

Blended Learning Policy

Addendum to Curriculum Policy

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as guidance by the Vice Principal responsible for Curriculum, as a minimum every six weeks initially and annually thereafter.

This policy is under review and may be revised as necessary in light of further experience of blended learning and the circumstances around its necessity. For example, 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 students and teachers to participate in blended learning, owing to widespread illness, for example

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RATIONALE

In the event of a school closure, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of remote (online) learning. Extensive blended learning would apply particularly in a situation in which the school is closed for an extended period, but a high proportion of students and teachers are healthy and able to work as normal from home.

Blended learning may also be appropriate in situations when students, in agreement with the school, have a period of absence but are able to work at home, at least to some extent. This may apply in cases such as exclusion from school or long-term illness, assuming students are able to complete schoolwork at home. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, students are self-isolating at home but are not suffering with relevant symptoms.

There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention of school or government guidance. This may apply, for example, if parents choose to take students 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.

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Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for students who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual student, the collation of work and communication with the parent will be coordinated by the student's Academic Year Leader and/or subject teacher.

The student's subject teachers will use Show My Homework and Microsoft Teams to make work available to the student. If there are any issues with the compilation of work, tutors should liaise the relevant Academic Year Leader or Curriculum Leader (particularly if a classroom teacher is unavailable).

If a significant number of students are absent from school but the school remains open, the Principal will decide whether the method of blended learning operated will take the form outlined here, or as 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:

1. Staff will set school work across Show my Homework **and** Microsoft Teams
2. Regular direct instruction from teaching teachers, with the ability of students to ask questions online (via Teams)

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3. The setting of work that students complete, written responses (if relevant) completed electronically
4. The assessment of specific assignments that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided.

Students and teachers are expected to have access to the internet whilst at home. If there are connectivity issues or limited access to devices, parents and staff should inform the school who will try to resolve the problem. The school recognises that many families may not have home printers and will therefore not require the printing of material.

The primary platforms the school will use to deliver continuity of education are:

Show My Homework (Satchel one): access to SMHW is via the relevant app or any browser. For login details contact Mr Vaddiraju: rvaddiraju@chacademy.co.uk

Microsoft Teams: accessed via the relevant app or desktop application, or via the following URL: <https://teams.microsoft.com>

Access to these platforms is via a student's normal school login; if students have difficulty with logging in, they should contact the school's ICT support team: ICTSupport@chacademy.co.uk.

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 students and teachers to participate in blended learning. For shorter closures, for example, teachers may set work on SMHW for submission in person once the school has reopened.

For longer closures, teachers would make more use of live sessions and electronic assessment. The school reserves the right to vary the range of methods used to provide blended learning tasks, feedback, and interaction, based on the circumstances of any closure and based on our experience.

THE SETTING OF TASKS (USING TEAMS)

Subject areas will provide work broadly in line with students' timetables through Microsoft Teams. Tasks will be set in accordance with existing schemes of work, and tasks will be designed to allow students to progress through schemes of work at the same pace as if they were in school, where possible. Naturally, blended learning will require students and teachers to take a different approach to working through content but tasks should ensure the pace of content coverage is as close as possible to in-school teaching and ensure students do not fall behind. The nature of tasks set should allow students to learn independently, without the specific support of an adult at home.

Unless there is a good reason not to, tasks will be set for individual classes. The type of task set will vary between subjects, but examples of appropriate tasks might include:

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- Reading and noting new material from a common subject area textbook or electronic resource
- Working through subject-specific presentations or worksheets provided by the subject area
- Watching a relevant video resource and making notes on it
- Completing a listening exercise (e.g. in languages)
- Written responses to prompt questions, essay plans etc.
- Completion of practice questions or past papers, particularly for those in examination years
- Working through relevant exercises offered by external providers

LIVE SESSIONS

Academic curriculum areas may also arrange for teaching teachers to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by text or audio and/or visual means).

Microsoft Teams is a platform that allows for resources to be shared, teachers to provide exposition and students to ask questions in 'real-time'. Students will be provided with details about 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 facilitate contemporaneous communication, with students able to respond to teachers' questions (as well as ask them) via the conversation functionality in teams.

Teachers should include line managers as group members of class teams to allow them to monitor and support as required.

ASSESSMENT

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and whilst this may be more challenging with blended learning, teachers will endeavour to provide regular feedback to students 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 blended learning.

Assessed work will be set using Microsoft Teams and Show My Homework, regardless of how students' work is eventually submitted (e.g. by Microsoft Teams or Show My Homework), with clear due dates given to students for completion, thereby helping students to organise their time. Students and teachers should keep accurate records of all work completed, submitted and assessed.

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 set assessed work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided.

Possible methods may include:

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- Using MS Assignments to provide feedback on submitted work.
- 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 on Google or Microsoft.
- Providing feedback directly in the Chat function on Teams.
- Sending a direct email (or Teams message) to students with specific feedback/targets.
- Feedback via another website/piece of software
- Recording oral feedback and sharing an audio file with the student on Teams.

Additional functionality is available in Teams if teachers want to create assignments for students to complete. These might include, for example, the creation of a tailor-made quiz (containing either multiple choice or extended answers) and teachers are able to use assignments to give feedback within Teams.

EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS

Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, students will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the blended learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Students will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a form tutor or class teacher) on a regular basis.

In the event of an extended school closure, teachers will continue to deliver content in line with existing schemes of work once the school is reopened; if any student misses significant parts of the content, they will be able to view material posted online and the school will give consideration to the practicalities of helping students to catch up once the school reopens. Students should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any administrative tasks that allow the school to monitor their progress. For example, where tasks are set using Teams, students need to submit assignments before deadlines so that teachers can monitor their progress. If students or parents have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant curriculum area. If there are questions about a student’s overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the student’s Academic Year Leader and/or subject teacher.

