

West Dunbartonshire Council Remote Learning Policy

PP 9.5



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Policy: PP 9.5 – Remote Learning

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Background

In recent years, online learning has been an integral part of learning and teaching across schools in West Dunbartonshire Council. The use of our online platform [Ourcloud.buzz](https://ourcloud.buzz) has enabled our schools and early learning and childcare centres to enhance the learning and teaching experience and promote independent learning.

Remote online learning became the main platform for our children and young people to access support from our staff to continue with their learning during the school closures in March 2020. Our children and young people are becoming more adept in the use of technology for social and economic purposes, however, when it comes to education, there is a strong desire for the child or young person's entitlement to be supported with direct, real-time interaction between teachers and pupils.

This policy for remote learning brings together key elements of research and information including online safety, as well as our own experience, to support provision of remote learning in the current context of COVID-19.

This policy should be deployed using a collegiate and collaborative approach in line with the 35 hour working week applying flexible management of resource to support delivery. It is expected that all children and young people in West Dunbartonshire will be supported through direct contact with teaching and support staff when working remotely. An adaptive approach is required to ensure the entitlement to direct teaching and learning is achieved whilst supportive of the need to adjust to individual and local circumstances.

Aims

- To ensure there is a consistent approach to remote learning across WDC schools adapted to the individual context of schools and ELC and agreed collegially;
- To build on the existing provision and positive experience of remote learning using Ourcloud digital learning platform, the virtual campus – [Campus@wdc](https://campus@wdc), West Os, and the national offer;
- To provide clear advice and guidance on expectations for remote delivery in the context of the COVID pandemic;
- To give all children and young people the highest quality educational opportunities possible through a blend of learning.

Remote Learning

Key Principles

- does not replicate face to face in school teaching – in style, approach or hours of delivery;

- retains responsibility with the class teacher for planning and organising children and young people's learning with parents and carers encouraged to support the learning experience ;
- provides opportunities for learners to progress and extend their learning and attainment;
- includes approaches to assessment of learning and providing feedback that support and capture children and young people's achievements and attainment in school and at home;
- encourages learning activities to ensure engagement for all, considering the age and stage of development of learners, and introducing increasing opportunities for independent study as appropriate;
- provides learning activities for learners who require additional support for learning and any learners who may be particularly vulnerable, disadvantaged or disengaged;
- fosters a shared understanding between home and school of the remote learning approach and the respective roles and responsibilities of all involved;
- endeavours to tackle digital exclusion, including the provision of devices and connectivity solutions to support learning;
- fosters partnership working with community providers and third sector organisations to support provision.

In line with these key principles, children and young people are entitled to:

- learning opportunities which reflect the principles of Curriculum for Excellence, allowing learners to develop their knowledge, skills and attributes in a variety of relevant contexts and across curriculum areas;
- access to appropriate physical and digital resources where needed – this might include learning materials, textbooks and / or digital devices and access to the Internet;
- on-line resources that will be consistently used across learning to aid interaction, assessment, attainment and allow feedback of the learning experience;
- regular high quality interactive learning and teaching using technology or other remote methods but expectations must be reasonable.
- a balance of live learning and independent activity;
- access to learning activities which are available for learners to revisit as often as necessary and possible;
- ongoing dialogue, reflection and feedback with practitioners in relation to their own learning;
- daily registration/check in for every learner, recognising that the format for this may vary depending on the age and stage of learners;
- regular opportunities for engagement with other pupils to support learning, as well as informal engagement to ensure learners have the opportunity to see each other and work together;
- due regard for their well-being and safeguarding.

Conditions for Delivery

- Collaborative working in schools/ELC, Local Learning Communities, Curriculum Networks and sectors to support sharing of resources and practice;
- Access to Google Classroom via ourcloud for all staff, children and young people;
- Staff, children and young people familiar with WDC Virtual School '[Campus@WDC](#)';
- Staff experienced in use of Google classroom in school/ELC being supported to build on good practice established during lockdown;
- Professional learning support availability on use of digital learning platform;

- Established approach to assessing digital needs at home, such as access to a device or Internet.

