Falconer School

Blended and Distance Learning Policy

Last Reviewed:	Sep 2020	**Next Review:**	Sep 2021
Approved by:	Curriculum Achievement & Wellbeing Committee	**Date:**	Sep 2020

Rationale

The 2020 pandemic, unprecedented and unplanned for, has brought about challenges for secondary school teaching and learning which previously and predominantly took place in large classrooms, under the instruction of teachers, within a highly structured day. The sudden need to adapt to distance learning allowed limited time for teachers to implement detailed procedures; however, as schools reopen to more pupils from the 29 June 2020, there is a requirement to ensure a more consistent, formalised and structured approach to blended and distance learning.

Objectives

The objective of this Policy is to provide a framework for Falconer School to pursue its main aim of providing the statuary obligation to pupil's education in the event of a partial or full closure of the school.

This Policy applies to the delivery of programmes of learning leading to Pearson qualifications, through means of distance learning and/or assessment for a period that is less than 50% of the programme.

Programmes, where remote, distance learning and distance assessment make up more than 50% of the programme will be considered as Distance Learning programmes.

This Policy does not supersede the requirements of Pearson and it is essential deliverers of a qualifications content understand, and follow, any qualification and unit-specific requirements for delivery or assessment that are set out in the qualification specification.

Aims

1. To ensure that blended learning delivery meets the guidelines set by the awarding organisation.
2. To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual learners.

How Aims will be met

- Staff to deliver their timetabled allocation of lessons to support blended learning when learners are working remotely.
- Staff must ensure that they continue to effectively manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered, and feedback is provided in a timely manner.
- Staff must ensure that the setting of assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear.
- Staff must ensure that when learners submit work they are assured that the work is authentic and has been completed by the learner.
- Staff must ensure that they maintain and store securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with Pearson Centre Agreement.

Blended Learning

Blended learning is a formal approach to education that creates an integrated learning environment where face-to-face and online teaching and learning become complementary, with the purpose of giving learners a more diverse and engaging learning experience.

Blended Learning is a two- way process of teaching. The first is using face to face interaction to educate (in school) whilst the second is through electronic platforms to educate online (remote learning). Blended learning is used therefore, to maximise the educational impact on children and young people both in and out of the classroom.

Blended learning allows for both school-based and remote learning environments to work hand in hand, helping children and young people achieve. This will ensure that any closures of school premises will be met with effective response.

Blended learning will provide an opportunity for assessment to be a mixture of traditional assessment methods combined with Distance Assessment.

Distance Learning

Distance learning refers to a process of learning where there is little or no face to face interactions between teachers, children and young people. Online electronic platforms are the main mechanism that is used to provide education when remote learning is taking place. Children and young people may be requested to use these online electronic platforms in order evidence their learning, in the form of the submission of work assignments, which will form the basis of distance assessment.

Distance Assessment

Distance Assessment is a method of assessment delivered to learners away from Falconer school, with little or no face to face contact with their teachers, where the assessment is designed to be carried out remotely.

Distance Assessment enables children and young people to be assessed even if they are in situations/settings where traditional methods of assessment delivery may be difficult or impossible to operate.

Distance Assessment can be defined as assessments completed in a location remote from the assessor, without direct supervision from a centre. For example, assignments completed using an online electronic platform such as those known as Virtual Learning Environments or assessments completed and posted either physically or electronically.

Distance assessment cannot be used for Pearson externally set and marked examinations and controlled tasks.

Objectives of Blended Learning at Falconer School

The planning and delivery of distance learning at Falconer School should:

- Offer high-quality online learning;
- Align as closely as possible with in school provision;
- Provide appropriate levels of challenge;
- Build on prior learning;
- Be immediate;
- Make provision to post materials where there is no on-line access in the home environment;
- Consider the nature of the task so it can be completed independently;
- Be set in line with timetable – range of subjects and be equivalent in hours;

- Include face to face or video explanation which can then be followed by work set on the basis of this explanation;
- Not be overly reliant on long term projects or internet research;
- All worksheets, PowerPoints and other electronic documents should be converted to the pdf file format to ensure pupils access;
- Ensure tasks set are for appropriate timeframe.

