



Distance Learning Policy

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Purpose of Policy

Downe House Riyadh is committed to the continued provision of a varied and engaging education in the event of full or partial school closure. This policy summarises how this provision will take place, so that there are consistent and well-understood expectations of the level of support that will be provided for all concerned. The intended outcome is to maximise pupil learning, following the curriculum but also take advantage of opportunities to develop independent and digital learning.

The policy is for the whole school community: teachers, parents, and pupils. This is an evolving policy that we will regularly review.

Introduction

This remote learning policy for staff and parents aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning for pupils who are not in school
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to remote learning
- Provide appropriate guidelines for data protection

It should be noted that this policy may be updated in response to changing circumstance related to the on-going Covid-19 pandemic and to reflect changes in local guidance / requirements.

Remote education may be an essential component in the delivery of the school curriculum for some pupils alongside classroom teaching, or in the case of a local restrictions. We are required to plan to ensure any pupils educated at home for some of the time are given the support they need to master the curriculum and so make good progress. We may consider it appropriate to suspend some subjects for some pupils in exceptional circumstances. We would only do this if we could demonstrate it is in the best interests of pupils and it would be subject to discussion with parents.

School Staff Responsibilities

The school accepts its responsibility to provide immediate remote learning opportunities for both individual and groups of pupils if they are required to self-isolate at home during the current COVID- 19 pandemic. In addition, if teachers are required to self-isolate they must continue to support the education of their 'bubble' of pupils from home in whatever ways are deemed practicable.

We recognise that personal contact with our pupils is key to maintaining motivation and engagement, as well as sustaining fruitful relationships, both teacher/pupil, peer to peer and with parents.

We also recognise that when providing remote learning, variety is key. The research is clear that pupils should be facilitated to engage in a variety of remote learning activities, including direct instruction, real time lessons, recorded sequences, quizzes, formal assessments, discussion forums and online material (including those set on platforms such as Teams or Seesaw, any virtual learning platform via email.

We also consider ongoing pastoral support to be central to ensuring our pupils remain engaged within the school community. This occurs through regular contact with Form Tutors/Heads of Year and through remote assemblies.

Teachers

Staff absence due to self or family isolation

When providing remote learning, teachers must be available for normal school hours on normal school days. If they are unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure. Staff members will be expected to set cover work as appropriate for the age-group. Providing they are well and not caring for dependents within the household who are unwell, Covid-related return to work procedures will be followed. As circumstances dictate and the teacher remains well, then they should also continue to set work via the school platform, and, in negotiation with the Senior Management Team, provision will be put in place for them to deliver lessons remotely to their classes. They will continue to assess work online with 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 or hospitalised this would be treated as any other absence and work would be set by their Head of Department, Head of Year or a colleague within the department and a colleague will cover the lesson for them.

Expectations for remote provision

The quality of learning is at the heart of our policy and should always take precedence over the method or delivery platform. Learning needs to come from both individual and group effort, with enough opportunity for a teacher to assess and give feedback to each pupil.

Downe House Riyadh has the following specified minimum expectations for remote provision;

- set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects, including new material - planning a programme that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school
- 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
- gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum using questions and other suitable tasks, and set a clear expectation on how regularly teachers will check work
- 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

Contingency if there is a large number of absences

If a significant number of pupils within a year group is required to isolate then they will continue to follow their normal timetable remotely, attending a number of live lessons per day mixed with independent work set by teachers on the school platform. A document showing which lessons will be 'live' will be shared with pupils and parents, should this be the case. The number of weekly 'live' lessons will reflect the weighting of weekly subject allocation and be dependent on the age of the pupil.

Teachers will send out information as to how pupils will log in to attend live lessons. Pupils will upload their independent work and receive feedback via the school platform.

Contingency if there is a large number of teacher absence

If a significant number of staff are required to self-isolate at any one time, the School may need to rotate year groups in school to ensure safe and feasible staffing levels. Staff may also need to provide work for larger groups of children depending on the number of staff in quarantine and whether they are well or not. Staff who are still in school will continue to teach as they would normally do whilst staff in self-isolation will provide remote learning for their classes including 'live' lessons and independent work on the school platform (providing they remain well). They will follow the model described i.e. a number of daily 'live' lessons

and independent work set on the school platform with cover staff ensuring that pupils are following instructions. There will also continue to be pastoral check-ins for year groups on the rota system.

Whole School Closure

The School will offer a full remote learning timetable, the details of which will be communicated to parents at the first available opportunity.

