

Remote Learning Policy

January 2021

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# Aims

This remote learning policy aims to:

* ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning in the event of the whole college, a year group or a class lockdown so that students across the college experience the same high-quality offer.
* set out expectations for all members of the college community with regards to digital learning.
* provide appropriate guidelines for data protection.
* provide appropriate guidelines for online safety and safeguarding.

# Roles and responsibilities

During times when the college is unable to be open, or when a group of students, or a member of staff is unable to access the college building, members of staff are required to continue their roles but in a different way. All teaching, site, office and pastoral staff will be required to continue work where possible in adapted ways. Teachers and teaching assistants will be asked to provide online learning and follow procedures to ensure that students still have access to high quality education.

This could be any of the following situations:

* Teachers are providing remote learning in an online environment
* Some students are learning online from home (due to isolation) and other students are learning in class.
* The teacher is at home (due to isolation) and the students are learning in class.

**It is expected that a switch to online learning will be immediate meaning the next working day.**

**(Schools must be prepared for any situation as related to the DfE Directive issued on 1st October, 2020 - Appendix 1).**

Unity College is committed to the following principles:

* Vulnerable families will be contacted weekly. This will be based on clear criteria that constitutes what defines the term ‘vulnerable’. The college will identify who the selected families are that need this provision.
* The online platforms that staff and students use during lockdown will be the same as for normal home learning: Satchel One (Show my Homework) and Microsoft Office365. This ensures that staff, students, and parents are safe, knowledgeable and skilled in using the technology. The platform that the college uses for live lessons is Microsoft Office 365 Teams for Education. Sufficient training will be provided during normal school operations to provide confidence in leaders, teachers and students being able to switch effectively, and immediately, to remote learning.
* The designated safeguarding leads will make sure that safeguarding is considered following our Child Protection, Safeguarding and On-line Safety policies and procedures alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021.
* College leaders are committed to ensuring that teachers design remote learning thoughtfully drawing on the latest pedagogy and guidance for effective teaching and learning.
* College leaders will ensure that staff have access to the technological equipment they need to meet the requirements of this policy and are guided towards the latest pedagogy and guidance for effective remote learning.

Teachers

* Where the **teacher is isolating (but is not ill)** they should deliver their timetabled lessons, live (via the Office Teams platform) from home if possible, taking-into account any factors which might influence the quality of the delivery from home.
* The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that teachers receive appropriate training, support and equipment to engage successfully with our remote learning policy.
* Where classes or year groups, or the whole college is isolating – teachers should adapt to the remote learning offer outlined below:
  + Teachers are expected to provide wherever possible live or pre-recorded lessons via the Office 365 Teams platform.
  + Some lessons will be a combination of class discussion, teacher instruction and independent activities.
  + Other lessons may involve independent activities which students will complete during their usual timetabled lesson. In these lessons, the class teacher will be available live, via the Office365 Teams platform, to offer support if and when required.
* Students will follow their usual daily timetable. This can be accessed via the Satchel One platform. Students should submit their work as directed by their class teacher. All work submitted by students should be recorded by the teacher in whatever format is agreed by their department.
* Providing feedback on work:
  + Teachers are expected to assess and feedback on work in line with college and departmental policies
  + Teachers are expected to maintain the tracking of student progress in line with their departmental policy.
* PD tutors will contact the parents/guardians of every student or contact students themselves via SMH or college email fortnightly to check on their well-being.
* The needs of vulnerable learners will be assessed and met through regular phone calls from the Support team, the SENCO and the SEND team.
* Teaching assistants may be asked to support the provision of work for specific children and to join live support sessions to offer breakout group support.
* Keeping in touch with students who are not in college and their parents
  + Teachers will answer emails and requests from parents during college hours. If a teacher cannot assist with the parents’ queries or concerns, they should forward the issue on to the relevant member of staff as soon as possible.
  + If a student is not completing set work online, the teacher should notify parents with offers of support. Continued non-engagement should be reported to the senior member of staff.
* Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents and students:
  + Teachers will take part in regular department Teams meetings to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented effectively and to assess impact on students’ progress.
  + In any video/conference/live event, all teaching staff will wear appropriate clothing for the occasion.
  + Filming/videos will take place in quiet locations with no background noise, or anything inappropriate in the background. MS Teams ‘backgrounds’ feature can be used to support this.
  + Teachers should be aware that all lessons on TEAMS should be recorded to support student learning and safeguarding
* No student photographs will be added to TEAMS and students’ avatar/photos will be set to initials only as default.
* Students will participate in live lessons with their cameras and microphones switched off. The chat function shall be used to facilitate dialogue between the students and teacher.
* Teachers will inform students at the start of all the lessons that the lesson is being recorded and that it will remain available within the TEAM posts for 21 days.
* Recorded lessons will remain available, via the ‘posts’ section of individual class teams, for a period of 21 days only, after which time the videos will be automatically taken down in line with Microsoft’s user settings.
* Downloading, sharing or inappropriate use of recorded lessons for any purpose other than that which they are intended is forbidden.
* The practices and procedures used to facilitate live lessons and remote learning will remain under constant review to ensure best practices are followed at all times.
* When providing remote learning, teachers must be available between normal working hours. 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. If a member of staff is required to provide online work or feedback then this will be delegated to a suitable person who can fulfil this role.

