

REMOTE EDUCATION POLICY

The OHC&AT Board of Directors has agreed this Policy – 26th March 2021.

Jay Mercer
Chair of OHCAT Board

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Peter Lauener
Chair of OHC Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Lauener".

Remote Education Policy

INTRODUCTION

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is a 'family' of providers, comprising Orchard Hill College (OHC) and Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT), which works for mutual benefit. OHC&AT is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. Part of this commitment is ensuring that every pupil and student has access to high quality teaching and learning when they are unable to access school or College premises.

This policy sets out OHC&AT's approach to delivering remote education. It is written with regard to government legislation and guidance including the Coronavirus Act 2020 Provision of Remote Education (England) Temporary Continuity Direction, the "Guidance for full opening: schools" (DfE, December 2020), "Remote education good practice" (DfE, October 2020), "What's working well in remote education" (DfE, 2021) and "Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)" (DfE, 2020), as well as evidence-informed guidance including "Best evidence on supporting students to learn remotely" (EEF, April 2020) and "Remote education: Expectations, evidence and experience" (CST, 2021).

PRINCIPLES

OHC&AT is committed to ensuring that every pupil and student has access to high quality educational provision that supports and enables them to reach their full potential. Our schools and College centres deliver curricular and therapeutic provision that is differentiated according to need and informed by the ambitions of each individual young person in the cohort. Where pupils/students are unable to physically attend school or College, they should still be enabled to access this provision through remote education.

OHCAT Academies have a legal requirement, under the Temporary Continuity Direction, to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children unable to attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19), and this policy sets out how this duty will be met. More broadly, however, OHC&AT's position is that we have a duty to all our pupils and students to ensure that educational access is not compromised by periods of absence from school or College sites. We recognise that our pupils/students may experience disrupted onsite attendance as a result of their additional needs; it is our place as educators to support their continued access to high quality education wherever possible.

This policy sets out the guiding principles for remote education at OHC&AT provisions. Details of each provision's remote education offer can be found on the school or College website.

DEFINITIONS

OHC&AT adheres to the definition of remote education as laid out in DfE guidance, which is “a broad term encompassing any learning that happens outside of the classroom, with the teacher not present in the same location as the pupils.” This may be delivered digitally (e.g. livestreamed or pre-recorded lessons, work set and assessed through online platforms such as Google Classroom or Microsoft Teams) or via analogue methods (e.g. printed home learning packs, textbooks). A blended learning approach may be deployed, where pupils/students access a mix of face-to-face and remote methods.

The Education Endowment Foundation’s rapid evidence assessment of remote education finds that “*When implementing strategies to support pupils’ remote learning, or supporting parents to do this, key things to consider include:*

- *Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered*
- *Ensuring access to technology is key, especially for disadvantaged pupils*
- *Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes*
- *Supporting pupils to work independently can improve learning outcomes*
- *Different approaches to remote learning suit different types of content and pupils”*

Accordingly, every OHC&AT provision will design and deliver a remote education offer that is:

- Informed by, and responsive to, the needs and abilities of the school or College cohort;
- Aligned to the school or College curriculum and built on the principles of good teaching as onsite delivery would be;
- Appropriately differentiated, both in terms of the work that is set and the method of delivery (for example, delivering physical home learning packs where that is the preferred method of learning, or where there are known barriers to accessing online learning such as a lack of suitable devices);
- Delivered and assessed in line with stringent safeguarding and data protection processes.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Within OHC&AT

Trustees will:

- Review this policy on an annual basis
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of educational provision through termly updates from ESLT

The Executive Senior Leadership Team (ESLT) will:

- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of remote education within each Academy and the College, through CEO monthly monitoring with Principals of each provision
- Oversee engagement with national programmes to reduce barriers to access e.g. DfE device allocation schemes

- Ensure that robust security protocols are maintained across all OHC&AT IT systems and devices
- Work with the Head of Strategic CPD, Training & Policy Development to review and update this policy and any related policies/procedures at least annually, or as required by updates to legislation and national guidance

Within each OHC&AT provision

Principals will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of this policy and related documentation
- Oversee the development and implementation of a remote education offer that is robust, accessible and fit for purpose, and which ensures that any pupil/student who is unable to attend onsite provision is able to access remote education by the next school day
- Select the online tools that will be consistently used across the school or College 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/students who do not have suitable online access or where this is identified as the most suitable method of delivery
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of remote education delivery within their school or College, and act on any concerns or areas for improvement
- Ensure that staff have access to OHC&AT systems and devices in order to deliver remote education, whether on- or offsite
- Where staff do not have access to a suitable OHC&AT device, ensure that any unavoidable use of personal devices to deliver remote education is suitably risk assessed and monitored (see below)
- Work collaboratively with families to identify and remedy any barriers to accessing remote education, including lack of access to technology, accessibility of materials, and any specific barriers relating to the pupil/student's individual needs
- Ensure that staff understand and adhere to all safeguarding and data protection principles when delivering remote education
- Work with Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure that safeguarding concerns are raised and acted upon in line with the Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- Work with multidisciplinary teams to ensure that, as far as is practicable, ongoing therapeutic and medical support remains accessible to pupils/students who cannot attend – for example, this may take the form of online therapy sessions or working with families to transfer therapeutic interventions to the home environment
- Publish information for pupils/students, parents and carers about remote education provision on the school or College website

All staff will:

- Understand and adhere to this policy and all related policies and procedures listed at the end of this document
- Maintain high standards of professional behaviour while delivering remote education, in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct

- Ensure that any and all safeguarding concerns are raised and acted upon in the appropriate manner.
- Ensure that any and all data protection concerns are raised and acted upon in the appropriate manner.
- Ensure that remote education, and related communication, is delivered via OHC&AT systems. Staff **must not** give their personal contact details to pupils/students including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers.
- Maintain professional relationships with pupils/students **at all times**. No attempt should be made to build or encourage any friendship with pupils/students or their families outside of work. This includes telephone and personal contact and connecting via social media.

