

Staffordshire University Academies Trust		Trust Policy Document		
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Remote Learning Policy

The purpose of this Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT) policy is to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to remote learning for pupils who aren't in the Academy
- Set out expectations for all members of the Academy community with regards to remote learning
- Provide appropriate guidelines regarding data protection and safeguarding
- Minimise the disruption to pupils' education and the delivery of the curriculum and ensure provision is in place so that all pupils have access to high quality learning resources

This policy is generic in acknowledgement of the different arrangements at each SUAT Academy regarding the management and delivery of remote online learning. Each SUAT Academy supplements this policy with their own policy statement which will be relevant to their circumstances and arrangements.

Remote learning can be defined as:

- Remote education: a broad term encompassing any learning that happens outside of the classroom, with the teacher not present in the same location as the pupils.
- Digital remote education: often known as online learning, this is remote learning delivered through digital technologies.
- Blended learning: a mix of face-to-face and remote methods. An example would be the 'flipped classroom', where main input happens remotely (for example through video), while practice and tutoring happen in class.
- Synchronous education: this is live; asynchronous education is when the material is prepared by the teacher and accessed by the pupil at a later date.

Statement of intent

SUAT Academies understand the need to continually deliver high quality education, including periods where remote working is required – whether for an individual pupil or many. We recognise the importance of maintaining high expectations in all areas of academy life and ensuring that all pupils have access to the learning resources and support they need to succeed.

This policy aims to address the key adjustments associated with blended remote working. Each Academy has its own remote learning strategy on their Academy website; this is where they specify their remote learning offer in more detail.

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SUAT Academies will:

- Use a curriculum sequence that allows access to high-quality online and offline resources that is linked to that Academy's curriculum expectations.
- Give access to high quality remote education resources.
- Select the online tools that will be consistently used across the Academy in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback and make sure staff are trained in their use.
- Provide printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, for pupils who do not have suitable online access.
- Recognise that younger pupils and some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so Academies should work with families to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum at home or in school.

When teaching pupils remotely, we expect our Academies to:

- Set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in both Core and Foundation subjects.
- Teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally along with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and then practised in each subject.
- Provide frequent, clear explanations of new content.
- Gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum, using questions and other suitable tasks.
- Set clear expectations about how regularly teachers will check work and provide feedback.
- Enable staff to adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure pupils' understanding
- Plan a programme that is of equivalent length to the teaching pupils would receive in school, ideally including daily contact with teachers where possible.

Roles and responsibilities

Teachers

When providing remote learning, teachers must be available during the working day.

If they're unable to work for any reason during this time, for example, due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

When providing remote learning, teachers are responsible for:

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Setting work:

For the classes they teach on any given day during normal school operation. A suitable remote learning rota will be published.

Equivalent to the volume of learning the pupils would experience if present in their Academy.

Work may be set ahead of time via the appropriate platform, for example, TEAMS, Google Classroom or the Academy website. A suitable schedule will be published via the appropriate channel for each given year group.

In specific circumstances where pupils cannot access the ICT infrastructure then the teachers may send paper copies of work home. This is harder to provide feedback on and the Academy may not accept completed work back on paper dependent on the circumstances under which the pupil(s) are not in the Academy.

Providing feedback on work:

Completed work may be submitted to teachers directly via the platform or via email. Dependent on the circumstances that the pupil(s) are not in the Academy, that Academy may accept work completed on paper via post.

Teaching staff may give feedback on completed work with annotations on completed work using relevant software. This can then be shared back to pupils via the relevant online learning platform. In the event that paper work is sent and accepted back into the Academy, teaching staff may annotate with feedback and next steps before posting home. This may also depend on the period of time the pupil(s) are away from the Academy.

Teaching staff will give feedback on completed work where relevant and feasible. Due to the complex nature and in-school support that many of the pupils receive, the format of remote teaching may differ from what would have been feasible in the Academy to allow pupils to access from home with limited support.

Keeping in touch with pupils who aren't in the Academy and their parents:

Teachers are responsible for monitoring the weekly contact of all parents and carers. The responsibility to ensure this happens for all pupils and their families' lies with the class teacher or other named responsible adult, in accordance with the Safeguarding policy and the Attendance policy.

