

Distance Learning at Abbey Hill Academy

*To be read in conjunction with Horizons Specialist Academy Trust's **Remote Learning Policy***

Abbey Hill Academy

Distance learning arrangements

Distance Learning Planning Arrangements for Staff

Due to the Covid-19 situation the academy will operate a three-tier system as we move between normal operation, moderate self-isolation, and full bubble closure.

Stage 1: Normal class teaching.

This approach would be taken when nobody in your class is self-isolating.

- Lessons are planned by the students' class teacher and delivered by the class tutors.
- Daily marking is completed by tutors. Assessments are set and marked by the class teacher and then Bsquared is updated accordingly.
- The curriculum should be delivered as normal wherever possible, some adaptations have been made for the practical subjects IT, music, DT, FT and PE where it can be difficult for students to access practical equipment. Small adaptations have been made to the long-term curriculum overview to reflect this.

Stage 2: Independent study set.

This approach would be taken when there are individuals/ small groups in self-isolation due to either the Government introducing lockdown procedures and therefore students with health needs needing to shield or students needing to self-isolate having been in contact with a positive Covid-19 case.

- The focus should remain on the students in class.
- Staff should set independent work or activities as appropriate with instructions for parents to follow.
- Support may be provided by email/ phone call with a parent as requested.
- Students who are self-isolating due to either long-term health needs or anxiety will access a bespoke package according to their needs which will be co-ordinated by their class tutor. Those students meeting this criteria who are following a formal curriculum will access virtual tuition on a daily basis.

Stage 3: Full virtual school delivery.

- This stage would be taken when the whole class is in self-isolation.
- Home learning packs will be delivered to homes as soon as possible.
- Staff should plan and set work linked to the students' current curriculum topic using a mixture of paper-based and online tasks as appropriate. For students with high sensory needs, a sensory pack will also be delivered.
- Microsoft Teams will be used to support Formal curriculum classes in engaging in learning and social skills.

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Distance Learning Procedures:

In the event of closure either of a 'bubble' or wider school, Abbey Hill will operate a distance learning model; facilitating the ongoing delivery of education.

- Each student will have access to differentiated home learning activities with a mixture of online tasks such as Lexia and My Maths, paper-based learning booklets, practical tasks and, where relevant, sensory packs for those with complex needs.
- Feedback from parents and students is welcomed and home learning will be adapted upon request.
- Each child has an EHCP risk assessment in place to ensure students' needs are met if accessing education at home. These documents are updated and shared with the relevant local authority. If a student's needs are unable to be met within the home, a referral will be made from school to the relevant service for support.
- Where appropriate, Microsoft Teams will be used to encourage students' engagement with school, the development of social and communication skills as well as the opportunity to develop reading skills.

Delivery of learning

- Students who are accessing home learning will be given a paper-based learning pack with instructions from the class teacher as to what they need to do at home. Useful websites will be clearly listed and if specialist resources are needed, then these will be provided.
- Each pack will include basic stationary resources.
- Students with complex needs will have packs of practical tasks that can be completed at home and, if appropriate, will include equipment to support the students sensory and motor control needs such as beads, feathers and bubbles.
- Within each pack, students will also have the instructions to access the relevant online programmes to support their literacy and numeracy needs.
- During weekly check-in phone calls, tutors will check how students are doing with their learning and ask parents if they require any further tasks or support.
- Students' work will be collected every fortnight when a new work pack is delivered. Work will then be marked to inform future planning and stored as evidence of student achievement. If students require less or more time to complete work, this will be negotiated on an individual basis with the student's tutor.
- Students needing access to IT resources have been given a laptop/ iPad in line with the government laptop scheme.

Students in long-term self-isolation

A small number of students who are self-isolating due to either long-term medical needs or high levels of anxiety have been offered online tuition on a daily basis from a teacher based in school.

- Students with long-term absence from school will access a bespoke daily online teaching package via Microsoft Teams. Where a student does not have a laptop/ iPad, one will be provided via the government laptop scheme. Students and parents will be asked to take responsibility for this equipment (see Remote Learning Guidelines).
- Students accessing daily online teaching have a set time slot in which a teacher verbally delivers a bespoke lesson to the individual student. Complementary paper-based tasks are sent home to

access both during the session and complete at home once the session has ended. Completed learning will be collected and returned to the class teacher to aid in setting new learning tasks.

Attendance

- Students whose parents have requested their child remain at home during a national lockdown and to which approval has been given, will be marked with a C in SIMs.
- Students self-isolating for 10 days due to being in contact with a positive Covid-19 case will be marked with an X in SIMs.
- Students who are accessing online teaching on a daily basis will be marked as either X or O dependent upon their reason for being at home, but for the period they access online teaching, they will be marked with a B in SIMs.
- Students expected to be in school will be marked with the usual codes for attendance, sickness, medical appointments etc.

