

North Cotswold Primary Schools Cluster



Remote Learning Policy

This policy was approved by Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School Governing Body on 28-9-2020

This policy will be reviewed by September 2021



Remote Learning Policy

Introduction

This policy is to ensure that the North Cotswold Primary Schools will continue to provide education and support to our pupils using remote learning if they are unable to attend school due to unusual circumstances such as illness epidemics, extreme weather, power-loss, etc.

Whilst a range of platforms may be used, such as Office 365 Teams, Google classrooms, the aim is to allow staff to keep in contact with the pupils in a professional and confidential manner. Teachers will be able to schedule learning in such a way that does not overwhelm the pupils, parents or carers. Teaching and learning can be tailored, changed and updated as time progresses, allowing for replication of classroom activity to the best of our ability, but we recognise that remote learning is not a substitute for being in school.

In all communications we will prioritise the wellbeing of our children and safeguarding will be our top priority.

Flexibility of learning

We realise that the circumstances that cause our schools to close will affect families in several ways. In our planning and expectations, we are aware of the need for flexibility from all sides.

- Parents/carers may be trying to work from home so access to technology as a family may be limited.
- Some families may not have access to digital technologies.
- Parents/carers may have two or more children trying to access technology and need to prioritise the needs of young people studying towards GCSE/A Level accreditation.
- Teachers may be trying to manage their home situation and the learning of their own children.
- Systems may not always function as they should and we are aware that rural areas often have variable internet speeds and can be unreliable.

An understanding of, and willingness to adapt to, these difficulties on all sides is essential for success.

Expectation management

The North Cotswold Primary Schools Cluster believes that it is in the best interests of our pupils that we continue to provide structured support to the best of our ability. Bearing in mind the need for flexibility, no deadlines will be set. It must be noted that the work pupils engage in during a period of closure will be part of our current planning and so cannot be considered as optional. Children and parents/carers should consider the arrangements as set out in this document as highly recommended.



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Teaching Staff will:

- Share teaching and activities with pupils through specific platforms, including the school website, ensuring instructions are written using plain English.
- Continue teaching in line with current, extensive planning that is already in place throughout the school, in particular for groups of vulnerable learners.
- Accept the fact that learning remotely will be more difficult, so tasks will be set in smaller steps to allow for this.
- Use instructions that contain enough detail for the pupil to be relatively independent (age dependent) but should not rely on use of a computer or device as it is acknowledged that the internet connection may be unreliable or devices are needed by siblings and/or parent(s) working from home. Teachers should not assume that a home has access to a printer to print anything.
- Keep in contact with their pupils through agreed platforms with safeguarding given the highest priority.
- Reply to messages, set work and give feedback on activities during the normal teaching hours if the whole class is accessing lessons remotely. If individual pupils are accessing lessons remotely, a member of teaching staff may reply to messages, set work and give feedback outside the core teaching hours.
- Allow flexibility in the completion of activities, understanding that the circumstances leading to our closure will affect families in a number of ways.
- Take regular breaks away from the computer or iPad to engage in other professional duties as much as circumstances allow e.g. policy, subject or professional development.
- If unwell themselves, be covered by another staff member for the sharing of activities. Follow up of messages from pupils during this time will not be undertaken until the teacher is fit to work.
- Be flexible and cover members of staff who are unable to work due to illness, either at home or school.
- Keep SLT informed of any trends, issues, feedback or concerns that arise in their daily role so any necessary actions can be taken as required, especially with regard to safeguarding.
- Discuss any complaints or concerns raised by parents/carers with a senior member of staff before replying to the parent.

Pupils will:

- Be encouraged to take regular breaks, get fresh air, exercise and maintain a reasonable balance between online engagement and offline activities. This is because their wellbeing is at the forefront of our thoughts.
- Potentially work a day or two behind what has been shared through the learning platforms.
- Work hard to complete the tasks set to the best of their ability and with the resources they have available.



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- Seek help if they need it, from teaching staff and/or family members.
- Only send messages and queries that are in relation to tasks set by the teacher or in response to questions the teacher may ask them directly.
- Only access the material shared by their teacher and ask for parental permission to use technology for anything beyond that.
- Read daily, either independently or with an adult.
- Consider learning a new skill, follow their own interests to discover more about the world around us or just be creative.

Parents/carers will:

- Support their child's learning to the best of their ability.
- Encourage their child to access and engage with activities and tasks set by the teacher.
- Follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Refrain from screenshotting or copying any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform outside the school's communication platforms.
- Know they can continue to contact their class teacher as normal if they require support of any kind.
- Check their child's completed work each day and encourage the progress that is being made.
- Alert the teacher if their child is ill or otherwise cannot complete the work set.
- Be mindful of mental well-being of both themselves and their child and encourage their child to take regular breaks, play games, get fresh air and relax.
- Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff.

N.B. In compliance with Copyright Law and regulations governing the use of photocopiable materials parents must note that resources are for viewing online only on our secure class teams. They must not be printed, photocopied or distributed. The school will not take responsibility for any breach of Copyright Law.

Safeguarding

All schools in the North Cotswold Primary Cluster have updated their Child Protection Policy to reflect the current situation.

Data protection

When accessing personal data, all staff members will:

- Only use their official school email account and never use personal messaging systems.
- Connect to the school network using only a school remote desktop connection to work with any personal data to ensure that no data leaves the school premises.



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Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as email addresses, as part of the remote learning system. As long as this processing is necessary for the school's official functions, individuals will not need to give permission for this to happen. Staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online.

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.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the school's following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices
- ICT and Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the North Cotswold Primary School Cluster and the individual Headteacher of each school. At every review, it will be approved by the Governing Body.