

St Matthew's CE Primary School

Blended Learning Policy



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Our School Vision

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

At St Matthew's we enable children to become aspirational citizens. Our curriculum is enhanced by our **deeply Christian ethos**, empowering children and enabling them to flourish. **Worship** is the heart of the school and our **Christian values** teach children to value themselves: they are **courageous advocates** for the Christian message.

Principles of Blended Learning

Blended learning is as an approach that combines learning in school with learning at home. At St Matthew's CE Primary School, we are committed to providing quality blended learning for our pupils should they be required to learn at home due to circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic.

St Matthew's CE Primary School uses DB Primary as a platform for Blended Learning. DB Primary is an online platform which enables children to access high-quality content and resources provided by their teacher, as well as links to other useful websites. It also enables children to keep in touch with their classmates and submit work to their teachers electronically.

Through these resources we teach the same curriculum remotely as we do in school wherever possible and appropriate. However, we have needed to make some adaptations in some subjects. For example, if lessons require resources that are not readily available at home (e.g. PE equipment, Art/DT materials) then we will adapt these lessons for home learning.

Our Blended Learning policy has been designed to ensure that remote learning is accessible for all. We are aware that families have varying circumstances and that it is not possible for all families to be available for a full day of live teaching. Therefore, a combination of live sessions, pre-recorded videos and downloadable resources are used to ensure that every child is able to access learning when they are not able to attend school.

This policy is also designed so that safeguarding children remains our highest priority. We aim to keep children safe during school closures by providing regular contact, Free School Meals hampers and vouchers, loaned devices, live check-ins, and places in school for the most vulnerable.

Our Blended Learning Policy is driven by our school drivers of communication, confidence, well-being, faith and possibilities. Children are encouraged to communicate with their teachers through submitting work and reading feedback, as well as joining live session. Children have opportunities to develop confidence, and take control of their own learning within a supportive environment. Children's well-being is supported by regular contact from school, opportunities to engage with peers, delivery of well-being and citizenship and by additional opportunities for reflection. We are able to allow children to connect with the Christian faith by providing daily worship, including a weekly church worship video from Reverend Richard, and prayers are shared on the class page. Finally, we promote possibility, by doing all we can to limit the impact that the pandemic has on children's life chances.

How long can I expect work set by the school to take my child each day?

We expect that remote education (including remote teaching and independent work) will take pupils broadly the following number of hours each day:

Key Stage 1	Minimum of 3 hours
Key Stage 2	Minimum of 4 hours

Three scenarios are covered by this policy:

- 1) School is open and children are in class
- 2) Individual children are self-isolating, due to potential contact with a case or suspected case of COVID-19
- 3) Whole class closure due to confirmed case of COVID 19, or national school closures

School is open and children are in class

DB Primary is used as a platform for children to access homework and other additional learning resources, including the DB Primary Learning Library, Maths Whizz and Espresso.

Individual children are self-isolating, due to potential contact with a case or suspected case of COVID-19

- Children will be provided with home learning for each of the days that they absent from school.
- Home learning will be available from the first day of absence.
- Home learning will closely match the learning that is delivered at school where possible.
- Teachers will upload daily lessons in the format of PowerPoint presentations, videos, activities or other resources to support children's learning.
- Both core and foundation subjects will be provided that match the learning in school. This includes reading, story time and Phonics.
- Where an exact match between learning and school and learning at home is not possible, teachers will provide alternative activities for children.
- Daily worship will be provided.
- Exercise books, pencils and other resources will be provided where necessary to support our most vulnerable pupils.
- Staff will maintain regular contact with families of pupils that are learning at home. More regular 'check-ins' are in place for the most vulnerable pupils.

- If children require resources/learning to be printed then we will co-ordinate this and deliver the learning packs in a safe way.
- Children with additional needs will have learning provided that meets their needs.
- For children who are entitled to meet the benefits-related free-school meals eligibility, the school will work with their catering team to make arrangements for this provision to continue, or supermarket vouchers will be provided.
- Children will be encouraged to submit work online and feedback will be given electronically.
- Children's learning will be assessed by the teacher when they return to school so they can be aware of knowledge gaps that exist and address these through first quality teaching and post-teaching.
- Families who do not have access to an electronic device may be able to borrow one from the school (subject to availability).

Whole class closure due to confirmed case of COVID 19, or national school closures

In the case of whole class closure or national school closures, the above measures will be in place for all children. In addition, teachers will provide one daily live 'check in' session each morning, to enable them to explain the day's learning to the children and demonstrate where to find the necessary resources. Teachers will also provide pre-recorded explanatory videos for Literacy and Numeracy each day to explain and model new skills. Finally, all children will have access to a pre-recorded Story Time featuring school staff each day.

Children will be encouraged to submit work online and will receive regular feedback when they do so, in the form of emails or DB Primary Rewards. Teachers will contact parents regularly to discuss their children's engagement and progress.

