Remote Learning Policy

Updated January 2021

Contents:

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Statement of intent

At St. Mary & St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School, we understand the need to continually deliver high quality education, including during periods of remote working – whether for an individual pupil or many. We recognise the importance of maintaining high expectations in all areas of school life and ensuring that all pupils have access to the learning resources and support they need to succeed.

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to address the key concerns associated with remote working, such as online safety, access to educational resources, data protection, and safeguarding.

This policy aims to:

- Minimise the disruption to pupils' education and the delivery of the curriculum.
- Ensure provision is in place so that all pupils have access to high quality learning resources.
- Protect pupils from the risks associated with using devices connected to the internet.
- Ensure staff, parent, and pupil data remains secure and is not lost or misused.
- Ensure robust safeguarding measures continue to be in effect during the period of remote learning.
- Ensure all pupils have the provision they need to complete their work to the best of their ability, and to remain happy, healthy, and supported during periods of remote learning.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2004
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- Data Protection Act 2018

1.2. This policy has due regard to national guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2019) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2017) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety for school children'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Attendance and Truancy Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data and E-Security Breach Prevention and Management Plan

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The governors of St. Mary & St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school has robust risk management procedures in place.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the school's remote learning arrangements.

2.2. The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff, parents and pupils adhere to the relevant policies at all times.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements in place for identifying, evaluating, and managing the risks associated with remote learning.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements in place for monitoring incidents associated with remote learning.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of this policy on an annual basis and communicating any changes to staff, parents, and pupils.
- Arranging any additional training staff may require to support pupils during the period of remote learning.
- Conducting reviews on a regular basis of the remote learning arrangements to ensure pupils' education does not suffer.

2.3. The school Business Manager, who deals with health and safety in school is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the relevant health and safety risk assessments are carried out within the agreed timeframes, in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team.
- Putting procedures and safe systems of learning into practice, which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with remote learning.
- Ensuring that pupils identified as being at risk are provided with necessary information and instruction, as required.
- Managing the effectiveness of health and safety measures through a robust system of reporting, investigating, and recording incidents.

2.4. The Business Manager and ICT Co-ordinators are responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff, parents, and pupils are aware of the data protection principles outlined in the GDPR.
- Overseeing that any ICT equipment used for remote learning is resilient and can efficiently recover lost data.

2.5. The Deputy Headteacher/Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Attending and arranging, where necessary, any safeguarding meetings that occur during the remote learning period.

- Liaising with the ICT Co-ordinators to ensure that all resources used for remote learning is suitable for its purpose and will protect pupils online.
- Identifying the level of support or intervention required while pupils learn remotely and ensuring appropriate measures are in place.
- Liaising with relevant individuals to ensure vulnerable pupils receive the support required during the period of remote working Ensuring all safeguarding incidents are adequately recorded and reported.

2.6.   The SENCO is responsible for:

- Ensuring that pupils with EHC plans continue to have their needs met while learning remotely, and liaising with the headteacher and other organisations to make any alternate arrangements for pupils with EHC plans and IHPs.
- Identifying the level of support or intervention that is required while pupils with SEND learn remotely.
- Ensuring that the provision put in place for pupils with SEND is monitored for effectiveness throughout the duration of the remote learning period.

2.7.   Staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy at all times during periods of remote learning.
- Reporting any health and safety incidents to the School Business Manager and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Reporting any safeguarding incidents to the Deputy Headteacher/Safeguarding Lead and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Taking part in any training conducted to meet the requirements of this policy, including training on how to use the necessary electronic equipment and software.
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify, as well as any concerns they may have about remote learning, to the headteacher.
- Adhering to the Staff Code of Conduct at all times.

2.8.   Parents are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy at all times during periods of remote learning.
- Ensuring their child is available to learn remotely at the times set and that the schoolwork set is completed on time and to the best of their child's ability.
- Ensuring that their child always has access to remote learning material during the times set by the school.
- Ensuring their child uses the equipment and technology used for remote learning as intended.
- Adhering to the structure of the Home Learning Overview.

