

# Remote Learning Policy



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## 1. Aims

This remote learning policy for staff aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning for pupils 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

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### 2.1 Teachers

When providing remote learning, teachers must be available between 09.00 to 12.15, and 13.15 to 15.00

If they're unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

When providing remote learning, teachers are responsible for:

➤ Setting work –

- Key teachers will be expected to provide work for their key group and/or direct them to their own school platforms if they are working in this way. If cover is needed for a sick colleague the key teacher may also be required to work outside their key group.
- The work should be estimated to fill lessons in groups of 1 hour – for example, 2 hours in the morning session, 1 hour in the afternoon, 5 days a week.
- Work should be ready for the pupil to start at 9am, and best loaded in advance.
- Work can be sent via school email or using Microsoft 365 remote learning platform. Staff and student/parents from home can be signposted, as needed, to help centres and online tutorials.
- Teachers should be in regular contact to check the system is working well. Colleagues are in the best position to help one another with any queries or glitches. If students have limited access to technology the work can be printed and posted or delivered. The GOV.UK scheme for access to technology and free laptops can be employed if the student meets the criteria.

<https://get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk/>

➤ Providing feedback on work -

- If the student is using Microsoft 365 or email to return work, a copy of their completed work should be returned for feedback and assessment to the key teacher, or the teacher setting the work. This should be fed back to the young person within 3 working days of receipt.
- Online feedback where possible is the quickest method.

➤ Keeping in touch with pupils who aren't in school and their parents –

- It's good practice to check in with pupils at the beginning and end of each day.
- Emails from parents, pupils and home schools will be done during the course of the working day – between 08.30 and 15.30. Teachers are not expected to answer messages outside of working hours.
- Any safeguarding concerns should be dealt with following the Child Protection Policy, including reporting to the designated safeguarding leads in the normal manner. Any behaviour concerns, such as repeatedly failing to complete work without good reason, should be discussed with the head or deputy.
- Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents and pupils:
  - Dress code for meetings, even though online, should be in line with the Code of Conduct outlines set by the school.
  - The location of the meeting and what is in the background should be appropriate and not disclose any personal property, details or anything not suitable for a school meeting. Interruptions should be kept to the absolute minimum.

## **2.2 Teaching assistants**

When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants must be available between 9.00 and 15.00. If they're unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure. It is expected that the teaching assistants should be able to take lunch breaks and the timing of this should be negotiated with the teaching staff they are assisting.

When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants are responsible for supporting the students who need extra help, to be directed by key teachers. Remote learning guidelines above also apply to support staff.

## **2.3 Subject leads**

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, subject leads are responsible for:

- Considering whether any aspects of the subject curriculum need to change to accommodate remote learning
- Working with other staff teaching their subject remotely to make sure all work set is appropriate and consistent
- Working with other subject leads and senior leaders to make sure work set remotely across all subjects is appropriate and consistent, and deadlines are being set an appropriate distance away from each other

## **2.4 Senior leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads**

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning –through regular meetings with teachers and subject leaders, reviewing work set or reaching out for feedback from pupils and parents
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.

## **2.5 IT staff**

IT support will continue to be supplied by our current provider.

## **2.6 Pupils and parents**

Staff can expect pupils learning remotely to:

- Be contactable during the school day – although consider they may not always be in front of a device the entire time
- Complete work to the deadline set by teachers
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers or teaching assistants
- Alert teachers if they're not able to complete work

Staff can expect parents with children learning remotely to:

- Make the school aware if their child is sick or otherwise can't complete work

- Seek help from the school if they need it – if you know of any resources staff should point parents towards if they're struggling, include those here
- Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff
- Any complaints about Poplar Adolescent Unit's Remote Learning provision should be made through Poplar's complaints procedure. See website for details.