Live Interactive Lessons

During short periods of school closure (e.g. 2 weeks), it is important that pupils do not lose academic momentum. Routines such as punctual starts, regular face-to-face contact with teachers and peers, engagement in lessons, and prep/homework should not be abandoned. Live lessons should be delivered in real time with cameras and microphones on. Lessons should be varied in content and format; however, the points below set out some of the principles of a good interactive lesson (depending on age), whether delivered from home or from an empty classroom:

- Pupils should be actively learning, rather than just passively listening.
- Some form of open question or challenge near the start of the lesson should require all pupils to contribute, either orally, in the chat window, or via an alternative application.
- Targeted questioning throughout the lesson should deter pupils from zoning out.
- The lesson should contain the opportunity for higher thinking and should be designed to challenge even the most-able pupils.
- There may be opportunities for pupils to collaborate or work in pairs/groups.
- Pupils could be asked to present their own work to the class and engage in debate about this work with other pupils for extended oracy.
- Assessment for Learning (AfL) at the end of the lesson allows the teacher to ascertain the extent of pupil learning and engagement and will inform future lessons to maintain academic momentum.
- AfL should seek to assess both skills development and pupil metacognition of those skills.
- Lessons may also be spent writing or doing independent work, which can be submitted at the end of lesson. In this scenario the teacher must be on hand to answer questions in real time or check in with pupils individually.
- Homework should be in accordance with the homework timetable.

Digital Platforms

- Pupils should have their cameras on wherever possible, with the expectation they are sitting in a well-lit room at a desk or table (although this may not be

possible for all), appropriately dressed, with relevant books and writing material to hand.

- Backgrounds for both pupils and teachers should be blurred.
- Teachers may well choose to share their screens rather than use camera.
- Lessons should all be recorded.
- Teachers do not need to set up Teams lessons in advance as pupils should expect each lesson to be live.

Enrichment Activities

For periods of prolonged school closure, Downe House Riyadh will also roll out a programme of enrichment activities, including competitions and puzzles, cross-curricular tasks, PE workouts, free theatre and recommended audio-books. A page with age-appropriate activities will be available.

All pupils are encouraged to use the time to read for an hour a day. This has many benefits, including a break from screens and a personal space to unwind when cooped up indoors.

Pupils may record additional achievements in diaries which they share with Tutors.

Pastoral Care of Pupils

Working at home can be challenging for a variety of reasons, especially when coupled with social or lifestyle limitations, and possible illness in the family. We appreciate the huge role that parents will be playing and encourage families to structure the day to give balance, variety, and a sense of purpose. Parents can play a key role in helping pupils adhere to a routine, and the amount of support will vary depending on the age and personality of the child, and the parents' own work commitments. Time should be made for regular breaks, exercise, pursuing co-curricular interests and connecting virtually with friends and relatives.

Downe House Riyadh will also continue to provide a strong sense of pastoral support during periods of closure. Guidance will be offered to parents on supporting their children with remote learning. The School's pastoral support system will also provide a sense of mental and emotional wellness, in addition to ensuring our most vulnerable pupils will continue to receive focused pastoral support.

Registration, Form periods and Assemblies

- All pupils should log in to the school platform each morning.
- If a pupil does not log in, parents will be contacted.
- Each Tutor will hold a weekly 10-15-minute form period on Teams, principally aimed at giving the pupils some interaction with their Tutor and others in

their form.

- Pastoral staff, including the Heads of Year and Heads of Section will deliver wellbeing-themed messages and reflective assemblies.
- Pupils should update Tutors about any issues preventing them from completing work as expected.

Teacher wellbeing

- It is recognised that this will be a stressful time for teachers, who may well be looking after children at home, and worried about their personal circumstances, friends, and family.
- Teachers should check in regularly with Heads of Year/Department, and alert them promptly of any significant changes in circumstances, including living arrangements, health, and anxiety.
- Careful consideration should be given to teachers with health problems, dependents or caring duties, and other members of the department may be asked to support them.
- The usual rules around confidentiality will apply; if a colleague believes that another member of staff may be at risk, it is their responsibility to share this with an appropriate member of senior staff.
- Use of Teams or equivalent for meetings and maintaining morale is encouraged.
- Opportunities for Continuous Professional Development, online courses and curriculum development or coaching may be discussed with the Deputy Head Academic and/or the Head of Department.

Pupils and Parents

Pupil absence due to self or family isolation

Parents must inform the school that COVID-19 symptoms are the reason for their child's absence and follow local guidance as to who needs to isolate and book a test. Teachers will initially be asked to set work as appropriate/

Parents should notify the school of results and follow advice from the School as to when they may return to on-site learning. Whilst the household is in quarantine, the pupil will be set work via the school platform or email and receive feedback from their teachers on what they have submitted. They will also have a weekly catch up (either via Teams or a phone call) with their Form Tutor/Class Teacher and/or Head of Year.

