

Larwood Academy Trust

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Sandra Barr
Chair of Governors

APPROVED DATE
JANUARY 2021

Sean Trimble
Executive Headteacher

Review Date

JANUARY 2022

REMOTE LEARNING

Guidelines for parents & carers

Registered office:

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INTRODUCTION

This remote learning policy has been written as guidance for staff and parents during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The remote learning leads are Bianca Osobu (Larwood School) and Ian Reid (Brandles School). Any concerns questions or feedback can be communicated with them through email: Bianca.osobu@larwood.herts.sch.uk and ireid@brandles.herts.sch.uk. If you are unable to access the internet or do not have enough devices for remote learning, then please get in touch via your school's main number.

A FLEXIBLE APPROACH

Keeping regular learning going during the period that schools are closed is of great importance to reduce the impact on children's education, however we understand that everyone's circumstances at home will be different. Some families have one child to support while others have several. Some families have one device to share while others may have more – and some things may work differently on different devices. Some parents will have plenty of time to help their children learn, while others will be working from home and may have much less time and some children will be able to work more independently than others or need greater challenge.

Due to this we are providing a flexible approach to remote learning. We will offer a variety of weekly learning activities across the curriculum so that pupils can work their way through as much as they are able, at a time that suits them.

Remote Learning timetables will be sent to families via Class DoJo, email and/or letter. They will also be posted on each school's website. Pupils will be able to view their live lessons using the Microsoft Teams Calendar.

A separate document on how to access will Microsoft Teams will be sent out to all families and posted on both school's websites.

INTERACTION

We are keen to make remote learning an interactive experience through the submission and sharing of work by children and delivery of feedback from teachers and arranging opportunities for pupils and families to compete, interact and collaborate, for example through Times Tables Rockstars.

We will also provide some live face-to-face contact opportunities for children, to maintain a sense for them of being part of a class. We will use the Microsoft Teams Video Conferencing tool to do this. Please see the section further down regarding use of Microsoft Teams.

Communication between staff and pupils / families must be through the authorised school systems above and not through personal email or personal social media accounts. It

should follow the usual rules outlined in the Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreements.

REMOTE LEARNING BEST PRACTICE

The safety of both children and staff when using this technology is paramount and we will be following relevant advice from Microsoft Teams, the Children's Commissioner, and the NSPCC.

To protect both children and staff, we require that if you wish to take advantage of these opportunities on Microsoft Teams, you agree to the following:

- A free Microsoft Teams account is needed so that we can ensure only registered users can access meetings. All children have been given a school email address and password. This address only allows access to their Teams class account and is restricted to only allow access to what their teacher has set.
- An appropriate adult must remain in the same room as the child during video or conference calls to monitor and ensure they are safe and using it appropriately. For Brandles pupils, a parent is not required but meetings will only take place with a minimum of three participants.
 - For Larwood pupils, when joining any school Microsoft Teams meeting you will need to briefly be onscreen with your child, so we know that they have an appropriate adult nearby.
 - For Brandles pupils we will need to have acknowledgement that a parent/carer is aware when a 1:1 Wellbeing call is taking place.

This will also give us a chance to talk with you if we need to.

- Children must take part in the meet up in a suitable communal environment (ideally not a bedroom) and be appropriately dressed (uniform is not necessary, but they should be fully dressed in clothing that covers top and bottom half of the body).
- All members of the household must be aware that the meeting is taking place and make sure they are also suitably dressed and use appropriate language and behaviour when nearby or in the background. Microsoft Teams has a built-in option to use a virtual background - you may feel this is an appropriate feature to turn on.
- You must make sure you and your child have 'logged off' the call correctly once it is finished - before turning off any devices.
- You and your child will not try to contact any staff using these online tools outside of the pre-arranged meet ups, which will be arranged through Class Dojo.

If you need to contact staff for any reason, you will do so through Class Dojo (Larwood) or Email or phone (Brandles) as normal.

- Screenshots, photos or recordings of Microsoft Teams meetings must not be made and the links must not be shared with others.

WE WILL ENSURE THAT:

- No staff member will contact you or your child using Microsoft Teams outside of any pre-arranged meetings and if they do need to contact you, they will arrange to do so with you using Class Dojo, email or phone.
- Teachers will ensure appropriate security settings are in place for the meeting.

They will ensure that access is only granted to the expected registered users invited with a password or direct link. Screen sharing, file-sharing, annotation and chat will be restricted.

- Participants will be held in a virtual waiting room while their identity is confirmed. Your Microsoft Teams account must clearly identify you by name and renaming during the meeting will not be allowed. Participants' audio or video may be muted until appropriate and they may be removed from the room if rules are not being followed.
- In groups of more than one child, a teacher and for Larwood pupils, one other staff member will be present throughout the video call to help safeguard all participants and monitor appropriate use.
- Staff will stay in the meeting until everyone has 'logged off'. Staff may use 'end meeting', this will automatically close the meeting for all participants.
- Staff and any other adults on the call (or in the background) will use appropriate language / behaviour throughout the call.

SITES AND SERVICES:

We are currently delivering remote learning through a range of sites and services, most of which are part of our usual online provision for children:

- For Larwood pupils, Class Dojo is our main method of communication between school and families and is used for posting daily timetables and text, video and photo updates between staff and families.
www.classdojo.com
- For Brandles pupils, communication will be made through email, phone calls and Microsoft Teams.

We may try and make use of other subscriptions as time goes on. Further details will follow, as necessary. If you require login details for any of these, please get in touch with your child's class teacher via Class Dojo.

For Brandles pupils, Teams, email, and phone calls will be our main methods of communication.

Any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection /GDPR requirements. See our policies.

SAFEGUARDING & REMOTE LEARNING:

With the increased use of digital technologies that comes with remote learning, safeguarding implications need careful consideration. Parents are advised to spend time

speaking with their child(ren) about online safety and reminding them of the importance of reporting to an adult anything that makes them feel uncomfortable online.

If parents have any safeguarding concerns that need discussing, they can contact us on Bianca.osobu@larwood.herts.sch.uk (Larwood) and nwilsher@brandles.herts.sch.uk and one of our Safeguarding Leads (Bianca Osobu or Natalie Wilsher) will get in touch.

While we will be doing our best to ensure links shared are appropriate, there may be tailored advertising which displays differently in your household or other changes beyond our control.

For parents/carers of Larwood pupils, online safety concerns should still be reported to the school's Online Safety Lead (Nic Newman) as normal. Parents can do this through Class Dojo messaging or by emailing:

Nic.newman@larwood.herts.sch.uk

USEFUL WEBSITES

CHILDLINE - for support

UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE - to report and remove harmful online content.

CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse.

In addition, the following sites are an excellent source of advice and information:

INTERNET MATTERS - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online.

LONDON GRID FOR LEARNING - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online.

NET-AWARE - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC

PARENT INFO - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online.

THINKUKNOW - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online.

UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE - advice for parents and carers

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



REMOTE EDUCATION 10 TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS

Remote education ensures continuous learning outside the classroom. For parents and carers, remote education 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 education experience.

1. TAKE AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

As a parent or carer, your school may have explained how remote education works already, but children may still need help. 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 AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 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 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 education, 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 education 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 education 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 they can. Whilst learning from home might seem fun and exciting to start with, missing out on seeing their friends every day might take its toll.



www.nationalonlinesafety.com Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety Instagram - @nationalonlinesafety

Sources: Remote education good practice, DfE guidance | Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19), DfE guidance.

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