

## REMOTE EDUCATION POLICY

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### RATIONALE

Risks surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic have led to both short-term and long-term periods of school closure and have also required both staff and students to self-isolate. During this challenging time, the Governing Body remains committed to ensuring that students are in receipt of high-quality education. This policy draws on guidance published by the Department for Education and Ofsted.

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### PURPOSE

This information is intended to provide clarity and transparency to pupils and parents/carers about what to expect from remote education if local restrictions require entire cohorts (or bubbles) to remain at home. This policy also provides details of what to expect where individual pupils are self-isolating.

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### IMPLEMENTATION

#### The remote curriculum: what is taught to pupils at home

A pupil's first day or two of being educated remotely might look different from our standard approach, while we take all necessary actions to prepare for a longer period of remote teaching. In the overwhelming majority of cases where a 'bubble' is required to work at home, the remote learning material will be available either in advance of or during that first day. There may be a short delay when this is required in the middle of the school day while we ensure all students are safely collected.

#### Will my child be taught broadly the same curriculum as they would if they were in school?

We teach the same curriculum remotely as we do in school wherever possible and appropriate. However, we have needed to make some adaptations in some subjects. For example, for core PE we have provided a video which directs students to suitable activities and resources they can use. In practical subjects, there are certain topics which cannot be completed at home due to lack of access to equipment and, as such, some lessons may be postponed until students are back in school. Each subject has reviewed the curriculum and identified lessons which are suitable in terms of content. This does mean that students may cover the work in a slightly different order to a standard year where education is provided solely in school.

#### Remote teaching and study time each day

#### How long can I expect work set by the school to take my child each day?

We expect that remote education (including remote teaching and independent work) will take pupils broadly the following number of hours each day:

Secondary school-aged pupils not working towards formal qualifications this year	5 hours per day. Students are expected to follow their normal school timetable with the appropriate number of lessons provided for each subject.
Secondary school-aged pupils working towards formal qualifications this year	5 hours per day. Students are expected to follow their normal school timetable with the appropriate number of lessons provided for each subject.
Sixth-form pupils	Students will have video lessons provided for a minimum of seven lessons a fortnight per subject. Due to the nature of some of the courses studied at KS5, these lessons may incorporate a larger proportion of time where students work independently on coursework or individual study.

## Accessing remote education

### How will my child access any online remote education you are providing?

All resources will be provided on Google Drive for all year groups. The link to each year group's area can be found at: <https://www.sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk/629/covid-19-home-learning>.

### If my child does not have digital or online access at home, how will you support them to access remote education?

We recognise that some pupils may not have suitable online access at home. We take the following approaches to support those pupils to access remote education:

- We have selected Google Drive as our platform as this can be accessed on any device that connects to the internet – computer, mobile phone, smart TV, games consoles. You can find further help on how to access Google Drive on games consoles in our 'Frequently Asked Questions' document: <https://sandwichtech.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/document/Home-Learning-FAQs.pdf?t=1610364211?ts=1610364211>
- If you do not have access to any device to enable internet access, you may be able to borrow a laptop from the school. Please be advised that there are a limited number of laptops that have been provided by the DfE so we may not be able to meet demand in all cases. To make a request you can either:
  - directly e-mail Mrs Wanstall ([lucy.wanstall@sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk](mailto:lucy.wanstall@sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk)) to make the request;
  - inform the staff liaison during the weekly contact phone call that you would like to make a request for a laptop.
- If you have a computer but do not have internet, you may be able to borrow a dongle by:
  - directly e-mailing Mrs Wanstall ([lucy.wanstall@sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk](mailto:lucy.wanstall@sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk)) to make the request. (Please note, these are limited in supply by the DfE so there is a chance that not all requests can be met.)
- If you have limited data, you may be able to request a data allowance upgrade.
  - If:
    - you do not have fixed broadband at home;
    - you cannot afford additional data for your devices;
    - students are experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education;
    - the mobile phone being used to access the data is on:
      - Three
      - Smarty
      - Virgin Mobile
      - EE
      - Tesco Mobile
      - Sky Mobile
      - O2
  - If you meet the criteria above, please contact Sam Holland ([sam.holland@sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk](mailto:sam.holland@sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk)) including the following information:
    - the name of the account holder for the phone account;
    - the phone number of the mobile linked to the account;
    - the mobile network of that device;
    - whether you pay monthly or Pay as you Go (PAYG).
- It is essential that you can watch the recorded lessons. If you do not have access, we can put the lessons onto a DVD and you can watch them on any DVD player. Where necessary, you can request printed resources, but generally this will not be needed.
- If you are unable to email work in or access the online platforms to submit work, you can post work to the school. However, we anticipate that this should be an unlikely problem due to the loaning of equipment described above.