2.9.   Pupils are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy at all times during periods of remote learning.

- Ensuring they are available to learn remotely at the set times and that their schoolwork is completed on time and to the best of their ability.
- Ensuring they have access to remote learning material and notifying a responsible adult if they do not have access.
- Notifying a responsible adult if they are feeling unwell or are unable to complete the schoolwork they have been set.
- Ensuring they use any equipment and technology for remote learning as intended.
- Adhering to the Behavioural Policy at all times.

3. Resources

Learning materials

3.1.   The school will use a range of different teaching methods during remote learning to help explain concepts and address misconceptions easily. For the purpose of providing remote learning, the school may make use of:

- Work booklets
- Email
- School website
- Google Classroom
- E-School
- Current online learning portals
- Educational websites
- Reading tasks
- Live webinars
- Pre-recorded video or audio lessons

3.2.   Teachers will review the DfE's list of online education resources and utilise these tools as necessary, in addition to existing resources.

3.3.   Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that all pupils have access to the resources needed for effective remote learning.

3.4.   Lesson plans will be adapted to ensure that the curriculum remains fully accessible and inclusive via remote learning.

3.5.   The school will review the resources pupils have access to and aim to adapt learning to account for all pupils needs by using a range of different formats, e.g. providing work on PDFs which can easily be printed from a mobile device.

3.6.   Work packs will be made available for pupils who do not have access to a printer – these packs can be collected from school on a regular basis.

3.7.   Any issues with remote learning resources will be reported as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

3.8.   Pupils will be required to use their own or family-owned equipment to access remote learning resources.

3.9.   Teaching staff will oversee academic progression for the duration of the remote learning period and will mark and provide feedback on work on a regular basis.

Costs and expenses

3.10.   The school will not contribute to any household expenses incurred while pupils learn remotely, e.g. heating, lighting, etc.

4. Online safety

4.1.   This section of the policy will be enacted in conjunction with the school's Online Safety Policy.

4.2.   All staff and pupils using video communication must:

- Communicate in groups – one-to-one sessions are not permitted.
- Wear suitable clothing – this includes others in their household.
- 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.
- Use appropriate language – this includes others in their household.
- Maintain the standard of behaviour expected in school.
- Use the necessary equipment and computer programs as intended.
- Not record, store, or distribute video material without permission.
- Always remain aware that they are visible.

4.3.   All staff and pupils using audio communication must:

- Use appropriate language – this includes others in their household.
- Maintain the standard of behaviour expected in school.
- Use the necessary equipment and computer programs as intended.
- Not record, store, or distribute audio material without permission.
- Ensure they have a stable connection to avoid disruption to lessons.
- Always remain aware that they can be heard.

4.4.   We will consult with parents prior to the period of remote learning about what methods of delivering remote teaching are most suitable – alternate arrangements will be made where necessary.

4.5.   During the period of remote learning, we will remind parents to:

- Reinforce the importance of children staying safe online.

- Ensure parents are aware of what their children are being asked to do, e.g. sites they have been asked to use and staff they will interact with.

- Encourage to set age-appropriate parental controls on devices and internet filters to block malicious websites.

- Direct parents to useful resources to help them keep their children safe online.

4.6. The school will not be responsible for providing access to the internet off the school premises and will not be responsible for providing online safety software, e.g. anti-virus software, on devices not owned by the school.

5. Safeguarding

5.1. This section of the policy will be enacted in conjunction with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which has been updated to include safeguarding procedures in relation to remote working.

5.2. The Deputy Headteacher and headteacher will identify 'vulnerable' pupils (pupils who are deemed to be vulnerable or are at risk of harm) via risk assessment prior to the period of remote learning.

5.3. Any phone calls made to vulnerable pupils will be made using school phones where possible.

5.4. All contact with vulnerable pupils will be recorded on paper and suitably stored.

5.5. The Safeguarding Lead will keep in contact with vulnerable pupils' social workers or other care professionals during the period of remote working, as required.

