Remote Learning – Guidance & Support

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Written By	Paul Fortune
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Further support and training

Introduction and Overview

The aims of this guidance include:

- Outlining expectations for online learning in a range of scenarios, clarifying any misconceptions

- Ensuring that staff are aware of the procedures designed to safeguard staff and students/pupils;

- Providing support and easily accessed training for teachers to enable them to develop confidence with the required skills and knowledge to conduct live lessons during a partial or full school closure.

Background

In March 2020 schools across the UK had to move their teaching 'online' for the vast majority of students at very short notice in response to the coronavirus pandemic. At that time there were many barriers to schools doing this successfully and the vast majority of work was uploaded by teachers to an online platform (created a week earlier) with fortnightly feedback to students starting in June and July. Initial barriers included:

- Significant numbers of staff isolating with young children in their household. This made any attempt at more interactive or 'live' learning impractical and a demand we were not prepared to place on our staff.

- A lack of available evidence, or experience, on remote learning to know what might work best.

- A lack of IT infrastructure within some schools to allow more interactive learning to take place safely.

- Most telling, the gap in available IT resources in many houses (both hardware and internet access) would have put some pupils/students at an unacceptable disadvantage if we moved to a fully online programme.

Current situation

More recently, research conducted by the EEF, published in "Rapid Evidence Assessment – Distance Learning" has shown that clear explanation, scaffolding, assessment and feedback are the most important factors when considering the effectiveness of online learning. While explanation can be delivered via pre-recorded video, assessing students' understanding and adapting the teaching to meet the immediate requirements of students cannot and for this reason The Education Alliance has revisited the earlier barriers, working to remove them to allow as much 'live' and reactive teaching as possible.

- It is anticipated that in the event of any future partial closure or 'rota', nearly all staff will be able to continue to work due to the controls (for example, 2 metre distancing) that have been put in place to stop teachers becoming close contacts. This means they are available for teaching from their usual classroom whilst the pupils/students are at home.

- The Education Alliance has purchased over 300 laptop devices and these, alongside the provision of 4G dongles, mean that any family that needs to access online learning can now do so.

- All schools moved on to Microsoft Teams or Google Classrooms as a remote platform. This has many benefits. For example: classes are created automatically for each teacher saving workload; only those pupils/students and staff within the organisation can access the lesson; and group policies mean that pupils/students cannot control the camera or microphone which are set to off. Any misuse is recorded by the pupil/student account and therefore the normal school sanctions can be applied if necessary.

The way ahead

As a consequence of the above, we are now able to offer a much more interactive experience where we are not able to deliver face to face teaching.

In **summary** this means that:

- If an individual pupil/student is isolating at home, if they are well enough to do schoolwork, we will ask them to work remotely. They will access work that the rest of the class have been doing and the teacher will simply drag and drop their resources into the appropriate section of MS Teams or Google Classroom. The school will ensure that the pupil/student has the appropriate technology to access this.

- If a whole class is at home, we must offer the best teaching we possibly can. We are in quite a different position now so where a teacher is in school, but the children are at home, it is possible to deliver "live" teaching remotely at the same time as the timetabled lesson in school. The teacher can do this from their normal classroom via MS Teams or Google Classroom.

Some FAQs are included on page 8; however, it is important to note the following:

- You do **not** need to 'appear' on their screen – we advise that **your camera is turned off.**

- Pupils/students (except A-level) will have their camera and microphone turned off by default, responding only through the chat function.

- There is no need to teach a 100-minute live lesson. You could choose to greet the class, introduce the lesson and then talk over your PowerPoint to explain the new content. Pupils/students might then be allowed to work on a task whilst you answer their queries on the chat function. You might then turn your microphone back on to explain a concept, correct a misconception using your visualiser, or to deliver more new content.

More detailed guidance on how to do this is found in the attached appendices. In addition, Subject Development Time will be used to focus on these new techniques and there are also several 'champions' in each school to offer support should staff need further reassurance.