### How will my child be taught remotely?

We use a combination of the following approaches to teach pupils remotely:

- Pre-recorded lessons which have been recorded by teachers in STS. These videos can be found on 'Google Drive'.

- Access to online versions of the textbook via 'Kerboodle' in Geography and Science. (<http://www.kerboodle.com>)
- Access to the school library to borrow e-books via the library app. (<https://www.sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk/625/library>)
- Access to Seneca Learning for all years and Seneca Premium for Years 11 and 13. (<http://www.senecalearning.co.uk>)
- Access to 'MyMaths' to supplement Mathematics lessons.

### **Engagement and feedback**

What are your expectations for my child's engagement and the support that we as parents and carers should provide at home?

We expect students to:

- engage with their lessons as per their normal school timetable;
- log into their school email daily and respond to emails they have been sent by their tutor and teachers;
- complete the assessment tasks for each subject.

We expect parents to support remote learning by:

- ensuring students maintain a routine and follow their school timetable for lessons;
- checking they have accessed their email daily;
- checking that students are seeking help from their teachers when needed.

How will you check whether my child is engaging with their work and how will I be informed if there are concerns?

We will check student engagement in the following ways:

- students are encouraged to remain in contact with their teachers to raise any concerns they have over any content covered;
- all students receive a weekly e-mail from their form tutor which they are expected to reply to;
- during prolonged school closure, the parents of students will also receive a phone call every week to check on progress and identify any concerns;
- every three lessons per subject there will be a short Google Form quiz for students to complete; this will allow us to see which students are completing the task;
- every ten lessons per subject there will be a longer, formal assessment set – this may take the shape of a Google Form with more in-depth questioning on the topics covered or it could be work that will be e-mailed to the student's class teacher.

In the eventuality that a student is not completing the assessments:

- the class teacher will e-mail the parent/carer to let them know of the issue.

How will you assess my child's work and progress?

Feedback can take many forms and may not always mean extensive written comments for individual children. For example, whole-class feedback or quizzes marked automatically via digital platforms are also valid and effective methods, amongst many others. Our approach to feeding back on pupil work is as follows:

- All lessons will have self-assessed questions included. The questions set in the video lesson will then have the correct answer given so students can mark their own work to check progress. This will allow students to see if there is something they are struggling with in real time so they can e-mail their teacher for further help on that aspect.
- Every three lessons per subject there will be a short Google Form quiz for students to complete. This will allow us to see not only which students are completing the task but also measure their understanding on a regular basis. This will provide students with instant feedback on those questions.
- Every ten lessons per subject there will be a longer formal assessment set. This may take the shape of a Google Form with more in-depth questioning on the topics covered or it could be work that will be e-mailed to their class teacher. This formal assessment will receive individual feedback in accordance with the in-school policy of 'What Went Well' (WWW), 'Even Better If' (EBI) and 'Now Do This' (NDT).

## **Additional support for pupils with particular needs**

### How will you work with me to help my child who needs additional support from adults at home to access remote education?

We recognise that some pupils, for example some pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), may not be able to access remote education without support from adults at home. We acknowledge the difficulties this may place on families and we will work with parents and carers to support those pupils in the following ways:

- Students with SEN are supported by Teaching Assistants who are available to offer more specific support. The SENCo will contact the parents of students to give them the name and email address of named Teaching Assistants who are available to support.
- All parents of students are, during full school closure, contacted weekly. Concerns can be raised during these conversations and support will be offered.
- Ongoing access with programs to support students with reading text at home, e.g. ReadWrite 11.

## **Remote education for self-isolating pupils**

Where individual pupils need to self-isolate, but the majority of their peer group remains in school, how remote education is provided will likely differ from the approach for whole groups. This is due to the challenges of teaching pupils both at home and in school.

### If my child is not in school because they are self-isolating, how will their remote education differ from the approaches described above?

