




Blended and Remote Learning Policy

Date of policy approval Chair of Board of Governors Review: As necessary	11.11.20 
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Specific Aims

- To outline Phoenix Integrated PS and Nursery Unit's approach to blended and remote learning from Term 1 2020-21.
- The guidance in this policy may need to be adjusted at any time to reflect the latest department guidance and/or the changing needs in our own school setting.

Introduction

Since 20th March 2020, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, apart from children of key workers, the majority of pupils engaged in learning at home. Learning packs for pupils to use at home, and online learning materials, or a combination of both, were used for learning and teaching.

Phoenix Integrated Primary and Nursery Unit have considered the approaches we will take in meeting the needs of our children through a blended and remote learning approach.

Blended learning is defined as:

An approach to education whereby schools will combine classroom based teaching and learning methods within school, with a range of remote learning in order to deliver the Northern Ireland curriculum. (Northern Ireland Re-Opening School Guidance Aug 2020)

Remote learning is defined as:

Where the student and the educator, or information source, are not physically present in a traditional classroom environment. Information is relayed through technology, such as discussion boards, video conferencing, and online assessments. Remote Learning can occur synchronously with real-time peer-to-peer interaction and collaboration, or asynchronously, with self-paced learning activities that take place independently of the instructor. (Northern Ireland Re-Opening School Guidance Aug 2020)

This policy includes the use of online learning platforms as part of the day to day running of the school;

School open (as per reopening guidance August 2020)

Supporting children with Covid related absence

Planning for extended period of Online Learning or lockdown.

School open (as per reopening guidance August 2020)

1. Phoenix Integrated PS and Nursery Unit will reopen in line with the guidance issued to schools, August 2020.
2. As part of the reopening guidance schools have been advised to limit movement of items between home and school. To enable homework to continue the school will use online learning platforms. If books or resources are sent home, they should be left for 72 hours before staff mark them.
3. The school will consider the age and learning needs of pupils, as well as the content of particular subjects or areas of learning. The school recognise that remote and blended learning for younger pupils and those who may have additional learning needs will typically need more involvement from parents, whilst some older pupils may be able to learn more independently.
4. We are aware that the level of support and access to resources will be different for all pupils. Families will be given the opportunity to make the school aware of any needs or access problems. We will aim to lend digital devices where a need is identified, this will be done on a case by case basis. Anyone borrowing a device will be asked to sign a loan agreement.
5. Teachers will identify key learning priorities, without necessarily sacrificing breadth across the curriculum. There will be a pragmatic approach to delivering the curriculum, prioritising key knowledge, understanding and skills in each area of learning.
6. Teachers will engage with pupils through the wide range of e-learning platforms in addition to providing hard copy or emailed resources.

As the school moves towards blended and remote learning consideration has been given to the following:

1. Teachers understand that the initial stage of recovery needs to focus on securing key structural, pastoral and organisational aspects of school life.
2. Gaps in learning/difference in progress between children who engaged in remote learning and those who did not will be identified through use of assessments.
3. All classes will ensure their pupils have access to online learning. As pupils return to school time will be spent using online platforms as part of classwork and homework. This will ensure that e-learning platforms can be easily accessed should a pupil be unable to attend school or if a class is required to isolate.
4. An increased element of learning will take place outdoors.
5. Learning tasks and activities will be designed to achieve a specific goal or for a specific reason in order to engage pupils. When applicable, the learning tasks will provide explicit learning objectives and clear success criteria to ensure pupils are clear on the purpose and intended outcomes of the learning experience.
6. Homework will be set using online learning platforms. Staff will develop methods to monitor pupil progress and engagement.
7. Teachers will be made aware of The Education Endowment Foundation:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/support-resources-for-schools/>

The planning framework sets out a learning sequence with five approaches to learning – activate, explain, practise, reflect and review – and provides example tasks and activities within each approach.

8. Where possible teachers will adjust existing practice and resources to ensure they are still engaging for pupils working remotely. Teachers will consider adapting resources to ensure they stand alone to provide simple and clear explanations of work.
9. Teachers recognise that a focus on feedback is key. Teachers will give regular whole class and/or individual feedback to pupils. (see Assessment and Feedback Section for further details).
10. Teachers will provide opportunities to focus on pupil independence as learners. This will support the further development of the cross-curricular thinking skills and personal capabilities, particularly self-management and management of

information. This may include helping pupils to organise their learning and to reflect on what conditions and what types of resource are most conducive for helping them as learners. When necessary, teachers will provide self-assessment and peer-assessment opportunities allowing pupils to reflect on their learning and performance and set goals.

11. Flipped learning is a pedagogical approach where pupils first explore new course content before class by viewing a pre-recorded lecture, video or digital module, or completing a reading or preparatory assignment. In-class time is organised around pupil engagement, inquiry, and assessment. It typically entails the use of active learning strategies, including case studies, investigating problems or structured discussion. Teachers will aim to maintain the ‘flipped’ portion of learning through live class sessions or setting activities for pupils to engage in remote collaboration such as posing questions for pair or small group discussion, or setting shared assignments. Flipped learning will remain important as we develop our approaches to blended learning.
12. The school will recognise learning opportunities for collaborative and clustering arrangements between and within schools to explore co-planning and co-teaching, for example to provide thematic experiences which offer learning across the curriculum.

Supporting children with Covid related absence

1. Any pupil who cannot attend school due to a Covid related absence should be able to access online homework resources on their first two days out of school. On the third consecutive day online learning or paper copies will be made available to the pupil.
2. If a class has to isolate for a period of time the teacher will set work on the online learning platform. Work will be set on a daily basis and include one literacy, one numeracy, and if appropriate one additional task. If it is possible learning packs will also be sent home with the pupils prior to this period of isolation.
3. Any pupil who is unwell will not be expected to complete the work.
4. If a staff member is unwell, the ICT Coordinator will have access to the relevant online learning platform. A staff team, normally consisting of a teacher from the KS, ICT Coordinator and member of the leadership team, to ensure online learning is provided for the class.

