



Wootton Academy Trust

Blended Learning Policy

October 2020

This policy was developed in October 2020 and presented to the Trust's Curriculum and Standards Committee on November 17 2020. The policy was then approved by the Trust through written resolution

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A. Introduction

Wootton Academy Trust reopened to all learners in September 2020 following closure due to the global coronavirus 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 our school or college.

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

This policy draws on government guidelines to secondary schools on planning for tier 2 local restrictions

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

Recommendations made in the NASWT report on blended learning

<https://www.naswt.org.uk/advice/in-the-classroom/remote-and-blended-learning.html>

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research evidence on supporting pupils to learn remotely

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/best-evidence-on-supportingstudents-to-learn-remotely/>

B. 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 has 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 pupils Lack of access to appropriate technology is a barrier to effective participation in remote learning. We need to be aware of pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils 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.

C. Defining Remote Provision

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

We also recognise that when providing remote learning variety is key. The research is clear that pupils 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 MS Teams, our virtual learning platform).

We also consider ongoing pastoral support to be central to ensuring our pupils remain linked to the WAT learning community. This occurs through a variety of contact with Form Tutors/Heads of Year/Pastoral leaders, remote assemblies and next step presentations from HE coordinators and our careers team.

The government has specified minimum expectations for remote provision:

- set assignments so that pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils' understanding

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

D. Specific approaches for different scenarios where blended learning may be required

i) **Underlying principle based upon EFF research.**

For the policy to be sustainable, staff wellbeing, workload and working practices underpin the policy. Teaching staff need the capacity within directed time to produce high quality material and resources, much of which does not already exist. Therefore, the policy reflects this important need. Blended learning requires learners to engage with a range of tasks set by teaching staff, including teacher delivered instruction (although this will be the minority of the remote learning experience).

Through each stage of the blended learning offer, learners will have a proportion of teacher instruction, engagement with preloaded teacher generated resources, and completion of independent tasks. An indicative timetable is shown below for both Wootton Upper school and Kimberley College.

ii) Intended blended learning at Wootton Upper School.

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| <p>For all subjects studied for up to four hours in a two-week period e.g. Combined Science biology in Year 10</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ One lesson will be live teaching ❖ One or two lessons will be pre-recorded ❖ One or two lessons will be set work – independent work in the form of a project, and assessed task or practice questions |
| <p>For all subjects studied for more than four hours in a two-week period e.g. English, maths, Triple science biology, science in year 9</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Two lessons will be live teaching ❖ The rest will be split between pre-recorded, and independent tasks |

iii) Intended blended learning at Kimberley College.

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| <p>What will my lessons look like in lockdown?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ All lessons will follow a mix of live teaching, independent task completion (including engagement with online learning resources) and a mini plenary to monitor engagement and progress. Teachers will determine the proportion of live lessons as appropriate; however, it is recognised that this will be much lower than in face to face provision. |
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iv) Access to IT for synchronous learning.

The policy recognises that a significant number of learners will not have access to the necessary IT equipment for synchronous learning as they are living in households where equipment is shared. For this reason, all synchronous sessions will be recorded so that learners can participate in these sessions at a convenient time.

E. Approaches to changes in blended learning mix based upon different scenarios

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 MS Teams with notification uploaded to SHMW 24 hours in advance of any lesson they are due to teach, providing they are well and not caring for a dependant within the household who is unwell. COVID return to work procedures to be followed in line with existing absence return to work procedures.

As circumstances dictate and if the teacher remains well, then they should continue to set work via Teams with updates on MS Teams, and, in negotiation with the teacher, provision will be put in place for them to deliver lessons remotely to their examination classes.

If they are a form tutor, teachers 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. Pupil absence due to self or family isolation whilst awaiting a COVID-19 test result

Parents must inform the school/college of student absence 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 SMHW/MS Teams.

