Distance Learning (Remote Education) Information

Curriculum

The school is following, as far as possible, the regular curriculum programme for all subjects. Subjects with practical elements have adapted the curriculum to include more theoretical work or simplified the practical tasks so that they can be undertaken at home. The important thing to note is that the programme of study for distance learning is progressive and coherent, building on previous learning and introducing new concepts.

Accessing Distance Learning

The school uses two main platforms for distance learning: SMHW (Satchel One) and Google Classroom. SMHW is a familiar interface for parents and students and allows for easy tracking of work set and work completed. Google Classroom is the medium for live lessons using the Google Meet tool. Google Classroom is also used to set assignments and tasks. Teachers can mark assignments and provide feedback to students.

There are other platforms used by the school:

- Loom: used by teachers to record themselves delivering a lesson
- Revision and testing software such as Seneca, BBC Bitesize, Pearson ActiveLearn
- Subject-specific software (a detailed list is found on the website)

Supporting Distance Learning

Students require a device that connects to the internet in order to access distance learning. This is usually a pc or laptop but can also be a games console or tablet device. The school has increased it's use of live lessons which has created time constraints for households, e.g. where more than one sibling has a live lesson but there is only one device.

The school received 114 DfE laptops and, over the past year, has ordered additional laptops from the school budget. The school also received 24 DfE 4G dongles and purchased an additional 20 4G dongles. Vodafone provided 50 free data SIM cards. Students without a device to access distance learning are issued with a laptop. Students without access to the internet are provided with a 4G dongle or data SIM card. The school also advises parents that games consoles can be used as devices for distance learning.

Parents and carers are advised to contact their child's Year Co-ordinator if they have any issues with accessing distance learning. Any devices provided for students require the parent or carer to sign a loan agreement.

Parents are encouraged to support their child by helping them to set up a suitable space at home for distance learning. Students should be free from distractions such as noise, interruptions and temptations (such as a mobile phone or games console).

The Learning Support Department provide bespoke support for children with Special Educational Needs. These students and their parents are contacted directly by a member of the department to ensure they can access distance learning activities successfully.

Monitoring Distance Learning

Students are expected to submit work when requested by the teacher. This can be a document uploaded to SMHW or Google Classroom, or it could be a photo of written work from their exercise book. If a student does not have internet access or a suitable device then they can use their phone to take a photo of their work and email it to their teacher. Students who are unable to do this can contact their teacher or Year Co-ordinator and arrange for work to be posted or dropped off at school. The reception is open every day.

Teachers are expected to provide feedback to students at regular intervals. The purpose of the feedback is to correct errors, reinforce knowledge and skills, and increase understanding of key concepts. Teachers reward students with Achievement Points for work that is above and beyond expectations.

Teachers are required to log any incidents that affect distance learning. These include not completing work, not attending live lessons and misusing technology related to distance learning. A weekly report collates this information and is shared with Year Co-ordinators and Heads of Department. Students who are flagged as a concern are followed up by pastoral teams. Where appropriate, referrals are made to relevant support functions such as: Wellbeing Team, Learning Support Department, Child Protection Team.

Parents receive regular communication from the Headteacher during a period of school closure and distance learning. Parents receive alerts for each Achievement Point and Behaviour Point issued. Subject Teachers, Form Tutors and Year Coordinators will contact parents regarding any matters of concern.

Online Safety

Students were issued with an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that includes guidance about appropriate behaviour and activity with respect to distance learning.

Teachers have been given guidance about conducting live lessons safely and how to provide effective distance learning for students. The school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL are available at all times during school hours. Staff use a designated email address to raise any safeguarding concerns.

Mini-school

The school has remained open for a small number of eligible students to attend during lockdown:

- Child of a keyworker
- Education Health Care Plan
- Child with a social worker
- Child who is deemed vulnerable (includes children with no access to a device)

The mini-school operates the same school day as those students undertaking distance learning. The students are provided with a computer or laptop in order to access live lessons and other distance learning activities. There are three learning zones that ensure student bubbles are kept below 20. Each learning bubble is kept separate from other bubbles throughout the day. There are also smaller learning areas for SEN students who are supported by Learning Support Assistants.

Mini-school staff are on a rota to ensure a balance between providing the right level of support and ensuring staff are as safe as possible in terms of exposure to infection. Two senior leaders are present on site each day with overall responsibility for all staff and students on the school site. Year Co-ordinators oversee the mini-school in operation and provide support for the supervisors.