



**Whitefield**  
Academy Trust

**Policy  
Document**

**Covid 19 –  
Supported Home  
Learning –  
Whitefield Academy  
Trust  
Category: Management**

**Key Elements**

This document sets out the arrangements for supporting home learning when pupils are unable to attend school due to the Covid pandemic so that they can continue to learn and make progress.

**Adopted on:**  
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**Agreed by:**  
Directors

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# 1. Introduction

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DfE guidance (1<sup>st</sup> October 2020) notes that, while most pupils returned to school full time at the start of the autumn term 2020, the risk remains that small numbers of pupils, or larger groups, may be unable to attend school due to self isolation or local restriction and that schools must be well prepared to offer immediate 'remote education' so that children and young people may continue to learn and progress.

This document sets out the offer to children and young people within the Whitefield Academy Trust, based on the schools' experience during the summer and autumn terms.

'Remote learning' implies that individuals or classes will be able to access lessons similar to those taught in school, albeit with some support from adults at home. Only a minority of pupils within the Trust are able to do this as most are not at a developmental level to associate what they see on a screen with their familiar routines in school. The Trust therefore uses the term 'supported home learning', recognising that families will need to work with their children to access the school curriculum and that the teacher's job is to support them to do this. Activities will need to be individualised for pupils and their family circumstances. Most pupils, however do respond to the faces or voices of adults and other children and therefore we will offer direct contact via a laptop, tablet or phone as this is beneficial to pupils' wellbeing.

Where pupils are able to access lessons online these will be provided alongside support for families.

Experience shows that the main barriers to supported home learning are:

- pupils finding it difficult to access the tasks they would do in school within the home setting
- parents finding it difficult to combine caring for children who may be confused or upset that school is closed with supporting them to learn alongside the other responsibilities in their lives
- parents not having the skills or knowledge to support their children's learning
- parents lacking the technology they need to support home learning

This document sets out our framework for supporting home learning, including some ways to address these barriers.



## 2. Guiding Principles for supported Home Learning Whitefield Academy Trust

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The schools within the Trust are ready to support our pupils to access remote education, either because they are self-isolating or because all or part of the school has closed.

We will:

- support our children and young people to address the objectives in their EHCPs as appropriate within the home setting
- work with families to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, tailored to our children's individual needs and our curriculum pathways
- provide opportunities to consolidate and incrementally build on skills and knowledge and make progress.
- provide parents/carers with a recommended daily schedule based on the class timetable and next steps for learning for all children undertaking remote learning
- ensure that teachers and colleagues in their teams are able to maintain a reasonable workload, to continue their wider roles in school and to access CPD

In order to meet these aims, we will:

- use Google Classrooms as a tool to share resources and to communicate with children and their families
- provide printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, for children who do not have suitable online access or a printer, including Brailled or tactual resources or sensory items
- individualise learning taking account of children's needs and their family circumstances
- guide and support parents in ways to help their children learn
- provide children with Ipads/laptops where needed, and Brailers/BrailleNotes
- provide other learning resources as agreed by teacher and HOS
- meet reasonable expenses for teachers and parents e.g. postage, phone costs

We will also provide supermarket vouchers for children who would receive free school meals if they were in school

### **Strategies to support learning**

Teachers will plan on an individual basis to provide a mixture of structured learning, learning through play and real-life experiences and positive self-occupation. The balance between these will be different for every child and young person. Teachers will be mindful of family needs but we do expect families to support their children's learning. School leaders and the Family Support Team will work with parents who find this challenging.

- For the majority of our children, learning will need to be supported and mediated by an adult. These children will therefore need a range of online activities via Teams and Google Classroom, and activities which their parents can carry out with them. Teachers may access any suitable specialist resources on the Oak National Academy website.
- At Whitefield Schools (WS) our priority subjects are communication/ language and PSHE. All children must have daily access to these subjects and to literacy activities. Overall children should have as broad a curriculum as we can manage.
- At Joseph Clarke School (JCS) students following the Stepping On curriculum pathway will focus on their individual priority targets with an emphasis on Maths and English skills plus a broad range of additional curriculum activities. Students following the Branching Out curriculum will work on the full range of curriculum subjects throughout the week with an emphasis on core subjects.



