Camphill Primary School

Remote Learning Policy

March 2021

Introduction

At Camphill Primary School, we believe that it is vitally important that as a school community, we endeavour to ensure that children consistently have access to a good quality education, as is their protected right noted by Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As such the school is committed to continually reviewing and developing its practices to ensure that all members of the school community have access to a consistent and effective education. This includes learning occurring remotely at home at the end of the school day in addition to homework, periods of time when children are required to self-isolate due government guidelines and short term and long term closures of the school building. The Covid-19 pandemic, beginning in 2019, made it clear that such a policy would be effective in helping all within the school community better understand the school's plans and expectations during emergency closures.

In Camphill we recognise that there has been much disruption to children's education, therefore, we are committed to ensuring that all children continue to receive a quality education should the need for Remote Learning arise.

Remote Learning - is where the children and/or the teacher are not physically present in the classroom. The teacher provides educational resources, information and support for pupils through online learning platforms and pupils can return their work to the teacher digitally. Depending on the length of the closure, hard copy learning packs will also be provided alongside the online information. In Camphill we are using an effective home-school platform on our School website, which allows managed communication between the teacher and the children/families. We will also use the c2k provided learning platform Microsoft Teams once staff, pupils and families are familiar with using Teams.

Remote learning can occur synchronously with real-time teacher to pupil or peer-to-peer interaction and collaboration, or asynchronously, with self-paced learning activities that take place independently of the teacher.

Not all children can access devices at the same time or 'live' considering we are a family school where there are often multiple siblings in families. With a range of scenarios including parents working from home using devices or indeed out at work during the day and unable to supervise learning activities, 'live' lessons (which require adult supervision, individual devices and whole school co-ordination/timetabling) simply would not work for most families. As such, the focus of our Remote Learning will be asynchronous activities set out on a daily basis throughout any school closure.

Blended Learning – was developed in its current guise as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and occurs when some children in a class may be at home participating in remote learning while some children are in school receiving face-to-face instruction from the teacher.

It is important to note that this policy does not apply in the case of short-term absence due to illness, holiday or other occasion. Children who are absent from school due to ill-health are deemed to be unfit for school and therefore not in need of home learning. As is normal practice, they will be supported upon their return to school to address areas of learning missed. In cases of long-term sickness, the school will work in partnership with families, EWO and EOTAS to ascertain need and design a learning programme as advised to each individual circumstance. Remote Learning applies to those cases where pupils are in good health and have been asked to self-isolate either as a result of a confirmed covid case/contact at school, where it is required via familial/community contact, or when partial or full school closure happens.

Flexibility of Learning

We understand that the circumstances that cause our school to close will affect families in a number of ways. In our planning and expectations, we are aware of the need for flexibility from all sides:

- parents may be trying to work from home so access to technology as a family may be limited;
- parents may have two or more children trying to access technology and need to prioritise the needs of young people;
- teachers may be trying to manage their home situation and the learning of their own children; and
- systems may not always function as they should.

An understanding of, and willingness to adapt to, these difficulties on all sides is essential for success.

Due to a range of factors which will affect each household's capacity to carry out remote learning, there will be a degree of flexibility with regard to submission of work and/or feedback.

It is important that parents strive to achieve the targets set for their children and seek support from the school if required.

Children and parents should consider the arrangements as set out in this document as highly recommended.

If for any reason you are affected by any of the above, please contact the school by telephone or email info@camphillps.ballymena.ni.sch.uk

School Expectations

We believe that it is in the best interests of our children that we continue to provide structured support to the best of our ability. The work that the children are engaging in is part of our current planning and cannot be considered as optional. Teachers will be expecting children to complete and return daily activities. This will form the main component of our attendance strategy during periods of remote and online learning.

Teaching Staff will:

• Share teaching and learning activities with their class through the Home Learning section of our website or Microsoft Teams. This could be done through text instructions, pre-recorded teaching videos, video links or audio recordings. For longer school closures, hard copy learning packs will be provided to go alongside the online information;

• Continue teaching in line with current planning that is differentiated and already in place throughout the school;

• Ensure that the content of any websites / links posted for Home Learning are age appropriate;

• Accept the fact that learning remotely will be more difficult, so tasks will be set in smaller steps to allow for this;

• Reply to messages, set work and give feedback on activities during the normal teaching hours 9am – 3pm;

• Keep in contact with children/families through the school website and pastoral phone calls;

• Allow flexibility in the completion of activities, understanding that the circumstances leading to our closure will affect families in a number of ways;

• Take regular breaks away from the computer or iPad to engage in other professional duties as much as circumstances allow eg Policy Development or planning; and

• If unwell themselves, be covered by another staff member or year group colleague for the sharing of activities. Follow up of messages on the school website during this time will not be undertaken until the teacher is fit to work.

