Balmoral Learning Trust

Remote Learning Policy

Policy Agreed:	
Policy Review:	

Rationale

In the event of a school closure, the Trust is committed to providing continuity of education to its children and will do so through a process of remote (online) 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 children and teachers are healthy, and able to work as normal from home. 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 learner absence.

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, at least. This may apply in cases such as exclusion from school, or longer term illness, assuming children are able to complete school work at home.

There is no obligation for schools in the Trust 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 would apply if parents made the decision, without prior agreement with the school, to absent their children from school 'as a precaution', against official guidance, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

Remote learning for individual children

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the learner in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for children who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual learner, the collation of work and communication with the parent/carer will be coordinated by the child's teacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Though every case will have its own specifics, a rough guideline for the frequency of communication between school and parent/carer would be once per week. Work will only be provided to children in this way if there is an agreed absence lasting more than a week.

If a significant number of children are absent from school, but the school remains open, the Trust in consultation with the Head of School will decide whether the method of remote learning operated will take the form outlined below.

Remote learning in the event of extended school closure

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

a) Regular direct instruction from teachers, with the ability for children to ask questions online.

b) The setting of work that children complete, written responses (if relevant) completed electronically.

c) The primary platforms the schools will use to deliver continuity of education are:

- Dojo
- Purple Mash
- Google Classroom
- Times Table Rockstars
- Reading Plus
- Oxford Owl

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 children and teachers to participate in remote 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.

Live sessions

Schools may also arrange for teachers to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by Powerpoint or audio and/or visual means). There would always be agreement with the teacher prior to this starting.

Google Classroom and Google Hangouts are used for more interactive live sessions and allows for resources to be shared, teachers to provide explanations, and children to ask questions in 'real-time'. Children will be provided with details of sessions, and will be expected to participate in them if they are asked and able to. Live sessions can be particularly helpful as they can help communication, with children able to respond to teachers' questions.

Assessment

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and whilst this may be more challenging with remote learning, teachers will endeavour to provide regular feedback to children on pieces of work that they are required to submit. Under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers and this would continue to be the case should the school employ remote learning.

Given the nature of the tasks, the type of feedback teachers can provide may not have the same format as marking an exercise book. Teachers are encouraged to ensure, when they assess set work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided.

Possible methods may include:

· Providing whole class feedback rather than feedback 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 Google Classroom or Hangouts

· Sending a direct message to children with specific feedback / targets

· Feedback via another website / piece of software

Expectations of children

Assuming that a learner is healthy and well enough to work, children 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. Children will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school on a regular basis.

Children should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any tasks set that allow the school to monitor their progress. If children or parents have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the class teacher. If there are questions about a child's overall workload (e.g. a learner feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the class teacher in the first instance. If the issue can't be resolved this should be directed to the phase leader or member of the SLT .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 have equipment or an appropriate substitute ready. The school does not expect children to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school. 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. If online learning is expected to continue for a number of weeks some online textbooks may be purchased. The school expects that parents have internet access at home to access remote learning resources and will support families who don't have access to the internet, but teachers will make no presumption of the child's ability to print at home.

Expectations of Teachers

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet and a phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, must speak to the Head of School to find a solution.

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

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, Heads of School and 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. Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their children in a timely manner.

In the event a teacher is unwell during a period of remote learning, it becomes the responsibility of the Head of School or the person they delegate, to ensure work is set to her/his classes.

If required, teachers will be contactable via email during school closures. Email addresses will be sent out to parents as part of any school closure information. Teachers will only contact parents via phone if this is deemed necessary in conjunction with the Head of

School. When calling from a personal device, it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that their phone number is 'private' or 'anonymous'.

If parents ask for additional work, beyond that set as part of the requirements above, teachers should have a bank of general resources available and point pupils and parents in that direction.

In order to ensure teachers are able to perform the minimum expectations outlined above; the school will provide a range of training opportunities that teachers will have access to before any planned school closure. These will include a revision of the platforms used for home learning.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, teachers will be expected to be contactable remotely during normal working hours by colleagues, children and parents. Teachers also should ensure their communication does not encourage unhelpful work habits. All communication should take place during usual office hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 4.30pm, although responses should be made to electronic messages within two working days in normal practice. 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, and not through personal accounts or other websites. Permitted methods are:

- Email using school email addresses only
- Google Classroom
- Dojo or Marvellous Me

Before the online session starts, staff should remind children that they are not to record the session and ensure that an adult is with the child. They should ensure that the child is appropriately dressed and that the session is not being held in the child's bedroom. The children should be reminded that the lesson is part of school and that the usual behaviour expectations apply and that children are reminded how to keep themselves safe online.

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

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all children when setting online tasks. Profiles are available for SEND pupils and advice can be sought from the SENDco. In addition, the SENDCo will maintain contact with pupils on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/children and will give feedback to teachers using CPOMS if required.

Pastoral care during a school closure

In event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a learner rests with their parents / carers. However, staff (under the guidance of the Senior Leadership Team) should check in regularly to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Staff will be expected to pass on feedback to the Senior Leadership Team, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication. This should also be recorded on CPOMS.

Safeguarding during a school closure

In the event of a school closure, pupils, parents, carers 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.

<u>Remote Learning Agreement</u>

Each school in the Trust must have a Remote Learning and Safer Access agreement with parents. This policy will be reviewed annually in line with other safeguarding policies.