Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust's approach to Remote Learning Provision in our Schools

Our community of schools is committed to providing the very best learning opportunities for all our pupils and as a family of schools we work very closely to share the best practice being developed both nationally and within the Trust.

Remote learning has rapidly become a key part of the offer needed to support our children through these very difficult times. It is not a substitute for the classroom experience. Schools have had to rapidly adjust to new forms of teaching and schools across our Trust have been working together for some months to develop effective ways of working for pupils who are unable to attend school due to Covid-19. However, all schools work in different contexts and therefore will approach remote learning in ways that best suit their setting, so not all Bishop Bewick schools will approach remote learning in exactly the same way. However, we have based our overall approach on best practice and in conjunction with guidance produced by the DfE that sets out expectations for schools and the best practice cited by Ofsted (January 11). There are two key documents from the Department for Education and Ofsted at the end of this statement.

Remote Learning in Bishop Bewick CET schools

The term Remote Learning is now being used widely to describe this form of education, but what does it actually mean and how can we make it as effective as possible? In this information summary we will set out what is meant by Remote Learning and how, as a Trust, we will ensure that all our schools provide high quality materials for pupils who are unable to attend school due to Covid-19.

Why is Remote Learning needed? Where can it be accessed?

As with earlier lockdowns, the majority of pupils are once again learning at home. Ultimately, **we want pupils to be able to return to school able to pick up their learning and not to have fallen behind**. Therefore, our Bishop Bewick schools have been working very hard since March to ensure that quality materials are in place to enable pupils to keep up with learning, even during times of lockdown or self-isolation.

Schools have already explained to their pupils how to access materials, so that whilst at home they are able to follow the curriculum for their subjects. This information will also

be available for parents, usually on the school website. Parents can contact schools directly if they need help accessing on-line resources for their children.

What format can remote learning take? Does it include printed booklets, worksheets or is it only online?

Remote learning can take many forms and schools will continue to use a blend of different methods of learning such as printed resources or textbooks as well as online lessons and resources. Where pupils need further support with these resources or to check they are keeping on track, schools will have systems in place to enable this to happen.

Schools in our Trust mainly use a single, interactive platform such as Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom for their remote education provision. Both of these platforms and similar systems make it possible to create virtual classes by drawing information from schools' Management Information Systems, enabling a single point of access for all lessons and resources and allowing teachers to host both live and recorded explanations and lessons. This should make it easier for pupils to access their learning and find all the key links and material they need. Some primary schools are using the App Seesaw as an effective way to deliver learning for pupils.

Not all pupils have access to online facilities or sufficient laptops within a family for everyone to use. Government has provided support for families and schools will provide school-owned equipment when they can, but the situation remains, that for some pupils, complete, reliable online access is still not fully available. Our schools are working hard to ensure appropriate equipment for all pupils is made available as far as is reasonably possible. If a pupil cannot access digital equipment at home, they are now included in the government's definition of vulnerable and so are entitled to a place at school. In the first instance, parents should contact their child's school to find out the support that is available.

Does online remote learning mean 'live, real-time teaching element' and is there an expectation that schools must provide this for every lesson? Are there alternatives that are also acceptable?

There is no expectation that schools provide live-streaming for every lesson. Some think that a live lesson is the 'gold standard' of remote education. This isn't necessarily the case. Live lessons have a lot of advantages. It helps students focus and keeps them in a routine that mirrors the school day. But live lessons are not always more effective than other approaches.

There are some specific difficulties in doing live lessons. It can be hard to build in interaction and flexibility. This means that giving feedback can actually be less effective than when teachers use recorded lesson segments followed by interactive chats, or tasks and feedback.

This is one element of a blended approach to teaching. Schools will provide recorded or live direct teaching time as well as time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments **independently,** some live teaching along with materials that may have an element of pre-recorded teaching or video clips to support pupil learning, in particular to deliver new content. A benefit of this approach is that parents can decide when it is most suitable for their children to follow a particular lesson e.g. if children are sharing digital devices within the family.

Schools can also signpost pupils to recorded lessons provided by the school or other organisations such as Oak Academy**.** Schools may also provide resources such as power points that are voiced over by teachers to explain or add clarity to teaching.

How many hours of learning should my child follow when learning at home?

When teaching pupils remotely, our schools will plan a programme of learning that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school:

> 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

Most schools ask pupils to follow their time-table for the day, others ask that they undertake a number of sessions per week, per subject. Where possible, pupils should be working in a quiet space where they can concentrate on their work, but take regular breaks.

What if my child has a special educational need or disability that makes remote learning difficult?

Teachers in our individual schools will know how the pupil's needs can be most effectively met to ensure they continue to make progress even when they are not able to be in school. Staff will work collaboratively with families, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that pupils with SEND can successfully access remote education alongside their peers. If parents or carers have any concerns they should contact the school's SENDCO who will be able to offer advice and support.