If your child is having to self-isolate while the rest of their year group is in school:

- Please notify the Attendance Office.
- Attendance will send a daily e-mail to all teaching staff naming students who are having to self-isolate.
- Teachers will then e-mail the work to the student's e-mail account for them to complete. This will often be the same lesson resource as is used in school to ensure consistency in learning. Video lessons are not provided as standard during these short periods of self-isolation, but some departments may use relevant material or resources such as Oak National Academy lessons where appropriate.
- Feedback will be provided every ten lessons per subject as per school policy so it is likely that students will be back in school before this period passes for instances of self-isolation.

## **Links to other policies/documents**

On 11 January 2021 Ofsted published a guide to remote education, which draws on their findings from their interim visits, research and literature review. This guide is reproduced below (Appendix 1).

## OFSTED GUIDE TO REMOTE EDUCATION

### What is remote education?

There are different definitions out there, but these are the ones we will use here:

- Remote education: a broad term encompassing any learning that happens outside of the classroom, with the teacher not present in the same location as the pupils.
- Digital remote education: often known as online learning, this is remote learning delivered through digital technologies.
- Blended learning: a mix of face-to-face and remote methods. An example would be the ‘flipped classroom’, where main input happens remotely (for example through video), while practice and tutoring happen in class.
- Synchronous education: this is live; asynchronous education is when the material is prepared by the teacher and accessed by the pupil at a later date.

### Some common myths about remote education

Some unhelpful myths exist about remote education, which are not based on evidence. These include that:

- remote education is fundamentally different to other forms of teaching/learning
- remote education is a different curriculum/offer to the content that would be delivered normally
- the best forms of remote education are digital
- the best way to deliver remote education is always through live lessons
- the most important thing is pupils’ engagement

None of these things are necessarily true. Below, we counter them with evidence-based pointers. Here are 7 things to think about when providing remote education. Note that they are not in order of importance.

#### 1: Remote education is a way of delivering the curriculum

Remote education is a means, not an end. The aim of education is to deliver a high-quality curriculum so that pupils know more and remember more. Remote education is one way of doing so.

This means that everything we know about what a quality curriculum looks like still applies. The remote education curriculum needs to be aligned to the classroom curriculum as much as possible. And, just like the classroom curriculum, it needs to be carefully sequenced and ensure that pupils obtain the building blocks they need to move on to the next step. Curricular goals should be made as explicit remotely as they would be in the classroom.

Remote education is not the same as digital education. Sometimes, it may be more effective to deliver remote education through worksheets or a textbook. All schools/colleges should have access to a digital platform so they can provide online education where that is the most appropriate method.

A good textbook can provide the curriculum content and sequencing pupils need. It can also be easier to access for some pupils. However, when using textbooks or worksheets it is still important to make sure that teachers can provide feedback and assess learning. Any worksheets should be aligned with the curriculum and provide meaningful work.

#### 2: Keep it simple

Our brains don’t learn differently using remote education, so everything we know about cognitive science and learning still applies. We don’t have to make huge changes to the way we teach.

We also don’t need to overcomplicate resources with too many graphics and illustrations that don’t add to content. When using digital remote education, the platform we use shouldn’t be too complicated to use. Just as we don’t need ‘all-singing, all-dancing’ lessons in the classroom, remote education often benefits

from a straightforward and easy-to-use interface. Simple graphics that highlight the key concepts and features we want to teach can be most effective.

More important is attention to the key elements of effective teaching. For example, it's useful to provide pupils with an overview of the bigger picture and where a specific lesson or activity sits within a sequence of lessons or activities. It's also vital to have clear and high expectations and to communicate these to pupils. Just as in the classroom, most pupils will be novices in what we are teaching them. We can't expect them to be able to discover new content for themselves through tasks, projects and internet searching.

There are of course some things that need more careful consideration when teaching remotely. For example, when using recorded lessons, clarity of explanations becomes even more important as we can't as easily correct misunderstandings or misconceptions.

Another example is the 'split attention' effect. Pupils can find it harder to concentrate, so the way we integrate words and pictures or graphs is important. Text can be integrated with images where that is appropriate and doesn't just encourage guessing. This can be shown in chunks in the appropriate place. This makes the words into a description of the images and allows pupils to focus on what is most important.

As it's harder for pupils to concentrate when being taught remotely, it's often a good idea to divide content into smaller chunks. Short presentations or modelling of new content can be followed by exercises or retrieval practice.