Expectations

Provision of an appropriate timetable of remote learning during the period from Monday 11 to Friday 29 January. Arrangements for the period of Monday 1 February onwards will be communicated at the earliest opportunity. Our children and young people will engage in a planned programme of direct teaching and contact across the week. Any young person finding it challenging to engage could be considered vulnerable and may be supported in school. Our school leaders with our partners will provide support to any family finding it difficult to manage their child or young person's remote learning.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leaders

Responsible for coordinating and monitoring remote learning and should:

- work collaboratively and flexibly with staff to support and manage the delivery of remote learning taking into account individual staff circumstances;
- adopt a personalised approach in the management of staff supporting their individual personal and professional needs to deliver a range of resources and teaching approaches, including digital technologies of which live and recorded lessons are one part of a range of approaches;
- identify and provide support where there may be professional learning requirements for staff;
- provide staff with appropriate resources to deliver online learning;
- manage communication with parents including password management;
- oversee the tracking and monitoring of pupil engagement in remote learning and review this in collaboration with teachers and support staff;
- respond to any data protection scenarios;
- coordinate and plan for virtual meetings with school/ELC staff where required, to support teachers with delivery of the school's approach to remote learning;
- arrange meetings with other partners or parents/carers for those children and young people who require additional support whether virtual or via telephone conferencing.

In the current context of COVID , it is agreed locally that formal lesson observation and monitoring by SLT is suspended. Senior leaders may join 'live' learning sessions in their role as leaders of the school community providing opportunity for them to meet with their pupils.

Teaching Staff and ELC Practitioners

Class teachers/ ELC practitioners retain responsibility for planning and organising learning content as they know their learners best and can arrange learning which is appropriate to the needs and circumstances of their learners. Our children and young people benefit from 'direct' contact with teachers, however a balance of different modes of learning from direct remote 'face to face', through to independent and group approaches should be provided.

A good starting point when planning for remote learning is to consider how learning might be organised in a typical classroom situation i.e. under 'normal' circumstances. Where, in a classroom setting, the practitioner is not working directly with a group of learners, what sort of activities would be planned for them and how would these be organised?

This should include:

- a blend of different modes of learning from direct remote 'face to face', through to independent and group approaches;
- provision of online learning activities. This includes use of on line resources such Ourcloud, Campus@wdc, Scholar, e-Sgoil, Campus@wdc West Os , EIS on line learning resources.
- provide advice to pupils/parents as to when the face to face contact is taking place; engagement times will be for a proportion of the day agreed as part of a timetable of learning
- assess learning and provide feedback;
- monitor the engagement of pupils, highlighting any concern about non engagement to their SLT.

Teachers should be supported in the management of any workload resulting from the change to remote learning and working from home / school. If a teacher or ELC practitioner is working in school while their pupils are learning at home this will restrict their availability to provide timetabled remote learning. If a teacher is unwell and is unable to support remote learning the SLT will review and manage this with the resources available to them.

Professional learning on the use of Google functions through Ourcloud platform to deliver remote learning is available by contacting support@ourcloud.buzz . Professional learning can be delivered to individuals, small groups or whole schools/ELC's.

Support Staff

Learning assistants, Pupil and Family Support Workers and Outreach workers play a key role in support for pupils and families and it is anticipated most establishments will continue to plan for this to continue in the school building and remotely. This support is vital as it helps learners to overcome barriers to learning and enables them to progress at their level. Often such support is in response to outcomes identified in a Child's Plan and is in keeping with the principles of GIRFEC. When support staff are in school or working from home, they will be expected to continue to support learners they work with using a mix of direct face to face online contact and through Ourcloud classroom. As with all support planning in educational settings, this will be directed and planned by the class/ELC teaching team and the role of the support member of staff clearly articulated to them and regularly supported and monitored.

All support staff should be supported in understanding and implementing safe on-line working practices and risk assessments for on-line and in school working shared with them.

