

**REMOTE LEARNING**  
**&**  
**BLENDED LEARNING POLICY**

**January 2020**

Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery



Name of person/s responsible for this policy	Mrs C M Webb Principal
Issued to	Staff, governors, parents and guardians.
Date of issue	2020
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## **UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

Article 28- Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free.

Article 29 – Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Article 42 – Governments should make the Convention known to children and adults.

Article 6 – Governments must do all they can to make sure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

## **RATIONALE**

### **AIMS OF REMOTE LEARNING & BLENDED LEARNING POLICY**

- To outline Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery’s approach for supporting pupils who cannot attend school due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
- To outline expectations for the whole school community for Remote and Blended Learning.
- To provide structure, support and encourage the well-being of our children.
- To provide open lines of communication in a confidential manner if children are unable to attend school.
- To provide appropriate guidance for data protection.

## **FLEXIBILITY**

We realise that the circumstances that cause our school to close will affect families in a number of ways. In our planning and expectations, we are aware of the need for flexibility from all sides:

- Parents may be trying to work from home and so access to technology as a family may be limited.
- Teachers may be trying to manage their own home situation and the learning of their own children.
- Systems may not always function as they should. An understanding of, and willingness to adapt to, these difficulties on all sides is essential for success.

## **WHO IS THE POLICY APPLICABLE TO?**

Pupils, staff and families should self-isolate in line with government guidance if they have any of the following symptoms:

- A new continuous cough;
- A high temperature/fever; or
- Anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell which can affect your sense of taste).

If children are unwell with any of the above symptoms or unwell generally, they should not come to school and stay at home. Pupils who are unwell should concentrate on recuperating and getting back to full health so they may return to school. In these circumstances, school will not provide additional work to children. It is unreasonable to expect children who are unwell to complete work at home.

The latest information from the PHA can be accessed here: <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus>

### **SHIELDING OR SELF-ISOLATING**

Children who are shielding due to coronavirus (and who are in receipt of a medical letter from their GP or specialist), will be provided with additional work via our online learning platforms. Children who are shielding, provided they are well, should complete this work at home. The level of work provided to children who are shielding (or self-isolating), will not be of the same amount if they were otherwise in school. Teachers will provide literacy and numeracy work as well as homework tasks as standard to pupils who are shielding (or self-isolating).

If a child is instructed to shield, parents should provide a copy of this letter of advice to school.

It must be recognised and accepted that teachers may still have a full teaching timetable and will not be available during class teaching time to respond to online queries.

However, if school is unable to open due to lockdown, teachers should provide a full breadth of activities and should be available to offer support to pupils between 9.00-3.30pm.

### **CLASS BUBBLE**

In the event that a whole class or “bubble” of children are instructed to self-isolate due to Covid-19, the full breadth of remote learning activities will be delivered to this group. Children should complete these activities provided they are well enough. Should the teacher in the class “bubble” be unwell and not able to work, online activities will still be provided to the class group.

### **CLOSE CONTACT WITH A CONFIRMED COVID CASE**

Children who have been in close contact with a confirmed case of Covid-19 must follow the latest PHA guidance and self-isolate. This does not automatically mean the entire class bubble is instructed to self-isolate. Where individual children are self-isolating, they will be provided with Literacy, Numeracy and homework tasks.

## **HOLIDAY OR VISITING A RESTRICTED COUNTRY**

Families who choose to visit a country which is on the quarantine list must follow PHA guidance and self-isolate for 2 weeks on their return to Northern Ireland. Holidays taken during term time are discouraged. Therefore, work will not be set online for the entire period they are out of school.

## **WHAT IS REMOTE LEARNING?**

“Remote learning describes any learning where the teacher and the learner are not physically together. The pandemic created the need for a period of emergency remote learning & teaching, where both teachers and learners had to adjust very quickly to a new way of communicating with each other.” DENI

## **WHAT IS ONLINE LEARNING?**

“Online learning is a generic term that refers to any learning that is done using digital resources. It encompasses both learning that is done entirely in a digital format as well as learning that is done digitally within a broader learning programme. Online learning can be completely self-directed, or it can be structured by someone other than the learner.” Education Authority, *Moving to Blended Learning in the Primary School*.

In Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery we will primarily use the following online learning platforms:

Nursery and P1 – P4: SeeSaw

P5-7: Google Classroom and SeeSaw.

We will consider using Google Meet with younger classes as appropriate.

