RAINHILL HIGH SCHOOL

BLENDED LEARNING

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STATUS	NON-STATUTORY
RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE	LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
APPROVAL DATE	23/03/21
RENEWAL DATE	23/03/24

Blended Learning Policy 2020-21

Introduction

This policy has been developed by Rainhill High School part of Stephenson Multi Academy Trust.

Rationale

In the event of a school closure, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of remote or blended learning. Extensive remote learning would apply particularly in a situation in which the school is closed for an extended period of time, but a high proportion of students and teachers are healthy, and able to work as normal from home.

This policy is under review and may be revised as necessary in light of further experience of remote learning and the circumstances around its necessity. For example, the extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning, owing to widespread illness, for example. This policy is for the whole school, although remote learning for the different Key Stages will be differentiated.

Remote learning for individual students (case by case basis)

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, such as a student shielding or due to mental health concerns, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for students who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual student, the collation of work and communication with the parent will be coordinated by the student's Year Progress Leader.

The student's subject teachers will use MS Teams in the first instance to set work. If there are any issues with the compilation of work, YPLs should liaise with the relevant Head of Faculty.

Remote learning for larger groups (bubble closure or year group isolation)

It may be the case that a number of students are asked to self-isolate for a period of time. At KS3, KS4 and KS5, all subject teachers will have their own individual teams in order to contact students and provide work. If there are any issues with the compilation of work, the relevant Year Progress Leader should be contacted.

Remote learning in the event of extended school closure

In the event of an extended school closure, the school will provide continuity of education applying a range of the following ways:

a) Regular direct or indirect instruction from subject teachers, with the ability for students to ask questions online via MS Teams in line with the planned curriculum.

b) The setting of work for students to complete; written responses (if relevant) completed electronically

c) The assessment of specific MCQ forms that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided

Students and teachers are expected to have access to the internet whilst at home and support will be given where possible to ensure students have suitable access and device. The primary platforms the school will use to deliver continuity of education are:

MS Teams/OneDrive: accessed via the relevant app or desktop application, or via the following URL: https://teams.microsoft.com or www.onedrive.com

SMHW: Teachers will use SMHW to direct students to where they may find the work to be completed

Access to these platforms is via a student's normal school login (R number). If students have difficulty with logging in, they should contact the school's IT support via the school website.

The extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning. For shorter closures, for example, teachers may set work on SMHW for submission in person once the school has reopened. For longer closures, teachers would make more use of live, recorded lessons and independent learning. The school reserves the right to vary the range of methods used to provide remote learning tasks, feedback and interaction, based on the particular circumstances of any closure and based on our experience.

The setting of tasks

Subject areas will provide work broadly in line with students' timetables through MS Teams. Tasks will be meaningful and ambitious and set in accordance with the planned curriculum where possible. Tasks will be designed to allow students to progress through schemes of work at a similar pace as if they were in school, where possible.

Naturally, remote learning will require students and teachers to take a different approach to working through content, but tasks should ensure the pace of content coverage is as close as possible to in-school teaching, and ensure students do not fall behind.

The nature of tasks set should allow students to learn independently, without the specific support of an adult at home.

The type of task set will vary between subjects, but examples of appropriate tasks might include:

- Taking part in live lessons
- Accessing recorded lesson content
- Completing independent tasks
- Reading and noting new material from a common subject area textbook or electronic resource
- Working through subject-specific presentations or worksheets provided by the subject area
- Watching a relevant video resource and making notes on it
- Completing a listening exercise (e.g. in languages)
- Reading
- Written responses to prompt questions, essay plans etc.
- Completion of practice questions or past papers, particularly for those in examination years
- Working through relevant exercises offered by external providers (e.g. Seneca Learning, MathsWatch, Tassomi)

Teachers will set tasks through MS Teams and it is the responsibility of teachers and students to ensure they know how to use this function effectively following instructions and training issued by the school. Teachers should add Line Managers as teachers of Teams to allow them to monitor and support as required.

Live (synchronous) sessions

Subject teachers may wish to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by text or audio and/or visual means) where appropriate and directed by the school.

Microsoft Teams allows for resources to be shared, teachers to provide exposition, and students to ask questions in 'real-time'. Students will be provided with details of sessions, via invite, and will be expected to participate in them fully if they are asked and able to do so.

Live sessions can be particularly helpful as they can facilitate synchronous communication, with students able to respond to teachers' questions (and ask them) via the chat functionality in Teams. The safeguarding policy should be followed by staff conducting live lessons.

Recorded (asynchronous) Lessons

Subject teachers may provide pre-recorded lessons as an alternative where appropriate and the school has directed them to do so. These could be recorded using Teams, screencasting or video software or by using the screen recording function of PowerPoint. Training will be made available for staff who wish to improve their skills via AAHT – Blended Learning. Recorded videos will be disseminated to students via Teams.