Children will:

• Be assured that health and wellbeing is a priority and therefore take regular breaks, get fresh air, exercise and maintain a reasonable balance between online engagement and offline activities;

• Work with their family at home to access the Home Learning work and activities set by their teacher each day;

• Follow their parents' or guardians' instructions as they are trying their best to help them;

• Try their best to attempt all the activities set;

• Take pride in the presentation of their work;

• Check their work carefully;

• Let their parent or guardian know if they are finding a task difficult. They will then let the teacher know, who will be able to help;

• Only access the material shared by their teacher and ask for parental permission to use technology for anything beyond that;

• Read daily, either independently or with an adult and where applicable engage with Reading Eggs, Bug Club, Epic or Accelerated Reader;

- P1 – P4 will continue to use Mathseeds and P5 – 7 will continue to use Doodle Maths;
- Take regular breaks from work, just like in school. We all need a quick break during tasks with some light physical activity;
- Take some time each day to carry out activities away from a digital screen;
- Recognise that remote learning can make everyone feel different and experience a range of emotions. Talk to a trusted adult if you are feeling sad or under pressure;
- Know their teacher is only expecting them to try their best. Everyone makes mistakes and that is okay. It is how our brains learn and get bigger;
- Remember that the school's rules about using the computer and staying safe online apply to all remote learning work;
- Remember that there are always adults in school ready to help them;
- Consider using the school closure time to learn a new skill, follow their own interests to discover more about the world around us or just be creative!

The school understands that remote learning can be a difficult time for pupils as they adapt to new ways of working. Throughout previous periods of remote learning we have been very proud of the achievements of our pupils and how they have adapted to a different style of school.

Parents/Guardians will:
- Support their child's learning to the best of their ability by following the resources, explanations and advice on the school's Home Learning posts;
- Encourage their child to complete their Home Learning to the best of their ability by accessing and engaging with the Home Learning posts from their teacher;
- Maintain regular contact with the class teacher through the website Home Learning comments and upload sections. We would encourage work completed each day to be uploaded to the class teacher daily as soon as possible for feedback. However, we recognise that home circumstances may make this difficult and so would encourage checking in with teachers at a minimum, least once a week;
- Refrain from screenshotting or copying any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform outside of the website Home Learning section or Teams;
- Know they can contact the teachers for any work related enquiries by sending a message on the website Home Learning section or by contacting the school office by telephone or email info@camphillps.ballymena.ni.sch.uk;
- Check their child's completed work each day and encourage the progress that is being made;
- Keep the class teacher informed of any pastoral care needs as normal;
- Keep the school updated on the test results or sickness of their child;
- Follow all government advice regarding isolation and testing; and

• Be mindful of mental well-being of both themselves and their child and encourage their child to take regular breaks, play games, get fresh air and relax.

As a school community we realise that the pressure of remote learning lands firmly at the feet of parents and guardians, many of whom are already under a great deal of pressure with their own work or family situations. As such we seek to work in strong partnership with parents to make remote learning as beneficial and stress free as possible. Our priority remains the health and wellbeing of all children. All work is set on the school's Home Learning section of the website and may be set on Teams in future. These are easy to access resources available from any web browser. There is no expectation that work must be printed, rather work can be copied by parents or pupils from the screen. Hard copy printed Home Learning packs will be provided for longer school closures.

N.B. In compliance with Copyright Law and regulations governing the use of photocopiable or purchased materials parents must note that resources are for viewing online only such as ebooks. They must not be printed, photocopied or distributed. The school will not take responsibility for any breach of Copyright Law.

Links with other Policies:
This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies, available on our school website:
- Whole School Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection/GDPR Policy
- Online/E-Safety Policy
- ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy

This policy was approved by the School Governors on: Date ……………………………….

Signed …………………………………………………………………….   Date ………………………………
(Chair of Governors)

Signed …………………………………………………………………….   Date ……………………………….
(Principal)

This policy will be reviewed in January 2023 or as required in line with DE Guidance.