



Great Marlow School: Remote Learning Policy (in exceptional circumstances)

Date: January 2025

Rationale

In the event of students not being able to physically attend school due to **exceptional circumstances** Great Marlow School remains committed to the school's vision and values:

- A high quality learning environment that inspires all students, staff and the community to be compassionate, successful and resilient contributors to a better society.
- A place where opportunities are created, potential is realised and excellence is achieved.
- A compassionate and honest approach to achieving excellence

In the event of **exceptional circumstances** where the school is required to operate differently the school would implement a policy of **remote learning** that would apply if a **high proportion of the students** were required to engage in their education in a location that was not at the normal school address.

The decision to move to remote learning in **exceptional circumstances** will be made by the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School.

In the case of teachers at the school there would be the expectation that unless otherwise instructed they attend their normal place of work to deliver remote learning in the **exceptional circumstances** that were being experienced. *This policy would not apply in the event of a short-term closure, for example as a result of inclement weather.*

Remote learning (**in exceptional circumstances**) would not apply in a certain number of cases. For example, if a student

- was absent from school without parental permission
- was absent as a result of being in contravention of school or government guidance regarding taking holidays in school time
- is long term absentee from school or has been unable to attend their place of education*

*For students who are long term absentees from their normal place of education or are on roll but have not been able to attend their place of education (Great Marlow School) the school has implemented in February 2025 a **Student Share Library** area (students use their 365 account to access these resources in the student zone). All students through the **Student Share Library** will be able to access the lessons delivered in the school environment enabling them to get an experience of the learning that is taking place in their teaching groups when they are not in school.*

This policy may be revised, if necessary, in light of changing circumstances and/ or the experiences of remote learning.



Remote learning for individual students/ groups of students

Where there are a significant number of students absent from school the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School may decide as to the method of remote learning that will take place, either providing for individual students or providing for remote learning in the event of students being unable to attend the school. This will be communicated to parents and carers and students through the normal communication platforms that are used by the school.

Remote learning in the event of exceptional circumstances

In the event of students not being able to physically attend school due to exceptional circumstances, Great Marlow School will provide work through the Microsoft Teams (MT) platform. All students will be expected to log on to MT by 8.30am and where whole form groups are absent/ isolating they will be invited to join registration at 8.35am.

- Teachers will engage in live learning conversations with students through Microsoft Teams and the lessons will commence at the normal lesson time on a students' timetable. These sessions may not last for the 1-hour duration of the lesson, but teachers should be available for the lesson duration to support learning.
- Students should complete the work set as instructed by the class teacher (this may be in their exercise book/ folder or electronically in the class notebook function of Microsoft Teams).
- During a period of exceptional circumstances staff will where possible and appropriate, feedback to students in accordance with the school/ departmental feedback policy

If a student is having difficulty logging in, they should make contact with their form tutor in the first instance.

Please note that for some teachers their own personal circumstances may restrict their ability to engage in live learning conversations with students during a period of exceptional circumstances and in these situations, work will ideally be set by the classroom teacher by the start of the lesson.

Remote learning (in exceptional circumstances) in the event of a whole teaching group/ majority of a teaching group not being able to physically attend school

In the event of a whole teaching group being unable to attend school the classroom teacher should invite students to attend a remote learning experience. The invitation should be sent via MT by 8.30 on the day of the lesson. In this circumstance the classroom teacher should plan learning for the duration of the lesson. Attendance to that lesson does not need to be marked on SIMS but it would be good practice for the classroom teacher to keep a record of which students joined the lesson.

Remote learning (in exceptional circumstances) in the event of a whole form group being absent from school

The form tutor should invite tutees to registration as normal and go through (as close as is practically possible) the arranged form activities for that day. In some year groups the form group will be the teaching group for the majority, and in some cases all of the student's subjects. The form tutor should check with the students that they have received invites to their lessons (this should have been done by the classroom teacher by 8.30am). Where students have not been invited to a live learning experience the form tutor should inform their Director of Learning and Head of Department for that subject.



