St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Remote Learning Policy

Aims

As our School Mission Statement states: St Mary's aims to develop the skills and talents of all its pupils, in a nurturing family environment, which has Christ's living example of love at the heart of everything we do.

The vision of St Mary's RC Primary School is as a hub of excellence. By each member of our school family being encouraged, supported and inspired to live and work to the absolute fullness of their potential, our school will continue to be a beacon of educational, spiritual and community excellence for all to see.

As a learning community, we have the highest expectations of our pupils, and as such, hold ourselves to account by the highest standards. Our home-school partnership aims to outline the commitments we make towards one another in order that we may best meet the needs of all pupils in our school. As a learning community, we strive to work as closely as possible with the parents and carers of our young people, as initial educators, to support and encourage educational, social, moral, physical and spiritual growth and development.

Our 'Remote Learning' procedures strive to be a reflection of the high standards of teaching and learning for which we continually endeavour at St Mary's. Our fundamental aim is to continue to provide rich learning experiences for pupils and to support their parents/carers to guide and encourage their continued progress through a period of isolation from the classroom.

We do not seek to replicate the classroom at home, but rather seek to maximise the potential learning impact of the home learning set-up, given its unique set of circumstances, for a set period of time.

Remote Learning within the Curriculum: A 'Blended Approach'

In responding to the current global COVID-19 pandemic, and the subsequent closure to schools in England – and indeed globally – from March 2020, we have designed a Remote Learning Curriculum which promotes a continuous and progressive approach to learning and supports teachers to deliver the best outcomes for pupils utilising a coherent and embedded learning platform. Rather than design a separate curriculum to sit alongside our planned programmes of study, in the event of partial or full school closure, teaching delivered across each age range will continue to be progressive and sequential, building upon children's prior learning experiences in the classroom. This 'blended approach' to learning and curriculum delivery allows practitioners to continue teaching pupils effectively – whether in school or at home – without the potential stop-start of a separate remote learning curriculum. The pedagogy class teachers employ will vary – as will the teaching tools at their disposal – however the objectives chosen for individuals will be based upon prior assessment and pupil outcomes.

Role of the Class Teacher

In the eventuality of pupils being asked to stay away from school for a period of time, the class teacher would continue to provide daily learning tasks to be undertaken at home which would:

- Amount to broadly the same number of hours 'learning' as a typical school day.
- Be supplemented with 'teaching' materials (eg. videos) to introduce new content.
- Provide feedback from teachers to support ongoing learning and progress.
- Utilise online platforms familiar to the children.
- Not be heavily reliant on printed materials.
- Seek to benefit from adult support provided at home.

The overall availability of the class teacher, and how they will fulfil their duties, will be dependent upon whether the class teacher remains in school for the isolation period or not.

The class teacher will be available each day to receive examples of a child's continued work at home, and to provide feedback in a timely manner so as to facilitate continued learning and progress.

In the case of one or more pupils fulfilling a period of isolation away from school, but the remaining pupils being in school, the class teacher will be responsible for the safety and learning of pupils in school for the duration of the school day. As such, the class teacher will communicate as to when they will be contactable and able to offer feedback on tasks being completed at home so as to move a child on in their learning.

In the case that a whole class is instructed to isolate, the class teacher will communicate a timetable for the period of isolation which will outline distinct times of the day during which they can be contacted. These slots for contact and feedback will be flexible dependent on the circumstances of the isolation period and the home working arrangements arranged between the Headteacher and teaching staff.

Role of PPA Teachers

Across school, we have a number of teachers and Higher-Level Teaching Assistants who cover elements of the Curriculum to allow teachers to undertake their required 10% planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA). In the instance of an isolation for one or several children, the class teacher may share required activities on behalf of the PPA cover teacher. In the instance of a full class isolation, the tasks provided will be broadly in line with the expectations we would have had should the children have been in school.

Role of Teaching Assistants

Dependent upon the nature of the isolation period, Teaching Assistants will be asked to fulfil a range of duties which may include:

- Making contact with parents of pupils at home whom they would routinely support in school.
- Supporting the class teacher by finding, producing, distributing learning resources for pupils.
- Updating assessment information for pupils.
- Planning ahead for pupils' return.

