



Remote learning policy

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1. Aims

This remote learning policy aims to:

- Ensure a consistent and safe approach to remote education where pupils are unable to attend ReFocus in person.
- Set out expectations for staff, pupils and parents/carers when remote education is used.
- Maintain high-quality education while keeping attendance at school as the priority.
- Set clear expectations for safeguarding, online safety and data protection during remote education.

2. Use of remote learning

2.1 Attendance at school is the priority. Remote education is not an equal alternative to attendance in person and will only be considered as a last resort where attendance is not possible, or is contrary to government guidance, but the pupil is able to continue learning.

2.2 ReFocus uses online learning resources including Lexia, BKS B and PASS Functional Skills Maths. Hayley Perry and Paula Tucker oversee these portals. These resources may supplement in-person learning and, where appropriate, form part of a planned period of remote education; they do not replace the expectation of attendance at school.

2.3 Pupils who are absent from school but receiving remote education will still be recorded as absent using the appropriate attendance code, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current Department for Education attendance guidance.

2.4 Remote education may be considered in the following limited circumstances:

- Where ReFocus cannot open safely, or where opening would contradict guidance from local or central government.
- For a short-term absence where an individual pupil is unable to attend in person but is well enough to learn, for example while recovering from an infectious illness, operation or injury.
- In exceptional individual cases where attendance has been affected by SEND or a mental health issue, after the pupil's absence has been established and where remote education supports, rather than hinders, reintegration.

2.5 Decisions about remote education will be made on a case-by-case basis. Where it is used for an individual pupil, ReFocus will:

- Seek mutual agreement with the pupil and parents/carers and, where appropriate, a relevant medical professional.
- Involve the local authority where the pupil has an EHC plan, a social worker, or where the local authority has relevant statutory responsibilities.

- Make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND and consider what support the family may require to access the provision.
- Put a formal arrangement in place to review the provision regularly and plan for reintegration into school at the earliest appropriate opportunity.
- Set a clear review point and time limit, with the aim of returning the pupil to in-person education with appropriate support.

2.6 Where a pupil has a longer-term medical or other need that prevents access to suitable education, ReFocus will work with the commissioning school and/or local authority as appropriate. Remote education does not replace any statutory duty on the local authority to arrange suitable education where that duty applies.

2.7 Remote education will not be used as a justification for sending a pupil home because of behaviour. Where a pupil is suspended, the suspension will be managed in accordance with the school's Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy and current statutory guidance. Work will be set and marked during the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Teachers

When providing remote education, teachers will work within their normal working arrangements and timetable. If they are unable to work, they will follow the school's normal absence procedures.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Providing access to remote education as soon as reasonably practicable and proportionate to the likely length of absence and the needs of all pupils.
- Providing work that is meaningful, appropriately ambitious and aligned as closely as practicable with the pupil's curriculum and current learning.
- Considering the pupil's age, SEND, additional needs, level of independent study skills and the support available at home.
- Making reasonable adjustments so that pupils with SEND can access remote education.
- Giving clear instructions, realistic deadlines and appropriate feedback.
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries in all remote contact and using only school-approved systems and communication methods.
- Monitoring engagement and raising concerns promptly where a pupil is not engaging, cannot be contacted, or there are welfare or safeguarding concerns.

3.2 Content and tools used to support remote education

Remote education may use a combination of:

- BKSBLive and other approved online learning platforms
- Lexia and PASS Functional Skills Maths where appropriate
- Telephone calls and text messages home using approved school systems
- One-to-one mentoring meetings online or by telephone where appropriate
- Printed learning packs
- Physical learning materials such as books, exercise books and writing materials
- BBC Bitesize and other appropriate educational resources

Access to BKSBLive: <https://refocus.bksblive2.co.uk/>

3.3 Senior leaders

Senior leaders have overarching responsibility for the quality, coordination and delivery of remote education. They are responsible for:

- Coordinating the remote education approach across ReFocus and ensuring it remains a short-term response to absence rather than an alternative attendance pathway.
- Ensuring staff are trained and confident in the use of approved digital platforms and relevant accessibility features.
- Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of remote education through discussion with staff, review of work and feedback from pupils and parents/carers.
- Monitoring pupil engagement and ensuring concerns are followed up promptly with families and relevant professionals.
- Taking reasonable steps to overcome barriers to digital access, including the use of school-owned devices, internet connectivity solutions or printed resources where available.
- Ensuring the security of remote learning systems and that safeguarding, online safety and data protection requirements are followed.
- Providing clear information to pupils and parents/carers about how remote education will operate and how to obtain support.