Teaching staff should reply to emails and queries from parents, carers and pupils during their contracted hours, or at other convenient times in some cases.

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Any complaints or concerns should be directly forwarded to the Academy Principal / Head Teacher or other named member of staff. The Complaints policy must be followed, as required.

Named staff are responsible for taking steps to support their families in accessing remote learning, and flagging any technical difficulties to the Academy Principal or other named member of staff.

Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents and pupils:

Ensure that dress is appropriately smart in line with the dress code.

Avoid areas that are noisy when setting up remote meetings. Ensure any confidential or personal information is out of shot in webcam view.

Take measures to minimise interruptions during your meeting.

Follow the virtual meeting protocol.

Teaching assistants

When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants must be available for their contractual hours. Any staff who are working from home, without access to ICT equipment, may be assigned pastoral duties or other duties which do not rely on ICT equipment.

If they're unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants are responsible for:

- Flagging any issues with accessing remote learning to relevant members of the teaching staff. These may be established through weekly phone calls home to parents and carers.
- If working from the Academy, teaching assistants may access the relevant platform and share best practice for accessing remote learning with parents, carers and pupils.

Attending virtual meetings with teachers, parents and pupils:

- Ensure that dress is appropriately smart.
- Avoid areas that are noisy when setting up remote meetings. Ensure any confidential or personal information is out of shot in webcam view.

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- Take measures to minimise interruptions during the meeting.
- Follow the virtual meetings protocol.

SENCO

- Liaising with the ICT technicians to ensure that the technology used for remote learning is accessible to pupils and that reasonable adjustments are made where required.
- Ensuring that pupils with EHC plans continue to have their needs met while learning remotely, and liaising with the Head Teacher and other organisations to make any alternate arrangements for pupils with EHC plans.
- Identifying the level of support or intervention that is required while pupils with SEND learn remotely.
- Ensuring that the provision put in place for pupils with SEND is monitored for effectiveness throughout the duration of the remote learning period.

Senior leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the Academy.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning – regular meetings with teachers, reviewing work set or reaching out for feedback from pupils and parents.
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.

In addition, all staff members are responsible for:

- Reporting any health and safety incidents to the relevant person and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Reporting any safeguarding incidents to the DSL and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Taking part in any training conducted to meet the requirements of this policy, including training on how to use the necessary electronic equipment and software.
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify, as well as any concerns they may have about remote learning, to the Academy Principal/ Head Teacher.
- Reporting any defects on Academy-owned equipment used for remote learning to an ICT technician.
- Reporting potential data breaches to the designated person within the designated time frame.
- Adhering to the Staff Code of Conduct and Teachers Standards at all times.

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Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for responding to child protection or welfare concerns which may occur during online learning sessions.

ICT staff

ICT staff and / or ICT contractors are responsible for:

- Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work.
- Helping staff and parents as soon as possible with any technical issues they're experiencing.
- Reviewing the security of remote learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the Principal / Head Teacher, Data Protection Lead in school, and Data Protection Officer at the Trust.
- Ensuring appropriate anti-virus software, filtering and monitoring systems are in place on all academy devices, secure connections can be established and any lost work can be recovered via secure back ups.
- Providing access to school data systems safely.

Pupils and parents

Staff can expect pupils learning remotely to:

- Be contactable during the school day.
- Complete work to the deadline set by teachers.
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers or teaching assistants.
- Alert teachers if they're not able to complete work.

Staff can expect parents with children learning remotely to:

- Make the Academy aware if their child is sick or otherwise that they can't complete the work set.
- Seek help from the Academy if they need it.
- Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff.
- Ensure that children use the Teams account created for them by the Academy, to ensure that secure settings are maintained.
- Ensure that remote joining emails are from the designated school email address, to prevent impact from phishing emails where people try to get you to click on a fraudulent email.

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Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for:

- Monitoring the Academy's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible.
- Ensuring that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons.

Who to contact

If staff have any questions or concerns about any aspect of remote learning, they should contact their Academy Principal/ Head Teacher.

