

DRAFT REMOTE LEARNING & BLENDED LEARNING POLICY

2020

Carrickfergus Academy



Agree Date	Review Date	Person Responsible
October 2020		JMY

RATIONALE

AIMS OF REMOTE LEARNING & BLENDED LEARNING POLICY

- To outline Carrickfergus Academy's approach for supporting pupils who cannot attend school due to the Coronavirus pandemic
- Outline expectations for the whole school community for Remote and Blended Learning
- To provide structure, support and encourage the well-being of our children
- To provide open lines of communication in a confidential manner if children are unable to attend school
- Provide appropriate guidance for data protection

WHO IS THE POLICY APPLICABLE TO?

During the ongoing COVID pandemic, Carrickfergus Academy will put contingency plans in place for our whole school community.

Pupils, staff and families should self-isolate in line with government guidance if they have any of the following symptoms:

- A new continuous cough;
- A high temperature/fever; or
- Anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell which can affect your sense of taste).

If students are unwell with any of the above symptoms or unwell generally, they should not come to school and stay at home. Pupils who are unwell should concentrate on recuperating and getting back to full health so they may return to school. In these circumstances, school will not provide additional work to children. It is unreasonable to expect children who are unwell to complete work at home.

SHIELDING OR SELF-ISOLATING

Students who are **shielding** due to coronavirus (and who are in receipt of a medical letter from their GP or specialist), will be provided with additional work via our online learning platform and/ or email. Students who are shielding, provided they are well, should complete this work at home. The level of work provided to children who are shielding (or self-isolating), may not be of the same amount if they were otherwise in school. Teachers will provide core material as well as homework tasks as standard to pupils who are shielding (or self-isolating).

If a child is instructed to shield, parents should provide a copy of this letter of advice to school.

It must be recognised and accepted that teachers may still have a full teaching timetable and will not be available during class teaching time to respond to online queries.

However, if school is unable to open due to lockdown, teachers should provide a full breadth of activities and should be available to offer support to pupils between 9.00-3.30pm.

CLASS BUBBLE

In the event that a whole class or "bubble" of students are instructed to self-isolate due to covid-19, the full breadth of remote learning activities will be delivered to this group. Students should complete these activities provided they are well enough.

CLOSE CONTACT WITH A CONFIRMED COVID CASE

Students who have been in **close contact** with a confirmed case of Covid-19 must follow the latest PHA guidance and self-isolate. This does not automatically mean the entire class bubble is instructed to self-isolate. Where individual students are self-isolating, they will have access to homework tasks on Google Classwork and additional material will be sent by subject teachers on request.

HOLIDAY OR VISITING A RESTRICTED COUNTRY

Families who choose to visit a country which is on the quarantine list must follow PHA guidance and self-isolate for 2 weeks on their return to Northern Ireland. Holidays taken during term time are discouraged. Therefore, work will not set online for the entire period they are out of school.

WHAT IS REMOTE LEARNING?

"Remote learning describes any learning where the teacher and the learner are not physically together.

The pandemic created the need for a period of emergency remote learning & teaching, where both teachers and learners had to adjust very quickly to a new way of communicating with each other." DENI

WHAT IS ONLINE LEARNING?

"Online learning is a generic term that refers to any learning that is done using digital resources. It encompasses both learning that is done entirely in a digital format as well as learning that is done digitally within a broader learning programme. Online learning can be completely self-directed, or it can be structured by someone other than the learner." Education Authority, moving to Blended Learning

In Carrickfergus Academy we will use **Google Classroom** as our online learning platforms:

WHAT IS BLENDED LEARNING?

"Blended learning takes place when the learning activity is structured to blend face-to-face learning and teaching with remote/online learning; this may involve using digital tools and other educational resources. In the current context, Blended Learning requires a child centric, pedagogical approach to maximize the impact of the remote learning, ensure continuity with the face to face session and retain children's engagement."

Education Authority, Moving to Blended Learning

In Carrickfergus Academy, Blended Learning may happen if pupils are required to attend school on a part-time basis and engage in online learning while at home.

Learning and Teaching Guidelines

- All students and staff have a school email address which students should check on a regular basis as it may be used as a means of remote communication by their teachers.
- Our school community has been making effective use of Google Classroom as an e-Learning platform which we have continued to develop in the light of the current situation. Google Classroom will be adopted by all departments as their online learning platform
- Students should access Google Classroom by signing in to their 'My School' account on a PC / laptop or by downloading the Google Classroom app to their smartphone or mobile device. Instruction guides are available for students and parents on request and via the school Facebook page.
- To access Google Classroom students will need to provide an email address. **Students must use their school email address** to keep all communication through their school C2K account rather than through any personal email address. This is to ensure online safety of our students.
- Parents should review the work of their son or daughter in Google Classroom as they would normally do with, for example, homework.
- Access codes are for pupil use only and should not be used by parents to gain access. Staff have been instructed to block or remove users who are not class members.

