Areté Learning Trust - Blended and Distance Learning Policy for Parents (Richmond School)

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Ownership	Areté Learning Trust (for Richmond School)
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Definition of Blended Learning:
"At its simplest, blended learning is the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences." [Garrison and Kanuka, 2004].

This means that time spent learning in the classroom will introduce key concepts, new content and skills; address misconceptions; answer questions; and, set clear expectations and guidelines for the work to be completed at home. However, it should be noted that the learning that takes place at home will take a variety of forms and will not be restricted to online provision.

The DfE have now published a temporary continuity direction which makes it clear that schools have a duty to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children unable to attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19). This will come into effect from 22 October 2020. The direction poses no additional expectations on the quality of remote education expected of schools.

Remote education expectations - DfE guidance

Where a class, group or a small number of pupils need to self-isolate, or local restrictions require pupils to remain at home, we expect schools to have the capacity to offer immediate remote education. Schools are expected to consider how to continue to improve the quality of their existing curriculum, for example through technology, and have a strong contingency plan in place for remote education provision. This planning will be particularly important to support a scenario in which the logistical challenges of remote provision are greatest, for example where large numbers of pupils are required to remain at home.

- 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
- use a curriculum sequence that allows access to high-quality online and offline resources and teaching videos and that is linked to the school's curriculum expectations
- give access to high quality remote education resources
- select the online tools that will be consistently used across the school in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback and make sure staff are trained in their use
- provide printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, for pupils who do not have suitable online access
- recognise that younger pupils and some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so schools should work with families to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum - for pupils with SEND, their teachers are best placed to know how to meet their needs.

When teaching pupils remotely, we expect schools to:

- set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects
- Set work that is equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and will include both recorded or live direct teaching time, and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. The amount of remote education provided should be, as a minimum 5 hours a day for Key Stages 3 and provide frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher or through high-quality curriculum resources or videos
- provide frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher or through high-quality curriculum resources or videos
- 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
- gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum using questions and other suitable tasks, and provide feedback, at least weekly, using digitally facilitated or whole-class feedback where appropriate
- enable teachers to adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure pupils' understanding

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. We expect schools to avoid an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities.

Richmond School & Sixth Form College Guidance
Types of Blended Learning:
A. Face-to-Face Time with Pupils
This is the most traditional form of teaching and learning. Pupils benefit from increased levels of interaction with their peers, as well as with their teacher, and are allowed the opportunity to bond with fellow students. In face-to-face learning, students are held accountable for their progress at the specific time the lesson is taking place, for example, through the use of AfL techniques.

B. Flipped Learning
In the traditional approach to teaching and learning the teacher is the primary source of information. By contrast, the flipped learning model deliberately shifts instruction to a student centred approach, where in class time is dedicated to: exploring topics in greater depth; introducing complex concepts; answering questions; addressing misconceptions; setting clear expectations around work to be completed at home (online or paper based); and, creating rich learning opportunities. As a result, students are actively involved in knowledge construction as they participate in and evaluate their learning in a manner that is personally meaningful.

C. Online Learning
Google Classroom will be used for sharing online resources and setting work. Pupils will also be able return/submit completed tasks through this platform. Students may be set work in two ways:

Asynchronous Learning
Asynchronous learning is learning that doesn't necessarily happen at the same time for the teacher and the students. There is no real-time interaction; the learning resources are created and made available for students to use later on. The main features of asynchronous learning are:
- resources and activities delivered online, e.g. through Google Classroom;
- recorded lessons/video instruction/podcasts;
- flipped learning - students engage with material before discussions in class.

Synchronous Learning
Synchronous learning is teaching and learning that happens where the teacher is present at the same time as the students, meaning that there is real-time interaction between them. The main features of synchronous learning are:
- live, streamed lessons however, we currently do not have the technology in school to support this for each class

D. Hard Copy Physical Resources
In some cases physical resources are the most appropriate way to support learning, hard copy physical resources include:
- paper packs and work booklets;
- textbooks;
- resources needed for projects, games and activities, for example, music, art, D&T, etc.

Methods of Blended Learning:
The Education Endowment Foundation recommends the following metacognitive methods to enhance learning:

Activate	Prompting students to think about what they have learnt previously, that will help them with their next steps
Explain	Explicitly teaching strategies to students and helping them decide when to use them.
Practise	Pupils practising strategies and skills repeatedly, to develop independence.
Reflect	Pupils reflecting on what they have learnt after they have completed a piece of work.
Review	Revisiting previous learning after a gap.

A contingency framework has been published by the DfE following the end of the national lockdown on December 2nd 2020. This states that

- Any restrictions on education would only be as a last resort and may only be initiated following a ministerial decision.
- Where the contingency framework is implemented, secondary schools should only allow vulnerable children, children of critical workers, pupils in years 11 and 13 and other pupils due to take external exams this academic year, to attend. High-quality remote education should be provided for all other pupils.

This replaces the previous 4 Tier system.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities#contents

Where blended learning is required (this is the situation in which most students are in school with some self-isolating):
- Work will be set through Google Classroom and in line with department plans, with the use of other packages where appropriate.
- Y7-9 work may not always be identical to what is going in the classroom e.g. for practical lessons this may not be possible
- Y10 - 13 in subject option groups it is likely work will be set by the teacher, but in core areas it may be the LT.
- For each 2 week cycle there should be a 30 minute recorded lesson or explanation to accompany each class. This can be one recording to cover all classes if appropriate or class based. Other online recordings could also be used or signposted, such as Oak National Academy if these were suitable.
- For some year groups (most likely Y11 - 13) a live lesson or drop in/feedback session may be appropriate. This should be in line with the Appendix 1 - included below.
- Tutors - in the tutor group Google Classroom, assemblies to go into the classroom. Word of the week to be signposted in the Language for Learning folder.

