



West Rainton Primary School

Our remote learning offer- a guide for parents

Introduction

Since the Coronavirus pandemic began to affect UK schools back in March 2020, our true intent from the very first day, and every day since, has been to minimise the negative impact on our pupils' education whilst also protecting their safety and that of our staff and wider community. We are exceptionally proud of how we've led our community throughout this incredibly tough time, providing the decisive and clear communication that the very best interests of our pupils came first. There has not been any phase of this crisis where our pupils have not been provided for to the very highest quality, and that has relied on you, our parents and families, to come on board with us. For that, we thank you!

Our remote-learning offer has continually been evaluated, reviewed and improved through dedicated leadership across the school in regular consultation with the governing body. The actions we have taken have ensured our provision has grown swiftly into an offer which benefits all of our pupils. Until we're all back in the classroom where we belong, this is the next best thing!

How will my child be able to learn from home using digital platforms?

The school uses a combination of class dojo and Microsoft Office 365 including Teams to deliver digital teaching and learning.

Pupils in all classes from reception to Y6 are provided with a minimum of 3 hours of live teaching and classroom interaction via their daily Teams lessons (4 hours minimum in Y3-6). All pupils have a bespoke and secure 365 account and are organised in safe class teams that allow them to join each day for maths and English instruction on a morning, then their regular foundation curriculum on afternoons.

All classes have individual timetables that provide a broad and ambitious range of tasks and subject areas. In reception, staff work tirelessly to put together resource packs fortnightly that are delivered to pupils and then subsequently used in the following two weeks during live sessions. We've seen everything from magnetic letter spelling to African dance lessons. In year 1, pupils still receive targeted Read Write Inc. sessions suitable to their phonic ability each morning. All classes build in 'guest teachers' to bring learning to life such as our local priest who's been supporting RE lessons in Year 2 and Year 4, and Durham University who engaged our students in crafts and language sessions for our annual celebration of Chinese New Year.

On top of the live lessons (which total around 3-4hrs per day), children are also directed to our usual websites for additional learning such as busythings in reception and Ks1, and spellingshed and TTrackstars in Y2-6. Pupils also need to continue their good reading habits of around 15 minutes per day. An airlock is set up securely in school to return and exchange reading books.

Class dojo is used to provide additional tasks for pupils to access at other times. It is also the forum where pupils 'post' their work to teachers for summative feedback although they already receive formative comments during the live sessions. The school community have responded very positively to this forum as it allows interaction from parents on an appropriate level as well as fun incentives for the pupils such as dojo stickers and points.

Through the purchasing of 20 laptops on top of our allocation from the DfE, we have been able to provide new and appropriate devices to all who need them.

We can also support with data connectivity through sim cards from Vodafone that provide 90 days' worth of free internet access.

We have around 10% of our pupils who access their learning through printed packs which are created weekly, in line with the learning in 'class'. These packs are either delivered or collected and the previous weeks' work returned at the same time.

What are the expectations for my child's behaviour?

There are still clear and important rules for our pupils to follow to ensure everyone can learn safely and with a minimum of distraction. This includes:

- Wearing appropriate daywear on Teams calls
- Being on time for lessons each day
- Having an adult within earshot of all calls (having an adult directly next to them if 1:1 with a teacher)
- Not using chat or other Teams controls unless instructed to
- Showing good behaviour for learning by listening carefully and sitting up preferably at a table
- Making sure there are no distractions to other learners like background noise, pets or toys on Teams calls
- Submitting work in a timely manner after sessions
- Being patient and kind to adults at home who are supporting their learning
- Parents informing school as usual if children are not attending lessons through illness
- Pupils who loan devices need to follow the parental signed agreement of appropriate use

How will teachers know what work my child has done?

Teachers continue to deliver formative assessment and feedback during live sessions as pupils stay on the call to receive support alongside those learning in school. When finished pieces are submitted on dojo, teachers give constructive comments on the content that was taught as well as issuing dojo points as incentives.

When paper packs are returned, these are commented on by the teacher and support on any misconceptions is provided in the following week.

What if school has to close at short notice?

It is important to us that our contingency plan can be operational with immediate effect and the access to digital platforms has allowed us to transition from in class to remote-learning sometimes within the same day!

Our library stock of devices means we are adequately prepared to ensure every child can get connected to their lessons within minutes. In very small numbers of cases, where digital learning cannot be achieved, a paper pack of relevant and tailored work is provided along with reading books, writing materials and exercise books to work in.

How will my child still feel part of the West Rainton family?

It is very important to us that all of our pupils, whether in school or at home, feel a strong sense of belonging and value to the school community. This unity is what engages and motivates us to keep attending lessons and keep giving our all. The fact that the children see their own teacher and classmates every day boosts emotional wellbeing as well as academic knowledge.

The sense of belonging is celebrated every Friday in our usual celebration assembly slot where all children join together to share in the success of the entire school. This also adds to our collective responsibility to make this as successful as we can.

In the summer term of 2020, whilst all pupils were in school, we trialled Teams teaching with them and with families through individual telephone discussions during parents' evening plus step-by-step tutorials on how to get connected. The closure of many of our bubbles in November 2020, due to outbreaks of covid, meant we could put our offer into practise with great success.

The Headteacher and school business manager are on hand daily to solve technical issues, set up devices, or simply provide a listening ear.

Our use of dojo to provide clear, transparent and timely updates for parents and pupils has also proved to be very welcome and crucial during this challenge.

In November 2020, we were delighted to regain our Inclusion Quality Mark Award with 'Centre of Excellence' status. The assessor's report, formed largely around our provision during the pandemic, repeatedly mentioned how valued and included the pupils and parents had been made to feel.

"The Headteacher and staff are determined to minimise the effects of the pandemic on the children's education and wellbeing and aim for pupils to continue to achieve as well, or even better, than ever." IQM November 2020