Remote Learning Policy

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1. Introduction

In the event of a school closure, the Trust is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of remote (online) learning. Extensive remote learning would apply particularly in a situation in which an academy 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. This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term academy closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short-term student absence.

Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when students, in agreement with the individual academy, have a period of extended absence but are able to work at home, at least to some extent. This may apply in cases such as exclusion from school, or longer term illness. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, students are self-isolating at home but are asymptomatic. The following information will need to be amended depending on the exact number of staff and/or students who are absent and the ability of all parties (in terms of health) to engage. In all instances, families/students will be contacted with details of what work will be offered as soon as this is possible to minimise any lost learning.

There is no obligation for the academy to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention of school or government guidance. This will be the case if, for example, parents choose to take students on holiday during term time. Similarly, this would apply if parents made the decision, without prior agreement with an academy, to absent their child from school 'as a precaution', against official guidance, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

This policy is for the whole Trust, but each academy will manage its own remote learning arrangements on a case-by-case basis. Further academy specific details can be found at the end of this policy in the appendices.

2   Aims

This policy aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning for students who aren't in school
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to remote learning
- Provide appropriate guidelines for data protection

In the event of an extended school closure, each academy will provide continuity of education in the following ways:

a) Regular direct instruction from teachers, with the ability for learners to ask questions online

b) The setting of work electronically, that learners complete in a variety of formats

c) The assessment of specific assignments/tasks that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided. Students and teachers are expected to have access to the internet whilst

at home; where this is not the case, the academy will endeavour to either provide the means/equipment for a student to access the internet or, where this is not possible, to provide paper copies of any work/tasks set. The Trust recognises that many families may not have home printers and will therefore not require the printing of material.   The Trust does not expect learners to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the academy (e.g. science or art).

Work set in the first 2 days may not reflect the full offer which will be made available from day 3 of any extended closure or partial closure, although this will change on a case by case basis depending on how much notice the academy has had prior to moving to remote learning, the availability of staff and the circumstances of the particular incident. Where possible, the curriculum offered virtually will follow that which a student would experience in a face-to-face classroom. In the case of practical subjects, adaptations will be made to accommodate the move to virtual learning. As no two cases of closing/partial closure will be the same, parents can expect to be updated by the appropriate Principal as to what their child's timetable will look like no later than the end of the second day of moving to virtual learning.

The primary platform the Trust will use to deliver continuity of education is Microsoft Teams: accessed via the relevant app or desktop application, or via the following URL: https://teams.microsoft.com

The Trust have created a dedicated email address for **parents** to use if they have specific issues with Microsoft Teams (its use or its installation).
microsoftteamsparentsupport@isleeducationtrust-iet.co.uk

There is also a dedicated **staff** email address that can be used for support with Microsoft Teams:

TeamsHelp@isleeducationtrust-iet.co.uk

These addresses will be monitored regularly, but do not have dedicated staff and so some delay in response time should be expected.

Other academy specific platforms used will be evidenced in the individual academy protocols in the appendix of this document.

Parents/carers who are experiencing difficulties with access to laptops/internet etc should contact the appropriate academy's admin email address explaining what the issue is so that a solution can be found. This may be the provision of printed work, the loan of a device or similar.

The extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning. The Trust reserves the right to vary the range of methods used to provide remote learning tasks, feedback and interaction, based on the particular circumstances of any closure and based on our experience.

Each academy will monitor the engagement of students with remote learning in a variety of ways including by the class/subject teacher, the form teacher and or the pastoral team. Where there are concerns that a student has not engaged with work (and the academy has not been informed by the parent/carer of an illness or extenuating circumstances) this will be followed up initially by a message being sent to a parent/carer. If the situation continues for any period of time, the academy in question will offer support and advice for the family. In cases where there is a concern for the health, safety or wellbeing of a child, other external partners may be informed as appropriate to the individual case to offer more specialised or bespoke support. Students with SEND will be supported through the academy's SENDCo and pastoral team with individual support provided as necessary, including regular conversations via Teams.

Live Sessions

Academic subject areas *may* also arrange for teachers to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by text or audio and/or visual means). **There is no expectation of teachers to carry out live sessions**.

Microsoft Teams allows for resources to be shared, teachers to provide exposition, and students to ask questions in 'real-time'. Students will be provided with session details, and will be expected to participate in them if they are asked and able to. Live sessions allow communication between students and teachers, with students able to respond to teachers' questions (and ask them) via the chat functionality in Teams.