How school can check if pupils are engaging with their work and update parents if there are concerns?

This is a very important part of the remote learning offer. Our schools have adopted a number of approaches that work best in their settings. This includes undertaking a number of sessions during the week for pupils to check-in with their teacher or personal tutor (secondary schools). Others are using weekly phone calls by staff to pupils. Teachers will also look at how well pupils are engaging with the work that has been set

and use this to assess if there are any problems. Parents will be informed if a school has concerns about a pupil's progress in order to provide support and find a resolution.

Where to seek help or advice, or if you have concerns about a school's remote learning provision?

If you need support with providing digital equipment, broadband or data, there are now a number of government initiatives may be able to help your child. Your school will be able to signpost you to these. If you find it difficult to use some of the educational packages schools are using to deliver remote learning, let the school know as soon as possible so you can be quickly supported.

We would ask parents to be mindful of how difficult it is for schools to manage remote learning whilst still being open and delivering teaching to large numbers of children in schools. There are still high absence rates amongst staff due to Covid infections or having to self-isolate.

If you have any concerns about the quality of remote learning being provided for your child, in the first instance you should always contact your child's school. This may well be their class teacher or personal tutor, or a more senior member of staff. Please do this during school opening hours. In the vast majority of instances any concerns you have will be quickly eased or addressed. If however this is not the case, please contact: jo.douthwaite@bishopbewickcet.org with the subject Remote Learning provision.

Appendices

Ofsted

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-working-well-in-remote-education

Department for Education

Taken from **- Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools Guidance for all schools in England January 2021 - DfE**

In developing their remote education, we expect schools 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 practised in each subject so that pupils can progress through the school's curriculum
- 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. If schools do not have an education platform in place, they can access free support at Get help with technology - GOV.UK (education.gov.uk) Overcome barriers to digital access for pupils 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 to keep pupils on track or answer questions about work.
- It may also be that some pupils 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.
- Have systems for checking, daily, whether pupils are engaging with their work, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern
- identify a named senior leader with overarching responsibility for the quality and delivery of remote education, including that provision meets expectations for remote education
- publish information for pupils, parents and carers about their remote education provision on their website by 25 January 2021 – an optional template is available to support schools with this expectation

When teaching pupils remotely, we expect 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 pupils would receive in school. **This will include both recorded or live direct teaching time and time for pupils 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

Online video lessons do not necessarily need to be recorded by teaching staff at the school: Oak National Academy lessons, for example, can be provided in lieu of school led video content.

Consider how to transfer into remote education what we already know about effective teaching in the live classroom by, for example:

- providing frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher or through high-quality curriculum resources
- providing opportunities for interactivity, including questioning, eliciting and reflective discussion
- providing scaffolded practice and opportunities to apply new knowledge
- enabling pupils to receive timely and frequent feedback on how to progress, using digitally-facilitated or whole-class feedback where appropriate
- using assessment to ensure teaching is responsive to pupils' needs and addresses any critical gaps in pupils' knowledge
- avoiding an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities. 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.

Younger children in Key Stage 1 or Reception often require high levels of parental involvement to support their engagement with remote education, which makes digital provision a particular challenge for this age group. We therefore do not expect that solely digital means will be used to teach these pupils remotely.

We also recognise that some pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so expect schools to work with families to deliver an ambitious curriculum appropriate for their level of need. Special educational needs

For pupils with SEND, their teachers are best-placed to know how the pupil's 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 pupils' special educational needs remains in place. Schools should work collaboratively with families, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that pupils with SEND can successfully access remote education alongside their peers.

Where a pupil has provision specified within their EHC plan, it remains the duty of the local authority and any health bodies to secure or arrange the delivery of this in the setting that the plan names. However, there may be times when it becomes very difficult to do so, for example, if they are self-isolating. In this situation, decisions on how provision can be delivered should be informed by relevant considerations including, for example, the types of services that the pupil can access remotely, for example, online teaching and remote sessions with different types of therapists. These decisions should be considered on a case by case basis, avoiding a one size fits all approach.

Vulnerable children Where individuals who are self-isolating are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that schools put systems in place to keep in contact with them.

When a vulnerable child is asked to self-isolate, schools should notify their social worker (if they have one). School leaders should then agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support to the vulnerable child or young person. Schools should also have in place procedures to check if a vulnerable child is able to access remote education support, to support them to access it (as far as possible) and to regularly check if they are doing so.

Delivering remote education safely Keeping children safe online is essential. The statutory guidance keeping children safe in education provides schools and colleges with information on what they should be doing to protect their pupils online. Support on delivering online remote education safely is available from:

- safe remote learning, published by SWGfL
- online safety and safeguarding, published by LGfL, which covers safe remote learning
- the National Cyber Security Centre, which includes which video conference service is right for you and using video conferencing services securely
- safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) • annex C of keeping children safe in education