Pupils who are unwell need to focus on getting better and the School will help them to catch on any work they have missed when they return fit and well. However, pupils who are absent for Covid-related issues, and are well enough, will be able to access work they miss via the school platform once staff have had the opportunity to upload this.

In exceptional circumstances, pupils will be given remote access to live lessons via Teams for English and Maths.

Long term pupil 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 an individual timetable, remote work set on the school platform or emailed to parents and weekly catch ups with Form Tutors.

Pupils' and Parents' Responsibilities

- When working remotely from home, pupils must remember that this is an extension of the classroom and they are to conduct themselves as they would in a classroom or school environment.
- Pupils may use their school email account to communicate with their Form Tutor or subject teachers. Parents of younger pupils may also use their child's email account to contact teachers
- Pupils should only use platforms that have been authorised by the school.
- Pupils must only use their school account credentials (e.g. Email, VLE) when signing into school platforms.
- When communicating with staff the language is to be respectful, appropriate and professional
- Any communication relating to 'Distance Learning' which you feel is of a wellbeing or safeguarding concern must be immediately forwarded to the child's tutor or class teacher for further investigation.
- Pupils should not be engaging with remote learning or completing work, tasks or activities at unsociable hours.
- Pupils should not be communicating with staff via personal messaging services or non-school messaging services
- Please ensure that face-to-face communication is only between teachers and pupils.
- Any parent to teacher communication should be in the usual manner, via email unless discussed beforehand to protect the wellbeing of staff and pupils, members of the school community should not record, share or comment on public forums about individual teachers or other pupils

Live Communication with Teachers:

- Pupils to get clear permission from their parents before they accept any invite to a live communication with a teacher.

- Pupils to inform their parents when a live communication is about to begin and when it has concluded.
- When joining a live communication you should grant access to your camera and microphone to the web browser (i.e. "Admit").
- When entering a live video, pupils must only click 'JOIN MEETING' when they see that their teacher is present.
- If a pupil joins a live video call and no teacher is present then they must immediately leave and end the call.
- When joining a group video call, pupils are to 'turn off' their microphone and only 'turn on' the microphone when told to do so by the teacher.
- Pupils have the freedom to turn off their camera/mute the microphone if needed.
- Pupils to be appropriately dressed and items worn are to be respectful and non-distracting.
- Parents to be present (i.e. within the same room) at the start of a live communication to make sure that it is in fact a teacher from school in the video.
- If the communication is live and there are wellbeing or safeguarding concerns the conversation/video must be immediately terminated and reported directly to the child's tutor or class teacher who will inform the relevant safeguarding or pastoral leads.
- Pupils should be seated in a communal area of the home (i.e. kitchen, living room)
- If a pupil is working in a room by themselves (i.e. office or study) then it is important that the door remains open.
- A parent will need to remain in close proximity to the pupil and be within earshot (i.e. same floor of the house or adjoining room)
- Live communication should not take place within the pupil's bedroom.
- Pupils to only accept invites that come from a member of staff through an official school account and/or via an authorised school platform.
- Pupils are not to use their school credentials to set up or invite other pupils to their own live communication.
- Pupils are not to share teacher invites to live communication with other users or post publicly online.
- Pupils are not to use the inbuilt chat feature unless clearly told to do so by the teacher.
- Pupils to follow the instructions from teachers during live communications e.g. when to mute microphones, limiting the use of the chat feature, when to leave at the end.
- If using a WiFi connection, pupils will need to be located in an area of the home with a strong and reliable signal.
- If the sound quality is inconsistent, pupils can enable the inbuilt subtitles

- The backdrop of videos are not to reveal other members of the house (e.g. younger siblings)
- Ideally the backdrop of videos is a neutral background such as a wall or curtains
- Parents or pupils MUST NOT record any online interactions, lessons, activities or tutorials
- To be aware that if any party is found to be in breach of this policy then the teacher will end the lesson/meeting immediately and inform a senior member of staff

Monitoring

Downe House Riyadh accepts that the use of 'Distance Learning' is a valuable educational tool. However, misuse of these platforms can have a negative impact upon pupil productivity, welfare and the reputation of the school.

In order to ensure compliance with both this policy and the School's safeguarding policy, the School will periodically monitor and keep a record of who has accessed the School's platforms and attended live communications. There should be no expectation of privacy; full details of our procedures can be found in the main Safeguarding and ICT policies.