- In the interest of student and staff welfare and well-being we are asking that all communication on learning through email or Google Classroom is restricted to school hours on week days only - essentially that **school hours are respected**. We would kindly ask that this is respected by all involved. We have a duty of care to work collectively to ensure our students and staff are prevented from being overwhelmed by communication while at home and that their personal down time is protected.
- Parents should **ensure the online safety of their child** which will be all the more prevalent when directing students to the use of the internet for modes of e-Learning. Check in regularly on your child to ensure they are spending their time online appropriately and productively when they have informed you that they are working on online learning. Your child's safety is of paramount importance to us.

Student Responsibility

- Pupils should aim to retain a structure to their working day starting with logging into Google Classroom in the morning.
- Pupils should check their notifications or stream to see the posts / resources for each subject in the morning.
- Pupils should work to complete all set work and, if requested, to hand in work on Google Classroom. In these challenging circumstances we are reliant on the maturity of our pupils to be proactive in taking responsibility for their continued learning.
- Pupils can avail of online pastoral support through their Form Teacher or Year Mentor should they find themselves struggling to cope with the online learning process. Year mentors will communicate pastoral concerns to subject teachers.
- Pupils should use the 'Stream' on their Google Classroom forum to communicate with their teachers and ask questions if they do not understand / require help if their teachers have made this option available. Alternatively, some teachers may choose to communicate through email. **Pupils should remember to be responsible at all times with their online communication ensuring it is respectful and purposeful.** **Staff have been instructed to block pupils who do not comply with this instruction, and parents will be contacted by senior staff.**

Teacher Responsibility

- Teachers will set regular work which is appropriate in challenge and length of completion to keep students learning in accordance with specifications / programmes of study on a continual and steady pace during any period of closure.
- Teachers are advised to set work on a weekly basis for their students in realistic, time bound, achievable tasks bearing in mind the specific context of each subject. This work should either be outlined at the start of the school week or start of a school day with one clear form of communication outlining the instructions so as not to overload students with communication from staff. This will allow students to follow their daily timetable if appropriate. However, it is recognised that if students do have specific individual questions staff may wish to respond to these to offer further guidance or check in with students throughout the week.
- Teachers may be required to set homework remotely, and to provide remote support for pupils who are deemed to be clinically extremely vulnerable when Covid 19 restrictions are in place.
- Teachers will set tasks on Google Classroom that may include lesson activities and resources, as well as any preparation / homework / revision or extended reading that would normally be set.
- Teachers must bear in mind the challenges and demands which will be placed on students by relying on remote learning to continue their studies. As such cognizance should be given to this added pressure on students and teachers should ensure students are not overloaded with workload for individual subjects.
- Teachers may choose to make themselves available on the 'Stream' of Google Classroom forums or email to answer any questions pupils may have regarding work.
- Teachers will mark and provide feedback regarding the assessment of students' work *in line with department policies*. Subject Leaders will monitor the quality and appropriateness of lessons and assessment. For further guidance on assessment see below.
- Staff must bear in mind that not all pupils will have access to a computer and to the internet at home or if they do several siblings may be sharing the one device throughout the day. Furthermore, some pupils

may be ill (or someone in the family may be ill). Pastoral or academic concerns should be forwarded to the appropriate Year mentor or Subject Leader.

Further support and guidance for teaching staff can be found in DE Circular 2020/5 'Remote Learning to Support Educational Continuity'<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-20205-guidance-schools-supporting-remote-learning>

Parental Responsibility

- Encourage and support your children's work, including finding an appropriate place to work, checking that set work is completed and ensuring they have some structure to the working day: start and finish times and appropriate breaks.
- Check on your child regularly to ensure their online safety and that they are spending their time online appropriately and productively.
- Parents must bear in mind the challenges and demands which will be placed on teachers by relying on remote learning to support students with their studies. As such cognizance should be given to this added challenge for teachers who will continue to strive to support our students.
- Parents must appreciate that teachers may be ill at some point and therefore not able to work remotely with their students or indeed someone in the teacher's family may be ill and they may be caring for them.
- Parents should consider the wellbeing of their young person during the school closure. Whilst academic study is to be encouraged, it should only form part of a child's daily routine. Students should be encouraged to pursue other interests throughout the day such as sport, music etc , dependent upon their own interests and individual circumstances.

Safeguarding

This guidance document is supported by the Safeguarding Policy in Carrickfergus Academy. Specific additions to note:

- Staff registering for any software / platforms (such as Google Classroom), must do so with their school email address.
- Students registering for any software / platforms (such as Google Classroom), must do so with their school email address.
- Parents / guardians should be proactive in supporting their child with regards to ensuring their online safety. Online safety is continually addressed through our preventative curriculum within school across all key stages.
- Pupils should remember to be responsible with their online communication ensuring it is respectful and purposeful at all times.
- Video conferencing should only take place through the C2K Collaborative Ultra platform or MS Teams and in line with whole school pastoral policies.
- As a collective duty of care - we ask all staff and students respect normal school hours during the week to ensure communication is not excessive on any party and to protect personal down time to ensure the well-being of everyone.