## **2.7 Management Committee**

The Management Committee is responsible for:

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

## **3. Who to contact**

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

- Issues in setting work – talk to the relevant subject lead or SENCO
- Issues with behaviour – talk to the head or deputy.
- Issues with IT – talk to IT staff
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – talk to their line manager
- Concerns about data protection – talk to the data protection officer
- Concerns about safeguarding – talk to the DSL and report to Poplar Ward

## **4. Data protection**

### **4.1 Accessing personal data**

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

- How they can access the data, such as on a secure cloud service or via work email
- Which devices can be used. Personal equipment or email addresses should not be used. Staff, when working remotely, should be provided with a school laptop

### **4.2 Processing personal data**

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as email addresses and school based telephone contacts, as part of the remote 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.

### **4.3 Keeping devices secure**

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)
- 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

## **5. Safeguarding**

- Refer to the school Child Protection Policy, and
- *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*, DfE 2021

## **6. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, it will be approved by the Management Committee.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy and coronavirus addendum to our child protection policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Home-school agreement
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Online safety policy

## **8. Remote learning platform, use and support**

We have very recently taken up the offer of government support in launching a learning platform via Microsoft 365 – an Outlook programme. In order to access this the young people need to be provided with school emails on admission.

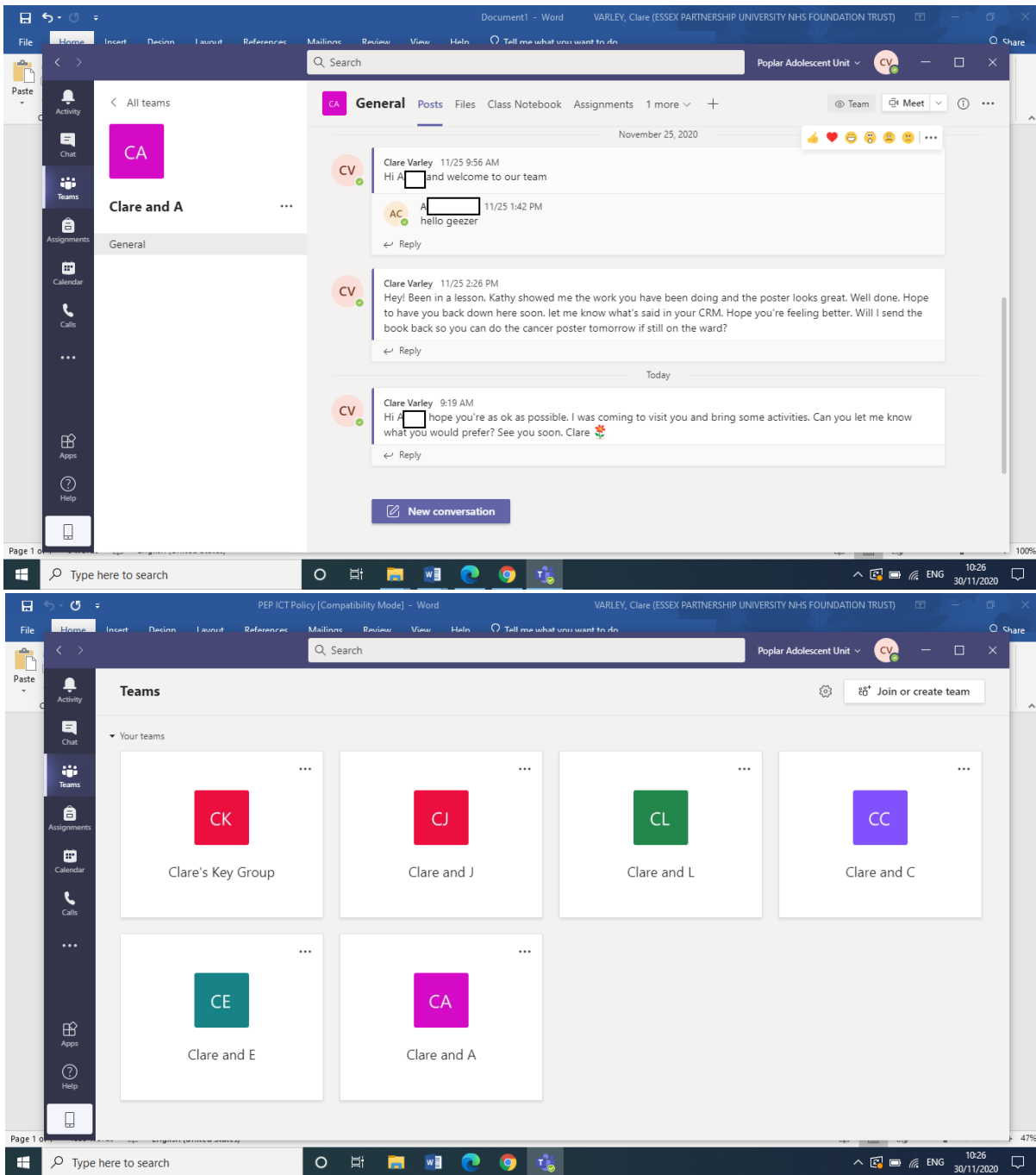
Summary from our training providers – Sweethaven Computers.