## **WHAT IS BLENDED LEARNING?**

“Blended learning takes place when the learning activity is structured to blend face-to-face learning and teaching with remote/online learning; this may involve using digital tools and other educational resources. In the current context, blended Learning requires a child centric, pedagogical approach to maximize the impact of the remote learning, ensure continuity with the face to face session and retain children’s engagement.”

*Education Authority, Moving to Blended Learning in the Primary School.*

In Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery Blended Learning may happen if pupils are required to attend school on a part-time basis and engage in online learning while at home.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **TEACHING STAFF WILL: -**

- Share appropriate teaching and learning activities with their class through SeeSaw and Google Classroom.
- Provide a weekly/daily schedule of learning during lockdown.
- Continue teaching in line with current, extensive planning that is already in place for each year group.
- Ensure that online learning tasks are differentiated according to pupil needs.
- Never use personal devices that share their personal contact details e.g. private mobile number, personal non-work email address etc.
- Accept that learning remotely will be more difficult, so tasks will be set in smaller steps to allow for this.
- Attend virtual school meetings as required
- Seek to keep in contact with children through SeeSaw, Google Classroom, calls home etc.
- The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will collate engagement information from each teacher on a rolling basis and at least once per week contact the parents/guardians of those not engaging by phone. Should no contact be made, a call to the house will be made by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or the Principal.
- Assign appropriate, flexible learning activities for children with consideration of individual remote learning environments which encourages both independent work and peer interaction.
- Teachers should use a wide range of pedagogy such as cross- curricular thinking skills and personal capabilities.
- Teachers should provide time for self-assessment and peer assessment as appropriate- See Feedback and Assessment.

### **PARENTS AND CARERS WILL:**

- Support and encourage their child's learning to the best of their ability.
- Support their child to login to online learning platforms.
- Check that work set online has been completed.
- Encourage their child to access and engage with work set online.
- Refrain from screenshotting, recording or copying any information or sharing this on social media.

### **CHILDREN WILL:**

- Complete and upload work set by their teacher, as appropriate.
- Seek parental permission to use technology or other materials set out by the teacher.
- Seek help when needed.
- Only send messages and queries that are in relation to tasks set by the teacher or in relation to questions the teacher may ask them directly.
- Take regular breaks to maintain a reasonable balance between online engagement and offline activities.

## **REMOTE TEACHING FOR STAFF WHO ARE SELF ISOLATING**

Teaching staff are required to follow PHA guidance if they display symptoms of Coronavirus. If a member of staff is self-isolating, they are expected to:

- Follow the normal procedure for an absence and inform the appropriate line manager
- Follow PHA advice and obtain a test

While self-isolating, and able to do so, staff will be given individual project work which is in line with whole school priorities. These projects will be communicated by the Principal and be allocated on a case by case basis. Staff who are self-isolating will be asked to support online learning provision for individual children or a year group.

## **REMOTE LEARNING SYSTEMS/ACCESS/PASSWORD/LOGIN DETAILS**

### **FOUNDATION & KEY STAGE ONE**

All children are added to the SeeSaw app.

### **KEY STAGE TWO**

Children will be enrolled in a Google Classroom determined by their class group. Teachers will send out each child's username and password. Help sheets will be sent to parents about resetting passwords, accessing Google Classroom and accessing the C2K system at home. This will also be available on the school website. Please note that only children will be admitted to the Google Classroom and parents/carers will be removed by the teacher or ICT Co-Ordinator.