- JCS students who access lessons at Highams Park School will complete work set on Firefly. Students will upload their work for the teachers, who will then provide students with feedback. The teacher at JCS will support students to complete work where necessary via TEAMS sessions.
- Children and young people who can learn independently will need a range of activities set on Google Classroom, including activities on appropriate educational websites, worksheets (adapted where needed for students with VI), reading and writing tasks, as well as some online teaching with their teachers via TEAMS.
- The level and nature of contact and support for learning will be highly individualised. Teachers should make direct contact at least once per week and provide access to home learning every day. Where there are safeguarding concerns school leaders and the Family Support Team will arrange more frequent contact.

Each teacher will:

- work with a member of the leadership team to complete the Waltham Forest risk assessment (or paperwork provided by other local authorities) in respect of children whose parents have asked that they learn from home, making the risks in and out of school clear
- talk to parents about the best way to support their child to learn at home
- write a short plan for supporting each child in their class, including ways of helping the parents/carers and the child. These plans will be individualised and will take into consideration family needs and situations.
- discuss their plans with and provide a copy of their plans to a member of SLT.
- ensure the plans promote learning through engagement and link to the pupil's EHCP/ next steps for learning
- set clear objectives for learning and share these with the parents/ carers
- log input as it is given using the form provided and send a copy to the SLT link at the end of each week.
- keep the individualised plans under review alongside the parents/carers and amend the plan as necessary
- speak to SLT in the first instance if parents/carers or children are not engaging
- share useful resources with other staff
- record progress within the school's established systems, including a clear note where progress has been adversely affected by learning from home
- complete assessments and evidence learning within the school's established timescales on the basis of work completed at home and school

Where the plan involves significant changes to a child's EHCP over time the teacher will work with the HOS/ Deputy Head to complete a more detailed learning plan to share with the local authority. The HOS/ Deputy Head will discuss this plan with the appropriate SEND Officer.

Leaders will:

- support teachers with providing plans which promote learning
- monitor practice to check that the protocol for home learning is followed
- ensure objectives are clear and appropriate
- ensure the logs reflect the support provided,
- quality assure the logs weekly and provide feedback and support to teachers
- ensure all concerns are being communicated and followed up
- liaise with the Family Support Team

### **Loaning equipment**

The Trust's aim is to provide all pupils with appropriate equipment for home learning. This will probably be a laptop, tablet or Brailnote though we will consider other pieces of technology. We will also consider the loan of equipment to enable a pupil to access the Internet where there is no Internet connection to their home.



At present the Trust will loan equipment to families who:

- do not own appropriate technology
- do own the technology but need to share it between several children learning from home

Equipment will be managed through the Trust systems to promote online safety and can be turned off if it is put to inappropriate use.

Parents are expected to sign a form confirming that they will take care of the device and will only use it to support their child.

### **Safeguarding and e-safety**

- If a teacher has any concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young person, they must make a report through Safeguard as soon as they possibly can. Concerns may arise from comments by the student or parent or from something seen in the home background.
- Contact between teachers and parents/carers is in order to meet the aims above. The safeguarding team and school leaders will continue to make welfare calls.
- If teachers agree to use online learning they may prefer to set up so that their face is not seen.
- Email contact should be from the school 'homework' email address only and never from a personal email account.
- Teachers who agree to support learning online must dress appropriately for work and must be in an appropriate environment (e.g. in a dining room or home office or against a plain wall). They must check the background to ensure that what students and young people see is appropriate.
- Conversations with parents and students should be as professional as they would be in school.
- Parents should be within earshot if the teacher is talking to a child or young person.
- Teams will be set up to prevent parents recording the session via their device. If a teacher thinks it appropriate to record a session they should first discuss this with SLT.
- If a teacher agrees to use online learning, the school will send a protocol to parents.
- Teachers will make a brief record of the support given and share this with SLT. It is particularly important that any contact by phone or online should be recorded

### **Pupil attendance**

Attendance will be monitored by the safeguarding team for each school who will keep a record of those pupils not attending school for any reason. Where a pupil is expected to be absent for an extended period of time by agreement following discussion with the local authority a member of the leadership team or the Family Support Team will make contact at least once a week and more frequently if the class teacher reports concerns.

Where a parent is keeping their child at home due to anxiety about the risk of Covid the safeguarding team will immediately make that pupil's SEND officer aware of the situation. Waltham Forest's Designated Clinical Officer will liaise with medical professionals and the SEN team. The Education Welfare Service may also assist in discussion with the family.

In all cases other than those pupils with the most significant medical needs our aim is to build parents' confidence and encourage them to allow their children to return to school.