We recognise these are very challenging times for everyone and while we must work within the current constraints that face us, rest assured we are committed to working collectively to continue to meet the educational needs of your child as best we can. Furthermore, we acknowledge that the safety, health and well-being of our entire community is of paramount importance.

REMOTE TEACHING FOR STAFF WHO ARE SELF ISOLATING

Teaching staff are required to follow PHA guidance if they display symptoms of Coronavirus. If a member of staff is self-isolating they are expected to:

- Follow the normal procedure for an absence and inform the appropriate line manager;
- Follow PHA advice and obtain a test

While self-isolating, and able to do so, staff will be given individual project work which is in line with whole school priorities. These projects will be communicated by the SLT and be allocated on a case by case basis. Staff who are self-isolating will be asked to support online learning provision for individual students or a year group.

REMOTE LEARNING SYSTEMS/ACCESS/PASSWORD/LOGIN DETAILS

Students will be enrolled in a Google Classroom determined by Subject Leaders. Class teachers will issue Google Classroom codes which should be recorded in homework diaries. Information regarding the use of Google Classroom will be made available to parents through the school Facebook page and inquiries regarding codes and c2k passwords can be made to the school email account info@carrickfergusacademy.carrickfergus.ni.sch.

Video conferencing should only take place through the C2K Collaborative Ultra platform or MS Teams and in line with whole school pastoral policies.

ALL REMOTE SYSTEMS WILL BE AVAILABLE 24 HOURS PER DAY BUT WILL BE MONITORED BY STAFF FROM 9:00-3:30PM MONDAY-FRIDAY (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

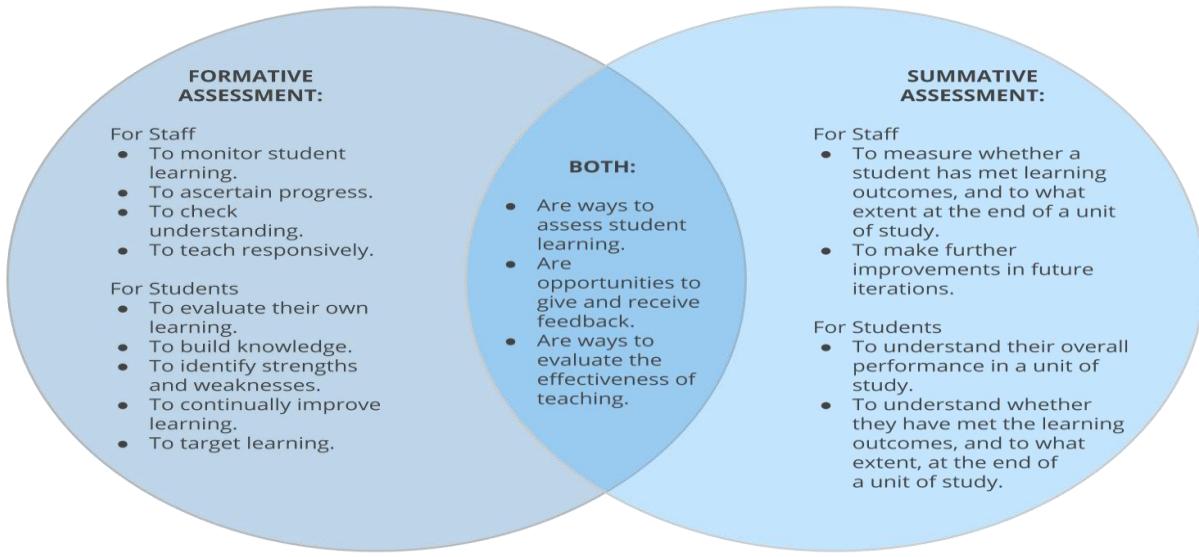
"Schools and teachers recognise a focus on feedback is key. E-learning tools provided opportunities to give whole class and individual feedback to pupils whilst they are learning remotely."

Education Authority, Moving to Blended Learning

Pupil engagement is key and at a basic level work must be completed. Activities should be clear with defined goals and expectations. Work needs to be differentiated to allow every child to be able to complete the work set and learn from it.

Students need self-motivation and good time management skills when working remotely and good feedback will provide this. Giving regular feedback keeps children motivated and enthusiastic about their learning, knowing that their work is being looked at, keeping lines of communication open between the child and the teacher and enhancing their learning and providing opportunities for progression or consolidation.

Feedback needs to be specific to allow learners to know what they have done well as well as ways to develop further. Assessment can be both Summative and Formative.



Teachers can give a variety of feedback such as comments on work uploaded to Google Classroom. This can be individualised giving specific support or comment. Feedback can be both learning focused or more general praise and celebration of achievement.

Pupils work can be highlighted and showcased so others can see. Online quizzes can provide specific data on student performance and hence their understanding.

J. McCready October 2020