## **ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK**

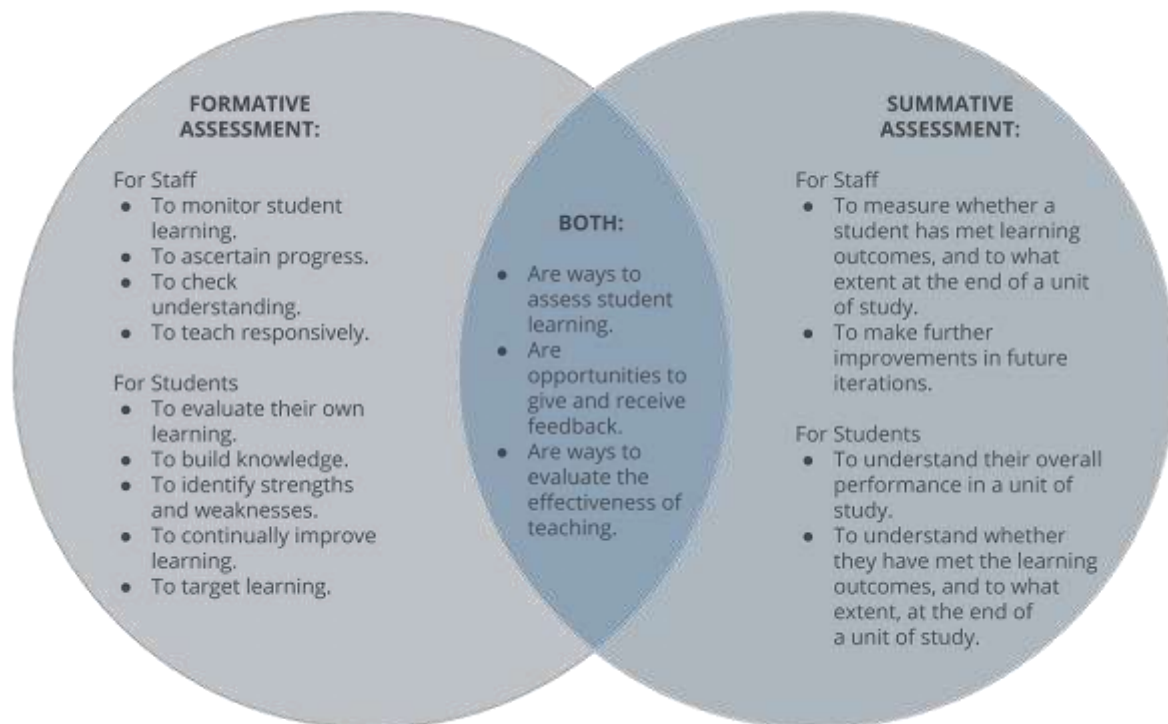
"Schools and teachers recognise a focus on feedback is key. E-learning tools provided opportunities to give whole class and individual feedback to pupils whilst they are learning remotely." Education Authority, Moving to Blended Learning in the Primary School

Pupil engagement is key and at a basic level work must be completed. Activities should be clear with defined goals and expectations. Work needs to be differentiated to allow every child to be able to complete the work set and learn from it.

Children need self-motivation and good time management skills when working remotely and good feedback will provide this. Giving regular feedback keeps children motivated and enthusiastic about their learning, knowing that their work is being looked at, keeping lines of communication open between the child and the teacher and enhancing their learning and providing opportunities for progression or consolidation.

Feedback needs to be specific to allow learners to know what they have done well as well as ways to develop further. Assessment can be both Summative and Formative.

ALL REMOTE SYSTEMS WILL BE AVAILABLE 24 HOURS PER DAY BUT WILL BE MONITORED BY STAFF FROM 9:00-3:00PM MONDAY-THURSDAY AND 9.00 – 1.00PM FRIDAY (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS) PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES PERMITTING



Teachers can give a variety of feedback such as comments on work uploaded to SeeSaw or Google Classroom. This can be individualised giving specific support or comment. Feedback can be both learning focused or more general praise and celebration of achievement. Pupils work can be highlighted and showcased so others can see.

### **DIGITAL LITERACY**

- ENGAGE- hook children.
- EXPLORE – explore the topic prior to formal instruction.
- EXPLAIN – lesson objectives through direct instruction.
- APPLY – children create based on learning.
- SHARE – children share creations.
- REFLECT – reflect and engage in self/peer assessment.
- EXTEND – differentiate for extended learning.

### **ONLINE SAFETY**

To keep both staff and children safe we should follow the guidelines set out in our ESafety Policy.

- Children and staff should only use their C2K username and password.
- Children should never share details of their online class with anyone outside school.
- Children and staff need to keep to the class rules online.
- Children and staff are not to share on social media except through Mrs Webb.

# 10 TOP TIPS

## REMOTE LEARNING FOR CHILDREN

Remote learning can be a great way to continue learning outside the classroom, particularly in difficult circumstances. For students, it's the perfect way to ensure they still get the education they need, despite not being at school. However it also requires a level of discipline and careful planning. That's why we've created this guide to help pupils understand different aspects of remote learning and to support them in ensuring their experience is as safe and secure as it can be.

### 1) Treat remote learning the same as classroom learning

Despite being at home, it's important to remember the same rules apply as being in the classroom, particularly in respect of behavior and conduct. Focus on learning and don't get distracted by your surroundings.



### 2) Use classroom language

If you are encouraged to communicate through emails and online messages, don't use shorthand text speak and write as though you would speak in class. Remember to be respectful and polite and avoid posting negative comments or spamming the chat.



