

Mark Rutherford School



Remote Learning Policy

Author:	Assistant Headteacher
Governor's Committee:	
Adopted by the Governing Body on:	November 2020
Signed (Chair of Committee):	
Signed (Headteacher):	<i>K. Foster</i>
Updated review date:	February 2023

AIMS

This remote learning policy for staff aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the school's approach to remote learning
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to remote learning

Please note that the Remote Learning Policy should be read in conjunction with the MRS Safeguarding Covid 19 addendum and Guidance on Live Lessons policy.

RATIONALE

In the event of a prolonged school closure, for example following an outbreak of an infectious disease, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its learners and will do so through a process of remote (online) learning. Remote learning would apply in a situation in which the school is closed for an extended period of time, but a high proportion of students and teachers are healthy, and able to work from home. This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term school closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short term student absence.

If students are absent for extended periods of time (e.g. if they are self-isolating but not suffering symptoms) work will be set for students to complete independently at home.

There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from school, with or without parental/carer permission, in contravention of school or government guidance; this includes absence from school 'as a precaution', against government guidance, in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease.

In line with Government guidance for remote learning during an extended period of school closure, teachers will provide opportunities for students to access new learning, have face-to-face interaction with teachers and tutors and receive electronic feedback on work submitted.

REMOTE LEARNING FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for students who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual student, the collation of work and communication with the parent/carer will be coordinated by the student's Head of House/Assistant Head of House.

The student's subject teachers will use Class Charts and the school's VLE - Its Learning - to make work available to the student. If there are any issues with the completion of the work, tutor(s) and subject leader(s) should liaise to resolve the situation. Students will be directed to the tasks on Its Learning via a message on Class Charts.

Though every case will have its own set of circumstances, a rough guideline for the frequency of work being set will be once a week. The work set for each subject will be proportionate to the curriculum time allocated for each subject on the student's timetable. Parents can access the work being set via Class Charts and Its

Learning. Work will be provided for students in this way if there is an agreed absence lasting more than three working days.

If a significant number of students are absent from school, but the school remains open, the Headteacher will decide whether the method of remote learning operated will take the form outlined here, or as outlined below.

REMOTE LEARNING IN THE EVENT OF EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURE

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

- regular direct instruction from teachers, with the ability for students to ask questions online ('live lessons' on Zoom)
- the setting of work that students complete, written responses (if relevant) completed and submitted electronically (on Its Learning)
- the assessment of specific assignments that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided (via Its Learning)

Please refer to Sect 9 (below) for password re-set information.

The extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning. For shorter closures, for example, teachers may set work on Its Learning for submission in person once the school has reopened. For longer closures, teachers would make more use of live lessons (on Zoom) and electronic assessment. Live lessons would follow a timetable that follows but has been reduced from the timetable for the regular school day, to avoid excessive screen time and to ensure that students have time to work and learn independently. The school 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 school closure and based on our experience.

THE SETTING OF TASKS (USING ITS LEARNING)

Subject areas will provide work proportionate with students' timetables and the work will be set on Its Learning, the school's VLE. Live (Zoom) lessons will take place during students' timetabled lessons (see below). Tasks will be set in accordance with existing schemes of work (following the curriculum plan for each department) where possible; units of work have been adapted to be used both in class and at home ('blended learning'). Naturally, remote learning will require students and teachers to take a different approach due to the context of activities taking place, but tasks should ensure the pace of content coverage is as close as possible to in-school teaching, and ensure students do not fall behind. The nature of tasks set should allow students to learn independently, without the specific support of an adult at home.

Unless there is good reason not to, tasks will be set for individual classes. The type of task set will vary between subjects, but examples of appropriate tasks might include:

- Reading and noting new material from a common subject area, textbook or electronic resource
- Working through subject-specific presentations or worksheets provided by the subject area
- Watching a relevant video resource and making notes on it
- Completing a listening exercise (e.g. in languages)
- Written responses to prompt questions, essay plans, etc.
- Completion of practice questions or past papers, particularly for those in examination years
- Working through relevant exercises offered by external providers (e.g. Seneca Learning, MyMaths, GCSE Pod, Oak Academy resources)
- Completion of mandatory assessments, such as coursework for BTEC qualifications and/or NEA for GCSE and A Level subjects

Teachers will set tasks through Its Learning and it is the responsibility of teachers and students to ensure they know how to use this functionality effectively (please refer to separate Guidance on Live Lessons policy).

