

Aims

This distance learning policy aims to:

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

Distance Learning Definitions

Online learning – teaching and learning take place simultaneously and through Microsoft Teams. Students and teachers are in separate locations – teachers may be in school or working remotely, dependant on the direction of the Principal. Teachers may switch their cameras on if there is an educational need to do so.

Hybrid learning – a combination of online and in-school education where some students participate remotely and others are in class. The teacher may have the camera on, or display the electronic whiteboard to students at home.

Online cover – where the teacher is unable to be in school, but is in good health and able to teach, they may teach online whilst their class are in school, supervised by a cover teacher. This arrangement must be approved in advance by the management and cover.

Distance learning is exceptionally permitted by the school for following reasons:

- A student has tested positive for Covid 19
- A student has been asked to isolate by the track and trace team
- A student cannot attend school due to long term sickness or injury, not related to Covid 19

This list is not exhaustive and the final decision on whether a student can participate in distance learning is to be made by the Senior Management team.

Roles and responsibilities

Teachers

When providing distance learning, teachers are responsible for:

- Uploading any work students may require on Microsoft Teams
- Providing a way students can submit work (through Teams or email)
- Ensuring students receive verbal or written feedback on the work completed
- Ensuring students are present throughout the lesson (and will follow up with the HoY and parents if not)
- Attending online meetings when required
- Ensuring that any camera use is done so professionally – appropriate dress code, use of Teams backgrounds and ensuring there are no other people on screen

Heads of Faculty

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, Heads of Faculty are responsible for:

- Considering whether any aspects of the subject curriculum need to change to accommodate distance learning
- Working with teachers teaching their subject remotely to make sure all work set is appropriate and consistent
- Ensuring the quality of teaching through distance learning remains high, either through virtual visits or classroom visits
- Monitoring the distance work set by teachers in their subject – through regular meetings with teachers or by reviewing work set
- Alerting teachers to resources they can use to teach their subject remotely

Heads of Year

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, Heads of Year are responsible for:

- Ensuring behaviour and attendance of students during distance learning is excellent, and following up with parents if required
- Supporting students who may be vulnerable or be struggling academically or emotionally during a period of distance learning

Senior leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the distance learning approach across the school and ensuring staff are supported with the right tools and training to teach high quality lessons
- Monitoring the effectiveness of distance learning – for example, through regular meetings with teachers and subject leaders, reviewing work set or reaching out for feedback from pupils and parents
- Ensuring behaviour and attendance of students during distance learning is excellent, and following up if required
- Monitoring the security of distance learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations

Designated safeguarding lead

The DSL is responsible for the safeguarding of all students, whether in school or online. Any concerns a staff member may have regarding a student should be raised immediately with the DSL.

IT staff

IT staff are responsible for:

- Providing staff and students with a Microsoft 365 account so that they all have access to the necessary applications (TEAMS, Office,...)
- Fixing issues with Microsoft Teams, ensuring it is set up to teach and if required, to set and collect work
- Helping staff with any technical issues they're experiencing
- Reviewing the security of distance learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the data protection officer
- Assisting pupils and parents with access to Microsoft Teams, and supporting with any technical issues they may have

Students and parents

Staff can expect students learning remotely to:

- Be present during all lessons throughout the school day
- Verbally respond to questions when asked during a lesson
- Complete work set by teachers by the deadline
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers or Heads of Year
- Alert teachers in advance if they need support in completing homework

Staff can expect parents with children learning remotely to:

- Make the school aware if their child is unwell in line with the school's Attendance Policy
- Seek help from the school if they need it
- Be respectful when making any concerns known to staff

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors are responsible for:

- Monitoring the school's approach to providing distance learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible
- Ensuring that staff are certain that distance learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons

Who to contact

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

- Issues in setting work – talk to their Head of Faculty
- Issues with behaviour – talk to the relevant Head of Year
- Issues with IT – talk to the IT staff
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – talk to their line manager
- Concerns about data protection – inform the Principal who will refer to the data protection officer
- Concerns about safeguarding – inform Deputy Principal, Pastoral

If parents or students have any queries or concerns, they should contact the Head of Year in the first instance, who will then follow up with the appropriate staff member

Data protection

Accessing personal data

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

- Access data through Microsoft Teams, One Drive or saved on a server on the school IT network. Staff will be vigilant with their passwords (do not share or write down) and will not use shared wifi or teach in public places
- Staff should use the devices provided for them by the school, eg laptops and tablets, rather than their own personal devices

Processing personal data

The Academy may retain the following information for the purposes of distance learning:

- Personal information for teachers and students (eg name, email, ID number)
- Microsoft Teams and network log – in information
- Assignments, presentations, answers of the students
- Messages shared on Teams during lessons

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as school email addresses or test results as part of the distance learning system. As long as this processing is necessary for the school's official functions, individuals won't need to give permission for this to happen.

However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online.

The Academy ensures that all personal data will not be transmitted to third parties, except in the case that authorities should investigate any legal activities (e.g. fraud, insult, personality insult, etc). All data, after a specified retention time limit, will be deleted.

Use of cameras

Should the teacher choose to, they may have their camera on – the voice and picture of the teacher during lessons is considered personal data. Students are prohibited from recording any aspect of their lesson. In case of hybrid education, the camera should be positioned to a place where it shows only the teacher and/or the board and not the faces of the students that are physically there.

If **teachers** are streaming lessons with their webcams on, they must:

- Sit against a neutral background
- Dress like they would for school
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language
- Ensure they are alone on camera at all times

Students' camera must be off.

Parents should avoid being in the room during lessons, but this is not always possible. If parents are present, they must remain mindful that other children might hear them and anything in the background.

Keeping devices secure

The IT team and all staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. 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)
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends
- Keeping operating systems up to date – staff must always install the latest updates as advised by the IT team and the Senior Management Team

Rights for Data subjects

Teachers and students have the following rights:

- Right to access
- Right to rectification
- Right to be forgotten (a part or everything of their personal data)
- Right to object
- Right to data portability
- Right to withdraw consent
- Right to complain

Safeguarding

When communicating online with parents/guardians and students, staff should:

- communicate within school hours as much as possible (or hours agreed with the school or to suit the needs of staff)
- communicate through the school channels approved by the Senior Management Team
- use school email accounts (not personal ones)
- use school devices over personal devices wherever possible
- not share personal information
- ensure logins and passwords are secure and pupils and students understand that they should not share this information with others

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Senior Management Team.

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