

**The Hermitage School**  
Oakwood Road St. Johns Woking  
Surrey GU21 8UU  
**T** 01483 472047 **F** 01483 472313  
**E** info@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk  
**HEADTEACHER** Mrs J Harrup

[www.hermitage.surrey.sch.uk](http://www.hermitage.surrey.sch.uk)



# **The Hermitage School**

## ***Inspiring Everyone to Learn***

# **Blended Learning Policy**

**Person Responsible:** Jo Harrup, Headteacher

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## **Introduction**

This document sets out the agreed processes and procedures the school will follow during the Coronavirus Pandemic if school learning is disrupted. We recognise that a school closure will impact differently on all of us and we acknowledge that children and families will face a variety of situations and challenges. The Hermitage School has always strived to be creative, innovative and support our parents and children in the best way possible to make learning purposeful and holistic. Our strategy for remote learning continues this.

## **Scenario Planning**

We are planning for a number of different scenarios:

1. Individual children isolating at home awaiting test results, or following a positive COVID-19 test within the family.
2. High levels of staff illness/absence making it impossible to staff all classes of children.
3. Infection affects a member of our school community and a case is confirmed, leading to a class or year group closure.
4. Instruction from the Government to close the whole school.

### **1. Individual child self-isolating awaiting a Coronavirus Test or self-isolating due to positive Coronavirus test within the family**

Class teachers will make contact via email and/or Seesaw with the child's parents by the end of the second day of self-isolation. Class teachers will direct parents/children to resources that will match as closely as possible to the work children are doing at home. Parents/children will be signposted to how the work will be set and how the children should hand the work in. This will be via Seesaw, class blog and the school website. Work will also be set via other online platforms. Teachers will monitor children's work and provide feedback where necessary; teacher workload must be considered as they will be teaching all day with their class.

### **2. High levels of staff illness/absence**

In the event of high levels of staff absence, a class teacher would have an overview of provision, but supervision of pupils could be delegated to suitably experienced support staff.

We would have to make dynamic risk assessments to ensure the health and safety of the school community. Therefore, in this scenario, it could be that we would need to partially close the school. We would then move to remote learning for all learners affected by this closure.

### **3. Infection affects a member of our school community and a case if confirmed**

In this scenario, the school would have to follow direct guidance and risk assessment from Public Health England and the Department of Education. In most cases, closure of the school will be unnecessary, but this will be a local decision based on various factors such as the school size and pupil mixing.

It is possible that one or more bubbles could be closed in this scenario. We would then move to remote learning for all learners affected by this closure.

### **4. Instruction to close the whole school for a limited period**

We do not intend to shut the school, but we could be instructed to do so by the Government as part of a nationwide policy. We would then move to remote learning for all learners.

## Aims

At the heart of all we do at The Hermitage is the safety and well-being of our staff and children. In addition, we also recognise the need for continuity, routine and predictability for parents/carers and young people. With this in mind, we will take all steps possible to keep the school open, but will ensure that the Contingency Plans are stringent to ensure children's learning continues if they have to spend a period of time at home.

Our aim is to keep our core purpose of teaching and learning continuing as effectively as possible. If we are instructed to close the school by Government, or when a group of children have to isolate at home for a period of time, each pupil will be provided with learning to do at home with high expectations of all pupils to complete the work set. Activities and tasks will be shared via the class blogs, Seesaw and on the school website. However, we do recognise that the health and wellbeing of all of our children is paramount, and we appreciate that the level of work that might be undertaken by a child will reflect the situation and circumstances at home.

For children with special educational needs (SEN), we realise this will have an impact on how Education Health and Care Plans are delivered. Extra attention will be given to meeting the individual needs of children and young people with SEN and their families in the event of school closure or partial school closure.

## Objectives

- To ensure teaching and learning continues as effectively as possible when children are not at school.
- To use a curriculum sequence that allows access to online (e.g. pre-recorded teaching videos, learning games, e-books) and offline (e.g. resource packs, reading books) resources, and that is linked as much as possible to our curriculum expectations.
- To provide easy access to these remote education resources.
- To ensure staff interact with their class each day by assessing and providing feedback for their work via the online platforms.
- To provide printed resources, such as textbooks and worksheets, for pupils who don't have suitable online access.
- To recognise that younger pupils and some pupils with SEN may not be able to access remote education without adult support, therefore further support will be given to these families to deliver our curriculum.

