Carre's Grammar School
A Robert Carre Trust school

Blended Learning Policy

Introduction

Carre's Grammar School reopened for all students in September 2020 following school closure due to the global pandemic. However, we are required to put plans in place in case of a local or national lockdown arrangement or a breakout of COVID-19 within the school community.

The aim of this policy is to consider the practical implementation of blended learning across a number of eventualities in order to ensure students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders are clear about expectations and responsibilities.

This policy draws on recommendations made in the NASWT report on blended learning:
https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/in-the-classroom/remote-and-blended-learning.html
The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research evidence on supporting students to learn remotely:
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/best-evidence-on-supportingstudents-to-learn-remotely/
The government guidelines to secondary schools on planning for tier 2 local restriction
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-localrestrictions/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions

Research Evidence

There is an emerging body of research into "blended learning", a style of education in which students learn via electronic and online media as well as traditional face-to-face teaching. This new approach to teaching and learning has grown exponentially due to wide spread school closure. The evidence of what works is clear and strengthening. The EEF have identified the following key areas to consider for successful blended learning provision.

1. Teaching quality is more important than how teaching is delivered

Providing that the established principles for introducing new knowledge are adhered to (explanation, scaffolding, feedback) then there is no difference between the effectiveness of real time remote lessons or pre-recorded material. What matters most is that each learning sequence builds on prior understanding.

2. Ensuring access to technology is key, particularly amongst disadvantaged students

Lack of access to appropriate technology is a barrier to effective participation in remote learning. We need to be aware of students who may have less access than others and require extra provision/ support.

3. Peer interaction provides motivation and improves learning outcomes

Peer marking, modelling and sharing of work, as well as live discussion and the use of shared forum functions for collaborative learning are all useful strategies to motivate and help progress whilst engaging learners**.**

4. Supporting students to work independently can improve learning outcomes

Using metacognitive approaches to encourage reflection and promote deliberate practice helps learners engage more effectively but also reminds them of key learning and thinking skills.

5. Different approaches to remote learning suit different types of content and students

Teachers will be supported to reflect on different approaches to remote learning and what will be most effective to deliver their subject content through ongoing CPD and coaching.

Defining Remote Provision

We recognise that personal contact with our students is key to maintaining motivation and engagement, as well as sustaining fruitful relationships, both teacher/student, peer to peer and with parents.

We also recognise that when providing remote learning, variety is key. The research is clear that students should be facilitated to engage in a variety of remote learning activities, including direct instruction, real time lessons, recorded sequences, quizzes, formal assessments, discussion forums, break out rooms and online material (including those set on Microsoft Teams).

We also consider ongoing pastoral support to be central to ensuring our students remain linked to the school community. This occurs through a variety of contact with Form Tutors/Heads of Year and remote assemblies.

The government has specified minimum expectations for remote provision:

- set assignments so that students have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects, including new material - planning a programme that is of equivalent length to the core teaching students would receive in school

- teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject

- gauge how well students are progressing through the curriculum using questions and other suitable tasks, and set a clear expectation on how regularly teachers will check work

- enable teachers to adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure students' understanding

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-localrestrictions/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions

Specific approaches for different scenarios where blended learning may be required

1. Teacher absence due to self or family isolation whilst awaiting a COVID-19 test result

Staff member will be expected to set work via email or Teams providing they are well and not caring for a dependant within the household who is unwell.

As circumstances dictate and if the teacher remains well, then they should continue to set work via email and/or Teams, and, in negotiation with the teacher, provision will be put in place for them to deliver lessons remotely to their classes. If they are a form tutor they will be expected to check in

remotely with their tutor group. They will continue to assess work on line. This will take immediate effect after the teacher goes into isolation and will continue for the duration of the time they are physically absent from school, providing they are well.

If they are unwell and unable to work, cover would be set by their Head of Department (HOD).

2. **Student absence due to self or family isolation whilst awaiting a COVID-19 test result**

Parents must inform the school that COVID-19 symptoms are the reason for their absence and follow NHS111 guidance as to who needs isolate and book a test. Teachers will initially be asked to set work via email/Teams as with any other absence. Parents should notify the school of results and follow advice from the school about when they may return to site learning.

Whilst the household is in quarantine the student will be set work via email/Teams as for any other absence, and receive feedback from their teachers on what they have submitted.

Students who are unwell need to focus on getting better and the School will help them to catch on any work they have missed when they return fit and well. However, students who are absent for Covid-related issues, and are well enough, will be able to access work they miss via Teams/email once staff have had the opportunity to upload this at the end of their working day.

3. **Long term student absence due to shielding or COVID related concerns regarding either themselves or a member of their family.**

In this eventuality provision will be negotiated on a case by case basis, but will include an individual timetable, remote work set via Teams, and regular catch ups with form tutors and subject teachers.

4. **Track and trace case within a bubble**

If a bubble is required to isolate then their timetable will be delivered on line in the same model as during full lockdown. Teachers will send out invites to Teams lessons and students will log in. This could (as per EEF research) take a number of formats; real time, pre-recorded, assessments etc. Students will receive feedback via email and/or Teams. Teachers will expect to deliver lessons according to their school timetable.

5. **Track and trace case involving several members of staff**

If a large number of staff members are required to isolate at one time the school may need to move to Tier 2 guidance for opening on a rota system to different year groups. During isolation staff not in school will provide remote learning for their classes (if they remain well) but also potentially larger groups in the same manner as during lockdown. There will also continue to be pastoral check-ins.

6. **Local lockdown Tier 2**

A rotation (of one or two weeks) will be put place with the emphasis on keeping year group bubbles separate. Years 7, 9, 11 and 13 will be taught in school for the first rotation, following their normal timetable, whilst Years 8, 10 and 12 will be learning from home, attending a maximum of 5 Teams lessons per day mixed with independent work set by teachers. In the following rotation, Years 8, 10 and 12 will be taught in school and Years7, 9, 11 and 13 will be learning from home in the same way.

7. **Local lockdown Tier 3**

Vulnerable children and the children of critical workers will continue to be taught in school. The rest of the school will revert to remote learning following their normal in school timetable. If the Government prioritises certain secondary year groups to be in school, they are likely to choose examination classes

and there is a high likelihood that Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 would therefore continue in remote learning mode. In this eventuality we will follow the specific DfE guidance for the locality.

8. **Whole School Closure Tier 4**

The School will revert to the full remote learning timetable which was offered in June 2020

Full time provision will remain in place for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers.

Agreed by SLT November 2020

Next Review Due: November 2021 (annually)