School Closure or Partial Closure

In the event of a whole school or partial closure, where a partial closure may take the form of a year group bubble being required to isolate at home, the following expectations are to be met:

- Teaching staff will be expected to deliver live video lesson via MS Teams
- Lessons taking place online via MS Teams will be scheduled in line with the school lesson timetable.
- Teachers will be expected to deliver live video lessons for ***at least*** half of the normal lesson duration. Pupils will be set tasks for the rest of the lesson duration that are supported by the information imparted in the initial teacher led live video lesson. A lead lesson may be delivered with the resulting pupil work calculated to take the equivalent in duration to the remaining lesson time and homework time.
- Double lessons will require the delivery of an online video lesson for at least one hour of the session. This may be one whole hour or broken down into segments delivered across the two hour duration of the lesson
- The use of other online lesson resources e.g. Oak Academy lessons can be used to supplement teaching tasks but **should not be used** to replace the live lessons from our own staff
- If a pupil is absent for a TEAM session work should be sent to their email account
- Assessments should be conducted following the same timeline as set out in school's assessment calendar and fed back in a timely manner

Individual pupil self-isolation

In the event that an individual pupil is required to self-isolate the following arrangements and actions are required to be made by the pupil's class teacher:

- Tasks should be set for each lesson that the pupil will miss in the anticipated length of absence.
- Tasks should be set that are in-line with the planned scheme of learning and assessment plan.
- If emails cannot be received, then provision should be made for printed material to be sent to pupils.

Responsibilities

Leadership

The role of the Senior Leadership Team is to:

- Develop, monitor and evaluate the whole school strategy for blended and distance learning;
- Communicate with, and provide support to, departments, staff, pupils and parents, to ensure effective implementation of blended and distance learning;
- Provide opportunities for appropriate CPD training to ensure that staff are able to deliver blended and distance learning effectively;
- Ensure accountability of the blended and distance learning process, through departmental self-evaluation.

The role of the Subject Coordinator is to:

- Lead and support the department in the design and development of high-quality blended and distance learning experiences for pupils, by ensuring that departmental plans are fit for purpose and audience;
- Monitor and evaluate the provision of blended and distance learning through departmental self-evaluation;
- Communicate with pupils and parents, as appropriate, as per the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, to ensure engagement and progress with the blended and distance learning experience;
- Disseminate excellent practice amongst colleagues, both formally and informally.

Teachers

The role of the teacher is to:

- Continue to strive to deliver consistently excellent lessons in accordance with the Teaching & Learning policy;
- Engage with CPD training to ensure proficiency in delivering effective blended and distance learning;
- Collaborate with colleagues to design and develop high-quality blended and distance learning experiences for pupils, in accordance with departmental plans;
- Plan and deliver blended and distance learning experiences for all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, taking into account Individual Development Plans and ensuring that pupils' needs are fully catered for;
- Communicate with, and provide timely feedback to, pupils in line with the School's Marking and Feedback Policy;
- Carefully monitor pupils' work completion and deadline compliance;
- communicate with pupils and parents, as appropriate, as per the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, to ensure engagement and progress with the blended and distance learning experience.

Learning Support Staff

The role of learning support staff is to:

- Provide support and assistance to departments and teachers;
- Assist with implementation of pupils' One Page Profile so that their needs are fully catered for through blended and distance learning.

Pupils

Pupils should:

- Record tasks set at the end of each face-to-face lesson in school, noting the due date for completion;
- Dedicate appropriate time to distance learning, in order to complete the tasks set by the due date;
- Check google classroom for information on tasks, assignments and resources daily, throughout the school week;
- Identify a comfortable and quiet space to study/learn;
- Engage in all learning set with academic honesty;
- Submit all tasks and assignments in accordance with provided timelines and/or due dates;
- Appreciate that when working at home, teachers will be delivering lessons every day at school.