Role of Parents/Carers

It is an expectation that all pupils undertaking a period of isolation would be supported with their learning by an adult at home. All pupils in EYFS and KS1 should be supported by an adult throughout the duration of the learning tasks being set. Pupils in KS2 may be able to work more independently, but pupils should not be left indefinitely to complete learning tasks, and a responsible adult should 'check-in' with a child within each learning session so as to provide encouragement, guidance and support and to help focus them on the objective of the session as outlined in the learning materials provided by the class teacher.

We understand that for many families, remote learning expectations will need to be flexible to take into consideration working arrangements and other everyday routines. We would however expect pupils' learning to take a priority during the periods of learning time allotted throughout the day for the adults taking on this responsibility.

Our aim is not to replicate the school environment at home, but rather, to capitalise on the strengths of the home-learning set-up, and we see adult supervision, support and involvement is an essential element of effective 'home learning'.

Virtual Platform

Arbor is the learning platform which we will use to share all tasks, instructions and resources, to receive messages and work, and to respond to pupils (https://stmw-bwcet.uk.arbor.sc/?/home-ui/index). Parents/carers should ensure that they, and their child, are confident using and navigating eschools – in particular how to send and receive messages and upload a file.

Parents/carers should contact school asap if they do not have access to an appropriate internet-ready device, and/or basic learning materials/stationary at home.

Remote Learning Timetable

During a period of isolation, learning tasks will be scheduled to follow a similar routine to the normal school week. The 'school day' for pupils and staff will be set at 9am to 3pm and the working week is set as Monday to Friday.

Daily activities provided will be broadly equivalent to the amount of learning delivered within a school day. Home learning tasks will be received, at the latest, by 9am each day.

Over the course of the week, pupils would receive a range of learning tasks covering the breadth of the Core and Foundation curricula, covering content matter broadly in-line with expectations we would have for pupils in school. Daily activities will always include Reading, English and Mathematics.

Should individual children be subject to a period of isolation relating to COVID-19, the class teacher will share daily learning tasks to be completed remotely which will be broadly in-line with the content being delivered in the classroom. Class teachers will make themselves available to receive and respond to pupils' questions and to provide feedback at points throughout the working week to be determined at the earliest practical opportunity upon learning of a child's isolation. Teachers will strive to communicate with pupils and their parents within 24 hours of the school learning of a child's isolation.

In the case of a partial or full class closure, a weekly 'home learning' timetable will be issued by the class teacher. The timetable will indicate how and when the class teacher will be available to respond to pupils' questions and to deliver feedback.

Evidently, concessions will be made to take into consideration the fact that for many families, routines for home learning may need to be more flexible than the usual school day. Moreover, acknowledgement must be made to the fact that class teachers themselves may have to be flexible in their working due to their own home circumstances.

Pre-prepared and 'Live' Learning

Teachers will deliver elements of both pre-prepared and 'live' learning each day – that is to say:

- Resources through which new content is 'taught' (eg. A 'screen share' or video).
- Activities via an online platform which tracks pupils' outcomes and progress.
- Timetabled sessions to answer questions, respond to pupils' efforts and offer feedback to promote continued learning.

Suggested tasks will be planned for pupils to respond to the teaching delivered, and resources shared to reinforce and develop key learning outcomes. Pupils will be prompted to 'submit' certain examples of their learning (eg. via eschools message to their teacher) to support the class teacher's ongoing assessment of pupils and forward planning. As sequences of teaching develop, teacher-prepared learning resources will often be designed/chosen to respond to difficulties or misconceptions observed in pupils' work.

Feedback

Throughout a period of isolation, feedback from a child's class teacher will take the form of:

- Positive reinforcement statements to recognise pupils' efforts and motivate them with their continued learning at home (eg. messages via eschools or Marvellous Me, certificates via IXL, Reading Plus etc).
- Whole class targets built into future 'teaching'.
- Individual targets communicated via eschools.

Submission of work will all be electronic, and we will not ask for pupils to return completed work at the end of the isolation period. Parents/carers should still encourage their child to give their best effort and produce work of which they are proud.

If a class teacher has concerns that a child is not accessing the work being set during a period of isolation, first contact will be made by the class teacher to the child's parents via eschools. If this message is not responded to, or the teacher has continued concerns that a sufficient amount of work is not being attempted, the class teacher must report this to the Headteacher (or appropriate senior leader) who will make telephone contact with a parent to discuss potential barriers to learning and how the school can support the family to overcome them.