### **3: When adapting the curriculum, focus on the basics**

We will often need to adapt our subject curriculum when moving to remote education, for example because some topics are hard to teach remotely. When we do this, we need to focus on the basics:

- Beware of offering too much new subject matter at once. Make sure key building blocks have been understood fully first. We need to assess pupils' knowledge to determine this.
- Consider the most important knowledge or concepts pupils need to know. Focus on those.
- Consider what alternatives exist for traditional practical activities. What can be done at home, or using simulations, for example? Worked examples and modelling can work very well in remote digital education.
- In many cases, practising and a focus on developing existing knowledge and skills, such as handwriting or simple arithmetic, may be useful.

### **4: Feedback, retrieval practice and assessment are more important than ever**

Learning isn't fundamentally different when done remotely. Feedback and assessment are still as important as in the classroom. It can be harder to deliver immediate feedback to pupils remotely than in the classroom, but teachers have found some clever ways to do this.

This immediate feedback can be given through:

- chatroom discussions,
- 1-to-1 interaction tools
- interactive touch-screen questioning in live recorded lessons
- adaptive learning software.

Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes. It's therefore worth considering enabling these through, for example, chat groups or video-linking functions. They will also help pupils maintain their social skills.

It is important for teachers to stay in regular contact with pupils. If necessary, they can even do this by using technology to automate communication. Some teachers have set up automated check-in emails to pupils to identify where they are with set tasks. This also gives a perception that teachers are 'watching' while pupils learning remotely.

Assessment is built into some online platforms and most textbooks. Low-stakes quizzes can be built in to remote education, as can written assignments and retrieval practice activities. It can be helpful to make sure pupils are 'warmed up' and 'readied' for content through an introductory task or scene-setting. Pupils

can then be invited to re-visit and process the main content further in an additional task or later lesson through retrieval practice.

## **5: The medium matters (a bit)**

Quality of teaching is far more important than how lessons are delivered. But there is some evidence that the medium does matter, especially in digital remote education. Pupils tend to spend longer accessing a remote lesson when they are using a laptop than when using a phone (tablets are in between).

This means that we need to think carefully about whether pupils have access to the right kind of device when we're using digital remote education. If they don't, and we can't provide enough devices, it might be better to consider non-digital approaches as well.

When using digital remote education, we often rely on internet access. Again, we need to consider whether pupils have this and what we can provide if they don't. The Department for Education provides support on internet access, and on setting up a digital education platform.

It is also worth considering where to host content. In the battle for attention against the internet, we need to consider whether we avoid hosting video lessons on certain platforms like YouTube, for example, because of their advertising algorithms distracting pupils.

## **6: Live lessons aren't always best**

Some think that a live lesson is the 'gold standard' of remote education. This isn't necessarily the case. Live lessons have a lot of advantages. They can make curriculum alignment easier, and can keep pupils' attention, not least as the teacher has more control over the learning environment. But live lessons are not always more effective than asynchronous approaches.

There are some specific difficulties in doing live lessons. It can be hard to build in interaction and flexibility. This means that giving feedback can actually be less effective than when we use recorded lesson segments followed by interactive chats, or tasks and feedback. Using recorded lessons produced externally can allow you to easily draw on high-quality lessons taught by expert subject teachers. The challenge here can be to make sure they are integrated with the curriculum.

Because evidence suggests that concentration online is shorter than the length of a typical lesson, filming a classroom lesson may be ineffective.

Different approaches to remote education suit different types of content and pupils. Mixed models may be effective in some cases. For example, you could use the so-called 'flipped learning' model. In this, new content is taught through an asynchronous recorded lesson. Practice, tutoring and feedback are then done synchronously.

## **7: Engagement matters, but is only the start**

It's harder to engage and motivate pupils remotely than when they are in the classroom. There are more distractions, and as a teacher you're not physically present to manage the situation. Communicating and working with parents, without putting an unreasonable burden on them, can help support home learning. A lot of attention has been paid to ways in which online education can be made more engaging. For example, we can make sure different types of tasks and activities are alternated, or build in rewards and incentives to make learning more 'game-like'.

While it is important to engage pupils, this is only a precondition for learning, not the thing itself. There is only so much a teacher can do to engage pupils remotely. We therefore need to make sure that efforts to engage don't distract us from teaching the curriculum. We also need to check whether pupils have actually learned the content we want them to through assessment.

Engagement increases when pupils feel part of the school or college community. Whole-school digital assemblies and feedback, for example through newsletters to pupils and parents, can help them feel part of the community even when learning remotely.