Data protection

Accessing and processing personal data

When accessing personal data for remote learning purposes, all staff members will abide by the relevant Trust policies and Academy policies, code of conduct and Information Security and Data Protection policies and processes.

Staff should use laptops and mobile devices issued by the Academy for the purpose of delivering or supporting remote online learning.

Staff may need to access data from home. Please access this data through secure means as designated by IT Support Teams and the Information Security Policy. Please do not save information onto your desktop which contains personal information.

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as email addresses as part of the remote learning system, as necessary for the Academy's official functions and legal obligation to deliver remote education. Staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible to fulfil its functions. Any sharing will be undertaken in a secure manner and where there is a legal basis to do so.

Staff members should take particular care when delivering remote education, including:

- Adhering to data protection policies
- Not sharing personal contact details when emailing multiple people
- Being careful when sharing usernames and other personal data for access to online resources; credentials should be shared securely and directly with the person they are intended for

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- Transferring personal / sensitive data only if it is necessary to do so, and in a secure manner such as encrypted email
- Ensuring that up to date contact details are used for pupils / parents
- Storing personal information securely, in both paper and electronic forms

Keeping devices secure

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Following the Information Security Policy.
- Keeping the device password-protected and for their use only.
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device.
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time (10 minutes or less).
- Not sharing the device among family or friends.
- Keeping operating systems up to date – always installing the latest updates when prompted to.
- Reporting issues immediately to their IT department or provider.

Live lessons, video conferencing and recordings

Staff conducting live lessons and video conferencing should do so safely, including:

- As a standard, live lessons and video conferences are not recorded.
- Pre-recorded sessions must be agreed with the Principal / Head Teacher and the individuals involved in the recording provide explicit written consent to do so. There is a clear and legitimate purpose, documented in writing, and agreed with the DPO in advance. A data protection impact assessment is provided where required.
- Never recording virtual lessons or meetings using personal equipment / devices.
- Only downloading the software from trusted sources and from the service provider's official website.
- Treating any unsolicited links that refer to video conferencing software with caution.
- Checking privacy settings to ensure that the system will operate securely.
- Ensuring the video conferencing account is protected with a strong password.
- Not making the sessions public or publishing details. Providing secure links and passwords to the designated attendees.
- Knowing who is joining the session.
- Enabling the waiting room to control admittance to the session.
- Disabling private group chats, inappropriate content on group chats, screen sharing.

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Permissions

All permissions must be explicit, written permissions where the data subject has a clear understanding of what they are consenting to. Where the subject would not have sufficient understanding of the implications of providing their own consent, a designated individual may act on their behalf. For example, someone with parental responsibility acting on behalf of a child.

Permissions must be retained on the pupil's educational file and staff member's personnel file.

Retentions

Any recordings must be retained in a secure location on the Academy's network, with access only to those permitted to view the recording.

Retain recordings only so long as is necessary to permit the recording to fulfil its' official purpose. It is not anticipated that this will be needed for more than one term. The date of destruction must be saved with the recording and the recording must be removed from any areas that it has been stored, including back-ups.

Safeguarding

Please abide by the SUAT Safeguarding Policy and any relevant school addendums.

The statutory guidance keeping children safe in education provides schools with information on what they should be doing to protect their pupils online. Support on delivering online remote education safely is available from:

- Safe remote learning, published by SWGfL
- Online safety and safeguarding, published by LGfL, which covers safe remote learning
- The National Cyber Security Centre, which includes which video conference service is right for you and using video conferencing services securely
- Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Annex C of keeping children safe in education

Academies should take care to:

- Obtain consents from parents for pupil participation in online learning, as relevant
- Complete acceptable user agreements for children, staff and parents using technology

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- Carry out a risk assessment and implement mitigating steps
- Set up the equipment ensuring that privacy is considered, for example, not showing general views of the classroom which include images of children
- Ensure that users know how to respond to any concerns or issues
- Ensure no 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in staff bedrooms; and the background should be blurred
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior leaders and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should note the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held and report any safeguarding concerns.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Operations Manager and the Director of Learning and School Improvement.

Academies may use the DfE's template documentation to monitor and review their remote education provision - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-your-remote-education-provision>.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-learning Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Policy