Remote learning (in exceptional circumstances) in the event of a year group not being able to physically attend school

In this circumstance when the rest of the school is operational but a whole year group is not on the school site then teachers will engage in live learning conversations with students through the MT platform. Lessons will commence at the allocated time on the students' timetable. For further information please see the detail on Live Learning Conversations.

Remote learning (in exceptional circumstances) when the school is operating on a rota basis to reduce actual numbers of students in school

The decision to run on an in-school attendance rota basis may be taken for a number of reasons. These reasons include high level of staff absence which means that the school cannot function in the normal way or a directive from the government that limits the amount of students that there can be in a classroom/ on a school site at any one time. This could result in a proportion of the students in each class attending the school at any one time.

Remote learning (in exceptional circumstances) for staff who are unable to for a period of time attend their normal place of work

If a member of staff is unable to attend their normal place of work, they should inform their Head of Department and member of staff who is responsible for organising the cover of lessons.

If the member of staff (in exceptional circumstances) who for example is well enough to teach but unable to attend their place of work they should aim to teach as many of their subject lessons as possible through Microsoft Teams (MT) and follow where appropriate and practically possible the normal scheme of work for that class.

The lesson that is being taught remotely will (if staffing availability allows) have a cover supervisor/ member of staff/ supervising adult in the room. The member of staff who is supervising the cover lesson will need to be added to the team so that they are able to log in to MT and access the lesson that is being taught.

It may not be appropriate or necessary for the member of staff who is teaching remotely to stay in the lesson for the whole hour. However, they should be available to answer questions from the students or member of staff covering the lesson during the time of the teaching period and should aim to join the lesson at points in the teaching period to check that students are clear on what they are learning or being asked to do.

Where practically possible it would be good practice to inform the cover teacher of a brief overview of the lesson (via email) prior to the cover lesson commencing, so that the cover teacher is aware of the lesson plan/ theme/ topic and can also inform the students of the protocol and expectations for that lesson. The member of staff who is responsible for cover at the school will inform a member of staff as soon as possible if they are covering a lesson and will then inform the isolating teacher who is covering the lesson.

If a member of staff who is not in school feels that they are unable to teach all/ some or individual lessons remotely during the period of absence, then this should be communicated to their Head of Department who should then liaise with their LT line manager.

When a member of staff (**in exceptional circumstances**) is unable to attend their normal place of work it would be good practice although not essential for the member of staff/ Head of Department to communicate to the parents/ carers of the teaching group and inform them that for a period of time the classroom teacher will be teaching remotely.

**Approaches to Remote Learning in exceptional circumstances**

Situation	Approach
1. Students absent with Illness/injury	<p>Work will be set on Teams for the student(s) to complete. Teachers will endeavor to set the work on the day of the lesson but this may not always be possible, particularly on the first day of absence. The expectation is that work will be set, at the latest by the end of the following day.</p> <p>The work set will allow the student to access learning materials but these may not be the same materials or resources that were used in the in-school lesson.</p>
2. Student absent with symptoms and awaiting test or test results and/or Household Isolating	
3. Student Quarantining	
4. Individual students with Coronavirus	
5. Whole Class Self Isolation/or working from home due to an insufficient number of teachers to run the curriculum	<p>Work will be set on Teams for the student(s) to complete. Wherever possible, the class will be invited to participate in a live learning conversation for a minimum of 20 minutes over Teams video/audio conference facility to support the work set for each lesson. Lessons will follow the school timetable and each will begin with a live learning conversation unless communicated otherwise.</p>
6. Whole Year Group Self Isolation/or working from home due to an insufficient number of teachers to run the curriculum	
7. Partial School Opening (teaching half classes in school on a rota basis to reduce actual numbers of students in school)	<p>Work will be set on Teams for the student(s) to complete. The half class, not in school, will be invited, whenever possible, to participate in a live learning conversation for a minimum of 20 minutes over Teams video/audio conference facility to support the work set for each lesson.</p>
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Key Stage 5 only students can be invited to participate in live learning conversations in Microsoft Teams through scenarios 1-4 • Live learning conversations are unlikely to last for the whole lesson • When setting work on Teams it is acceptable to put a brief post out to the class: <p>@2018 KS5 D - Ge1 Geography Classwork 25/9/20: For the students who were absent from the lesson today please access lesson 5 in Files and look at the PowerPoint. Answer questions on slides 4, 6 and 8</p>	



Setting of tasks using Teams (in exceptional circumstances)

Subject areas will where possible and appropriate set work in accordance with existing schemes of work and will aim to allow students to make progress at the same pace as they would in school. Some tasks set may require an adapted approach from both teacher and student, but should replicate where possible, the level of challenge that would be appropriate to a 'normal' classroom environment.

