St Bernard's Preparatory School

Remote Learning Policy

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Contents

Remote Learning Policy and protocol for Guided Home Learning Including protocol for staff/child absence and Blended Learning.

St Bernard's Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

Mission Statement
With God as our shelter and Christ as our guide, the mission of St Bernard's Preparatory School is to educate towards love and service to God, each other and the wider community. Through our broad balanced curriculum, we will develop an understanding of each faith and the values we share. We will treat each person with respect, knowing we are special and unique.

St Bernard's is part of the St Benedict's family of schools. All schools in the group share a similar Catholic and Benedictine/Bernardine ethos.

Rationale

In the event of a full school closure that means children have to be taught remotely, the school is committed to providing continuity of education and will do so through a process of (online) guided home learning, known as GHL.

This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term school closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short-term student absence. Remote learning and GHL takes place primarily via Microsoft Teams and Tapestry.

Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when children, in agreement with the school, have a period of absence but are able to work at home. This may apply in cases such as longer-term illness, assuming children are able to complete schoolwork at home. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, children are self-isolating at home but are not suffering with relevant symptoms.

There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to children who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention to school or government guidance. This may apply, for example, if parents choose to take children on holiday during term time. Similarly, this might apply if parents made the decision to absent their children from school 'as a precaution', against official guidance and without permission from the school, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

The term **'critical-worker children'** refers to children whose parents have a crucial role in society and therefore are unable to support GHL at home. It may also include certain vulnerable children for whom a request to work in school has been granted by the Head. These children will always be able to come into school and will be supervised while undertaking GHL.

Remote learning for individual children (blended learning)

Blended learning refers to a mix of in-class teaching and remote learning taking place via video call on MS Teams. Children can access class teaching in this model via video and teachers can teach from home, with classes in school learning via video with a teacher / learning support assistant. Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the child in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for children who are unable to attend in person. This will take place according to the usual timetable with teachers connecting with absentees via video MS Teams. If there are any issues with the compilation of work, specialist teachers should liaise with the class teacher and the Head (Mrs A Verma).

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Remote learning in the event of extended school closure (Guided Home Learning – GHL)

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

a) Direct, live, instruction from teachers, following the set timetable, with the ability of children to communicate directly with teachers online via video calls.

b) The work children complete electronically are returned by the teacher, with feedback, via Ms Teams

c) Critical-worker children supervised in school, following GHL

Children and teachers are expected to have access to the internet whilst at home.

The primary platforms the school will use to deliver continuity of education are:

Early Years including Reception - Tapestry and Zoom

Year 1 to Year 6 – Microsoft Teams and Satchel One

Access to MS Teams is via the child's normal school e-mail; if children have difficulty with logging in, they should contact Mrs A Rafferty in the first instance.

In a complete closure, GHL will take place according to the timetable with teachers available online, on live video throughout the whole lesson. However, within the Early Years, the class teacher is always available via Tapestry. This can be either from home or school, assuming teachers have the Head's permission to come in. The expectation is not that teachers will be actively teaching for every minute of the lesson, but the video will need to be on throughout and all children expected to attend until the end of the lesson so that a plenary can be delivered. The Headteacher (Mrs A Verma) and Mrs A Rafferty are members of every class' Teams to attend online lessons as required, to offer support and guidance.

The setting of tasks in GHL/blended learning settings

Tasks will be set in accordance with existing schemes of work, and assignments will be designed to allow children to progress through schemes of work at the same pace as if they were in school, where possible. Naturally, remote learning will require children 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 children do not fall behind. The nature of tasks set should be within age related expectations.

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

- Written responses to prompt questions, essay plans etc. and/or completion of practice questions or past papers, particularly for those in examination years
- Reading and noting new material from a common subject area textbook or electronic resource
- Working through subject-specific presentations provided by the subject area and/or watching a relevant video resource and making notes on it

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- Completing a listening exercise (e.g. in French)
- Working through relevant exercises offered by external providers (e.g. Purple Mash, MyMaths, SPAG.com, Read Theory, TTRS and Spelling Shed)

Teachers should set tasks/assignments through MS Teams. It is the responsibility of teachers and children to ensure they know how to use this functionality effectively; instructions are made available separately and support is available on request.