Safeguarding Guidance

When you are teaching via live video, please ensure that:
- There are no one-to-one lessons.
- The lesson is hosted on Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom so only students, pupils and staff within the organisation can access this. Microsoft Teams has a lobby function, Google Classroom has a waiting room, which prevents students and pupils from accessing the lesson before a member of staff is present.
- The lesson is recorded. This will automatically save to the "Recordings" folder. Staff should ensure permissions for this folder have been set to prevent student access. See appendix 4 (New Recording Settings) for instructions.
  Please note, this video remains the property of the teacher and will not be used for quality assurance.

During online/remote learning, staff and students/pupils should continue to communicate and act in a professional manner as if in school.

Staff should:
- Maintain their usual professional relationship with pupils/students.
- Keep their own camera turned off.
- Always use professional and 'safe' language. Be mindful that family members of students and pupils may be within earshot of the live lesson.
- Maintain normal expectations for students/pupils, as you would in school lessons.
- Ensure students/pupils are aware of these expectations when delivering live video lessons.
- Whichever method of remote learning is being used, ensure that appropriate privacy settings are in place and GDPR compliance is maintained. For example, don't share your screen with the class if it shows confidential information (e.g., SIMs).
- When delivering a live lesson, ensure that:
  - Only relevant pupils/students can access the lesson.
  - Pupils/students are not sharing personal information via the chat function.
  - Students/pupils have their microphone and camera turned off (this should be set by default)
  - Students/pupils use the "hands up" and "chat" function in a live lesson to ask questions.
- Challenge any inappropriate behaviour from pupils/students and report it as you would in school. For serious concerns it may be necessary to remove students from the online learning activity to ensure the learning of other pupils/students can progress.
- Any safeguarding concerns should be reported to the relevant safeguarding leads using the usual channels.

Pupils/Students:
- Should behave as if they were in school and in the classroom – they should be reminded of this at the beginning of the lesson.
- Pupils/students should only use school email to communicate with staff.
- Pupils/students should only access their school accounts, not personal accounts. They must not share or access any inappropriate material.
- Pupils/students should ensure conversations using the chat function are appropriate and related to the lesson.

Additional guidance for staff...

(a) When schools are open to all pupils/students

- Staff should upload lesson resources to each Team or the Classwork section of Google Classroom, allowing students/pupils to re-visit previous lessons and students/pupils who are self-isolating to access content from home. Lesson resources should be in clearly labelled folders, allowing easy access for students/pupils.

- Homework should be set using the assignments section of Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom. Where this is not possible, please discuss with your line manager.

- Insights should be activated on all class Teams. This allows staff to track the amount of time students are spending completing work.

- Insights also provides useful information such as the average grade or mark over a series of assignments, the percentage of tasks handed in on time and the percentage of students actively completing your assignment, reducing workload for teachers.

(b) When students/pupils are isolating or there is a partial school closure

- When students/pupils are not in school, work will be set using Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom.

- If you are teaching students in a class, but have members of the class working from home, students working from home should be set work via the Teams platform or Google Classroom. If possible, the work should include video content such as Power Point Narration, Stream Video, Loom Video or resources from the Oak National Academy. However, regular lesson resources such as those that are uploaded when schools are open to all students/pupils would be sufficient.

- If a member of staff wishes to "livestream" a lesson or part of a lesson where some students are present and some are at home (hybrid lesson), they must:

   a) inform and seek guidance from a line manager

   b) ensure the camera is disabled at all times

   Under no circumstances should a member of staff be **required** to deliver a hybrid lesson; it is for members of staff to make that professional judgement for themselves. Support and training is available for staff who wish to use this approach but aren't fully confident.

- If an entire class is working from home, a live lesson should be scheduled at the time you would normally teach that class or group.

- Live lessons must adhere to the protocols as set out in the "Safeguarding Guidance" section of this document.

- Following government guidance, students/pupils working from home should be set assignments with staff giving regular feedback. The frequency of feedback need be no different to that of your departmental policy on marking and feedback.

(c) In the event of a full school closure

- Work will be set on Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom.

- Where staff can, live lessons should be used with students. Reasons for not holding live lessons include childcare issues or illness.

- Live lessons must adhere to the protocols as set out in the "Safeguarding Guidance" section of this document.