## Remote Learning Provision

In the event of whole school closure or the necessity for a group of children to self-isolate, parents will be informed via text message and/or email, and this information will be also be available on the school's website. Any updates will be communicated to parents in the same way. Parents will be emailed instructions regarding children's home learning the next day. We will not use live lessons but provide frequent and clear explanations of new content using high quality resources and pre-recorded videos. It is imperative that we have up-to-date email addresses and mobile phone numbers so we can communicate with parents easily. Each year group has its own email account which will be monitored daily by the teaching staff. If you need to get in touch with your child's class teacher please use the relevant email address below:

Year 3	<a href="mailto:year3@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk">year3@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Year 4	<a href="mailto:year4@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk">year4@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Year 5	<a href="mailto:year5@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk">year5@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Year 6	<a href="mailto:year6@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk">year6@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Orchard	<a href="mailto:orchard@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk">orchard@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk</a>

## **Children with Special Educational Needs**

For pupils with additional needs, we comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. The SENDCO and the child's class teacher will decide on the action needed to help the child to progress in the light of any observations and assessments they have made. This may include:

- different learning materials or special equipment;
- some group or individual support;
- extra adult time to devise the nature of the planned intervention and to monitor its effectiveness;
- staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies;
- access to LA support services for one-off or occasional advice on strategies or equipment.

## **Children who are Vulnerable / Children of Key Workers**

In light of a 'bubble' or whole school closure, the school will be open for Key Worker children and vulnerable children, unless it is advised otherwise by the Public Health Authority or the Department of Education. The children will be placed into 'bubbles' with 2 consistent members of staff and will complete all remote learning set by their class teachers on iPads provided by the school.

### **Teaching staff will:**

1. Plan a programme that's of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school, ideally including daily contact with teachers\*.
2. Set activities via on-line platforms so that pupils have work each day in a number of different subjects, and monitor pupils' engagement with these assignments.
3. Provide paper based activities where a child does not have access to the internet.
4. Teach a planned and sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with clarity about what's intended to be taught and practised in each subject.
5. Follow the usual timetable for the class had they been in school, wherever possible.
6. Be accessible to the children between 8.30am and 3.30pm.\*
7. Report, using the normal absence procedure, if they are unable to work for any reason, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent.
8. Ensure children in their class have all necessary usernames and passwords to access the on-line platforms.
9. Gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum, using questions and other suitable tasks, and will check work daily.
10. Provide feedback to children following the school's Feedback Policy.
11. Adjust the pace or difficulty of what's being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure children's understanding.
12. Avoid an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities.
13. Reward children in line with our Behaviour Policy.
14. Contact parents via phone if there is a concern around the level of engagement of a pupil to see if school intervention can assist engagement.
15. Contact their Year Team Leader and Headteacher if there is a concern around the level of engagement of a pupil.
16. Report any complaints, concerns or compliments shared by parents or pupils to a member of SLT.
17. Immediately refer any safeguarding concerns to a DSL (Gilly Condon, Jo Harrup or Emma Joyce).

\* The programme of work will be in place, but daily contact with teachers may not be possible if the teacher is unwell. In these circumstances, other teachers and teaching assistants within the year group will interact with children, but this may not be daily contact.

### **Teaching Assistants will:**

1. Be available to support home learning and children during their normal working hours.
2. Report, using the normal absence procedure, if they are unable to work for any reason, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent.
3. During the school day, teaching assistants must complete tasks as directed by their Year Team Leader or member of SLT.

### **Senior Leaders will:**

1. Co-ordinate the remote learning approach across the school, including monitoring of engagement.
2. Monitor the effectiveness of remote learning through weekly meetings with Year Team Leaders (virtual).
3. Monitor the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.
4. Support teachers with parent concerns.

### **The SENCO will:**

1. Ensure that pupils with EHCPs continue to have their needs met while learning remotely, and liaising with the Headteacher and other organisations to make any alternate arrangements for pupils with EHCPs and IHPs.
2. Support class teachers to ensure remote learning provision meets the needs of children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register.

### **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for managing and dealing with all safeguarding concerns as outlined in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. All home learning staff will continue to use CPOMS to record incidents, but will be made aware of how to contact a DSL in an emergency. DSLs will be easily contactable throughout the school day.

### **The School Business Manager (SBM), in consultation with the Headteacher, will:**

1. Ensure value for money when arranging the procurement of equipment or technology.
2. Ensure that the school has adequate insurance to cover all remote working arrangements.

### **IT Technicians**

The IT Technician is responsible for:

1. Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect children's work.
2. Helping staff with any technical issues they're experiencing.
3. In consultation with senior leaders, reviewing the security of remote learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the Data Protection Officer.