Live sessions - video calls for lessons with MS Teams

Teachers and children must remain in live sessions throughout the session. Two members of staff will be on each live lesson for GHL, when remote learning takes place, with a child who is isolating calling into class, there will be one teacher delivering their normal lesson unless there is a TA supporting the class. In this instance children will join their class lessons and teachers will adapt if necessary for remote learners. Teachers will also send any worksheets or resources needed prior to the lesson. Live lessons should be planned so they allow for the children to interact with the teacher and each other. The teacher and/or the LSA will take a register at the beginning of each lesson and ensure each child is an attendee. Remaining online ensures children are engaging and can be supported individually. If any children are absent from the live sessions, teachers should follow the absence protocol in place. At the end of each session, teachers should ensure children have followed the lesson effectively and know what the next steps are.

Assessment and feedback

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, this can be facilitated easily across all digital platforms. However, under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers and this would continue to be the case under GHL. It is helpful to use the assignments function in MS Teams and ensuring a clear labelling of assignments helps signal to children if work needs to be returned.

When they set assessed work, teachers must ensure it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided. Feedback is at the heart of our assessment policy and when given well, has arguably the greatest impact in terms of improving outcomes of any pedagogical approach. Possible methods may include:

- Verbal feedback. Hearing the teacher's voice is hugely important to children, especially in a GHL setting. Furthermore, it can often make the delivery of feedback less onerous to teachers.
- Providing whole class feedback rather than comments on individual pieces of work – this is an effective way of providing feedback, supported by findings from educational research
- Using the "Comments" function on online documents, or in MS Teams assignments
- Feedback via another website / piece of software (e.g. Satchel One, MyMaths, Kahoot challenges etc.) Additional functionality is available in MS Assignments if teachers want to create assignments for children to complete. These might include the creation of a tailor-made quiz (containing either multiple choice or extended answers).

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Expectations of children

Children will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending all live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Children are expected to keep their video cameras and microphones on throughout each live video lesson, unless otherwise directed by the teacher. Teachers may choose to mute microphones if required.

Children 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 MS Teams, then they should mark tasks as "returned" so teachers can monitor their progress. If children 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 child's overall workload (e.g. a child feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the child's class teacher in the first instance. In GHL, teachers must work on the assumption that children will not necessarily have the full range of books and equipment that they would usually have in school. However, if advance notice is possible, teachers will instruct children to take relevant equipment from school, or for parents to ensure they have duplicates. The school does not expect children to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school (e.g. science or art). Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case children do not have access to them at home.

Expectations of teachers (and subjects)

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet and phone connectivity at home. If there are IT related issues while remote working, teachers can contact Mrs A Rafferty in the first instance.

The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with school and subject area policies. Under normal circumstances, subjects take different approaches to the setting and assessment of children' work – for example, the frequency of substantive task set, and the regularity of written assessment provided – and subject area policies will be applied in the event of remote learning.

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the nature 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 children have a range of activities to complete at home and **are not exclusively working on a screen.** The Head (Mrs A Verma) will monitor this and is included in all MS Teams groups so support and guidance can be offered as needed. Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their children in a timely manner. Subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the form and regularity of feedback, and will liaise with class teachers and the Deputy Head to ensure consistency.

Teachers and subject areas are expected to:

- Plan and deliver 'live sessions'
- Respond to reasonable amounts of communication from children, parents and teachers
- Plan and set tasks for their children using Tapestry, MS Teams and/or Satchel One

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- Set and mark assessed work promptly, in line with school and subject policies, returning it to children electronically.

All MS Teams live sessions should be recorded so that they can be watched back if required.