In a live session, there is no need for teachers or students to broadcast audio or video, unless they wish/are invited to do so as the chat (conversation) function is adequate.

Students will use their academy email address to avoid any issues regarding GDPR.

Assessment

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and whilst this may be more challenging with remote learning, teachers will endeavour to provide regular feedback to students as required in line with the academy's feedback policy.

Tasks/assignments that are to be assessed will be set with clear due dates given to students for completion, thereby helping students to organise their time.

Given the nature of the tasks, the type of feedback teachers can provide is likely to be mainly verbal. Teachers are encouraged to ensure, when they set assessed work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided in line with the academy's feedback policy.

Possible methods may include:

- Providing whole class feedback on Teams
- Providing feedback directly to individual students on Teams through the comments section

Expectations of Students

Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, they will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Students and parents will be expected to read and respond to communication from their academy (students using Teams and parents using the appropriate admin email address) on a regular basis.

If students have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant teacher. If there are questions about a student's overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the student's class/subject/form teacher in the first instance.

In the event of an extended school closure, teachers will endeavour where possible, to continue to deliver content in line with existing schemes of work once the school is reopened; if any student misses significant parts of the content, they will be able to view material posted online and the school will give consideration to the practicalities of helping students to catch up once the school reopens.

Parents will be expected to advise the academy in the normal way if their child is ill and cannot access remote learning.

Expectations of teachers (and subject areas)

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet and a phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, teachers can request a school device. If there are IT related issues while remote working, teachers should log these using the online helpdesk.

The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with academy and subject area policies/normal practice. Under normal circumstances, subject areas take different approaches to the setting and assessment of students' work – for example, the frequency of substantive tasks set, and the regularity of written assessment provided – and subject area policies will be applied in the event of remote learning.

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, subject leaders and/or SLT are responsible for overseeing the nature and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas. All teachers should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that students have a range of activities to complete at home and are not exclusively working on a screen.

Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their students in a timely manner. Subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the feedback.

In the event a teacher is unwell during a period of remote learning, they must inform the academy in the normal way, in the standard timeframes. In this circumstance, it becomes the responsibility of the line manager to ensure work is set for their classes.

Teachers/staff are expected to:

- Plan and deliver learning as outlined in this document, predominantly through the use of Microsoft Teams

- Respond to reasonable amounts of communication from students via Teams, and from emails sent through the admin email address from parents and unless there are exceptional circumstances, within 48 hours of receipt of any correspondence

- Be able to set and feed back on assessed work promptly, in line with academy policies, returning it to students electronically (or after the period of remote working for written and project work)

Teachers/staff are NOT expected to:

- Respond to parents or students outside of normal working hours, unless they choose to do so
- Respond to parents using Teams
- Respond to emails from colleagues outside of normal working hours unless there is a safeguarding issue, unless they choose to do so. Staff sending emails should not expect colleagues to respond to emails out of normal school hours

Teachers should be available to contact parents if needed, by email or phone (using phone app only). If contact is deemed excessive, the line manager will be able to support and, if necessary, escalate to SLT.

For those who are on part-time contracts, communication is expected only on the days on which they would usually work.

Communication must always occur via official school channels, and not through personal accounts or other websites.

If parents ask for additional work beyond that set as part of the requirements above, subject areas should have a bank of general resources available such as interactive websites and support activities (e.g. Oak Academy), and direct students and parents to these.

In order to ensure teachers are able to perform the minimum expectations outlined above; the academy will provide a range of training opportunities that teachers should have access to before any *planned* school closure. Teachers should ensure that they have looked through specific instructions, watched walkthroughs, and attended teacher training sessions. If teachers require support with any aspects of remote learning, they are encouraged to consult their line managers in the first instance.

Data protection Accessing personal data

When accessing personal data for remote learning purposes, all staff members will:

- Use an academy allocated laptop to access Arbor and/or SMID

Processing personal data

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as email addresses as part of the remote learning system. As long as this processing is necessary for the school's official functions, individuals will not need to give permission for this to happen. However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online.