### **Workload Impact Assessment for teachers**

If a whole class is absent the impact is neutral as teachers use their normal working hours to plan, teach, liaise with parents and keep records.



If the teacher is still working with children in school whilst supporting other children at home there is the potential for duplication of effort. All teaching should be done within the teaching day and planning within the normal timeframe. Depending on the balance of children in school and at home, teachers can be released by:

- their own class team taking responsibility for short periods with the smaller group.
- agency or supply support assistants being brought in to work alongside the class team
- two classes within one small 'bubble' working together to make effective use of time
- using support staff to support children online, prepare resources etc.

Where possible the normal establishment of the class will be maintained.

Teachers will need additional training e.g. to use Google Classroom. This will be part of the established training expectations, although it may need to be front loaded.

### **3. Expectations of families**

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Due to the Coronavirus pandemic there may be occasions where pupils are unable to attend school due to self-isolating or because all or part of the school has closed.

The school will continue to work with parents to support children and young people to have access to educational support. Teachers will be mindful of family needs, but the school do expect families to support their children's learning and to work with the teaching staff. School leaders and the Family Support team will be available to work with parents who find this difficult.

We aim to:

- Support children and young people to work on their targets as set out in their EHCP where appropriate within the home setting.
- Work with families to support pupils' individual needs across the curriculum that they follow within school.
- Build on pupils' skills and knowledge to support progress.
- Support parents to work on key skills for home e.g. self-help tasks

In order to meet these aims, we will:

- Provide parents/carers with a daily schedule with recommended activities based on the child or young person's timetable and targets, if they are accessing home learning.
- The school will be using Google Classrooms as a tool to give parents/carers access to activities and to provide feedback to parents/carers.
- Printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks will be shared with pupils who do not have online access or a printer.
- Brailled resources or tactile and sensory resources will be made available for pupils who need access to these.
- iPads/laptops or Brailers/Braillenotes will be made available to pupils who do not have access to these at home.
- Other learning resources may be provided as appropriate to support lessons and activities.

Blended learning will be supported through a mixture of daily online lessons or activities, learning through play-based activities, real life experiences and positive self-occupation appropriate to individual pupils.



Although some pupils may be able to complete their work independently, it will be really important for parents/carers to support their children to take part in or complete activities successfully. For some pupils, this will mean that the adult needs to work very closely with the pupil to support them through the actions.

Teachers will contact parents at least once a week to talk through the activities of the week, answer questions parents may have about the work and to discuss further learning opportunities. A home learning plan will be drawn up for each pupils and will be updated with weekly progress and next steps.

Parents may wish to contact the Family Support Team or their Head of School, if they want to discuss other concerns.

The school will aim to offer a broad-and-balanced curriculum, but we have identified priority subjects.

- Whitefield Schools will focus on Communication, Language and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education).
- Joseph Clarke pupils following the Stepping On Curriculum, will focus on their individual priority targets with an emphasis on English and Maths skills.
- Students on the Branching Out Curriculum will work on the full range of curriculum subjects, with an emphasis on English and Maths.
- Joseph Clarke pupils who access lessons at Highams Park School, will continue to complete work set by the school on Firefly. Pupils will upload their completed work and receive feedback from their teachers at Highams Park School. Teachers at Joseph Clark will continue to support these pupils through online sessions to complete their work as needed.

### **Online learning:**

Teachers will arrange online learning with either individual pupils or with the class group in advance and a link to the sessions will be emailed or shared within Google Classrooms.

In order to make this a safe and positive experience for all, please take the following into consideration:

- Please contact the teacher, Family Support Team or a Senior leader separately, if you need to speak to them about the pupil.
- Parents should be within earshot, if the teacher is talking to a child or young person who are able to work with greater independence.
- Pupils who may need support during the activity, will require an adult present to support them.
- Please do not record sessions with any electronic devices including phones, iPads or laptops. This function will be disabled prior to sessions.



## 4. The role of the Family Support Team

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The Family Support Team will support parents to work with their children at home and will also provide advice to teachers who are finding it difficult to engage with a family.

The team will provide some open sessions for families via Zoom.