- If live lessons are not possible, work set should include video content such as Power Point Narration, Stream Video, Loom Video or resources from the Oak National Academy.

- Students will be set regular assignments by staff, (including the use of self-marking assignments), on the assignments section of Teams or Google Classroom. Staff will give regular feedback on these assignments. The frequency of feedback should be in line with the departmental policy on marking and feedback.

(d) Having to self-isolate

- If you are required to self-isolate, and are not ill, staff are asked to either teach a 'live' lesson from home or to set work for your classes using Power Point Narration, Loom Video or Stream Video.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q) **I have some students/pupils in my class that are absent and some who are present. What should I do?**

A) *Please upload your lesson resources and set homework on Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom for these students/pupils as normal. This will allow the students/pupils who are absent to keep up to date with your subject. Please teach the remaining students/pupils in school as normal.*

Q) **My entire class is absent. What should I do?**

A) *Please teach a 'live lesson' to your class via Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom.*

Q) **How do I do this?**

A) *The suggested way of doing this is by sharing your screen with the students. This allows you to give verbal explanations over your PowerPoint and model techniques using your visualiser. You should be able to teach the live lesson sitting at your computer.*

Q) **Do I have to appear on camera?**

A) *No. We recommend that you turn your camera off so you cannot be seen.*

Q) **Will I be able to see or hear the students/pupils?**

A) *No. Student/pupil cameras and microphones will be disabled. 6th form students will have the option to enable their microphones should you need to have a conversation with them.*

Q) **If I can't hear my class how will they ask me a question?**

A) *Students/pupils can communicate with you through the chat function.*

Q) **What if students use inappropriate language in the chat?**

A) *Students/pupils will log in via their school email, so all chat comments have the student name next to them. Any inappropriate language will be dealt with through the behaviour policy when they return to school.*

Q) **Do I have to give break times and lunchtimes in the regular slot?**

A) *No. It is fine to teach a lesson in a 100-minute block, taking breaks as you need them along the way. You should ensure that you and the pupils/students get appropriate length breaks but please you your own professional judgement as to when is the best time.*

Q) **Will I have to talk over my PowerPoint for 100 minutes?**

A) *No. There should be opportunities in live lessons for students/pupils to work independently, just as there would be in regular lessons. At this point you could choose to mute your microphone and interact with students/pupils through the chat when necessary until it becomes appropriate to address the whole class again.*

Q) **What about students/pupils who don't have the technology to access these lessons from home?**

A) *We are providing the technology to students/pupils who need it so all can access these lessons.*

Q) **How do I give feedback to work submitted via Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom?**

A) *As per the regular departmental marking and feedback policy.*

Q) **What should I do if a student/ pupil is regularly not completing work set at home?**

A) *If this is just in your subject then it is worth speaking to your Subject Leader in the first instance. Where there is a pattern across subjects then pastoral teams will also become involved to try and get them back on track.*

Q) **Will recording be used for quality assurance?**

A) *No. Recordings are only there to allow pupils/students to revisit the lesson if they could not attend at that time or wish to revise*

Q) **Should I be concerned that a parent/carer might 'sit in' my lesson?**

A)   *For younger children this might be necessary and helpful. However, if you feel a parent/carer is posting things on the chat function or you have other concerns, please let a member of the senior team know to support you. We are developing a home-school remote learning agreement and this includes information to parents asking them to try to be outside the room during lessons and only to use established communication channels with school.*

Q) Should   I respond to pupils'/students' questions and queries outside lesson times?

A)   *As pupils/students become more familiar with online learning they may ask more questions outside the lesson time on chat functions. While staff are free to respond whenever they wish, there is no expectation this will happen outside normal school hours. This will be explained in the home-school remote learning agreement.*

Q)   Have issues around workload been considered?

A)   *As we have throughout lockdown, we remain committed to being reasonable and sensitive to concerns about workload. In developing this guidance, we have considered staff workload and have worked with union representatives. However, this is new territory for all of us so we will be reviewing these procedures regularly and part of that review will be an opportunity for staff to give feedback. This feedback will be shared with unions and the trust board, and we commit to act on feedback to ensure workload is reasonable and manageable.*