5.6. All members of staff will report any safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Lead immediately.

5.7. Pupils and their parents will be encouraged to contact the Deputy Headteacher if they wish to report safeguarding concerns, e.g. regarding harmful or upsetting content or incidents of online bullying. The school will also signpost families to the practical support that is available for reporting these concerns.

6. Data protection

6.1. This section of the policy will be enacted in conjunction with the school's Data Protection Policy.

6.2. Staff members will be responsible for adhering to the GDPR when teaching remotely and will ensure the confidentiality and integrity of their devices at all times.

6.3. Sensitive data will only be transferred between devices, using a secure portal, if it is necessary to do so for the purpose of remote learning and teaching.

6.4. 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.

6.5.   Parents' and pupils' up-to-date contact details will be collected prior to the period of remote learning.

6.6.   All contact details will be stored in line with the Data Protection Policy.

6.7.   The school will not permit paper copies of contact details to be taken off the school premises.

6.8.   Any breach of confidentiality will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Data and E-Security Management Plan.

6.9.   Any intentional breach of confidentiality will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behavioural Policy.

7. Marking and feedback

7.1.   All schoolwork completed through remote learning must be:

- Finished when returned to the relevant member of teaching staff.
- Returned on or before the deadline set by the relevant member of teaching staff.
- Completed to the best of the pupil's ability.
- The pupil's own work.

7.2.   Our school expects pupils and staff to maintain a good work ethic during the period of remote learning.

7.3.   Pupils are accountable for the completion of their own schoolwork – teaching staff will contact parents if their child is not completing their schoolwork or their standard of work has noticeably decreased.

7.4.   Teaching staff will monitor the academic progress of pupils with and without access to the online learning resources and discuss additional support or provision with the headteacher as soon as possible.

7.5.   Teaching staff will monitor the academic progress of pupils with SEND and discuss additional support or provision with the SENCO as soon as possible.

7.6.   The school accepts a variety of formative assessment and feedback methods, e.g. through quizzes and other digital tools from teachers, and will support them with implementing these measures for remote learning where possible.

8. Health and safety

8.1.   This section of the policy will be enacted in conjunction with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

8.2.   Teaching staff and ICT Co-ordinator will ensure pupils are shown how to use technology safely and correctly prior to the period of remote learning.

8.3.   If using electronic devices during remote learning, pupils will be encouraged to take a five-minute screen break every two hours.

8.4. Screen break frequency will be adjusted to five minutes every hour for younger pupils or pupils with medical conditions who require more frequent screen breaks.

9. School day and absence

9.1. Pupils should be present for remote learning by 9:00am and cease their remote learning at 3:00 pm from Monday to Friday, with the exception of breaks and lunchtimes.

9.2. Breaks and lunchtimes will take place at the following times each day:

- Morning break will take place at 10:30am until 10:45am.
- Lunchtime will take place between 12:00pm and 1.00pm.
- Afternoon break will take place at 2:00pm until 2:15pm.

9.3. Pupils with SEND or additional medical conditions who require more regular breaks, e.g. sensory breaks, are not expected to do schoolwork during their breaks.

9.4. Pupils who are unwell are not expected to be present for remote working until they are well enough to do so.

10. Communication

10.1. We will communicate with parents via letter and the school website about remote learning arrangements as soon as possible.

10.2. The headteacher will communicate with staff as soon as possible about any remote learning arrangements.

10.3. The school understands that pupils learning remotely have the right to privacy out-of-hours and should be able to separate their school and home lives – communication is only permitted during school hours.

10.4. Members of staff will have contact with their line manager on a regular basis.

10.5. As much as possible, all communication with pupils and their parents will take place within the school hours.

10.6. Parents and pupils will inform the relevant member of staff as soon as possible if schoolwork cannot be completed.

10.7. Issues with remote learning or data protection will be communicated to the pupils' teacher as soon as possible so they can investigate and resolve the issue.

10.8. The pupils' teacher will keep parents and pupils informed of any changes to the remote learning arrangements or the schoolwork set.