- A Microsoft for Education Partner has completed the technical setup of your Office 365 for Education domain to the specification outlined in the Platform Provisioning Programme. For clarity, the tasks completed are listed below, along with their status.
- Functionality - Outcomes Solution UAT
- The Tenancy is secure and resides in a Public Cloud environment 365Tenancy Tenancy is created
- The tenancy is able to sync to directory services to keep users and class groups up to date where appropriate Via MIS, Directory Services or SDS Sync is enabled
- Users are successfully created in the tenancy, synced to the MIS/Directory Services Via MIS, Directory Services or SDS Students and staff are visible
- Files are available remotely and shareable in a secure environment SharePoint for School files, OneDrive for personal files Users can see and access the online file share area
- The landing page provides links to the different services and acts as hub for users SharePoint Site Key areas are linked for the user - As a minimum the productivity tools listed below are linked to the homepage
- There are defined spaces for students and teachers to interact securely. The technical support and adoption support sessions will include how to set up a basic Teams/Classroom environment to get them started. Teams Setup Directory/MIS sync or One-time Sync via CSV or via SDS
- There is a range of productivity tools available, including video and audio Word Word is visible PowerPoint PowerPoint is visible Excel Excel is visible Teams A Teams video call is shown to be working.
- Security and privacy settings are deployed according to MS and Google standards and policies (\*) (\*\*) The partner will confirm that they have deployed against the recommended security guidelines
- Schools are provided with technical support and adoption support to ensure the school understands 'what has been configured' and 'how schools can make the most of the functionality to enable remote teaching and learning'. This will be provided by the partner and be at least two hour online sessions for each. MSP resource School signs off the above based on interactions with the MS

## Teams system for staff and student use.

On admission to the provision, young people are given an email ending in “poplar.org.uk”. They log on to Office 365 and change the allocated password. Their key teacher will then be able to contact them in one of 3 ways initially –

- Through a class group
- Through chat
- Through their own “class” which will consist usually of a teacher and an individual. Most of our students work to a bespoke curriculum so this is probably the most frequented option.



We can

signpost young people to a general selection of work, allocate personal work or recommend other sources of topic material. All of this of course, depends on the young person logging in! This is where parents and carers can play a significant part if the student is on home leave and offsite. It's useful if adults within the home can support our system and our staff if need be, with reminders to log on and check messages.

We are here during the hours of 9am-12pm and 1.30pm - 3pm to check our messages and provide work and other support. Login details and passwords can be changed and reset if needed during the morning slot allocated, Monday to Thursday. These times and dates are term time only; usual Essex school holidays still apply.



**Additions to policy in response to the current COVID restrictions (January 2021) can be seen below.**

**DfE:** 'Schools are expected to consider how to continue to improve the quality of their existing curriculum, for example through technology, and have a strong offer in place for remote education provision'. Colleges, primary (Reception onwards) and secondary schools will remain open for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. All other children will learn remotely until February half term.

While the whole school team at Poplar Education intend to keep the school open by practicing COVID safe working, there may come a point where 2 or more staff from separate working "bubbles" fall ill, and this would necessitate closure. While working from home, teachers can use both the Teams platform and Anydesk which is set up to give the staff access to all their server based resources, even if working remotely. Through the use of these systems -

- Lessons can be pre-recorded and accessed by pupils at convenient times during the day.
- Live meetings at the start of the day can set expectations, as well as enable teachers to see pupils and help towards carrying out welfare checks.
- The instant chat facility gives pupils and teachers the opportunity to feedback/ask questions/have points clarified.
- Dedicated email addresses enable parents/pupils to upload work, raise any questions and for teachers to feedback to pupils.

