputy designated teacher in consultation with the class teacher, when necessary, will carry out regular weekly or fortnightly checks on the safety and wellbeing of children, depending on their needs.

Office Staff

Office staff are responsible for adhering to this policy at all times during periods of remote learning.

If they are not able to work for any reason, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should follow the normal attendance procedure and report this to the principal.

They will continue to work in school when necessary or remotely when possible.

They will provide support to teachers and parents/guardians in relation to remote learning. Helping staff and/or parents/guardians with any technical difficulties e.g. user names and passwords. Issues beyond their expertise will be referred to the C2k helpdesk for assistance.

It is essential that office staff protect their own well-being and access support as necessary.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors are responsible for monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains high quality with regards to learning and teaching.

They should ensure that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons. The C2k service is strongly recommended and other programs and platforms should comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

C2k is the managed technology service for all schools, teachers and children. Access is via My School to this closed network which is only accessible to C2k users, making it much safer than other platforms for the children to use.

C2k has made available curriculum content that can support remote learning. The C2k tools also provide the functionality for teachers to provide feedback on digital work in a variety of ways and there is functionality for the children to collaborate as well as self-assess and peer-assess.

Children

Children are responsible for adhering to this policy at all times during periods of remote learning.

Children will be required to use their own or family-owned equipment to access remote learning resources, unless they have been provided with equipment from the school or through the Department of Education's loan of equipment scheme.

Children involved in remote learning will be expected to complete work to the deadline set by teachers and return it to the relevant member of staff for marking and feedback.

They will notify a responsible adult if they do not have access to remote learning materials.

Children will be expected to seek help if they need it and alert teachers if they are not able to complete work.

They will have to follow the agreed rules shared at the start of a session and adhere to the Behaviour Policy at all times.

During live lessons children should wear suitable clothing as should others in their households. They should always use appropriate language as should others in their households. When sending messages these must also be appropriate.

Computer equipment should be situated in a suitable 'public' living area within the home with an appropriate background. 'Private' living areas within the home, such as bedrooms, are not permitted during video communication.

There should be no recording, storing, or distributing of audio/visual material without permission.

Children who do not use devices or software as intended will be disciplined in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Parents/Guardians

School can expect parents/guardians to make the teacher aware if their child is sick or otherwise unable to complete work.

Parents/guardians should be encouraged to establish a routine with their children to include times for walking, working and eating whilst ensuring regular intervals for physical activity and relaxation. The creation of a schedule to coordinate the learning plan provided by the school helps establish a routine and allows children to take a leading role when making choices about how they engage in the balance between online and offline learning activities. Constant screen time is neither realistic nor beneficial. The National Health Service (NHS) recommend that 8 to 11 year olds have no more than 2 hours a day screen time (including TV, smartphones, tablets and video games).

The school will give sensitive consideration to parents'/guardians' capacity to support learning at home. Good communication between schools and parents/guardians (about the approach the school is taking) can help. This could include, where appropriate, briefings using Zoom, or one-to-one telephone calls where necessary, to inform parents/guardians and elicit their support. School should also communicate clearly what support is available from other organisations.

Parents/guardians should supervise their children when they are engaged in remote learning during synchronous or asynchronous activities. They should also make sure that work completed is the child's own work and it has been done to the best of his/her ability.

Parents/guardians should seek help with remote learning from the teacher and/or office staff if they need it.

Parents/guardians should highlight the importance of staying online and engaging respectfully and appropriately with others in an online environment. If they have any concerns about a child's safety they must immediately report it to the class teacher or the designated safeguarding teachers.

Parents/guardians should only use the links sent for their child's use and not share these with other families.

It is recognised that it is not possible to replicate school experiences in a home environment and parents/guardians are encouraged to engage confidently, innovatively and creatively when supporting the learning of their children.

Complaints or concerns made by parents/guardians and children will be handled in line with the school's Complaints Policy.

Data Protection

Staff members will be responsible for adhering to the GDPR when teaching remotely and will ensure confidentiality and integrity of their devices at all times. Sensitive data will only be transferred between devices if it is necessary to do so for the purpose of remote learning and teaching. Any data that is transferred between devices will be suitably encrypted or have other data protection measures in place so that if the data is lost, stolen, or subject to unauthorised access, it remains safe until recovered.

Staff should collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online. Staff should use work emails. Emails to parents/guardians will be sent blind carbon copy (Bcc) so that the emails of recipients do not appear in the received message header and will remain unknown to other recipients. Attachments sent by email should be encrypted/password protected.

Personal data stored on SIMS and the C2k platform, such as the dates of birth of children and parents'/guardians' contact details, should not be stored elsewhere or kept on separate devices. The school will not permit paper copies of contact details to be taken off the premises. Storage of such details is outlined in the school's GDPR.

All computer programs and platforms used for remote learning (e.g. Accelerated Reading, Education City, Seesaw) are compliant with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Footnote

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Pastoral Care and Behaviour Policy
- Special Education Policy
- Marking and Assessment Policy
- E-safety Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- The School Code of Conduct
- Attendance Policy
- GDPR
- Complaints Policy

This policy was written with reference to the following publications:

- Moving to Online Learning in the Primary School: Guidance for Primary School Leaders and Practitioners. - Education Authority
- Circular Number 2020/05: Guidance for School on Supporting Remote Learning to Provide Educational Continuity. - Department of Education
- Circular Number 2020/06: Curriculum Planning 2020/21 - Department of Education
- Circular Number 2021/01: Further Guidance for School on Supporting Remote Learning to Provide Educational Continuity. - Department of Education
- Safeguarding and Remote Education during Coronavirus (COVID-19). - DfE

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and other stakeholders.