Teachers should be available to contact parents if needed, by email or phone (when phoning from personal devices, dialling 141 before the number will ensure the teacher's own number is kept anonymous). If contact is deemed excessive a member of SLT will provide support

In order to ensure teachers can perform the expectations outlined above, the school will provide a range of training opportunities. Teachers should ensure that they have looked through specific instructions, watched videos and attended teacher training sessions. If teachers require support with any aspects of remote learning, they are encouraged to consult with the Head (Mrs A Verma) and Mrs A Rafferty.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, teachers will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, children and parents. Responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day where possible. For those who are on part-time contracts, communication is expected only on the days on which they would usually work. Communication must always occur via official school channels. Permitted methods are:

- Email using school email addresses only
- Microsoft Teams
- Satchel One
- Tapestry
- Zoom - where sanctioned by SLT (but not for 1 to 1 sessions with children)

Support for children with SEND, EAL and other specific learning enhancement needs
Teachers should ensure work is appropriately differentiated as required for all learners when setting online tasks. We recognise that some children, for example some children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), may not be able to access remote education without support from adults at home. We acknowledge the difficulties this may place on families, and we will work with parents to support those children with differentiated tasks, lessons from other year group materials, alternative methods of recording, additional resources and advice and support. Online intervention resources and small group sessions with our LSAs / class teachers will also be used where appropriate. We encourage parents to get in touch if their children are finding things too difficult or easy and we will do what we can to make personalised adaptations. Advice can be sought from the SENDCo (Ms A Underwood).

Pastoral care during a school closure
In event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a child rests with their parents. However, class teachers will continue to monitor both the children' academic progress and their general wellbeing. The Early Years curriculum ensures that the children's wellbeing is the focal point of all teaching. PSHCE is timetabled for all year groups to ensure the children' wellbeing is at the centre of all their learning. Children will also be contacted individually by their class teachers to discuss

any pastoral or academic concerns. Class teachers will be expected to pass on feedback to SLT, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication.

Form registration will take place via live video conferencing each day and registers taken on SIMS will be followed up according to the attendance policy. Records of important communications should be logged on MyConcern.

Governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible

Ensuring that staff are certain that systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons.

Who to contact

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

*Questions/concerns setting work – talk to the relevant subject lead/SENDCO/SLT

*Questions/concerns with behaviour– talk to the SENCO/SLT

*Questions/concerns with IT – talk to Mrs A Rafferty who can contact support if needed

*Questions/concerns with their own workload or wellbeing – talk to a member of SLT

*Questions/concerns about data protection – talk to the data protection officer (Mrs A Verma)

*Concerns about safeguarding – talk to the DSL (Ms A Underwood, Mrs M Biscardi & Mr N Cheesman)

All staff can be contacted via the school email addresses

Data protection

Accessing personal data

When accessing personal data, all staff members will:

All staff have access to MyConcern to record any parent contact or concerns about children, this is accessed via a secure password. Ensure you log out after use. Do not allow access to the site to any third party.

Teachers are able to access parent contact details via SIMS using a secure password. Do not share any details with third parties and ensure SIMS is logged off.

SLT have the ability to locate personal details of families when required through securely accessing SIMS. SLT are not to share their access permissions with other members of staff.

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Sharing personal data

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as emails or phone numbers as part of the remote learning system. Such collection of personal data applies to our functions as a school and doesn't require explicit permissions. While this may be necessary, 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

Safeguarding during a school closure

In the event of a school closure, children, parents and teachers are reminded that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between children and teachers.

With the increased use of digital technologies that comes with remote learning, safeguarding implications need careful consideration. Parents are advised to spend time speaking with their child(ren) about online safety - reminding them of the importance of reporting to an adult anything that makes them feel uncomfortable online.

While we will be doing our best to ensure links shared are appropriate, there may be tailored advertising which displays differently in your household or other changes beyond our control. Online safety concerns should still be reported to the school's Online Safety Lead (Mrs A Rafferty) as normal. Parents can do this through messaging via the appropriate digital platform or by calling the school office.

The following websites offer useful support:

- Childline - for support
- UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse

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In addition, the following sites are an excellent source of advice and information:

- Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children
- safe online
- Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is clear that there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school. Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mr N Cheesman, or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Ms A Underwood and Mrs M Biscardi.

The DSL is responsible for:

Maintaining contact, collating, passing on information and responding to any concerns.

See the COVID-19 amendments to the Child Protection Policy

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as and when updates to remote learning are provided by the Government by the Deputy Head. At every review, it will be approved by the Headteacher (Mrs A Verma) and SLT.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

*Behaviour policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and the coronavirus addendum to our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

*Data protection policy and privacy notices

*ICT and internet acceptable use policy

*Online safety policy

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