ONLINE LEARNING POLICY

2023-24

Rationale

In the event of a school closure, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of remote (online) learning. Extensive remote learning would apply particularly in a situation in which the school is closed for an extended period of time, but a high proportion of students and teachers are healthy, and able to work as normal from home. This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term school closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short-term student absence.

Online learning can also serve a useful purpose for pupils/students when a teacher asks for online research or other online educational activities to take place to enhance learning.

Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when students, in agreement with the school, have a period of absence but are able to work at home, at least to some extent. This may apply in cases such as exclusion from school, or longer-term illness or injury, assuming students are able to complete schoolwork at home. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, students are self-isolating at home but are not suffering with relevant symptoms.

There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention to school or government guidance. This may apply, for example, if parents choose to take students on holiday during term time. Similarly, this would apply if parents made the decision, without prior agreement with the school, to absent their child from school 'as a precaution', against official guidance, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

At the time of writing, the school has not experienced an example of whole-school closure since the enforced lockdown of March-July 2020, and so this policy is under review and may be revised as necessary in light of further experience of remote learning and the circumstances around its necessity. For example, the extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning, owing to widespread illness, for example. This policy is for the whole school, although remote learning arrangements for the degree course will generally be managed by the Higher Education Manager on a case by case basis, as requirements are different from lower and senior school

Remote learning for individual students

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for students who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual student, the collation of work and communication with the parent will be coordinated by the Pastoral Support Manager and form tutor. The student's subject teachers will use Teams to make work available to the student. If there are any issues with the compilation of work, tutors should liaise with the Pastoral Support Manager or subject leader (particularly if a classroom teacher is unavailable). If a significant number of students are absent from school, but the school remains open, the remote learning will take place through Teams and Zoom. All classrooms and studios now have webcams and Zoom functionality; in the absence of a student or small group up students, it is permissible that hybrid (live and Zoom) classes should take

place. Communication to the absent student should be through a Teams message that includes the Zoom link.

Remote learning in the event of extended school closure

In the event of an extended school closure, the school will provide continuity of education in the following ways:

a) Regular direct and live instruction from teachers, with the ability of students to participate through Teams and Zoom

b) The setting of work that students complete, written responses (if relevant) completed electronically

c) The assessment of specific assignments that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided. Students and teachers are expected to have access to the internet whilst at home; the school recognises that many families may not have home printers and will therefore not require the printing of material.

The primary platform of use will be Teams and Zoom. Access to these platforms is via a student's normal school login; if students have difficulty with logging in, they should contact the school's IT support (helpdesk@thehammond.co.uk).

The extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning. For shorter closures, for example, teachers may set work on Teams for submission in person once the school has reopened. For longer closures, teachers would make more use of live sessions and electronic assessment.

The school reserves the right to vary the range of methods used to provide remote learning tasks, feedback and interaction, based on the particular circumstances of any closure and based on our experience.

Tasks will be set in accordance with existing schemes of work, and tasks will be designed to allow students to progress through schemes of work at the same pace as if they were in school, where possible. Naturally, remote learning will require students and teachers to take a different approach to working through content, but tasks should ensure the pace of content coverage is as close as possible to in-school teaching, and ensure students do not fall behind.

The nature of tasks set should allow students to learn independently, without the specific support of an adult at home. Unless there is a good reason not to, tasks will be set for individual classes. The type of task set will vary between subjects, but examples of appropriate tasks might include:

• Reading and noting new material from a common subject area textbook or electronic resource

• Working through subject-specific presentations or worksheets provided by the subject area

- Watching a relevant video resource and making notes on it

- Completing a listening exercise (e.g. in languages)

- Written responses to prompt questions, essay plans etc.

- Completion of practice questions or past papers, particularly for those in examination years

- Working through relevant exercises offered by external providers

Teachers will set tasks through Teams and it is the responsibility of teachers and students to ensure they know how to use this functionality effectively (instructions are made available separately). Teachers should include line managers as co-owners of tasks to allow them to monitor and support as required (this is an important safeguarding directive).

Live sessions

Academic subject areas will arrange for teachers to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by text or audio and/or visual means). Teams, SharePoint and Zoom are platforms that allow for resources to be shared, teachers to provide exposition, and students to ask questions in 'real-time'. Students will be provided with details of sessions and will be expected to participate in them if they are asked and able to.

Live sessions can be particularly helpful as they can facilitate contemporaneous communication, with students able to respond to teachers' questions (and ask them) via the conversation functionality in Teams and Zoom. In a live session, we ask all participants to engage (switch on) the camera (unless permission has been received against this). All using video technology must adhere to the following safeguarding rules:

- Ensure you are dressed appropriately for a classroom/ studio lesson
- In the event of a performance class, ensure that the room and space used by yourself and by the students is safe (conduct safety briefings prior to all classes). For Lower School pupils, an appropriate adult should be present in the home at the time of the lesson
- Always use The Hammond's Zoom account; never use your personal account
- All sessions are recorded; please alert SLT and IT support if anything occurs in your class that may be a safeguarding concern
- Mute your microphone when not speaking
- Make others in the household aware a class is taking place
- Remove any images or texts from your backdrop that go against Hammond values
- Only use Hammond email accounts to communicate

Assessment

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and whilst this may be more challenging with remote learning, teachers will endeavour to provide regular feedback

to students on pieces of work that they are required to submit. Under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers and this would continue to be the case should the school employ remote learning. Assessed work will be set using Teams, regardless of how students' work is eventually submitted, with clear due dates given to students for completion, thereby helping students to organise their time.