Teachers will not be able to respond to multiple requests for assistance. Questions can be asked at the next face-to-face session with the teacher. If unsure about what to do with a task, pupils should: read questions and instructions carefully; research the answer to the question; or, collaborate with a friend/another pupil/classmate. If, while learning at home, a pupil has a problem that cannot be solved, then the relevant Achievement Assistant at school should be contacted in the first instance.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers should support their child/ren in their learning by:

- Providing an environment conducive to learning;
- Engaging in conversations about resources, tasks and assignments provided/posted;
- Monitoring time spent engaging in online and offline learning;
- Helping to provide emotional balance through ensuring ample room and time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, rest and play.

Training

To ensure that pupils can make the most of blended and distance learning, they may require training and support on:

- The effective use of google classroom;
- How to navigate the Classroom;
- How to submit work;
- How to keep track of tasks/assignments.
- The effective use of self-assessment grids/templates.

To ensure that teachers can proficiently deliver blended and distance learning experiences, they may require training and support on:

- How to ensure the Classroom is the main source of setting and receiving work;
- How to efficiently mark students work;
- How to organise Google Classroom and, in particular, classwork into categories;
- To photograph their work rather than upload a ‘Word’ document) within Google Classroom;
- How to create a quiz/assignment on Google forms;
- The effective use of PowerPoint including;
- Creating and embedding podcasts and video clips into PP;
- Use of hyperlinks to bring pupils from PP to necessary documents.

Teachers may use time not spent on teaching to:

- Source/create podcasts/videos relevant to SoWs for use when pupils are working at home;

- Create prescriptive self-assessment templates for use with pupils, especially for tasks that will be completed at home that would not otherwise be teacher assessed.

Marking, feedback and assessment

In line with the School's Marking and Feedback Policy, all submitted written work needs to be quality marked in detail by the teacher. It is important that work completion is tracked so that pupils who are not engaging with the work set can be appropriately supported. It is important to remember that feedback is considered so that learning, rather than simply provision, is taking place. The nature of marking and feedback given will depend on the type of work completed and the method of submission.

The School's marking and Feedback Policy should be followed as the overall framework on which to base our approach.

Staff should consider how pupils can be formally assessed so that progress can be effectively monitored and intervention can be put in place where necessary.

Self-assessment may be an integral part of a blended learning approach; however, in order for this to be effective, pupils must be able to accurately and confidently self-assess their work and progress. Therefore, clear guidance and expectations relating to this will need to be provided by subject teachers.

Pupil and Staff Safeguarding in a Blended Learning Environment

When participating in distance/blended learning, where contact may be by online video lesson, email or a combination of both all staff should share the commitment that Falconer School has to safeguarding children and young people. Even though staff contact with pupils may be remote they should still take all welfare concerns seriously and ensure that they act in the best interests of the child and in line with School's Safeguarding Policy.

When conducting distance learning, distance assessment or blended learning all staff should be vigilant to identifying children and young people who may be suffering or the likelihood of suffering significant harm. This responsibility supersedes any other considerations.

If there are any safeguarding concerns determined by a member of staff through the interaction that they have had with a young person when conducting distance learning, distance assessment or blended learning programme then these concerns should immediately be brought to the attention of the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy.

Staff conduction online video lessons from their home should be mindful of what may be displayed in the background of the video. Staff should where possible digitally alter the background of the video e.g. blurring the image displayed behind them.

When conducting an online video lesson staff should record the session using the facility embedded in the video meeting software. This video should be retained for at least a period of a week so that it may be accessed if required to support a safeguarding issue that may have been raised.

Email contact with pupils should only be from staff school email accounts, not personal accounts. Emails from staff should only be addressed to pupil school email accounts. A school email account can be identified as it is composed in the following manner – UserName@falconer.herts.sch.uk

Monitoring and review

Subject coordinators will monitor and evaluate the provision of blended and distance learning in their areas through established monitoring and quality assurance procedures.

As the current position relating to pupil attendance in the autumn term remains uncertain, the acting deputy headteacher will monitor, evaluate and review this Policy, initially on a monthly basis.