Quality Assurance

Home learning provision will be quality assured by leaders across the school on a regular basis. The School leadership team will give teachers regular feedback on the blended learning being provided. Mr Fitzsimons (Assistant Head for Curriculum) will oversee blended learning across the school, alongside the Middle Leadership Team.

Tailoring the remote curriculum for pupils with SEND

We recognise that some pupils, for example some pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), may not be able to access remote education without support from adults at home. We acknowledge the difficulties this may place on families, and we will work with parents and carers to support those pupils.

Consideration will need to be given to how remote education approaches can be tailored to ensure the content is accessible to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children who have an EHCP. Every effort will be made to provide virtual therapies for children with an EHCP who are unable to attend school.

Engagement and feedback

Keeping regular learning going during the period that schools are closed is of great importance to reduce the impact of school closures on children's education, however we understand that everyone's circumstances at home will be different. Some families have one child to support while others have several. Some families have one device to share while others may have more – and

some things may work differently on different devices. Some parents will have plenty of time to help their children learn, while others will be working from home and may have much less time and some children will be able to work more independently than others or need greater challenge. Due to this we are providing a flexible approach to remote learning. We will offer a variety of weekly learning activities across the curriculum so that pupils can work their way through as much as they are able, at a time that suits them.

Parents will be supported in provided home learning in the following ways:

- Telephone support/videos will be provided to support parents in using DB Primary.
- Demonstration videos will be provided to introduce new topics or skills to children where necessary.
- All resources will be clear, accessible and present information in a way that is easy to understand.

Teachers will check daily on pupils' engagement and provide feedback to pupils electronically. Feedback will take many forms and may not always mean extensive written comments for individual children. For example, whole-class feedback or quizzes marked automatically via digital platforms will provide pupils will feedback.

If teachers are concerned about a child's lack of engagement they will phone the parents to discuss any difficulties the family might be having and to see how the school can provide further support.

Developing the whole child

There will be opportunities for children to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally through home learning. This will be achieved through provision of wellbeing and citizenship lessons, daily worship, reflection sessions, story time, access to 'daily news' resources, as well as other online resources.

Access to devices

The school will provide electronic devices such as tablets or laptops to disadvantaged children who do not have access to such devices at home. If pupils do not have access to the internet then paper work packs will be provided.

Online safety

St Matthew's CE Primary School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where children are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

We also understand that many children will be using computers with access to the internet at home. We understand that it is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the Fray's Academy Code of Conduct policy and the Online Safety Policy, both of which have been updated to reflect this new guidance.

We will also ensure any use of online learning tools and systems are in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Holding virtual check-ins, or 'live teaching', is part of the blended learning approach at St Matthew's. Therefore there is a need for guidelines to be adhered to by all staff when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved. Therefore, we agree the following:

We ask that parents:

- Ensure that all members of your household are aware that the Zoom session is taking place so that they can behave accordingly.
- Ensure that children are appropriately dressed for their Zoom session.
- Ensure that children join the session from an appropriate location – for example, children should not join from bedrooms.
- Ensure that children, parents, and anyone in the background uses appropriate language only.
- Ensure that children are ready to join the session on time. Teachers will not wait for children who are late.
- Ensure that your microphone is muted throughout the session. Questions can be asked via the chat function to avoid lots of people talking over one another.
- Ensure that children are supervised by an adult throughout the session, and show the qualities of an outstanding learner throughout.
- Only ask questions that are specific to the learning that is being explained. More general questions or lengthy/multiple questions should be addressed in a separate phone call which you can arrange with the teacher.
- Ensure that only the child in that particular year group is participating in the Zoom session. Siblings should not participate in one another's Zoom sessions.
- Please report any concerns regarding live sessions to the Headteacher.
- Do not share videos provided by staff that are intended for use within our school community.

We ask that staff:

- Ensure that all members of their household are aware that the Zoom session is taking place so that they can behave accordingly, if joining a Zoom from home.
- Ensure that they are appropriately dressed for the Zoom session.
- Ensure that they join the session from an appropriate location with a neutral background – for example, staff must not join from bedrooms,
- Ensure that they are ready to join the session on time.
- Ensure that there are always two member of staff present at all times.
- Ensure that teachers always have cameras on, and LSAs where possible.
- Ensure that support staff are present and can see and hear what is happening for the duration of the session.
- If anything inappropriate occurs or there is any risk of a safeguarding issue, staff should end the call immediately and contact a DSL.
- Ensure that staff members' own children and other members of their household are not present during the session.
- Mute all children throughout the call and ask that all questions are asked via the chat.
- Keep an eye on the waiting room and admit children who arrive late, although you should not re-start the session for them.

Zoom sessions are not recorded.

Mental health and well-being

St Matthew's recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Our teachers are aware of this and consider it when setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.