Remote Learning Policy

Approved by	Governors' Resources Committee 20th October 2020
Next review due by:	October 2021

Introduction
During a partial or full school closure for reasons due to coronavirus, staff at our school will continue to provide education and support for our children, using remote learning. This will allow staff to keep in daily contact in a professional and confidential manner with their class. Teachers will be able to schedule learning in a manner that does not overwhelm our children or their families. Teaching and learning can be tailored, changed and updated as time progresses, allowing for replication of classroom activity to the best of our ability. In all communications we will prioritise the wellbeing of our children.

Aims
This remote learning policy aims to:

- ensure that strategies are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children whilst working from home;
- ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning for pupils who are not in school;
- set out expectations for all members of the school community with regard to remote learning;
- provide appropriate guidelines for data protection;
- ensure pupils unable to attend school remain fully included within the school community;
- continue to ensure that every child receives the best education with which the school can provide them;
- ensure that remote education is integrated in the curriculum so it is an essential part of the school curriculum, alongside classroom teaching, or in the case of a local lockdown.

Children or Families Self-isolating
This policy explains our online provision for children learning at home as a result of a whole or partial school closure. If individual children are required to self-isolate for two weeks, as their teacher will also be planning for their class in school, a pack of activities will be provided as hard copies, which may include links to online activities.

If we are notified of the need for self-isolation by 12 noon on a school day, activity packs will be usually available by the next school day, otherwise it will be the following school day. Activity packs will be available for collection from the school by a representative of the family, or may be sent by post. The class teacher will keep in touch with the child/their family by telephone at least once during the two-week period.

Flexibility
We realise that the circumstances that cause our school/bubbles to close will affect families in a number of 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;
- 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 exams;
- teachers may be trying to manage their home situation, such as caring for dependents and/or the learning of their own children;
- systems may not always function as they should.

Roles and responsibilities
Leadership Team
Alongside any teaching responsibilities, school leaders are responsible for:

- co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school;

- monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.

Phase leaders (Early Years, KS1, Lower KS2, Upper KS2) are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning (level of engagement, quality of: provision, resources, feedback and the children's work).

Teachers

When providing remote learning, teachers must be available between 8.30am-3.30pm on their working days. If they are 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, as far as possible, teachers will continue to teach in line with the current detailed planning that is already in place throughout the school. Teachers are responsible for setting work on a daily basis on school days for their current class. The amount of work they need to provide is as follows:

In Early Years (Nursery and Reception): a range of activities that will cover the seven areas of learning across the week.

In Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2): daily maths, English and either phonics lessons or grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) lessons, as appropriate, plus 5 lessons for foundation subjects each week.

In Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6 inclusive): daily maths, English and GPS, plus 5 lessons for foundation subjects each week.

Across the school, for each day, whenever possible, teachers will record and upload a short introductory video or audio recording, introducing the day's learning.

Teachers will use a variety of resources, including, for example, those provided by White Rose Maths and BBC Bitesize, as well as other resources (such as the Oak National Academy), identified by school curriculum leaders.

Setting Work
For Nursery, Reception and Year 1, teachers will send a range of activities to parents/carers using EvidenceMe, to be carried out over the course of the week.

For Years 2 to 6 inclusive, teachers will set work on Google Classroom by 9.00am each day.

Providing feedback on work
For children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1, all completed work will be acknowledged by the class teacher or key person, using the feedback facility on EvidenceMe. Feedback will be supportive in giving 'next step' options, on an individual basis.

For children in Years 2 to 6 inclusive, all work submitted will be acknowledged by the class teacher, using the 'stream' facility or private comments on Google Classroom. Feedback will be given for English and Maths in small groups (and/or individually, as appropriate). Feedback will be age-appropriate, and will be provided some time between the hours of 10.00am and 3.00pm, depending on the teacher's routine.

Teachers should also take regular breaks away from the computer to engage in other professional duties, as much as circumstances will allow.

If unwell themselves, a teacher will be covered by another staff member for the sharing of activities. Follow up on messages on Google Classroom during this time will not be undertaken until the teacher is fit to work. Feedback and marking will be limited.

Teaching assistants
Teaching assistants must be available to assist with remote learning between 8.45am-3.00pm on their working days.

If they are 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 assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants are responsible for supporting pupils who are not in school with learning remotely, as requested by the Headteacher, Inclusion Leader, or class teacher.

Teaching assistants should liaise with class teachers to support planning. They may well be able to support individual children - as appropriate - through video conference calls. To facilitate this support, teaching assistants will be provided with a school laptop as appropriate.

Subject Leaders
Alongside their teaching responsibilities, subject leaders are responsible for communicating with colleagues regarding remote learning opportunities in their subject.