INFORMATION SECURITY

All remote education should be conducted using OHC&AT systems and devices: this including the transmission, communication and storage of any digital data.

Whether working on site or from home, staff are expected to deliver remote education using OHC&AT IT systems/devices, in accordance with the IT Acceptable Use Policy. There are clear safeguarding and data security implications for staff using personal devices to conduct OHC&AT business, and therefore staff should not use personal IT equipment to conduct OHC&AT business, particularly where this extends to storing OHC&AT data e.g. linking personal smart phones to work email etc. In particular, staff **must not** take photographs of pupils or students on their personal devices.

However, we recognise that there will be some circumstances where the use of personal devices to deliver remote education is unavoidable. In such circumstances, all staff must adhere to OHC&AT's Guidance for Staff on Use of Personal Devices to Deliver Remote Education, including the following key points:

- Principals/Heads of Learning Centres must ensure that any unavoidable use of personal devices to deliver remote education is recorded in the school or College centre's Risk Assessment and kept under regular review.
- Personal data must not be recorded or stored on non-OHC&AT devices or transmitted via non-OHC&AT systems, including social media or any technology-based platform used for interacting or discussion via voice, text, video or pictures.
- Staff must **immediately** notify their Principal or Head of Learning Centre of any safeguarding concerns or potential/actual data breach relating to delivery of remote education.

E-SAFETY FOR PUPILS AND STUDENTS ACCESSING REMOTE OR BLENDED LEARNING

When pupils/students are not able to attend school for a period of time, the risks associated with online activity including remote learning are potentially heightened. When sending work home to pupils/students currently unable to attend, staff include information on staying safe online and sources of support, including reporting

pathways, where students have concerns about online activity. This includes details of Safeguarding teams, as well external agencies including:

- [Childline](#) – for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) – for advice on making a report about online abuse

Academy/College websites are also kept updated with relevant links and other e-safety information for both pupils/students and families.

When setting home learning, OHC&AT provisions ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

OHC&AT provisions operate clear procedures around delivering remote learning, including the following key points:

- Staff must adhere to the OHC&AT Staff Code of Conduct **at all times**, including when delivering remote learning.
- Ideally virtual sessions should be delivered to groups only, and at least two members of staff should attend.
- When planning delivery of live sessions, staff should consider the needs and profiles of each pupil/student intended to receive the session and risk assess accordingly.
- Live sessions should not be recorded unless they are 1:1 (see below) and images should not be made during live sessions. For example, if staff need to take a screenshot of content produced during a session, they must ensure that pupils'/students' faces and names are not in view.
- Staff should check whether pupils/students are happy to keep their cameras on during live classes, once pupil/student identities have been established at the start of the session. Use of cameras may be encouraged but not compelled.
- Staff and children/young people must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by the IT network manager/provider to communicate with pupils/students.
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Where remote access is used to deliver 1:1 sessions, for example counselling sessions, these must be recorded and the recordings safely stored in accordance with OHC&AT policies on IT acceptable use and records retention. Accordingly, the following stipulations have been made:

- 1:1 sessions must only be delivered from OHC&AT premises.
- 1:1 sessions must only be recorded on OHC&AT devices.
- Pupils/students and parents/carers must be made aware that sessions are being recorded.

This is to ensure that pupils/students and staff are protected, both in terms of safeguarding and information security.

Staff maintain regular contact with all pupils/students not currently attending, and this provides a further opportunity to discuss online safety with them, their parents and carers. We are aware that when a pupil/student is unable to attend school for any length of time, families may wish to access additional home learning support, for example tutors or other specialists, and staff emphasise the importance of securing online support from reputable organisations/individuals who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children or vulnerable adults.

POLICY REVIEW DETAILS

<i>Version:</i>	1.0
<i>Reviewer:</i>	John Prior, Laurie Cornwell
<i>Approval body:</i>	Family Board
<i>Date this version approved:</i>	26 th March 2021
<i>Due for review:</i>	Spring 2022

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy
Complaints Policy and Procedure (Academies/OHC)
Covid-19 SG annexes
Data Protection Policy and related documentation
IT Acceptable Use Policy
E-Safety Policy (Academies/OHC)
Relationships and Sex Education Policy (Academies/OHC)
Safeguarding and Wellbeing offers
Social Media Policy
Staff Code of Conduct

FURTHER RESOURCES

What's working well in remote education (DfE)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-working-well-in-remote-education/whats-working-well-in-remote-education>

Best evidence on supporting students to learn remotely (EEF)
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/best-evidence-on-supporting-students-to-learn-remotely/>

Safe remote learning hub (UK Safer Internet Centre)
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/safe-remote-learning-hub>

Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) (DfE)
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>