Parents/carers should notify the school or college of results and follow advice from the school about when they may return to site learning. Whilst the household is in quarantine the pupil will be set work via SMHW/MS Teams as for any other absence, and receive feedback from their teachers on what they have submitted. However, they will also have a weekly catch up (either via MS Teams or a phone call) with their form tutor/ Pastoral tutor and/ or Head of Year (HOY) as appropriate.

Pupils who are unwell need to focus on getting better and the school/college will help them to catch on any work they have missed when they return fit and well. However, pupils who are absent for Covid-related issues, and are well enough, will be able to access work they miss via MS Teams once staff have had the opportunity to upload this at the end of their working day. Students will be able to join lessons via MS Teams to participate in synchronous learning, in some subject areas.

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

In this eventuality provision will follow the designated timetable for each student, remote work set via MS Teams, and weekly catch ups with form tutors and subject teachers.

Pupils will complete tasks asynchronously and where appropriate synchronously with their peers within a timetabled lesson.

4. Track and trace case within a bubble

If a bubble is required to isolate, then their timetable will be delivered on line via Teams.

The lessons will follow a 3-part aspect:

1. Teacher input including register and check in
2. Class work
3. Teacher led Q&A plenary and AFL via MS Forms

Teachers will create calendared lessons for their classes on Teams so students can join at the same time their normal timetable stipulates. The lesson could (as per EEF research) take a number

of formats; real time, pre-recorded, assessments etc. Pupils will receive feedback via MS 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 are required to isolate at one time the school/college 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 to potentially larger groups if groups are combined in school. Students at Kimberley will not be expected to attend face to face lessons but will join the lesson via MS Teams. Staff are required to notify students of their absence in sufficient time so that unnecessary journeys are not undertaken by KS 5 learners. This will be done through SMHW notification and on MS Teams. There will also continue to be pastoral check-ins.

6. Local lockdown Tier 2

All vulnerable children and children of critical workers will continue to be taught in on site.

A weekly rota will be put place with the emphasis on keeping year group bubbles separate. Years 9, 11 will be taught in school during week 1, following their normal timetable, whilst Year 10 will be learning from home, attending a maximum of 5 MS Teams lessons per day mixed with independent work set by teachers. In week 2 Year 10 will be taught in school and Years 9, 11 will be learning from home in the same way.

As far as possible we will keep provision at Kimberley College as close as possible to tier 1 provision however, in the event this is not possible we will ensure the following provision. In a week 1 year 12 learners will attend college, whilst Year 13 learners will attend lessons online via MS Teams. This process will be reversed in week 2.

Teachers will deliver lessons to learners from the site they are timetabled. If teachers are in isolation and not available on site, they will deliver lessons from home following their timetable. Lessons to students who are required to isolate will follow the principles outline in section D of this policy.

Key and critical worker children and those identified as vulnerable in the year group who are not in face to face provision, will attend lessons remotely from Wootton Upper School (Y 9- 11) and Kimberley College (Y12 & 13). Students will go to their timetabled classroom where the teacher will provide them with the resources and support that will enable them to learn synchronously with their peers on MS Teams.

7. Local lockdown Tier 3

All vulnerable children and children of critical workers will continue to be taught in on site. All other learners will revert to remote learning following their normal in school timetable. This will be delivered on MS Teams.

Teachers who are well and not isolating will follow their normal timetable. Teaching will be delivered from either the Kimberley or Wootton site as directed by the timetable. All teaching will be through MS Teams.

8. Whole School Closure Tier 4

All vulnerable children and children of critical workers will continue to be taught on site, unless DfE or local authority guidance suggests otherwise. Trust provision will be delivered from Wootton

Upper School only. Staff will be rotated to support on site learning, this will be limited to the number of staff needed to adequately and safely make appropriate educational provision.

Vulnerable and key worker children on site will follow the same lessons as those learning remotely (synchronous). Delivery of lessons will through MS Teams. Learners on site will attend lessons in their year group IT bubble facility and will be supported by staff.

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