Feedback

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning. Feedback will be issued in a number of ways:

- o Whole class verbal feedback in live/recorded lessons

- o Whole class written feedback using Teams chat facility

- o Marked Multiple Choice Question Quizzes or other marked quiz platforms

- o Individual written feedback using Teams chat facility

- o Providing feedback directly in the assignments function of Teams either by rubric or individualised comments

- o Sending a direct email (or Teams message) to students with specific feedback / targets

- o Feedback via another website / piece of software (e.g. OneNote, Seneca Learning, Maths Watch)

- o Recording oral feedback and sharing an audio file with the student

Work will be marked and feedback given in line with the schools marking policy.

Expectations of students

Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, students will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Students will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a form tutor) on a regular basis.

In the event of an extended school closure, teachers will continue to deliver content in line with existing schemes of learning once the school is reopened; if any student misses significant parts of the content, they will be able to view material posted online and the school will consider the practicalities of helping students to catch up once the school reopens.

Students should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any administrative tasks that allow the school to monitor their progress. For example, where assignments are set using Teams, they should select the option of "Turn In" so teachers can monitor their engagement through Insights. If students or parents have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant subject area. If there are questions about a student's overall experience these should be directed to the student's Year Progress Leader.

The school does not expect students to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school (e.g. science or art).

RAINHILL
HIGH SCHOOL

Expectations of teachers (and subject areas)

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet connectivity and workspace at home. If this is not available for any reason, teachers must inform their Line Manager immediately. If there are IT related issues while remote working, teachers can contact the ICT Technicians via rainhillict@rainhillhigh.org.uk .

The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with school marking policy.

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, Heads of Faculty and Heads of Department or Key Stage are responsible for Quality Assuring the content and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas. All teachers should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that students have a range of activities to complete.

In the event a teacher is unwell during a period of remote learning, it becomes the responsibility of the Line Manager to ensure work is set.

Subject areas are expected to:

- Plan and deliver 'live sessions' where appropriate in consultation with faculty heads (for any audio/video links)
- Respond to reasonable amounts of communication from students, parents and teachers
- Plan and set tasks for their students using the assignments tab in Teams
- Be able to set and mark assessed work promptly, in line with school policies, returning it to students electronically (or after the period of remote working for written and project work)

In order to ensure teachers are able to perform the minimum expectations outlined above; the school will provide a range of training opportunities. If teachers require support with any aspects of remote learning, they are encouraged to consult their Line Managers.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, teachers will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, students and parents. Teachers also should ensure their communication with students does not encourage unhelpful work habits. All communication should take place during usual school hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 4pm, although responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day in normal practice.

Communication must always occur via official school channels, and not through personal accounts or other websites.

Permitted methods are:

- Email using school email addresses only (both teachers and student)
- Edulink One
- SMHW
- Microsoft Teams Posting (General class) and Teams chat facility

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Support for pupils with SEND, EAL and other specific learning enhancement needs

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all learners when setting online tasks using the schools CoP. Profiles are available for SEND pupils and advice can be sought from the SEND coordinator. In addition, the SEND Co-ordinator and LSA's will maintain contact with pupils on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/pupils and feed back to teachers using CPOMS if required.

DIS identified students

Where possible, students who are identified as DIS will be supplied with a school laptop and internet access. An acceptable use policy will be given that must be signed by both student and parent/carer prior to obtaining a device. The loan of said device will last as long as the period of absence or closure. Longer loans may be possible but this is at the school's discretion.

Pastoral care during a school closure

In event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents / guardians. However, form tutors (under the guidance of the Year Team Leaders) should check in regularly with their tutees to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Form tutors will be expected to pass on feedback to Year Team Leaders, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication.

Safeguarding during a school closure

In the event of a school closure, pupils, parents and teachers are reminded that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between pupils and teachers. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school. More advice on safeguarding and pastoral issues is available in the guidance for teachers document.

Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Linsay Munro linsay.munro@rainhillhigh.org.uk

We have updated our Child Protection Policy with an addendum relating to Covid, copies of which can be found on the school's website following this link https://www.rainhillhighschool.org.uk/parents/policies-procedures.Staff have also been issued with the Covid Jan 2021 guidance on the delivery of remote lessons, which can be found in the staff handbook.

There is also a Covid Addendum to our Behaviour Policy that addresses home working, which can be found on our website at https://www.rainhillhighschool.org.uk/parents/policies-procedures.

- **Staff wellbeing, staff CPD, QA procedures (i.e. lesson visits)**

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 head of faculty or SENCO
- Issues with behaviour – talk to the relevant Progress Leader
- 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
- Concerns about workload – Line Manager

IT staff
- IT staff are responsible for:
- Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work
- Helping staff and parents 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 pupils and parents with accessing the internet or devices

Data Protection

Accessing personal data

When accessing personal data for remote learning purposes, all staff members will:
- Access data through the remote access server (for SIMS or File Access) or secure cloud service i.e. Office 365 for emails, Classcharts, Microsoft Teams
- Understand that the Acceptable User Policy also applies to use of school ICT systems and equipment off the premises and use of personal equipment in situations related to employment by the school

Processing personal data

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as email addresses or contact numbers, 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.

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