Pupils and Parents
Staff can expect pupils learning remotely to:
- be assured that wellbeing is at the forefront of our thoughts along with the need for children to take regular breaks, get fresh air, exercise and maintain a reasonable balance between online engagement and offline activities;
- be contactable during the school day – 9.00am – 3.00pm although they should not be in front of a device the entire time;
- seek help if they need it from teachers through the stream (pupils in Years 2 to 6);
- **only send messages and queries that are in relation to tasks set by their teacher or in response to questions that their teacher may ask them directly;**
- read daily, either independently or with an adult;
- alert teachers if they're not able to complete work, explaining the reason;
- as well as completing school work, consider a school closure time as an opportunity to learn a new skill, follow their own interests to discover more about the world around us or just be creative.

Staff can expect parents with children learning remotely to:
- support their child's learning to the best of their ability;
- make the class teacher aware through EvidenceMe (Nursery, Reception and Year 1) or the stream facility on Google Classroom (Years 2 to 6) if their child is unwell or otherwise can't complete work, explaining the reason;
- seek help from the school if they need it, via EvidenceMe/Google Classroom;
- **refrain from screenshotting or copying any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform outside of Google Classroom;**
- check their child's completed work each day and encourage the progress that is being made;

- be mindful of the 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 courteous, considerate and respectful when communicating with members of staff.

Keeping in Touch

In the case of a national or local lockdown, or individual self-isolation, teachers will phone all pupils/parents at least every other week. Where possible, they will use school phones to make calls home. If necessary, they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number. Any concerns should be noted and the Headteacher informed.

In the event of a school lockdown or bubble isolation, communication between class teachers/children/parents regarding home learning will be via the stream on Google Classroom. General communications from school with parents/carers will be via ParentMail.

If there has been no contact (ie a message on the stream, or work being submitted) from either a parent or child for two days at any time during the lockdown/self-isolation period, on the third day either the class teacher or a member of the leadership team will contact parents/pupils by telephone.

The school office email accounts (administrator and reception) will be checked at least three times a day between 8.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday in term time. If a reply is appropriate, this should be sent within two working days.

As long as they are well, teachers should respond to pupil/parent communications within two working days.

Safeguarding

Core safeguarding principles

In connection with remote teaching and learning, we will continue to act in accordance with the procedures as stated in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which is in line with the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first.
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately.
- Whenever possible, a DSL will be available on the school site at all times during school hours (school telephone number: 01865-415105). Additional contact details for urgent out of hours concerns are detailed in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on the school website (https://www.stswithunsprimary.org/uploads/9/5/4/0/95408552/st_swithuns_safeguarding_policy_sept_2020__1_.pdf).
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not gain access to children.
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online.

Reporting concerns

All staff must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those learning from home. Normal reporting procedures will be followed as stated in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as a local lockdown, or if they need to self-isolate.

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children are those who are assessed as being in need, including children:
- ➢ with a Child Protection Plan;
- ➢ with a Child in Need Plan;
- ➢ Looked After by the local authority;
- ➢ have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan;
- ➢ have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by the school or Local Authority, such as those who are on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, children who have been adopted, or who are young carers.

Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker, and other children about whom we have safeguarding concerns, for circumstances when the child is learning at home.

Each child has an individual plan, which sets out:

- ➢ How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week.
- ➢ Which staff member(s) will make contact - as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well.
- ➢ Practicalities for enabling children who are entitled to Income-based Free School Meals to receive, if appropriate, a school brunch bag each lunchtime on school days.
- ➢ How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, video call, doorstep visits, or a combination. Doorstep visits ideally should be made by the social worker or support worker. An agreement will be made between the school and social worker/support worker to ensure that this happens.

If staff are unable to make contact and have concerns they will contact social services immediately.

We will continue to work with children's social care, with staff from the virtual school for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

Online safety

When staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.
Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately.
We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

We will make sure that parents and carers:
- are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online;
- know what our school is asking children to do online, where relevant, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online.

Data protection

Accessing personal data

Teachers are able to access parent contact details via the school's MIS using a secure password.
School laptops should be used when accessing pupils/parents' personal information.
When accessing personal data for remote learning purposes, no data will be shared with third parties.

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 (eg an 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;
- ensuring that the device is not used by anyone else;
- ensuring that antivirus and anti-spyware software have been installed and are updated as appropriate;
- keeping operating systems up to date, always installing the latest updates.

Who to contact
If staff have any questions or concerns about remote learning, they should seek support as follows:
- Issues in setting work – talk to their phase leader or Inclusion Leader as appropriate
- Issues with behaviour – talk to the Headteacher
- Issues with IT – talk to our IT technician or IT consultant
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – talk to the Headteacher
- Concerns about data protection – talk to the School Business Manager
- Concerns about safeguarding – talk to the DSL (Headteacher) or one of the deputy DSLs (Deputy Headteacher, Inclusion Leader, School Business Manager or Home-School Link Worker)

Monitoring arrangements
This policy will be reviewed as and when updates to home learning are provided by the government by the Headteacher and/or the Deputy Headteacher.   At every review, it will be approved by the school's Governing Board.

Links with other policies
This policy is linked to, and should be read in conjunction with, our:

- Positive Behaviour Policy and Covid-19 Addendum
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Online Safety Policy

All of these policies are available on our school website:
https://www.stswithunsprimary.org/policies.html