Tasks will be set through Microsoft Teams. It will be the responsibility of the subject leader to determine and inform staff and students of the method by which classwork is communicated to students through MT in that department. It may appear as a **post** or the work will be put into the classwork function of **class notebook**. For assessed work that will receive developmental feedback work will be set using the **assignments** function of MT.

Live learning conversations in periods of exceptional circumstance

Subject areas will be requested to deliver live learning conversations in the event of students not being able to physically attend school due to exceptional circumstances (not a normal absence from school). These sessions will commence at the allocated time on the timetable but may not last for the duration of the lesson. Students will be expected to participate in these sessions, respond to teacher questions and follow the instructions given in terms of the work to be completed.

These live learning conversations may be in the format of audio or video conversations with a minimum expectation of a 20 minute live learning conversation over the course of the lesson. This could be broken into different time segments.

At Key Stage 5 only, when a student is absent (see table 1) they will receive an invite to the lesson that they are missing through Microsoft Teams and be expected to join that lesson from home. This will not happen at Key Stage 3 or 4. Although the student will be receive an invitation to the lesson and the classroom teacher will make every effort to ensure that the learning experience the students(s) receive is of a high quality the students may not have access to all the resources/ materials that the students in the classroom environment will have.

As stated earlier:

Please note that for some teachers their own personal circumstances may restrict their ability to engage in live learning conversations with students during a period of exceptional circumstances and in these situations work will ideally be set by the classroom teacher by the start of the lesson.

Feedback and assessment (in exceptional circumstances)

Developmental feedback is essential for students to make progress and is a key ingredient in the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning. Teachers will provide feedback in a number of different ways:

- Through live learning conversations.
- **In accordance with the school/ departmental feedback policy that states ' review/ detailed feedback of identified pieces of work should take place at least twice each half term for subjects with an average of more than one lesson per week and once a half term for subjects with one lesson per week'.**

Work that will receive detailed feedback will be set through the assignments function of MT. Students should submit this work through MT and will receive feedback from staff on the work submitted.



Teachers may also provide feedback through

- The school email system – either to individuals or class groups
- Oral feedback through Teams
- Live learning conversations

Expectations of students in periods of exceptional circumstance

If a student is well enough, they are expected to participate as fully as possible in registration and all lessons through remote learning. This includes attending and participating in live learning conversations, submitting work as requested by the teacher and completing, when set independent/ preparatory work.

Students should log on to Microsoft Teams by 8.35 and participate in form group activities.

A student who is unable to participate in live learning conversations or complete work that has been set due to illness will be supported to catch up on this work either through home learning or when the school re-opens and the student returns to school.

If there are questions from a student relating to tasks that have been set then they should communicate this in the first instance to their classroom teacher through the post function on MT

Should there be wider concerns from the student then these should be communicated to the Director of Learning or Student Support Officer for that year group.

Students should submit work in accordance with the instruction(s) they receive from the subject teacher.

If parents/ carers have questions regarding the work set they should communicate this in the first instance to the classroom teacher via email.

Student Participation in Teams Lessons in periods of exceptional circumstance

Working across a video-conferencing platform is something many students and staff are now familiar with. In working in this way students and staff involved need to understand expectations and matters of safeguarding. Even though you will be in your home, you should consider a Microsoft Teams live learning conversation to be a part of school. As such, our school rules apply:

- We respect ourselves, each other and the school community
- We are safe and act responsibly
- We are ready to learn and make progress

Positive and Safe Behaviours (in exceptional circumstances)