In order to make best use of their time to support individual families, the following system will operate:

- Teachers should be clear with parents that their children are entitled to supported home learning and that we expect parents to work with the school
- If a family is not engaging with home learning, the teacher should have the initial discussion about ways to work at home and should look at how tasks and targets can be adapted to support the family. The teacher should make a clear record of the discussion and alert their HOS/ Deputy Headteacher to the issues
- Heads of School/ Deputy Headteacher should monitor the situation, identify those families for whom targeted support would be a priority and share information with the Family Support Team
- The Family Support Team will identify key families and offer them the opportunity to join a small group for a series of sessions looking at home learning
- The aim of this group is to equip the family to work with the teacher so the teacher should remain involved and continue to offer home learning activities
- The Family Support Team will keep the teacher and their line manager informed and will feed information into safeguarding/ attendance meetings

## 5. Addendum to attendance policy

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### 1. Aims and scope

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents/carers and pupils who are concerned about the return to school due to coronavirus

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020 until the end of the 2020/21 academic year. It sets out changes to our normal attendance policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal attendance policy continues to apply.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and pupils.

### 2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on school attendance during the 2020/21 academic year.



In section 4.2 of this addendum, where we refer to 'close contact', this means:

- Direct close contacts: face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- Proximity contacts: extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

This definition is from the DfE's [guidance on full reopening for schools](#) (see number 9 in 'the system of controls').

### 3. Attendance expectations

It is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age to attend school unless:

- They have been granted an authorised absence by the school
- They cannot attend school due to specific circumstances related to coronavirus (see section 4, below)

### 4. Where 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' applies

We will only accept 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' in circumstances where a pupil's travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- Against guidance from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission
- Prohibited by any legislation or statutory directions relating to the incidence of transmission of coronavirus

#### 4.1 Pupil develops symptoms or lives with someone who does

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self-isolate. The pupil will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test results.

**If the pupil's test result is negative:** the pupil will return to school when they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus. They should continue to stay at home if they remain unwell (i.e. with a different illness).

**If the person the pupil lives with tests negative:** the pupil will stop self-isolating and return to school

#### 4.2 Pupil or a 'close contact' of theirs receives a positive test result

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible by contacting the school.

Pupils who test positive must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, and must only return to school when they no longer have symptoms (other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste).

If a member of the pupil's household or a 'close contact' tests positive, the pupil must self-isolate for 14 days. The pupil must do this from when the member of their household first had symptoms, or the day the pupil last met with the 'close contact' who received the positive result.

See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum.



### **4.3. Pupil has to quarantine after travel abroad**

The parent/carer must notify the school if their child has to quarantine after travel to a country that is not on the government's [exemptions list](#).

The pupil must quarantine for 14 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

We would ask parents to consider the appropriateness of travel outside of the UK at the moment. Please consider the impact any periods of quarantine might have on your child's education.

### **4.4 Pupil is required to shield during a local lockdown**

The parent/carer will notify the school if they are advised by the government to stay at home and will provide proof of their shielding letter by sending a scan to [school@josephclarke.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:school@josephclarke.waltham.sch.uk) or a photocopy to the school address.

The pupil will stay at home until the shielding measures in the local area are paused. Once the shielding measures are lifted, we will contact the pupil's parent/carer to set the expectation that they can return to school.

Parents/Carers will be kept updated of the current protective measures in place to keep pupils safe.

### **4.5 Remote learning provision**

If a pupil is not attending school because of circumstances related to coronavirus, but where the pupil is not ill, the school will provide the pupil access to remote education.

Our approach and expectations regarding remote education are set out above.

We will keep a record of, and monitor, pupil engagement with remote learning, but we will not track this information in the attendance register

## **5. Recording attendance**

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances' as defined in our normal attendance policy
- Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

## **6. Following up absence**

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer by contacting the family by telephone on the first morning of absence. If this call is unanswered, leave a message, send a text and email requesting a response. By the end of the first day of absence, all contacts provided will have been contacted to ascertain reason for absence. If contact has still not been made, consider a home visit or request for a welfare visit through local policing team.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

If a pupil does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carer are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we arrange a phone call/video meeting/in-school appointment between the parent/carer and a member of the SLT to explain the protective measures the school is taking to keep pupils safe



- Offer a shortened day or staggered return (particularly if parents are concerned about travelling on public transport)
- Request support from the Education Welfare Team.
- Advise the home borough's SEN Team.

### **6.1 Legal sanctions**

Normal rules on legal sanctions apply.

### **7. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum annually. At every review, it will be approved by the Directors.



**This policy is shared  
via the school website:  
[www.whitefield.org.uk](http://www.whitefield.org.uk)**