



St Mary Magdalene C of E School  
with  
Christ Church C of E Primary School

# DISTANCE LEARNING, REMOTE LEARNING AND BLENDED LEARNING POLICY

This policy was:	Written in	November 2020
	Updated in	
	Review date	November 2021

## **Overview**

In the event of a school closure, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of distance or remote learning.

'Distance learning' refers to students being educated in any form whilst not in school. 'Remote learning' implies teaching and learning that takes place online but may also be used refer to the use of hard copy resources. We anticipate that most distance learning will also be remote learning, and therefore the terms are used interchangeably. 'Blended learning' refers to learning that involves a combination of face-to-face teaching and remote education which may be delivered online or through hard copy resources.

This policy uses the most recent government guidelines including the temporary continuity direction published in October 2020 which makes it clear that schools have a duty to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children unable to attend school due to coronavirus (Covid-19). The policy also draws from advice from trade unions and builds on the best practice developed during the period of school closure in spring and summer 2020.

## **Introduction**

Distance or remote learning typically exists in any situation in which the school is closed for an extended period of time, but a high proportion of students and teachers are healthy, and able to work as normal from home. Distance or remote learning may also be appropriate in some situations when a small number of students, in agreement with the school, have a period of absence but are able to work at home, at least to some extent. This also may be appropriate when a teacher is working remotely and teaching a class of pupils at school; for instance, when the teacher is teaching from home because they are self-isolating or shielding.

This policy may not apply in the event of short-term school closures or during short-term student absence unrelated to Covid-19. There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention of school, public health or government guidance. There are no qualifications or courses offered by the school which employ distance learning or distance assessment as the normal form of delivery.

## **Aims**

The aim of this policy is to outline the practical implementation of distance, remote and blended learning across a number of scenarios. Regardless of the specific circumstances, through our remote teaching we aim to:

- Ensure that every student achieves in relation to their individual potential
- Make learning an enjoyable, interactive and challenging experience
- Provide an inclusive education which caters to all students
- Promote feedback and assessment for learning

## **Expectations**

The government, in their guidance to schools, has specified expectations for remote provision detailed below:

- set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects
- teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject
- provide frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher in the school or through high-quality curriculum resources or videos
- gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum, using questions and other suitable tasks and set a clear expectation on how regularly teachers will check work
- enable teachers to adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure pupils' understanding
- plan a programme that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school, ideally including daily contact with teachers

These principles guide this policy, and indeed are in line with the distance learning provision provided by St Mary Magdalene during the Spring/Summer 2020 period of school closure.

### **Resources**

Distance learning is primarily delivered via Satchel. This enables teachers to set learning in line with the regular curriculum, students to upload completed work, and teachers and students to correspond quickly and in a secure manner. When setting work on Satchel, teachers are expected to use a variety of resources, including: worksheets; video clips; quizzes to check learning; narrated PowerPoints; and Loom videos. Teachers are always to keep in mind that students may have limited access to ICT and as a result, students should be able to complete the work even if it is only accessible on a mobile phones.

Wherever possible, the school will provide students with ICT and over the course of 2020, a large number of laptops were loaned or gifted to students. The school does not have electronic equipment for all students and as such, students identified as not having online access or appropriate ICT are provided with printable resources following the expectations above.

In the event of teachers working remotely from home whilst students remain in school, teachers are expected to use Zoom and/or Loom whilst the class is supervised by another teacher, to ensure the class receives high quality teaching.

### **Blended learning**

In the event that the school is required to stay open for certain groups or bubbles of students, those who are in school will be educated following their normal teaching timetable, or following an adapted timetable; those not in school are likely to be educated using remote learning, following their normal teaching timetable.

### **Students with SEND**

Students who normally have SEND support will continue to have regular remote support from an LSA or other member of staff. The SEND staff team will also liaise with families and students regularly throughout any period of remote learning.

## **Pastoral support**

Ongoing pastoral support is central to ensuring our students remain linked to the St Mary Magdalene community during any period when they are not in school. As well as students having access to their teachers through Satchel, students who are unable to attend school will receive regular telephone calls with their family group tutors and/or Head of Year.

## **Safeguarding**

Remote education is a new experience for both staff and pupils therefore ensuring teachers and children are safe when providing remote education is essential. We may offer lessons via loom/zoom if a member of staff is self-isolating and there will be a qualified member of staff in the room to facilitate this and support the pupils learning.

We encourage parents and carers to set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites. These are usually free, but often need to be turned on. It is essential to have and communicate clear reporting routes so that children, teachers, parents and carers can raise any safeguarding concerns. If you/your child has any concerns please phone the school office and leave a message for the designated/deputy safeguarding leads:

Mrs Pett – Designated Lead

Miss Hughes – Deputy Lead

Ms Hinds – Deputy Lead

All information will be treated in confidence and where necessary reported to the appropriate agencies.

## **Reviewing this policy**

This policy will be reviewed as and when further government guidance is issued.