Where remote learning is required (this is the situation in which a whole class, year group or whole school are learning remotely)
- Work will be set through Google Classroom and in line with department plans, with the use of other packages where appropriate.
- Y7-9 work may not always be identical to the curriculum delivered when in school or through blended learning but should be equally meaningful and ambitious. e.g. for practical lessons where it would not be possible.
- Y10 - 13 in subject option groups it is likely work will be set by the teacher, but in core areas it may be the LT.
- For each 2 week cycle, there should be a live opportunity for all students to interact with their teacher. This could be via a live lesson or a drop in Q&A session to support other remote work set.
  - As with a live lesson, a drop-in session would not need to for the full hour.
  - Please make students aware in advance of when this will be available.
- Where a whole tutor group are remote learning, Year 7-10 should have a live session each Monday with live academic mentoring of smaller groups in Year 11-13.

Teacher absence
Teacher absence due to self or family isolation whilst awaiting a COVID-19 test result. Staff members will be expected to set work via Google Classroom providing they are well and not caring for a dependant within the household who is unwell. As circumstances dictate and if the teacher remains well, then they should continue to set work via Google Classroom, and, in negotiation with the teacher, provision will be put in place for them to deliver lessons remotely to their examination classes. If they are a form tutor they will be expected to check in remotely with their tutor group. They will continue to assess work on line. This will take immediate effect after the teacher goes into isolation and will continue for the duration of the time they are physically absent from school, providing they are well. If they are unwell and unable to work, cover would be set by the Lead Teacher.

Student absence
Student absence due to self or family isolation whilst awaiting a COVID-19 test result. Parents must inform the school via the headteacher that COVID-19 symptoms are the reason for absence. They should follow NHS 111 guidance as to who needs to isolate and book a test. Teachers will be asked to set work via Google Classroom. Parents should notify the head teacher of the test result and follow advice as to when they may return to school.

Long term student absence due to shielding or COVID related concerns regarding either themselves or a member of their family. In this eventuality provision will be negotiated on a case by case basis, but will include them following their school timetable, remote work set via Google Classroom, and weekly catch ups with Home School Liaison Officer who also liaises with staff setting work.

Track and trace case within a bubble If a bubble is required to isolate then their timetable will be delivered on line in the same model as during full lockdown. Teachers will post work on Google Classroom. This could take a number of formats; real time, pre-recorded, assessments etc. Pupils will receive feedback via Google Classroom or email.

Assessment and Feedback
In line with the Assessment and Feedback Policy, not all submitted written work needs to be marked in detail by the teacher; however, it is important that work completion is tracked so that students who are not engaging with the work set can be appropriately supported. It is important to remember that feedback is considered so that learning, rather than simply provision, is taking place. The nature of assessment and feedback given will depend on the type of work completed and the method of submission. The School's Assessment and Feedback Policy should be followed as the overall framework on which to base our approach.

Engagement
For a blended learning approach to be effective, it is important that all students engage with the process. Students must have a secure understanding of what they have to do and by when. An overview, the appropriate level of challenge, and clear instructions are important to enable students to balance work completed in school and at home. Clear deadlines should be set to give students an explicit understanding of what is required, by when.

If students do not engage, they are reminded by staff to complete the work. If it still is not completed, then LLM meets with the students and reminds the student of the work needing to be completed. They are then given a week to get caught up and parents are informed.

Access to Devices

To support online learning the school has a limited number of devices which we can loan to students to support their remote education. The school also has a limited number of 4G dongles to support students without an Internet connection. Parents should email admin@richmondschool.net to request a device. The school will provide paper work packs for students while they do not have access to the online learning.

Training

The IT department has given all students a lesson on how to access Google Classroom, they have provided a help sheet for all students (in planners) and this is also available on the school website along with a more detailed guide for parents and students.

Appendix 1

Student online safety away from school and college

Richmond School and Sixth Form College will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Please abide by the following when taking part in virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

Student Code of Conduct for Live Online Teaching

- Students will be invited to the lesson or support session from the relevant member of staff though Google Classroom.
- Parents/Carers should be aware that the 'live online' lesson is taking place, but allow the lesson to progress uninterrupted.
- Students must wear suitable clothing, as they would for school/college.
- Images, audio or recordings from the lesson should not be shared externally by staff or students.
- Computers or devices used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred where possible. Any items of a personal or inappropriate nature should be out of view of the camera on your device.
- The 'live online' lesson will be recorded by the member of staff and stored in Google Drive so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Students must not record the lesson from their or another device. The recording will be made by the school/college staff, stored securely and be available in the Google Classroom if required.
- Student language must be appropriate at all times, as expected in school/college.
- Students must only use the Google Meet app via their school/college email address and the Google Suite. Students must not request Zoom, Skype, FaceTime or any other online platforms as these are not supported by Richmond School and Sixth Form College and your teacher cannot agree.
- If on any occasion a student or parent is uncomfortable with the conduct of a staff member, the lesson should be closed and reported immediately to SLT at Richmond School/Sixth Form College for further enquiry.