Establishments have varying numbers of staff and pupil needs and as such planning for in-school and virtual work will vary dependent on context. Establishments should apply fair and consistent approaches to staffing to meet service needs. Pupil and Family Support and Outreach workers should continue to engage with families; prioritising wellbeing and support needs in response to COVID. This engagement should be remote and not include house visits at this time. Where a member of support staff is in a period of self-isolation, they will be asked to assist with the remote learning and engagement.

Young Children and Families

At an ELC setting young children are not expected to engage in remote learning independently. For these children, "Learning at Home" replaces the terminology remote learning. Families will be encouraged to make use of the on line activities and face to face daily contact available. As young children are less independent in their learning, communication with parents and carers is vital to ensure that young children can access learning at home that is

available. Parents and carers should be aware of the protocol when they have been provided with a nursery Chrome book for use at home.

Pupils and Parents/Carers

Pupils should be expected to engage in the remote learning being provided by the school and they should complete their online tasks or assignments. Parents/carers should alert the school if their child is unable to participate in the remote learning. Parents/carers should be advised of the process for contacting school senior leaders, pupil and family support/pastoral care teams. Parents/carers and pupils should be aware of the protocol when they have been provided with a school Chrome book for use at home.

The provision of 'live' face to face remote learning should not be recorded by pupils or parents. Under GDPR recording is not permitted without the consent of everyone being recorded; teachers would need to give consent for filming.

Google Meet Protocol for Parents and Carers

- Parents please ensure your child attends online Google Meetings that are scheduled with teachers.
- Please remind children to behave online - in the same way as if they were in school.
- Please ensure other family members are out of camera shot and do not contribute to the video call.
- Please don't film any sessions on other devices; this is a safeguarding and GDPR issue.
- Please contact your child's school should you need support with helping your child with online learning

Google Meet Protocol for Learners

- Learners should try to find a suitable quiet environment, for example, in a shared part of the house;
- Learners should behave online - in the same way as if they were in school;
- Learners should not unmute when the teacher has muted the whole class, you should stay on mute until invited to speak;
- Learners are asked not to record or to capture/screen grab content from the video call as consent to record has to be given by everyone being recorded;
- Learners should always make sure they leave the Meet at the end of the session;
- Learners should ask their teacher if unsure about learning online just as you would in school.
- Recording of any learning session is not permitted, this is a safeguarding and GDPR issue.

Data Protection / Social Media

All staff should act professionally and treat the virtual environment like a physical classroom / playroom. Only data which is appropriate to the learning experiences should be shared. Information which identifies a child's individual circumstances should not be shared. Please refer to the [WDC Data Protection Policy](#) for further information.

For information on guidelines and standards of conduct by employees when using social media please refer to the WDC [Social Media - Policy](#)

Child Protection and Safeguarding

As with any normal situation, school/ ELC day staff should be alert to any safeguarding concerns that they have about a child or young person. Any such concerns should be immediately passed to SLT. Please refer to [WDC Child Protection Policy](#) for further information.

Consultation and Review

The Policy has been developed in consultation with Trade Union and management representatives, and agreed through the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT). The Policy will be reviewed and updated to incorporate any relevant changes to national advice/guidance. Any changes to the Policy as a result of a review will be agreed through the LNCT.

APPENDICES

Appendix1a.	Online Learning - Our Cloud.buzz
Appendix1b	Campus@WDC Curriculum
Appendix 2a.	Exemplar Plan for Early Years
Appendix 2b.	Exemplar Plan Primary
Appendix 2c.	Exemplar Plan Secondary
Appendix 2c(i).	Choices Lockdown Timetable
Appendix 2c(ii).	OLSP Pupil Wellbeing Survey Summary
Appendix 3.	Live Meeting Protocol
Appendix 4.	Remote online learning – Professional Learning Offer
Appendix 5.	Parent/Carer Guide
Appendix 6.	National Guidance
Appendix 7.	Remote Learning Recording Permission Slip