Back into the Classroom

There is an expectation that the class teacher will continue teaching sequences following a period of partial or full class isolation based on the evidence amassed throughout the period of remote learning.

Teacher's planning may be adjusted based upon the teaching and learning undertaken throughout the period of isolation – much like in the classroom – but there is an expectation that learning will 'move on' upon a return to the classroom. Teachers will not routinely plan to 're-teach' content covered during a period of remote learning.

Contact with school

During a period of isolation, parents are asked to make contact with school as follows:

- Questions or concerns about their child's well-being or ability to complete the remote learning being asked of them should be directed to school via the Main Office for discussion with a senior leader. This can be done by phone (0191 4205828) or email info@stmw.bwcet.com.
- Questions regarding the completion of the work being set for their child should be sent via eschools to the child's class teacher. Where possible, given the child's maturity and level of independence, parents should support pupils to send a message to the teacher in their own words much like they would if they were in class. Teachers will respond to these messages during allotted 'feedback' slots or will use them to inform their ongoing delivery of the curriculum content.
- Concerns, queries or complaints regarding the level of work provided, role of the teacher or school policy must be directed only to the Headteacher via telephone appointment, email (as above) or in writing.

Communications will be accessed and responded to within the designated school day/week.

Remote Learning Resources

Class teachers will use a number of online resources to meet pupils' ongoing learning targets at home. Parents/carers should familiarise themselves with these platforms in order that they may best support their child and engage with the objectives set by the class teacher.

Platforms used in school include:

- IXL (https://uk.ixl.com) – Years 3-6.
- Times Table Rockstars (https://play.ttrockstars.com/auth/school/student/19730) – Years 1-6.
- Numbots (https://play.numbots.com/#/account/school-login/19730) – Years 1-6.
- Reading Plus (https://student.readingplus.com/seereader/api/sec/login with site code: rpstmar15) – Years 3-6.
- Purple Mash (https://www.purplemash.com/sch/stmarysne16) – whole school.

Physical Resources

Activities planned by class teachers will purposefully not rely upon printed tasks and activities. Pupils will be able to tackle all learning with access to:

- An internet-ready device with a suitable screen size for reading text (tablet, laptop, PC, smartphone connected to a larger screen).
- Simple stationary (a lined exercise book, pen, pencil, ruler, rubber).

We will provide resources for any family who are struggling to access the planned learning tasks remotely. Parents/carers should contact school either in advance of a school closure or at the earliest possible opportunity upon discovering that their child is to be subject to a period of isolation.

Microsoft Teams 'Drop-ins'

In the case of a sustained partial or whole school closure, which would keep children away from school for a significant period of time, weekly opportunities to 'touch base' with the class teacher, or alternative member of staff, may also be offered via a group video chat on Microsoft Teams; the purpose of these 'drop-ins' will be pastoral, and they will offer an opportunity for staff and peers to recognise and celebrate pupils' achievements that week.

Teams 'drop-ins' would be set up by the class teacher, and a link to the meeting shared with parents via eschools. Parental guidance for the use of Microsoft Teams, and required consent will be shared/sought in advance of the sessions. All meetings will be recorded and stored via the school's Microsoft Stream service for safeguarding purposes.

Staff leading a Microsoft Teams 'drop-in' must present themselves professionally in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct and must adhere to *Staff Guidance on the Use of Microsoft Teams*.

Online Safety

Online resources will be checked and vetted by staff to ensure that they are suitable for pupils.

All communication with school staff will take place through eschools. Parents/carers should check their child's eschools account daily to ensure its safe use.

Communication between pupil accounts is prohibited on eschools.

Pupils should not be encouraged to discuss their work via other platforms.

Messages via eschools should only be sent, and will only be responded to, during the designated work day (between 9am and 3pm).

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr J Wheatley. Any concerns regarding a child's safety or well-being should be reported to him by phone, email or in writing at the earliest possible opportunity.

There are a wealth of online safety materials available on the school website (http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk/e-safety.html). Parents are encouraged in particular to actively engage with literature provided on the webiste regarding:

- E-safety in the home
- Internet safety settings
- Child exploitation and online protection
- Cyber-bullying

Links

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy and coronavirus addendum to our child protection policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Home-school agreement
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Online safety policy
- Staff Code of Conduct