School Safety Protocols:

Data Protection

- No student data should be accessed. School related data must not be downloaded to non-school devices.

Child & Staff Protection

- Posters about remote learning and how to use Microsoft teams produced by 'National Online Safety' have been shared with parents.
- Students and staff should only use their school email address to access Teams sessions.
- Staff should position the webcam to only capture the classroom environment. There should be no students or photos of students in the background.
- Students should adhere to the agreed time slot and ring school to give notice if they are unable to attend.
- Posters about remote learning and how to use Microsoft teams produced by 'National Online Safety' have been shared with parents.
- Remote learning expectations have been shared with parents and students. Those not wearing appropriate clothing, using inappropriate language and/ or behaving in a way we would usually expect within school will be immediately disconnected from the Teams meeting and a phone call will be made to the parent as soon as reasonably possible to discuss the issue at hand. Safeguarding procedures will be followed if necessary.
- Any incidents during sessions should be logged on CPOMs and reported to SLT if appropriate.

Top Tips for online teaching

- 1. Aim for students to complete around 30-45 minutes of work per lesson.**
 - *Allow yourself at least 5-10 minutes away from a screen between lessons.*
 - *You do not have to be at a screen for the entire lesson.*
- 2. Adapt the delivery and content to suit the individual.**
 - *The most important thing is to get the students engaged. Encourage them to discuss their interests and find ways to incorporate this into their learning. Once engaged we can open up to wider curriculum content.*
- 3. Encourage independence – provide a support procedure for each lesson that works for you e.g.**
 - *5 minutes of questions, or establish fixed “Q&A” review points at defined times in a lesson.*
 - *Provide resources which can be used at home i.e. calculator, word mat, symbols etc.*
 - *Present activities in a set way so students know what is expected of them.*
- 4. Consider assessment strategies e.g.**
 - *Begin the next session recapping on previous learning*
 - *Email a poster of 5 things you’ve learnt*
 - *Students to email/ ask 5 things they would like to learn more about*
- 5. Encourage creativity: vary the approach to activities by providing a choice of Apps or ways to record e.g.**
 - *Halftone 2 (Comics) - Popplet (mindmaps) - Piccollage (Collage)*
 - *Stop Motion - Puppet Pals (Animation)*
 - *Stickyboard (post-it board) - iMovie / Adobe Spark (Video production)*
- 6. Subject teachers could offer support via recorded message with hints and tips for the student which are subject specific.**
- 7. Recognise the power of praise. Look at ways to celebrate their achievements e.g. Twitter, Free Flow info, marking of work**



Microsoft Teams, or simply 'Teams', is a platform that allows for collaborative working, either as students or as professionals, using communication capabilities through audio, video and instant messaging. The software is available both online through a web browser and to download from [microsoft.com](https://www.microsoft.com). Users can have 1:1 online meetings or set up live events to host up to 10,000 people. Groups can be set up to include only relevant users and almost all file-types can be uploaded and shared, from PDFs and Word documents to audio and video files.



What parents need to know about

MICROSOFT TEAMS



DISCLOSING PERSONAL DETAILS

Like any messaging service or social network, children can be targeted by others to share their private or personal information ranging from their phone number, birthday and home address to their social media accounts or even their personal login details and passwords. Oversharing their private information can lead to any manner of risks including online fraud, bullying or even grooming activity.



CYBERBULLYING

The risk of cyberbullying can be increased online when using chat facilities. Microsoft Teams provides the ability for users to chat to each other via its instant messaging service, both as part of a group or privately. Children could find themselves the target of negative or hurtful comments directed from other users who might find it easier to say things they maybe otherwise wouldn't in person.



INAPPROPRIATE CHAT

The chance to have private conversations in Teams can also mean that children feel as though they can share messages and communication between each other that are hidden away from others. Whilst children are most likely to use Teams in a school setting, the ability to chat privately may provide an opportunity to be less formal which could lead to sharing inappropriate messages, files or content which is unsuitable in a school environment.



HACKING RISK

Teams, like any software application, may be a target for hackers to illicit personal data. A 'man-in-the-middle attack' could occur, whereby the attacker reroutes communication between two users through the attacker's computer without the knowledge of the other users. This means that online communications could possibly be intercepted and be read or listened to, exposing both parties to the possibility of identity fraud or other criminal behaviour.



VIRUS INFECTION

Viruses and other harmful programs are among the risks of using online platforms like Microsoft Teams. Wherever you can share files or links, there is a risk that the content could be malicious. This could lead to slow computer performance, deletion of data, the theft of private or personal information and even hackers taking control of your PC.