- Conduct yourself as you would in a normal learning environment and be punctual to the start of the lesson/ live learning conversation
- Use appropriate language and contribute when requested. As you would in the classroom environment – respect the opinion of others.
- Wear appropriate clothing and choose an appropriate location for the live learning conversation
- Be punctual
- Refrain from personal comments – especially regarding the location of other students
- Do not generate comments or content that hinders the good order of the session e.g. unnecessary messaging in the chat.
- Allow the teacher to lead the learning conversation



- The meeting is private and cannot be recorded or shared – all content is subject to the same policies regarding behaviour and use of technology that we have in school. School sanctions can reasonably be applied to behaviour that breaches our policies.
- Do not use Teams video conferencing feature to contact teachers at any time other than a designated lesson time – only use the POST feature to contact the teacher
- Other family members should not contribute or be involved in the live learning conversation. We understand that other people may well be ‘seen’ on screen in some households but they cannot be involved and you may be removed from the meeting if this occurs.
- Teachers can instigate meetings with parents/ carers through MT but it is entirely up to the parent/ carer if they want to conduct a meeting/ conversation with a member of staff in this way
- Teachers will endeavour to respond to all communications within 24 working hours. Please remember that members of staff will only be accessing communication between the hours of 8.00-4.30pm.

Expectations of teachers and subject areas in a period of exceptional circumstance

Teachers will be expected to be at school even in the event of a year group/ school lockdown unless otherwise informed by the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School.

Teachers who are at home should set work on MS Teams and wherever possible this should be supplemented by live learning conversations on MS Teams.

Teachers will be provided with a school device to use. If there are IT related issues please contact ithelpdesk@gms.bucks.sch.uk

- In the event of students not being able to physically attend school due to exceptional circumstances teachers are expected to engage in live learning conversations with their teaching groups. Where this is not possible the class teacher should inform their Head of Department and set appropriate work for that teaching group. The Head of Department should communicate this to the Leadership Team Line Manager for the department.
- At Key Stage 5 when a student is absent in a period of exceptional circumstance the student will receive an invite to the lesson through Microsoft Teams and be expected to join that lesson from home. This will not happen at Key Stage 3 or 4.
- Teachers should where possible set work in accordance with departmental Schemes of Work. Where this is not possible it is the responsibility of the Head of Department to support teachers in the department in setting appropriate work.
- Work set should, where possible allow the students to have a range of activities to do so that work is not exclusively limited to the screen.
- Heads of Department have responsibility for overseeing the quality of work set in their department in accordance with the Quality Assurance (QA) policy.
- Feedback should where possible take place in accordance with the school/ departmental feedback policy. Feedback should be detailed and developmental in nature.
- Where there are concerns regarding the frequency with which a student is engaged with their learning then the subject teacher should continue with the normal routines in place in terms of contacting parents, liaising where appropriate with the form tutor, Director of Learning and/ or Head of Department.
- All teachers at the school have been trained in the use of Microsoft Teams, which in the event of a school shutdown will be the main platform of communication. Teachers who require support on Teams in the event of students not being able to physically attend school due to exceptional circumstances should contact a member of staff from the Microsoft Teams support team or the ithelpdesk@gms.bucks.sch.uk
- Teachers who require support, when the school is operating in exceptional circumstances with remote learning should in the first instance communicate this to their Head of Department who if unable to



support the teacher will seek further assistance from their Leadership Team Line Manager or Head of School for Teaching and Learning.

- Teachers should be contactable remotely by their colleagues, parents and students during the course of the normal working day. For those teachers that are part-time the expectation is that you are contactable only on the days that you are contracted to work.
- Heads of Department and Leadership team line managers should use Microsoft Teams to conduct meetings in accordance with the normal meeting schedule in place
- All forms of communication should take place through official school channels – school email and Microsoft Teams
- All staff at the school retain their roles and responsibilities in a period of lockdown unless otherwise instructed by the Headteacher.

Pastoral care during a school closure (in exceptional circumstances)

In the event of a school closure the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of students is with the parent(s)/ carer(s). Form tutors are expected to conduct registration through Microsoft Teams and if they have concerns regarding a students they should contact the appropriate person. This could be the parent/ carer or within school the Director of Learning for that year group who will work with the Student Support Officer for the year group and Leadership Team link.