LIVE LESSONS

Subject areas may also arrange for teachers to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by audio/visual recorded content, or live Zoom lessons). Zoom is a platform that allows for resources to be shared, teachers to provide exposition, and students to ask questions in 'real time'. Students will be provided with a remote learning timetable for live lessons and will be expected to participate in them if they are asked and are able to. Live sessions can be particularly helpful as they can facilitate contemporaneous communication, with students able to respond to teachers' questions (and ask them) via the conversation functionality in Zoom.

Links to Zoom lessons will be shared with students on Its Learning.

Teachers using audio/video functions will follow eSafety protocols and live lessons will be recorded and saved to the W:Drive.

FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and while this may be more challenging with remote learning, teachers will endeavour to provide regular feedback to students on pieces of work that they are required to submit. Under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers and this would continue to be the case should the school employ remote learning.

Assessed work will be set using Its Learning, regardless of how students' work is eventually submitted, with clear due dates given to students for completion, thereby helping students to organise their time. The function on Its Learning also allows students to submit work to the teacher before a task can be signed off. Students and teachers should keep accurate records of all work completed, submitted and assessed. Teachers should refer concerns about lack of work and effort in the usual way, contacting pastoral colleagues and parents as appropriate; however teachers should also bear in mind the context of the work taking place and understand that students may face difficulties if they are sharing equipment at home, if they are experiencing ill health or other factors which may hinder progress while working remotely.

Given the nature of the tasks, the type of feedback teachers can provide may not have the same format as marking an exercise book or work completed in class. Teachers are encouraged to ensure, when they set assessed work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided.

Possible methods may include:

- Using the 'comments' function on online documents
- Providing feedback directly in the tasks function on Its Learning
- Sending a direct email on Its learning to students, with specific feedback/targets
- Feedback via another website/piece of software (e.g. Seneca Learning, My Maths)
- Recording oral feedback and sharing an audio file on Its Learning

Teachers may also want to create quiz assignments for students to complete. These might include the creation of a tailor-made quiz (containing either multiple choice or extended answers) on GCSE Pod, Educake or other web-based programme or provider.

PARTIAL SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of one or more year groups being required to work remotely while the school remains open to other year groups, the processes outlined above would apply. Students working from home would follow a timetable of live lessons (using Zoom) that teachers deliver from school. The links to Zoom lessons will be shared on Its Learning. In the event of partial school closure, students' live lessons will be supplemented with online independent work which will be set on Its Learning and should be uploaded to the VLE when completed. Teachers will give feedback on independent work uploaded to Its Learning.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, students 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 will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a form tutor) on a regular basis.

In the event of an extended school closure, teachers will 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.

Students should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any administrative tasks that allow the school to monitor their progress. For example, where tasks are set using Its Learning, students should mark tasks as 'done' so teachers can monitor their progress. If students or parents/carers have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant subject area. If there are questions about a student's overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind or struggling to access content) these should be directed to the student's Head of House or Assistant Head of House. Concerns about accessing content may also be discussed with the SENDCo if appropriate.

Teachers must work on the assumption that students will not necessarily have the full range of books and equipment that they would usually have in school. Teachers should also be aware that it may not be appropriate to expect students to print out materials at home. If advance notice is possible, teachers will instruct students to take the relevant equipment home from school. The school does not expect students to

have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school (e.g. science or art). Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case students do not have access to them at home. Online textbooks may be helpful in this regard.

While the school expects that the majority of parents/carers have internet access at home to access remote learning resources, and Heads of House will collate information regarding students who need to be sent the work in an alternative format.

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

Student password reset requests must be made on the following email addresses:

itslearning: ItsLearningPwdRst@mrus.co.uk

Class Charts: Classcharts@mrus.co.uk

GCSEPod: GCSEPodPwdRst@mrus.co.uk

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SEND, EAL AND OTHER SPECIFIC LEARNING ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all students when setting online tasks. Teachers should liaise with TAs and SENDCo/ASC lead for information, support and advice in setting remote learning tasks. The SENDCo/ASC lead will maintain contact with students on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/carers/students and feed back to teachers.

PASTORAL CARE DURING A SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents/carers. However, form tutors (under the guidance of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Heads of House) should check in regularly with their tutees to monitor both academic progress and general wellbeing. Form tutors will be expected to pass on feedback to Heads of House, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication.

SAFEGUARDING DURING A SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of a school closure, students, parents and teachers are reminded that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies still apply to all interactions between students and teachers. In the policies, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and report obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school. Please refer to MRS Safeguarding Covid 19 addendum.

Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be communicated to the school using the email address schoolclosures@mrus.co.uk