Teachers must work on the assumption that students 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 students to take relevant equipment from their lockers home, or for parents to ensure they have duplicates. The school does not expect students to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school (e.g. science or art). Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case students do not have access to them at home. Online textbooks are helpful in this regard and many subjects are now moving over to these.

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The school expects that parents have internet access at home to access remote learning resources. However, teachers will make no presumption of the student's ability to print at home.

EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHERS (AND CURRICULUM AREAS)

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet and a phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, teachers can request a school device. If there are IT related issues whilst working remotely, teachers can contact the ICT Support Team.

The setting and assessment of blended learning tasks will take place in accordance with school and subject area policies. Under normal circumstances, subject areas take different approaches to the setting and assessment of students' work – for example, the frequency of substantive task set and the regularity of written assessment provided – and subject area policies will be applied in the event of blended learning.

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, Curriculum 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 students have a range of activities to complete at home and are not exclusively working on a screen. Curriculum Leaders will monitor this and should be included in the classes to allow them to monitor what is being set in Teams.

Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their students in a timely manner. Curriculum Leaders are responsible for overseeing the form and regularity of feedback and will liaise with subject teachers to ensure consistency.

In the event that a teacher is unwell during a period of blended learning, it becomes the responsibility of the line manager to ensure work is set to her/his classes.

Curriculum areas are expected to:

- Plan and deliver 'live sessions' where appropriate in consultation with Curriculum Leaders and Academic Year leaders
- Respond to reasonable amounts of communication from students, parents, and teachers
- Plan and set tasks for their students in Teams and/or Show My Homework
- Be able to set and mark assessed work promptly, in line with school and subject area policies, returning it to students electronically (or after the period of remote working for written and project work).

Teachers should be available to contact parents if needed, by email or phone (when phoning from personal devices, dialling 141 before the number will ensure the teacher's own number is kept anonymous). If contact is deemed excessive, the line manager will be able to support and, if necessary, escalate to SLT.

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If parents ask for additional work beyond that set as part of the requirements above, curriculum areas should have a bank of general resources available in Teams, such as interactive websites and support activities and point students and parents in that direction.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, teachers will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, students, and parents. Teachers also should ensure their communication with students 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 4.00pm, although responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day 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 (please also see appendix regarding live links and flipped learning):

- Email using school email addresses only (both teachers and student)
- Microsoft Teams
- Show My Homework

BTEC SPECIFIC INFORMATION (To be viewed alongside BTEC policy)

- Ensure there is a process to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered, and feedback is provided in a timely manner
- Ensure the setting of assignments is undertaken in face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear
- Ensure that when learners submit work, measures are taken to ensure the work is authentic and has been completed by the learner
- Maintain and store securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with Pearson Centre Agreement
- Chiltern Hills Academy has policies, processes and structures that reflect the blended learning models of assessment. It is anticipated that staff and students will adopt a blended learning approach for a period of self-isolation, which typically will be no longer than 10 days. At which point they will return to their normal timetabled lessons.
- Teaching/delivery staff are timetabled to support blended learning when learners are working remotely (see above)
- Chiltern Hills Academy has a process to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively supported and feedback is provided in a timely manner if

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not in the classroom environment. Students submit their work electronically, therefore students can be supported appropriately

- The setting of assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear where possible. Timetabled lessons for BTEC students remain unchanged allowing for face-to-face sessions to continue to run
- We have provided staff training and implemented measures to prevent and detect any instances of malpractice which may arise due to the different delivery/assessment methods chosen.
- When learners submit work we can provide evidence to ensure that the work is authentic and has been completed by the learner
- Learners are fully aware of the need to ensure they avoid any forms of malpractice (for example plagiarism) and the consequences should they commit it.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SEND, EAL AND OTHER SPECIFIC LEARNING ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all learners when setting online tasks. Profiles are available for SEND students and advice can be sought from the SENCO. In addition, the SENCO and learning support assistants will maintain contact with students on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/students and feed back 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 student rests with their parents/carers. However, Academic Form Tutors (under the guidance of the Academic Year Leader) should check in regularly with their tutees to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Form tutors will be expected to pass on feedback to the Academic Year Leader, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication. Academic Year Leaders will continue to provide assemblies for their year group so that Life Skills can be covered

Academic Form Tutors will continue reaching out to families via both Microsoft Teams and, in exceptional circumstances, home visits where deemed appropriate and adhering to Government guidance. Safeguarding policies and procedures will continue throughout.

SAFEGUARDING DURING A SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of a school closure, students, parents and teachers are reminded that the school's Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between students 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.

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More advice on safeguarding and pastoral issues is available in the Guidance for Teachers document. Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Conway: jconway@chacademy.co.uk

APPENDIX 1

REMOTE WORKING, FLIPPING CLASSROOM, GDPR AND SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

Please note that any remote working methods should adhere to GDPR guidelines. In most cases, remote working via shared documents on Teams will give you plenty of flexibility. However, you must use your school account (Microsoft Teams/Outlook etc.) and if you are using flipped learning techniques, uploading videos or video conferencing, please ensure your background is blurred or neutral.

Instructions for setting up video conferencing and live links are available in the blended learning folder. Live video links can be particularly useful for staff meetings or small groups, perhaps A Level, where spoken explanations are better than written ones.

Teachers must not set up or join social media groups for school use with students (such as WhatsApp etc.).

If you need to use any apps or materials that fall outside the school network, please ensure you have discussed this with your line manager.

Ensure that teaching/delivery/assessment staff are timetabled to support blended learning when learners are working remotely