**Teaching assistants**

When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants must be available between their normal working hours. 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 assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants are responsible for:

* + Students who need additional support
  + Students who need additional challenge
* They may be asked to host ‘break out’ sessions during live events where they are providing intervention on a small group basis. This should be recorded and consent sought at the start of the session to make the recording – with the consent giving also recorded. The video must be stored securely in MS Stream and not shared.

Subject Leaders

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, subject leads are also responsible for:

* ensuring that their subject is being taught effectively and the curriculum coverage, pace and depth is secure, drawing on relevant, current guidance on best practice for remote learning.
* working with teachers to make sure that the needs of vulnerable learners are being met.
* monitoring the quality of remote learning set by teachers in their subject, student engagement and progress with meeting assignments deadlines.
* monitoring the academic progress of students and being able to report effectively on this and identify interventions.
* alerting teachers to resources they can use to teach their subject remotely

Senior leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

* co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the college to ensure everyone is able to use digital tools with confidence.
* ensure appropriate systems are in place for the monitoring of student attendance and engagement in remote lessons; identifying and removing barriers to learning for specific groups and individual students, and co-ordinating any interventions necessary to ensure that all students, in all groups can access high quality, relevant education remotely.
* monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning –conducting regular meetings with teachers and subject leaders, reviewing the learning set and providing overviews of academic progress.
* ensuring that the college’s data protection and safeguarding considerations and policies are implemented.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

The DSLs are responsible for:

* Responding to any concerns/queries that is brought to their attention through safeguarding
* Communicating with the Local Authority Safeguarding Team to ensure multi-agencies have all relevant information
* Ensuring staff remain trained in all areas such as FGM/Missing in Education/PREVENT.
* Conducting and sometimes leading Early help meetings virtually
* Supporting families who have requested support or who are identified by teaching staff.
* Supporting staff via update training regarding Safeguarding where appropriate.

IT staff

IT staff are responsible for:

* fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work.
* helping staff and parent/guardians with any technical issues they’re experiencing.
* reviewing the security of remote learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the data protection officer.
* assisting students and parents with accessing the internet or devices.

Students and parents

(Parents should refer to the remote education guide available on the college’s website)

Staff can expect students learning remotely to:

* attend all live lessons at the correct time.
* take an active part in activities and discussions throughout the entire lessons.
* complete work to the deadlines set by teachers.
* seek help when they need it, from teachers or teaching assistants.
* alert teachers if they’re not able to complete work.
* behave appropriately online.
* To Support this, leaders will:
* make sure teachers have been trained on how to manage a live support session and the tools available to manage behaviour online.
* ask staff to issue a short reminder of expectations each time a live support session is delivered and/or check children’s understanding of appropriate behaviour.
* amend their behaviour for learning policies to include a section on online behaviour and make sure that consequences are referred to and that staff, students and parents understand what they are.

Staff can expect parents with students learning remotely to:

* make the college aware if their child is ill or otherwise cannot attend live lessons or complete remote learning work.
* seek help from the college if they need it – use the support and resources provided under the Remote Learning tab on the college website.
* be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff.
* ensure that their child behaves appropriately online and support the college if notified of their child’s poor behaviour in a lesson.

College Governors

The governing board is responsible for:

* monitoring the college’s approach to providing remote learning to ensure the quality of education.
* ensuring that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons.
* ratifying changes to the behaviour for learning policy to take account of online learning.

# Who to contact for Support

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

* Issues in setting work – contact the subject leader
* Issues with behaviour – contact the subject leader or PD tutor or House leader
* Issues with IT – report this to [a.whitlock@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:a.whitlock@unity.lancs.sch.uk)
* Issues with using Microsoft Teams/remote learning – [m.holden@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:m.holden@unity.lancs.sch.uk)
* Issues with lack of student engagement – [j.mcgregor@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:j.mcgregor@unity.lancs.sch.uk) / [m.witter@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:m.witter@unity.lancs.sch.uk)
* Issues with workload or wellbeing – talk to their line manager or a member of SLT
* Concerns about data protection – contact- [j.mcgregor@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:j.mcgregor@unity.lancs.sch.uk)
* Concerns about safeguarding – contact one of the colleges DSLs
* Key worker / vulnerable provision – [t.hemissi@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:t.hemissi@unity.lancs.sch.uk)
* Show My Homework / Satchel one – [z.hammond-phillips@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:z.hammond-phillips@unity.lancs.sch.uk)

# Data protection

Accessing personal data

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

* use the secure email system for Unity College and ensure laptops/devices are password protected.
* use college’s devices where possible when working from home. If this is not possible, use a secure computer which cannot be accessed or seen by anyone else. All apps must be accessed via a password and not remain open when unattended.
* not download personal data to personal devices.