### **Local Governing Committee**

The Local Governing Committee is responsible for:

1. Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure the education is meeting children's needs.
2. Ensuring that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons.

### **Children will:**

1. Check the on-line platforms each morning by 9.00am to view their allocated work and plan their day's timetable.
2. Submit their work each day through the online platforms, or by completing their paper pack for drop off to school.
3. Complete their work either straight onto the on-line platforms, or in exercise books/on paper and then take clear photos of it to upload onto the on-line platform.

### **Parents will:**

1. Have an understanding of the school's Contingency Plan and will support the school's actions to meet these aims.
2. Support their child in accessing the set activities, or alternatively will organise for paper copies to be collected from school.
3. Make the school aware if their child is sick or otherwise can't complete work by emailing the School Office ([info@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:info@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk)) as well as the relevant Year Group email address (listed above).
4. Seek help from the school if they need it by contacting the School Office or relevant Year Group email address.
5. Contact the relevant year group email address if their child's username and/or password is not working or missing.
6. If possible, provide a suitable quiet place for home-learning and provide support and encouragement to assist their child engage with their learning.
7. Support their child in ensuring their work is handed in for feedback via the class blog, Seesaw or Purple Mash, or by returning the paper packs to school.
8. Encourage a positive attitude towards their child's education and the school. If there are any concerns, discuss them with school staff to resolve any issues and avoid using social media as a means of sharing concerns with other parents.
9. Read all information sent home as this provides information on amendments to school policies, meetings, curriculum and relevant dates.
10. Ensure the school has up-to-date email address and mobile telephone numbers for easy communication.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The curriculum in our school and the remote learning provision is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If you are experiencing difficulties in your child having access to appropriate hardware and Wifi, or if you feel your child requires some alterations to home learning, please contact Miss Joyce, Inclusion Lead via the School Office ([info@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:info@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk)).

### **Safeguarding and Online Safety**

As we are increasingly relying on technology to keep us all connected in the present climate, it is important that parents are aware of the apps and programs that their children are using. Our regular school newsletters provide links to websites which give parents with tips on how to keep their children safe online. Furthermore, children's weekly computing lessons always include teaching of online safety and these lessons would continue for any children learning from home.

Our experience is that pupils can talk well about their understanding of being safe and know what to do in different circumstances. However, in the moment, they tend to make decisions based more on curiosity than caution. Therefore, it is vital that parents know what their children are doing and how to protect them through a variety of measures, eg, regular communication, privacy settings and monitoring.

Please refer to all communications regarding Online Safety in the school's newsletters as well as the following websites for further details on how parents can support their children to keep safe on the internet:

- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/schools-esafety/parent-online-support-pack-teachers/>
- <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents>

## Frequently Asked Questions:

**Q: My child is unwell at home with eg, a sore throat and cold, will they be able to access home learning?**

A: As your child is unwell, they should probably rest and get better so they are ready to return to school. If they were feeling well enough, the best thing to do would be reading, spelling practice and some maths practice through our on-line platform, Mathletics. There are also resources on our School Website that your child could access. However, there would be no expectation from school that your child completes any school work when they are ill. If they do complete work at home, this will not be monitored by a teacher as they are unwell as opposed to learning from home.

**Q: My child is awaiting a COVID-19 test, will they be able to access home learning resources?**

A: See above if your child is feeling unwell.

If your child is well enough, please contact the relevant Year group email address to inform your child's class teacher that your child needs home learning. Your child's teacher will send through instructions for how to access home learning provision for your child.

**Q: We feel a little under pressure to get through the work or my child is not engaging with the home learning. What do we do?**

A: The most important thing is for pupils and parents to feel safe, have clarity about what learning there is available and to know *they can only do what they can each day*. Teachers will support and guide pupils and parents and can offer some strategies to help children feel happy and positive about their home learning. Teachers will be in regular contact with their pupils to check up on how children are managing the work and will offer feedback and support to pupils where necessary.

If you or your child are becoming worried or anxious about the pressures of home learning, please make contact with your child's class teacher via the Year group email address, or via the School Office for further support and reassurance.

**Q: We are struggling with the internet connection or we do not have enough devices for my child to complete their learning at home. What should we do?**

A: It would be helpful for you child's class teacher to know if there are significant issues with the use of internet / devices at home *now*, before home learning is required, to help us plan alternative resources in the case of the necessity for home learning. Please do make contact with your child's class teacher via the School Office or relevant Year Group email address.

**Q: We don't have our child's username or password to access the online platforms.**

A: Please make contact as soon as possible via email so the class teacher can supply you with these quickly.