3.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements remain effective when pupils are learning remotely and that concerns are managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

3.5 IT support

IT support is responsible for:

- Supporting approved systems used to set, access and return work
- Helping staff, pupils and parents/carers with technical issues where reasonably possible
- Supporting the security of remote learning systems and reporting suspected data breaches to the Data Protection Lead
- Supporting access to devices and connectivity where this forms part of an agreed school arrangement

3.6 Pupils and parents/carers

Pupils learning remotely are expected to:

- Be reasonably contactable during the school day in line with the agreed remote education plan
- Complete work by agreed deadlines and seek help where needed
- Tell staff if they are unable to access or complete work
- Follow the school's Behaviour Policy, Acceptable Use Agreement and Online Safety Policy during all remote learning activity

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Engage with the school and support the agreed routine for learning as far as reasonably possible
- Tell the school if their child is unwell, unable to complete work, or having difficulty accessing remote education
- Raise concerns or requests for support with the appropriate member of staff
- Support their child to use school systems safely and appropriately

4. Who to contact

Staff should raise questions or concerns with the appropriate person:

- Curriculum, work setting or SEND issues - the relevant teacher/subject lead, SENCO or Headteacher, as appropriate
- Behaviour or engagement concerns - the relevant senior leader
- IT issues - Chris Cullimore
- Workload or wellbeing concerns - line manager
- Data protection concerns - Data Protection Lead
- Safeguarding concerns – DSL

5. Data protection

5.1 Accessing and processing personal data

Staff will follow the school's Data Protection Policy and privacy notices when accessing or processing personal data for remote education. Staff will:

- Use secure school-approved systems and services.
- Use school-provided devices wherever practicable rather than personal devices.
- Access and share only the minimum personal data necessary for the purpose.
- Take particular care with photographs, video, live online sessions and screen sharing so that personal information is not disclosed inappropriately.
- Report any actual or suspected personal data breach promptly in accordance with the school's data protection procedures.

5.2 Keeping devices and accounts secure

Staff will take appropriate steps to keep devices, accounts and information secure, including:

- Using strong, unique passwords and multi-factor authentication where available.
- Locking devices when unattended and preventing access by family members or other unauthorised people.
- Using encryption and other security controls provided by the school.
- Keeping operating systems, browsers, antivirus and other security software up to date.
- Not downloading or transferring school information to personal accounts, unapproved applications or unapproved cloud storage.
- Following the school's procedures for lost, stolen or compromised devices and accounts.

6. Safeguarding and online safety

All remote education will be delivered in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Agreements and current Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

Staff will remain alert to safeguarding concerns that may arise through remote contact, including disclosures, changes in behaviour, inability to contact a pupil, concerning online activity, or concerns about the pupil's home circumstances. Concerns will be recorded and reported immediately through the school's normal safeguarding procedures.

Where live or one-to-one remote contact is used, staff will use approved school systems, maintain professional boundaries and follow the school's safeguarding and online safety expectations. Staff will not use personal social media accounts or personal messaging accounts to communicate with pupils.

The DSL will consider whether additional contact, welfare checks or liaison with the commissioning school, local authority, social care or other agencies is required for pupils who are vulnerable or where engagement gives rise to concern.

7. Monitoring arrangements

The application of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and senior leaders through review of remote education arrangements, pupil engagement, safeguarding concerns, staff feedback and the effectiveness of reintegration plans.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where national guidance or school arrangements change significantly.

8. Links with other policies and guidance

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Acceptable Use Agreements
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

It should also be read alongside current Department for Education guidance, including:

- Providing remote education: guidance for schools
- Working together to improve school attendance
- Safeguarding and remote education
- Keeping Children Safe in Education