Keeping devices secure

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure in line with the Acceptable Use Policy. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters (e.g. asterisk or currency symbol)
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends
- Installing antivirus and anti-spyware software
- Keeping operating systems up to date – always install the latest updates

Who to contact

If staff have any questions or concerns about remote learning, they should contact the following individuals:

- Issues in setting work – contact subject leader
- Issues with behaviour – contact the relevant PAL
- Issues with IT – email IT helpdesk
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – contact line manager
- Concerns about data protection – contact the IET data protection officer
- Concerns about safeguarding – contact the academy's DSL

Support for students with SEND, EAL and other specific learning enhancement needs

Teachers should ensure that work is scaffolded to support all learners when setting online tasks. Profiles are available for SEND students and advice can be sought from the SENDCo, PAL or pastoral team. In addition, the SENDCo, PALs and Pastoral team will maintain contact with students on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/students and feed back to teachers via email if required.

Pastoral care during a school closure

In the event of an academy closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents / guardians. However, form/class teachers (under the guidance of the SLT) should check in regularly with their tutees/students to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Form teachers/class teachers will be expected to pass on feedback to PALS, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication.

Safeguarding during a school closure
In the event of an academy closure, students, parents and teachers are reminded that the academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between students and teachers. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school.

Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead details of who can be found in the appropriate academy's appendices at the end of this document

3   Appendices

General online safety for live remote teaching for staff - a summary:

This should be read in conjunction with any academy specific information at the end of this document and alongside the relevant Safeguarding Policy.

- Turn off notifications in Teams on your phone.
- If students call you, you do not need to answer (unless this is something that you have been asked to do/a pastoral call etc.). If you are making a call to a student, only do so in normal school hours (these will differ depending on the academy you are working for)
- Only respond to "chats" etc. only through the teams set up on Teams by the academy.
- If a student messages to say they have a problem, you can always message and ask what's wrong. **If this is not subject related, alert the DSL and appropriate academy Principal immediately**. Follow the Safeguarding Policy and most current Keeping Children Safe in Education document at all times
- Always be professional, other people may be in the room with the student.
- Think about your surroundings. Use a background if you do not want to share your surroundings
- Report any abuse or concerns to your DSL and principal immediately

South Axholme Academy Appendix

This policy applies when the entire academy is operating remotely due to exceptional circumstances. It does not apply to hybrid or partial closures. In such cases, staff must liaise with SLT and/or the Principal to determine appropriate arrangements.

Teachers

Availability
- Must be available between 8:40am – 3:30pm.
- Absences must be reported via the normal absence procedure.

Responsibilities
- Setting Work: Use Microsoft Teams to set work aligned with the curriculum. Work should be available at the time of the scheduled lesson.
- Feedback: Review and acknowledge student work upon return to normal operations.
- Communication:
  - o   All student contact must be via Microsoft Teams and/or Satchel:One.
  - o   Teachers must not respond to student or parent emails directly.
  - o   Parent queries should go through the academy's admin email.
  - o   Teachers are not expected to respond to student posts after 3:30pm.
  - o   Any complaints received from parents should be discussed and shared with the subject leader or line manager.
  - o   Safeguarding concerns must follow the academy's safeguarding policy.
  - o   Non-engagement should be logged on the academy's tracking system and escalated to Subject Leader or PAL if persistent.

Assistant Teachers

Availability
- When assisting with remote learning, assistant teachers must be available between 8.40am – 3.30pm.
- Absences must be reported via the normal absence procedure.

Subject Leaders
Alongside their teaching responsibilities, subject leaders are responsible for:

- Reviewing and adapting the curriculum delivery for remote learning.
- Ensuring consistency and appropriateness of work set across their subject.
- Collaborating with other leaders to manage workload and deadlines across subjects.
- Monitoring remote learning quality via meetings or review of work set.
- Sharing useful resources with teaching staff.

Senior Leaders

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Coordinating the overall remote learning strategy across the academy.
- Providing professional development to support high-quality remote teaching.
- Monitoring effectiveness through feedback and review.
- Ensuring data protection and safeguarding protocols are upheld.
- Ensuring safeguarding is being adhered to in line with IET and academy policies outlined above. The Designated Safeguarding Lead at South Axholme is Mr C. Barnes.

Students and Parents

Expectations for Students
Staff can expect students learning remotely to:

- Be contactable during the academy day.
- Complete work by deadlines.
- Seek help when needed.
- Inform teachers if unable to complete work.

Expectations for Parents
- Notify the academy if their child is unwell or unable to complete work.
- Contact the academy for support if their child is struggling to engage.

4. Document Control

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal. At every review, it will be approved by the Academy Oversight Committee. This policy remains valid until it is reviewed and replaced, it does not expire by date alone.

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IET reserves the right to make amendments to this policy at any time without notice.

End

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