Planning for extended period of Online Learning or lockdown.

1. Prior to school closing teachers will endeavour to make Learning Packs available for pupils to work through. Each teacher will direct pupils/parents how to use these packs and answers will be provided.
2. E-learning tasks should last around 10-30 minutes.
3. One literacy and one numeracy task will be set each day. One further task can be set, this can be a one off lesson or can run for a number of days.
4. Teachers will aim to utilise the multimedia aspects of e-learning through visuals, video and audio where possible. They will endeavour to use creative ways to introduce and explain lessons, using live or pre-recorded videos, providing links to videos, online experiments, animations and podcasts.
5. We recognise that the success of all pupils during this period and particularly those from disadvantaged groups is linked to maintaining a close relationship with their teachers. During teaching time pupils and parents will be able to contact teachers on online learning platforms and via an email address.
6. Where possible teachers will aim to ensure the online resources provided are appropriately differentiated by pupils' ability in order to provide a positive learning experience for all pupils and avoid feelings of frustration and confusion.
7. Online learning will include asynchronous approaches, which occur more independently at different points in time, based on the child or young person's request or home circumstances; and/or synchronous approaches that occur with a number of other children or young people at the same time, usually online. Asynchronous approaches provide greater flexibility and are easier for parents to manage at home. Therefore, these will remain prevalent when organising distance learning.
8. If necessary, the school may consider implementing some live lessons via a C2K supported digital platform, or alternatively upload videos to the online learning platform. These could include pre-recorded videos and live video instructions, particularly for numeracy lessons.
9. Teachers recognise the importance of peer interaction during remote learning. If possible, teachers will provide pupils with the opportunity to collaborate by sharing work, taking part in discussions and group assignments.

Engagement, Feedback and Assessment

1. The school views the first and most basic level of pupil engagement as work completion. Teachers will ensure that goals and expectations are very clear.
2. Teachers recognise that it is helpful to communicate to pupils the resources available to them on the topic or activity and staff availability for support. This will also be helpful to gain insight into the barriers to work completion so that pupils can be supported appropriately. If necessary teachers may showcase exemplars of pupils' work to increase pupil motivation and confidence.
3. Each teacher will monitor work completion across the curriculum as this can be helpful to provide an overall picture of a pupil's engagement. If the teacher detects a lack of engagement they will make contact as soon as possible with the parent or guardian by email or telephone (class teacher, vice principal or principal).
4. Staff who become aware of any child protection concerns will continue to follow the school's established safeguarding procedures.
5. The school recognises that our pupils face many challenges when learning remotely, such as distractions when studying online and less regular interaction with teachers and other pupils. Online learning also requires pupils to be self-motivated and have strong time management skills. Consequently, the importance of regular feedback to pupils cannot be overestimated. The school will provide the pupils with regular feedback while they are learning remotely to keep pupils motivated and enthusiastic about their learning; to give pupils a sense that work is being looked at, so they keep sharing it; to keep channels of communication open so pupils and their families feel part of the school community; and enhance pupil learning allowing schools to provide the best possible education in the circumstances.
6. Teachers recognise that in the remote and blended learning environment, with the absence or reduction of the usual face to face interaction between teachers and pupils, the importance of being as specific as possible when providing feedback cannot be overestimated. When required, teachers will aim to supply learners with specific information on what exactly they did well, and what may help develop the work further is vital. If the work is good teachers will aim to explain why it is good and if it needs improvement to explain exactly what the pupil needs do to improve, with examples or prompts wherever possible.
7. Teachers recognise that formative assessment plays a key role in remote learning. Teachers will aim to build formative assessment into their teaching approaches through a mixture of quizzes, polls, self-assessments, or asking pupils to film or record themselves explaining a concept or idea.

Feedback during blended and remote learning may include:

Part of assessment when pupils are using online learning will be to monitor levels of engagement. Teachers will ensure all pupils in their class can access online work and if a pupil is not engaging the teacher will contact the parent/carer and discuss the way forward. Formative assessment plays a key role in remote learning and it is important that teachers find ways to see what pupils are learning. Where possible teachers will build formative assessment into their teaching approach through a mixture of quizzes, self-assessments, or asking pupils to write a summary of, or record themselves explaining a concept or idea. Evidence of work completed by pupils can be recorded in a number of ways e.g. photographs, comments, answers and other such methods. Teachers can provide feedback on these by adding comments to these. This feedback can be learning-focused or more general praise and celebration of achievement.

Some online platforms provide pupils with automatic feedback. Online quizzes can also be used to give feedback on incorrect answers. There are a number of free quizzing platforms, such as Quizlet and Kahoot that also provide data on pupil responses.

For some pieces of work teachers will post answers for pupils or parents/carers to mark their own work.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The school will gather feedback from pupils and parents and staff on what is going well, what could be better and what they would recommend.

Resources and Links

Moving to Blended Learning in the Primary School:

<https://sway.office.com/fGiPRZ9erLTnXDhy>

<https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/northern-ireland-curriculum-primary>

<https://pstt.org.uk/resources/curriculum-materials>

<https://explorify.wellcome.ac.uk/>

<https://www.ase.org.uk/ase-coronavirus-hub-primary-remote-learning-resources>

<https://www.stem.org.uk/primary-science>

<https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/education-skills/teacher-resources-and-opportunities/resources-for-teachers/science-at-home/primary/>

<https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/science-and-technology-progression-guidance>

<https://www.eani.org.uk/primary-school-education-resources>