**Processing personal data**

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data; as long as this processing is necessary for the college’s official functions, individuals will not need to give permission for this to happen. However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online. Any breaches should be reported to [a.rahman@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:a.rahman@unity.lancs.sch.uk)

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.
* making sure the device is locked if left inactive for a period of time and when member of staff moves away from device.
* not sharing the device among family or friends with any application/programme or document open or accessible without a password.
* keeping operating systems up to date – always installing the latest update.

# Safeguarding

Staff should follow all guidance with regards to Safeguarding as they normally would when in college. A greater emphasis will be placed on On-line Safety, however all principles remain the same with regards to reporting concerns to the college’s DSL. Please refer to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policies (revised January 2021) including the Addendum and the college’s On-Line Safety Policy.

Staff must ensure that they familiarise themselves with all policies and any routine updates that are made.

It is the joint responsibility of parents/carers, staff and students to ensure students are safe on-line whilst completing work set by the college and in everyday use. There are opportunities for things to go wrong and if staff or parent/guardians are concerned with regards to on-line behaviour they should take appropriate steps to support the young person.

**Staff**

Staff must follow normal safeguarding procedures should there be any concerns about any students. All staff should read the college’s Remote Education Policy

**Parents/Carers**

Parents/guardians should ensure they take all precautions when allowing their children to use on-line technology and familiarise themselves with the colleges Remote Education Policy. Parents/carers are encouraged to check on their children when accessing their learning and in the general use of technology

Parents/carers may find the following websites useful;

* General information - [www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/staying-safe-online/](http://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/staying-safe-online/)
* Reporting Abuse - <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>
* On-line Safety for the whole family - [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

# Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements

Internal tracking systems of student engagement, and records of staff evaluation of the impact of technology, are used to understand what is happening in the digital environment. A constant process of impact review is in place to support all members of the community to develop their digital knowledge and skills base. This enables the Senior Leadership Team to monitor the implementation of this policy and to identify and act upon concerns where appropriate.

# Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside other college policies noted below;

* Behaviour policy
* Teaching and learning policy
* Child protection policy/Safeguarding Policy and Addendum (January 2021)
* Data protection policy and privacy notices
* Home-school agreement
* Information Security Policy
* ICT Acceptable Use Policy
* Online safety policy
* Homework policy
* Parent/Carer Conduct Policy
* HR policies
* Guidance to Safer Working Practice and Addendum

**APPENDIX 1- DfE** **REMOTE EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS**

* Where a class, group or a small number of pupils need to self-isolate, or local restrictions require pupils to remain at home, we expect schools to have the capacity to offer immediate remote education. Schools are expected to consider how to continue to improve the quality of their existing curriculum, for example through technology, and have a strong contingency plan in place for remote education provision by the end of September. This planning will be particularly important to support a scenario in which the logistical challenges of remote provision are greatest, for example where large numbers of pupils are required to remain at home.

In developing these contingency plans, we expect schools to:

* use a curriculum sequence that allows access to high-quality online and offline resources and teaching videos and that is linked to the school’s curriculum expectations.
* give access to high quality remote education resources.
* select the online tools that will be consistently used across the school in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback and make sure staff are trained in their use.
* provide printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, for pupils who do not have suitable online access.
* recognise that younger pupils and some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so schools should work with families to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum.

When teaching pupils remotely, we expect schools to:

* set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects.
* teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject.
* provide frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher in the school or through high-quality curriculum resources or videos.
* gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum, using questions and other suitable tasks and set a clear expectation on how regularly teachers will check work.
* enable teachers to adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure pupils’ understanding.
* plan a programme that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school, ideally including daily contact with teachers.

For secondary schools teaching pupils remotely in a rota system because of tier 2 local restrictions, modified remote education expectations apply. These can be found in [how schools can plan for tier 2 local restriction](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions#remote-education).

* We expect schools to consider these expectations in relation to the pupils’ age, stage of development or special educational needs, for example where this would place significant demands on parents’ help or support. We expect schools to avoid an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities.
* We have now published a [temporary continuity direction](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remote-education-temporary-continuity-direction-explanatory-note) which makes it clear that schools have a duty to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children unable to attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19). This will come into effect from 22 October 2020. The direction poses no additional expectations on the quality of remote education expected of schools beyond those set out in this guidance.