

## Remote Teaching and Learning Strategy

September 2020

### I. Principles and aims

During the COVID-19 pandemic RPHS has undertaken a mixed approach to home learning. This combines aspects of online instruction, setting independent work on Satchel and the sending home of hard copy activities (for students remaining at home) with classroom teaching or activities (for vulnerable children, children of key workers and some Year 10 and 12 students).

From September 2020 we will need to undertake a blended approach, combining traditional teaching with aspects of setting work and live streaming of lessons via Microsoft Teams. A blended or hybrid model of independent study and online learning/ live lessons will ensure that students receive both sufficient instruction and explanation and opportunity to practice using new concepts.

We endeavour to ensure that all our students, including those who are disadvantaged, have limited access to technology, SEND or other needs can continue to learn remotely in the event of school closure or their inability to attend school. Our remote learning strategy is therefore guided by a concern for equality, inclusion and the need to ensure the design and delivery of distance learning does not exacerbate existing educational and social inequalities.

### II. Research

A rapid evidence assessment on remote learning conducted by the EEF (2020) is also useful to consider when developing our remote learning offer:

- Teaching quality is more important than the vehicle used for delivery
- Ensuring access to technology is key, particularly for disadvantaged students (if that is the school's plan for remote learning)
- Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes
- Supporting students to work independently can improve learning outcomes
- Different approaches to remote learning suit different tasks and types of content

Teaching and Learning training priorities are centred on Teaching quality including, clarity of instruction, assessment and feedback- this will be delivered with consideration of the event it will be done remotely.

The school has received funding for laptops for disadvantaged student and we continue to support families to make use of the technology we are able to provide. The blended approach also means that students are able to work collaboratively in live, streamed lessons, and combine this with ample opportunity for independent study between live lessons. Student understanding of learning, resilience and independence will also be taught explicitly to prepare for possible remote learning in the future.

### III. Technology

NFER Research in June 2020 identified limited student access to technology as a significant challenge. The research also found that schools using a VLE or other forum to inform students of the work set had lower engagement with remote learning than schools delivering learning through online learning conversations or activities that consolidate previous learning. The latter were also more likely to engage disadvantaged students.

Whilst we continue to provide equipment for disadvantaged students we will also prioritise preparing students for remote learning while in school, ensuring they are able to access emails, understand Microsoft Teams functions, can download and upload work, to ensure that once technology is in place they can aptly navigate it to access the learning opportunities.

RPHS has already put measures into place to develop digital capability and skills within our teaching staff body. The first phase of training for live streaming of lessons has taken place and we will continue to ensure that these skills are nurtured and put into practice should the need for live streaming of lessons arise again. We will also train staff on using pre-recorded instruction and remotely recorded feedback to add to their repertoire of options in terms of remote pedagogy.

We have taken steps to address staff access to technology by purchasing headphones and webcams for each desktop computer in the school, should the need for remote teaching arise without full school closure. We continue also to work on staff access to laptops should they need to teach from home, an investment which began when the school went into lockdown on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.

Where students do not have access to technology we will provide printed resources and ensure wherever possible that this does not restrict the students' educational experience or access to a broad and well sequenced curriculum.

#### **IV. Curriculum**

We are committed to providing continuity for students in terms of the curriculum in school and in a remote learning situation. We continue to plan a broad and ambitious curriculum for our students and we will work with our teachers to ensure that work set or taught remotely is planned and well sequenced, designed to build on prior knowledge and clearly moving them forwards in their learning too.

#### **V. Pedagogy and Assessment**

Regardless of the platform it is important that some basic principles are established. In further developing remote learning experiences and moving towards a blended learning approach we will be reflecting on their pedagogical goals and how technology might help to achieve these goals. Learning tasks and activities should be designed to achieve a specific goal or for a specific reason in order to engage students. Providing explicit learning objectives and clear success criteria for activities is important and ensures student are clear on the purpose and intended outcomes of the learning experience. Having student themselves set individual or class goals for working remotely can also increase motivation and engagement. According to the EEF research 2020, online learning tasks should last 30-45 minutes for post-primary student- with this in mind we can plan how to structure an online lesson and how the pedagogical logic may differ to standard lessons in a classroom.

We will aim to utilise the multimedia aspects of e-learning through visuals, video and audio where possible. Providing links to videos, online experiments, animations and podcasts can be very helpful by providing students with different ways of explaining concepts, assisting those who are less confident, and to work in lieu of teacher-led explanation. It is important to adjust existing practice and resources to ensure they are still engaging for students working remotely.

Differentiation continues to be a priority, ensuring that learning is accessible for all our students, we aim to ensure the resources provided are appropriately differentiated for students' in order to provide a positive learning experience for all and avoid feelings of frustration and confusion.

Monitoring and tracking of students completed work and assessment of the quality of work will be a priority in a second case of school closure, with the priority in the first instance being student engagement and access to technology.

## **VI. Future Live Streaming of Lessons**

We continue to develop our understanding of Microsoft Teams functions in order that we are able to provide more live lessons in the event of school closure. All classes will be set up on Microsoft Teams in September in preparation for the event of school closure and we will endeavour to synchronise Microsoft Teams with our school information system in order that class data and attendance can be monitored remotely.

We aim to provide a greater number of live lessons in the event of partial or full school closure than we did during the pilot of 2020, with the aim that each student will have at least 3 live lessons a day and would try to maintain a full timetable where possible. In addition, we will offer contact time with form tutors and Heads of Year to support student personal development and wellbeing. We will continue to plan for how we will mitigate against the lack of technology for those students who cannot access live lessons.

Where students are required to self-isolate and school remains open they will be able to login to some lessons while they are being delivered, live.

## **VII. Blended Learning**

Alongside the live lessons, we will continue to evaluate the curriculum to identify suitable opportunities for independent study/ activities which can be set on Satchel, requiring less instruction and teacher guidance. We will also prioritise seeking out resources which are available to facilitate the independent element of the blended learning approach. We will endeavour to avoid research based activities and project work so that all students can benefit from well planned and sequenced activities in line with the curriculum.

As we move from the *unsettled zone* Fullan et al (2020) to the *learning zone* we endeavour to refine our understanding, reflect on the approach to remote learning taken in March 2020 and make more informed and perceptive steps forward combining several elements of practice which has been deemed to be successful.

## **VIII. Pastoral Support**

In the event of students not being able to be in school due to a partial or full lockdown, we will provide a full programme of pastoral support. All form tutors will deliver the full programme of tutor activities each day, remotely on Teams. This will include registration and other tutor time activities. All students will be expected to log on to register their attendance and to engage fully in tutor time activities. We will also have weekly remote year group assemblies which will be presented on their normal assembly day. Again all students will be expected to attend remotely. In addition, the pastoral team, led by the Heads of Year and tutors will phone every student regularly to check on their well-being. Any issues or concerns that arise from these calls or more generally, will be followed up by our Safeguarding Team.

**IX. Safeguarding**

Safeguarding of students continues to be a priority above all else, to ensure that students can work safely from home when and if this is required. Most staff have been trained on the protocols for remote teaching in the summer term, particularly in terms of live lessons. Further training will be delivered from September to all staff. We continue to follow the DfE guidance in terms of protocols of remote teaching and also continue to evaluate the practices we have used in order to plan next steps.