Sanctions

If a pupil or adult is found to have breached this policy, they will be subject to the School's disciplinary procedures. Pupils may also face the withdrawal of their access and/or restrictions to the School's 'Distance Learning' platforms. In addition to this, the severity of the breach may lead to parents/carers being contacted and in the event of illegal activities the involvement of the authorities.

Distance Learning Resources

All lessons, videos, worksheets, are the content of the Downe House Riyadh's VLE and the content of any online meetings with Downe House Riyadh's staff are the Intellectual Property of the school and are not to be shared with third parties or people outside of the school organisation (i.e. any teachers, parents, pupils or governors who are not from Downe House Riyadh without the School's express permission. Permission should be sought to make copies or recordings of any of the VLE content or online meetings .

Policy History

Date of adoption of this policy	August 2022
Date of last review of this policy	August 2022
Policy owner (SMT)	Director of Studies
Policy owner (Chair of the Board)	Board

Appendix A Guidance for Online Meetings

Aims

The purpose of this guidance is to support effective remote pastoral care, and remote teaching and learning at **SchoolName**, during an extended period of school closure. It aims to set out the expectations of staff and pupils, with attention to the important considerations of safeguarding and the maintaining of professional standards. In developing this guidance, the School has referred to the following:

The Acceptable Use Policy (Staff)
The Acceptable Use Policy
(Pupils)
The e- Safety Policy
The Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

Any departure from this guidance may have safeguarding implications and must be agreed in advance with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Microsoft Teams is the platform that we will use for online meetings, either for pastoral care, or for lessons.

When planning and participating in an online meeting the following steps must be taken:

- The owner of the meeting, usually a teacher or Form Tutor, will invite participants via iSAMS, Outlook or Teams, to confirm the date and time.
- For Form Periods, the Tutor and the Teaching Assistant (if there is one) should ideally be included.
- One-to-one online meetings may be necessary for certain areas of school life, such as maintaining contact with the Form Tutor or other pastoral staff, language practice, or working with the Learning Support Department.
- All online meetings should be conducted in a professional manner, observing the usual expectations of behaviour. For video meetings, casual dress is appropriate for staff and pupils while at home, but clothing should not be revealing, and it should not feature political or offensive slogans.
- All meetings should take place within extended school hours.
- Pupils should access the meetings in a public area of their house wherever possible. If this is not possible, other rooms such as a bedroom can be used

but participants should be seated on a chair and/or at a desk.

- All participants are expected to blur their background during video meetings as common practice.
- Meetings within Microsoft Teams will be recorded by the owner of the meeting.
- Recordings may be used to support any pupils who were absent. These should be deleted once the course content becomes obsolete.

If any safeguarding concerns arise, the School Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy must be followed and the Designated Safeguarding Lead informed.

Appendix B Online Remote Learning Responsible User Agreement

Remote learning requires access to online platforms and services maintained by **SchoolName** and will require you to communicate with teachers and fellow students in a mature and considerate manner. This user agreement is to be used in conjunction with the general Acceptable Use Policy. By logging in to the School's systems you agree to the terms of this Policy.

The below rules will help to ensure that all members of the school community are able to be supported academically and pastorally when working remotely.

1. I will consider the content (text, images, audio and video) that I post to a school-maintained platform before I submit the content.
2. I will not use any school-maintained platform for non-school related activity.
3. I will be polite and courteous when communicating with other users and will use the same language as if I were talking to that person face-to-face.
4. I will adhere to the requirements of any work and not submit work in a format or on a platform not specified by my teacher or Form Tutor.
5. Wherever possible I will undertake remote working in a public location in my house (e.g. the kitchen or living room). If this is not possible, I will try to be seated on a chair and/or at a desk.
6. I will login by 8am Sunday to Thursday during term time.
7. If I encounter technical problems (e.g. not being able to log in to a system), I will contact IT support and provide them with a detailed explanation of the problem along with screenshots so they can diagnose the issue.
8. I will not try to access the accounts of any other user.
9. I understand that cyberbullying is unacceptable and will not use any of the remote working platforms to undertake such activity. If I do, I will be sanctioned.
10. I understand that posting immature or offensive content to teachers and fellow students is unacceptable and I may be sanctioned if I undertake such action.
11. If I receive any communication or content that I am unhappy with (e.g. cyberbullying, extreme or offensive content), I will immediately report it to my Form Tutor.
12. I understand that all activity that I undertake on a school-maintained platform or a school device is monitored and logged for safeguarding and recording keeping

purposes.