LIVE STREAMING RISKS

Microsoft Teams, like other video-conferencing software platforms, facilitates live streaming. That means it inevitably carries some of the associated risks. These are likely to be minimal within a controlled environment (for instance in a classroom setting / remote learning). However, live streaming means that content isn't always moderated and children may inadvertently show or hear inappropriate, unsuitable or offensive material that they otherwise wouldn't.



Safety Tips for Parents & Carers

BLOCK USERS

If your child is receiving inappropriate messages or finds themselves being harassed or abused on Teams, they can block these contacts from the privacy control in the settings menu. To add an extra layer of protection, you can also block contacts whom hide their ID to protect children from communicating with people they don't know.



PROTECT PERSONAL INFO

It's a good idea to talk to your child about the importance of keeping their personal information private and secure. Children should only give out the minimum information they need to when creating an account and understand that if other people request their personal details from them, they should avoid providing it and report any concerns to a trusted adult.



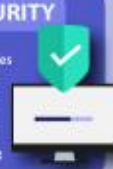
ENABLE BACKGROUND BLUR

To help protect your privacy during a video call or live stream, it may be a good idea to blur the background or even add a background effect. This can easily be done by clicking 'Background effects' before joining a meeting after which you'll have the option to blur your background, replace your background with one of the images provided or upload and use an image of your own.



UPDATE COMPUTER SECURITY

It's important to ensure you perform regular computer and software updates as these patches often improve security flaws and minimise your vulnerability to cyberattacks. Having your own computer security or anti-malware software is another level of defence in minimising the chances of an attack from viruses, malware and other harmful programs. Ensure this is updated everyday so that it is able to protect you against the very latest threats.



TALK ABOUT RISKS

As a parent, talking to your child and making them aware of the risks of working and communicating online can help them to be more digitally resilient. Perhaps outline a set of agreed do's and don'ts and try to ensure young people know what to do if they are made to feel uncomfortable or experience any negative behaviour or activity.



AVOID VIDEO/AUDIO

It's always a good idea to turn off your audio during live group calls when not in use. This can easily be done by muting the mic and will avoid others hearing anything personal in the background at home or at school. Similarly, if possible, try to encourage children to avoid using video call to help guard against any privacy concerns and limit the risks of viewing anything inappropriate or unsettling.



Meet our expert

Emma Davis is a cybersecurity expert and former ICT teacher. She delivers cyber awareness training to organisations nationally and has extensive knowledge and experience of managing how children access services and apps online.



SOURCES:
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/teams> | <https://www.mcafee.com>
<https://www.thekidsline.co.uk>



10 TOP TIPS

REMOTE LEARNING FOR PARENTS

Remote learning can be a great way to continue learning outside the classroom, particularly in difficult circumstances. For parents and carers, the idea of remote learning isn't always straightforward and there can be a number of factors they need to consider, especially around ensuring their children feel comfortable and are familiar with the whole concept. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers support their child in getting the most out of their remote learning experience.

1) Take an active interest in your child's learning

As a parent or carer, remote learning will be a new concept for your child and there are bound to be a few teething problems to start with. Take an active interest in their learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.



2) Monitor your child's communication and online activity

It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.



3) Establish a daily schedule and routine

Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting that children might associate more with play and a degree of freedom might take a bit of getting used to. Try to stick to a daily routine and use the timetable/schedule that schools have sent home to help children keep on top of their daily learning.



4) Encourage screen breaks away from devices

Remote learning will inevitably require more interaction with computers, laptops and tablets. Teacher's will invariably advise on screen breaks however it doesn't hurt to keep a check on their time online or encourage them to get some fresh air/exercise.



5) Ensure your learning device is in a public space in the home

It's important to consider where your PC or laptop is placed if live video is being used. Try to keep the background neutral with no personal information visible and move learning devices out of the bedroom as this could be deemed inappropriate.



6) Implement safety controls and privacy restrictions on apps and software

Dependant on how your school implements remote learning, your child may be required to download certain software or apps. Whilst these are likely to be relatively safe to use, like any other new app or platform, parents should still implement safety controls as a precaution.



7) Ensure your child only uses official school communication channels

It's important that all communication with teachers and school staff is directed through approved school channels, whether that be through the school's online portal or the relevant secure messaging site.



8) Familiarise yourself with relevant school policies

Schools should have a policy on remote learning and direction that they can share with parents. Familiarise yourself with this and ensure you know what is expected of teachers and your child during lessons, both online and offline.



9) Maintain feedback with teachers

Engage in communication with teachers where possible and try to feedback progress and development as well as any helpful suggestions around the learning process. Be transparent but remain professional and only use official channels to communicate.



10) Monitor your child's wellbeing and mental health

Remote learning will likely mean that your child won't get the same level of social interaction and might not see their friends for a while. Keep a check on their wellbeing and try to encourage them to get out as much as you can. Whilst learning from home might seem fun and exciting to start with, missing out on seeing their friends everyday might take its toll.