Students and teachers should keep accurate records of all work completed, submitted and assessed. Given the nature of the tasks, the type of feedback teachers can provide may not have the same format as marking an exercise book. Teachers are encouraged to ensure, when they set assessed work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided. Possible methods may include:

• Providing whole class feedback rather than feedback on individual pieces of work – this is an effective way of providing feedback, supported by findings from educational research

• Providing feedback directly in the assignments section on Teams

• Sending a direct email to students with specific feedback / targets

• Feedback via another website / piece of software (e.g. onenote, SenecaLearning, MyMaths)

• Recording oral feedback and sharing an audio file with the student

Additional functionality is available in Teams if teachers want to create assignments for students to complete. These might include, for example, the creation of a tailor-made quiz (containing either multiple choice or extended answers) and teachers are able to use assignments to give feedback within Teams.

Expectations of students

Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, students will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Students will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a form tutor) on a regular basis.

In the event of an extended school closure, teachers will continue to deliver content in line with existing schemes of work; if any student misses significant parts of the content, they will be able to view material posted online and the school will give consideration to the practicalities of helping students to catch up once the school reopens. Students should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any administrative tasks that allow the school to monitor their progress. For example, where tasks are set using Teams, then they should mark tasks as "done" so teachers can monitor their progress. If students or parents have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant subject area. If there are questions about a student's overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the Pastoral Team.

Teachers must work on the assumption that students will not necessarily have the full range of books and equipment that they would usually have in school. However, if advance notice is possible,

teachers will instruct students to take relevant equipment from their lockers home, or for parents to ensure they have duplicates. The school does not expect students to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school (e.g. science or art). Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case students do not have access to them at home. Online textbooks are helpful in this regard and many subjects are now moving over to these. The school expects that parents have internet access at home to access remote learning resources, but teachers will make no presumption of the student's ability to print at home.

Expectations of teachers (and subject areas)

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet and a phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, teachers can request a school device. If there are IT related issues while remote working, teachers can contact IT Support via the service desk email – helpdesk@thehammond.co.uk.

The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with school and subject area policies. Under normal circumstances, subject areas take different approaches to the setting and assessment of students' work – for example, the frequency of substantive task set, and the regularity of written assessment provided – and subject area policies will be applied in the event of remote learning. In order that we are providing a consistent approach, heads of faculty and subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the nature and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas. All teachers should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that students have a range of activities to complete at home and are not exclusively working on a screen. Heads of faculty and subject leaders will monitor this and should be included in the tasks set in Teams as a co-teacher.

Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their students in a timely manner. Subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the form and regularity of feedback, and will liaise with faculty heads and Vice Principals to ensure consistency. In the event a teacher is unwell during a period of remote learning, it becomes the responsibility of the line manager to ensure work is set to her/his classes. Note that illness in these cases will treated as normal and recorded with HR with back to work discussions conducted remotely if required.

Subject areas are expected to:

• Plan and deliver 'live sessions'

• Respond to reasonable amounts of communication from students, parents and teachers

• Plan and set tasks for their students using the tasks functionality in Teams

• Be able to set and mark assessed work promptly, in line with school and subject area policies, returning it to students electronically (or after the period of remote working for written and project work).

Teachers should be available to contact parents if needed, by email or phone (when phoning from personal devices, dialling 141 before the number will ensure the teacher's own number is kept

anonymous). If contact is deemed excessive the line manager will be able to support and, if necessary, escalate to SLT. If parents ask for additional work beyond that set as part of the requirements above, subject areas should have a bank of general resources available in Teams, such as interactive websites and support activities, and point pupils and parents in that direction. In order to ensure teachers are able to perform the minimum expectations outlined above, the school will provide a range of training opportunities that teachers should access to before any planned school closure. Teachers should ensure that they have looked through specific instructions, watched walkthroughs, and attended teacher training sessions. If teachers require support with any aspects of remote learning, they are encouraged to consult their line managers.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, teachers will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, students and parents. Teachers also should ensure their communication with students does not encourage unhelpful work habits. All communication should take place during usual office hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 6pm, although responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day in normal practice. For those who are on part-time contracts, communication is expected only on the days on which they would usually work. Communication must always occur via official school channels, and not through personal accounts or other websites. Permitted methods are:

• Email using school email addresses only (both teachers and student)

• Microsoft Teams

• Google classroom (docs/sheets etc.)

• Teams messaging (which can allow teachers to reply to an entire class)

Support for pupils with SEND, EAL and other specific learning enhancement needs

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all learners when setting online tasks. Profiles are available for SEND pupils and advice can be sought from the SENDCO. In addition, the SENDCO will maintain contact with pupils on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/pupils and feed back to teachers using CPOMS if required.

Pastoral care during a school closure

In event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents / guardians. However, form tutors (under the guidance of the Vice Principal) should check in regularly with their tutees to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Form tutors will be expected to lead form time registration every morning and to pass on feedback to Pastoral Leaders, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication.

Safeguarding during a school closure

In the event of a school closure, pupils, parents and teachers are reminded that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between pupils and teachers. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school. More advice on

safeguarding and pastoral issues is available from the DSL. Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

<u>Online Safety and Safeguarding</u>

The Hammond's online safety and safeguarding approach to online learning mirrors all commitments outlined in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The Hammond reminds students and staff of the robust and appropriate filtering and monitoring policy on school devices and networks. The Hammond alerts staff and students to the four key guidelines of effective online policy (content, contact, conduct, commerce) and requires all staff to read the detail as found in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Staff and students should also be aware of the Mobile Devices Policy and the Internet Filtering Policy, which reflects the fact that many young people have unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (3G, 4G, 5G). This access means that some children, whilst at school or home, have the capacity to sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, as well as sharing indecent images consensually and non-consensually (sometimes via chat groups) and to view pornography and other harmful content. Students and staff must know that The Hammond will take the above incidences as serious breaches of behaviour and will act accordingly.

Policy Details

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