Maintaining relationships/personal contact is crucial – lessons, phone calls, video links etc can help towards this. We have recently been trained in the use of Microsoft Teams that will greatly assist in our abilities to reach out to and support students directly with remote learning.

### **Access to Technology**

The Department for Education (DfE) is offering support to help children, young people and families access remote education and social care during coronavirus (COVID-19):

- Laptops and tablets
- Internet access (including increased data for disadvantaged pupils)
- Manage laptops, tablets and 4G wireless routers received from DfE
- Apply for a grant and support to get set up with a digital education platform
- Get funded training and support to set up and use technology effectively

We intend to continue with the application for laptops for students without their own personal access in the coming terms where need is evident and the families meet the requirements set out in the scheme.

## Remote learning

Remote learning takes place when a learner and member of staff giving instruction are not in the same place and the lesson is instead delivered through downloading information, webinars, or live streaming.

The concept of remote learning is not new. For some time, many schools have provided a virtual learning environment through which their pupils have been working and learning from home, outside of normal school time. Pupils can complete homework, coursework and other things remotely and submit them online, which are then marked and returned to pupils by their school.

The government have acknowledged that whilst there is no expectation for teachers to stream or provide recorded videos, many schools, colleges and universities are using video conferencing platforms to provide remote education. They have also stated that it is important for educational settings to ensure that they are making use of the security features and filters on any service they choose to use, and advised users to refer to the service providers' official support site which will assist in setting the right security features and filters.

Live streaming is not practical in our setting; with such a small team it's likely that the subject teachers will also be doing classroom teaching at the times this would take place. Direction to use of pre-existing resources that are pre-prepared, or direction to relevant websites such as BBC Bitesize or the Oak Academy may be an alternative that would work for our setting.

Guidance from **Essex County Council** states that, when using technology to support home learning, schools should consider safeguarding issues and the following points:

- Video-conferencing programs should not be used on a one to one basis between school staff and pupils – remote learning on a one to one basis is not appropriate. This would rule out conferencing for our young people.
- The platform should allow the school to restrict the audience, for example by asking them to create a login and password. Our admin team provide a secure email address for each individual student.
- There should be a code of conduct for staff and pupils using online platforms, for example those with message boards. This can be found in our IT policy and Code of Conduct
- During online activity staff and pupils should be in a neutral area, (ie, not in a bedroom or bathroom);
- Pupils and staff should use school-allocated email addresses, not personal ones, or use usernames and passwords which must not be shared with others;

- Schools should remind pupils and parents/carers of who they can contact at school for help or support;
- Pupils' personal information such as their location, date of birth or phone number should be kept private.

## Online safety

*The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation; technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.*

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE, 2020)

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three main areas of risk:

**Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;

**Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults;

**Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

Schools should be aware as far as possible of the possible online threats to pupil safety, as part of their wider safeguarding responsibilities. Schools should consider how they teach pupils to keep themselves safe online and pay particular attention to the list below:

- online bullying and associated mental health and wellbeing;
- exploitation;
- grooming;
- accessing inappropriate material;
- sharing of inappropriate material;
- significant risk of harm / actual harm.

These and more are covered by our PHSE and Thinking Skills sessions in school.

Schools cannot eradicate the risks that are associated with internet use, but by providing young people, parents and carers with information on how to practice online safety, and through continuing to practice online safety in their communications during the closure period, we can help to mitigate the risks and help to keep pupils safe from harm.

## **Useful Links**

[Remote education guidance \(Section 5 in Guidance for full opening: schools\)](#)

[Template to share remote education provision](#)

[Remote education guidance \(in Contingency Framework\)](#)

[Get help with remote education](#)

[Safeguarding and remote education](#)

[DfE good teaching practice and resources](#)

[DfE remote education good practice](#)