

Policy for Remote Teaching and Learning

This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees with reference to the academy's Equality Policy. The aims of the Equality Policy are to ensure that Plume Academy meets the needs of all, taking account of gender identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this academy we meet the diverse needs of students to ensure inclusion for all and that all students are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

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When Plume Academy enters into a period of remote teaching and learning, such as when educational establishments are required to shut as part of a national lockdown, leaders within the academy will publish a supplementary document detailing the precise educational offer this is being made to students for the duration of the respective closure period. This document, entitled 'Remote education provision: information for parents and carers' should be read in conjunction with this policy.

1. Introduction

Following two periods of sustained lockdown and incidental days of online learning during the academic year 2021-22, Plume Academy has continued to use remote learning to enable students to learn when they are unable to be present in the academy. Whilst this has not been required during academic year 22-23 the ability to use remote education for individuals or larger groups is important.

The Coronavirus Act 2020 and Provision of Remote Education (England) Temporary Continuity (No.2) Direction expired on 24 March 2022 meaning that schools no longer have a legal duty to provide remote education, however, non-statutory guidance to schools from the DfE (First published 29 March 2022 and last updated 14 February 2023) identifies situations when remote learning may be used.

Plume Academy is committed in principle to implementing this non-statutory guidance, as it recognises remote learning as a valuable tool in ensuring continuity and extension of learning.

In this policy, the core principles of the DfE guidance will be summarised. At the end of each section, Plume Academy's interpretation and intended implementation of the guidance is highlighted in italics.

2. DfE non-statutory guidance for providing remote education (29 March 2022, last updated 14 February 23)

This guidance states:

'Schools should consider providing remote education to pupils in circumstances when in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government guidance.'

In response, Plume Academy will offer remote education on occasions where the attendance of all learners, or a significant number of learners, is not possible or contrary to government guidance.

Example of such circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- *Local or national circumstances where Public Health England or other appropriate bodies advise that the academy is not safe to open to all students or significant cohorts of students.*
- *The unexpected, short-term closure of the academy, or one of its composite sites, due to unforeseen circumstances, such as boiler failure or adverse weather conditions.*

Which students should be able to access remote education?

The guidance states that attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age

In response, Plume Academy will offer remote education to all students affected by a school closure.

In reality, school closures will, in the main, fall into two distinct categories:

Category One

- *Occasions, such as those listed above, where school leaders decide that it is not possible for the academy or significant parts of the academy, to open safely, or that opening would contradict guidance from local or central government.*

Category Two

- *Occasions when individual pupils, for a limited duration, are unable to physically attend their school but are able to continue learning, for example, students preparing for, or recovering from an operation or short-term infectious illness.*

Delivering remote education safely

Guidance from the DfE is set out in their publication 'Safeguarding and Remote Education' (March 2021). This should continue to be followed and be read alongside the latest version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE).

Schools should continue to keep a record of and monitor engagement with remote education but there is no requirement to track this in the attendance register.

Plume Academy will continue to implement the requirements detailed in both documents. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their Deputy/Alternates, plus those colleagues with delegated safeguarding responsibilities, such as Assistant Heads of Year, will continue carrying out their duties as normal during periods of academy closure. All reporting and recording structures will remain the same, with any deviation from these procedures being clearly and regularly signposted to staff in advance of them altering.

Individual teachers will be required to monitor the attendance of students in their classes when lessons are taught remotely. They will also be required to report any safeguarding concerns via the established reporting pathways in operation at academy.

3. Department for Education's remote education expectations

'In developing their remote education, the DfE expect institutions to:

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 consolidated in each subjects so that students can progress through the school's curriculum.'

In instances of school closure, students will following their normal school timetable, but remotely. This will ensure that students continue to access a well-planned and well-sequenced curriculum. It will also ensure that, wherever possible, public examination specifications can continue to be delivered as normal.

In instances where individual students are required to self-isolate, students will be provided with access to an online folder containing resources that will enable them to continue learning the content that is being covered in the classroom. Such folders will be updated regularly by curriculum leaders to ensure that relevant and timely content is provided.

'Select a digital platform for remote education provision that will be used consistently across the school in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback and make sure staff are trained and confident in its use.'

All remote education provision will be delivered via a single digital platform, namely Microsoft Teams. The member of Senior Leadership Team responsible for the delivery of remote education will convene regular training and continuing professional development activities on the use of the platform.

'Overcome barriers to digital access for students by:

- distributing school-owned laptops accompanied by a user agreement or contract

- providing printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, to structure learning, supplemented with other forms of communication
- keep students on track or answer questions about work.’

All students who are in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) funding will be offered the use of a laptop in instances where the closure extends beyond two working days. Plume Academy will also seek to offer laptops to non-PPG students who request them, subject to the availability of sufficient devices.