### 3) Take regular screen breaks

Whilst remote learning might be an exciting experience to begin with, having prolonged periods of time in front of a screen isn't always healthy. Remember to have regular screen breaks where possible and in your spare time, try to get some fresh air and enjoy other activities away from electronic devices.



### 4) Always conduct video learning in an open space at home

To get the best experience from remote learning, it's important to create the right environment around you. Try to set up a 'mock classroom desk' at home in an open space so parents can supervise if necessary. Avoid bedrooms as this could be considered inappropriate.



### 5) Only communicate through approved school portals and platforms

It's important that you send messages and any pictures or images required for class through approved school channels, such as internal learning portals or approved platforms. This will help to keep your personal information safe and secure.



### 6) Stick to teacher rules and guidelines around online learning

Your school should issue you with guidance around remote learning and the rules to follow. Always maintain classroom behaviour and try to remember that you are in a learning environment and not a social setting.



### 7) Dress in school uniform

As part of your learning environment, try to maintain school uniform/dress. This will help as part of replicating classroom learning in the home. Try to avoid wearing anything too casual as this could be deemed inappropriate for school.



### 8) Don't share passwords or other sensitive information

In order to begin your online lessons or to gain access to learning materials, you may be provided with login details and passwords. In the same way you keep your personal details private, always keep these safe and never share them with others.



### 9) Don't use school platforms to discuss personal matters

It's important to keep your school communication channels separate from your own personal communication with friends and family. Don't be tempted to engage in casual discussions or send images, videos or links via official school apps or platforms that aren't associated with your learning.



### 10) Look after your mental health and wellbeing

Remote learning ultimately means working alone and missing out on daily social interaction with your friends. If you ever feel frustrated, low or sad, it's important to discuss how you feel with your parents or your teacher. Keeping in touch with friends over the phone or on social media can also help to keep your spirits up.



Note for Google Meets school uniform is not required but dress should be appropriate.



# 10 TOP TIPS

## REMOTE LEARNING FOR PARENTS

Remote learning can be a great way to continue learning outside the classroom, particularly in difficult circumstances. For parents and carers, the idea of remote learning isn't always straightforward and there can be a number of factors they need to consider, especially around ensuring their children feel comfortable and are familiar with the whole concept. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers support their child in getting the most out of their remote learning experience.

### 1) Take an active interest in your child's learning

As a parent or carer, remote learning will be a new concept for your child and there are bound to be a few teething problems to start with. Take an active interest in their learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.



### 2) Monitor your child's communication and online activity

It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.



### 3) Establish a daily schedule and routine

Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting that children might associate more with play and a degree of freedom might take a bit of getting used to. Try to stick to a daily routine and use the timetable/schedule that schools have sent home to help children keep on top of their daily learning.



### 4) Encourage screen breaks away from devices

Remote learning will inevitably require more interaction with computers, laptops and tablets. Teachers will invariably advise on screen breaks however it doesn't hurt to keep a check on their time online or encourage them to get some fresh air/exercise.



### 5) Ensure your learning device is in a public space in the home

It's important to consider where your PC or laptop is placed if live video is being used. Try to keep the background neutral with no personal information visible and move learning devices out of the bedroom as this could be deemed inappropriate.



### 6) Implement safety controls and privacy restrictions on apps and software

Dependant on how your school implements remote learning, your child may be required to download certain software or apps. Whilst these are likely to be relatively safe to use, like any other new app or platform, parents should still implement safety controls as a precaution.



### 7) Ensure your child only uses official school communication channels

It's important that all communication with teachers and school staff is directed through approved school channels, whether that be through the school's online portal or the relevant secure messaging site.



### 8) Familiarise yourself with relevant school policies

Schools should have a policy on remote learning and direction that they can share with parents. Familiarise yourself with this and ensure you know what is expected of teachers and your child during lessons, both online and offline.



### 9) Maintain feedback with teachers

Engage in communication with teachers where possible and try to feed back progress and development as well as any helpful suggestions around the learning process. Be transparent but remain professional and only use official channels to communicate.



### 10) Monitor your child's wellbeing and mental health

Remote learning will likely mean that your child won't get the same level of social interaction and might not see their friends for a while. Keep a check on their wellbeing and try to encourage them to get out as much as you can. Whilst learning from home might seem fun and exciting to start with, missing out on seeing their friends everyday might take its toll.