Plume Academy will coordinate the collection of printed worksheets and related learning materials for all students, PPG or otherwise, who request this service, or where, following a review of student attainment or engagement, it is deemed necessary.

In addition to in-lesson feedback and questioning, students will receive written feedback in a manner that shall be determined by individual faculty and/or subject leaders. Individual class teachers will be available to respond to students queries via email.

It may also be that some students who have difficulty engaging in remote education may be considered to be vulnerable children, and therefore, eligible to attend provision in person. As outlined in the guidance, this is a decision based on local discretion and the needs of the child and their family, as well as a wide range of other factors, including the capacity of the school to open its site in a safe manner.

When teaching students remotely, the DfE expects schools to:

- Set meaningful and ambitious work each day in an appropriate range of subjects.
- Provide teaching that is equivalent in length to the core teaching students would receive in school. This will include both recorded or live direct teaching time and time for students to complete tasks and assignments independently, and will be as a minimum:
 - Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with less for younger children
 - Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day
 - Key Stages 3 and 4: 5 hours a day

Unless unforeseen circumstances, such as significant staff absence, render it impossible, Plume Academy’s remote learning provision will entail students following their normal school timetable for that day, but remotely. This will facilitate the delivery of a rich and balanced curriculum, and will also ensure continuity of learning, as the planned curriculum, as detailed on the academy website, will continue to be delivered.

Plume Academy recognises that entire days or weeks spent in front of a screen can negatively affect a child’s physical and mental health. In view of this, on-screen activities will be limited to 40 minutes per one-hour lesson at Key Stages 3 and 4; lessons will run for a full hour at Key Stage 5. In the case of Key Stages 3 and 4, consolidation tasks will be set to enable students to continue working beyond the online session, creating an hour of provision. Additionally, homework can be set at the teacher’s discretion, but it is advisable that consolidation and homework tasks do not create significant additional screen time, over and above that which already forms part of the remote teaching day.

In order to ensure that all elements of the curriculum are delivered, learning group time and whole-year group assemblies will continue, but in remote format.

It is permissible for a variety of delivery methods to be used by members of staff when planning remote lessons. Whilst the default position is that lessons are delivered ‘live’ by the member of staff, it is also possible for lessons to be recorded and watched ‘as live’ or asynchronously. Similarly, lessons may also be set from established providers, such as Oak National Academy. Such a blended approach will mitigate staff absence, and provide much-needed variety in a student learning experience.

In order to mirror a standard, in-class learning experience, following a series of lessons, it is permissible for staff to set an extended writing task, practice activities or project work to enable students to consolidate their learning. In essence, learning becoming limited if it is restricted to a series of short, shallow activities.

In instances where individual students are self-isolating, students who are well enough to engage in learning will have access to an online folder of resources to ensure that they continue to learn the material that is covered in class. Where possible and practicable, teachers may set up a Microsoft Teams link to enable self-isolating students to join their in-person lesson remotely, particularly in circumstances where large numbers are missing having contracted Coronavirus or a similarly contagious disease. In such circumstances, use of pre-recorded, Oak National Academy and other appropriate resources are also permitted.

As the normal curriculum is still being followed, parents, carers and students are also encouraged to access the parental curriculum overviews that exist for each subject and year group. These overviews contain suggestions of extension and super-curricular activities that complement what is studied in class. They also detail a range of resources, mostly online, that can be used to support learning.

To further enhance super-curricular provision, in instances of whole-school or whole-year group closure, the academy will regularly signpost a range of super-curricular and cultural capital activities, such as access to the National Theatre's Online Library. Relevant Careers Information Advice and Guidance and wellbeing resources will also be circulated to students and staff.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

For pupils with SEND, their teachers are best placed to know how their needs can be most effectively met to ensure they continue to make progress even if they are not able to be in school due to self-isolating. The requirement for schools to use their 'best endeavours' to secure the special educational provision called for by the students' special educational needs remains in place (2014 Children and Families Act).

Schools should work collaboratively with families, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that students with SEND can successfully access remote education alongside their peers.

As required by the DfE, Plume Academy will continue to use its best endeavours to support learners with SEND. In instances of whole school closure, teaching staff should continue to deploy adaptive teaching strategies, as outlined in the teacher standards document, to best cater for the needs of individual learners within their classrooms. Similarly, they will also be required to follow the guidance given on a child's EHCP or One Page Profile. This may include making simple adjustments to learning resources, such as sending PowerPoint resources to individual students in advance, so that they may set the background to an appropriate colour.

In instances of whole-school closure, the SEND Faculty will continue to have an open channel of communication with learners and their families. The faculty will also plan for additional adults, such as Learning Support Assistants, to be deployed judiciously in online learning environments, in much the same way as they do when lessons take place in person.