



Blended Learning and Remote Learning Policy

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Policy Cover Note

Title of the Policy	Blended Learning and Remote Learning Policy
Summary/Reason for bringing to Board for Approval	New Policy
Statutory Requirement	No
Decisions to be made / recommendation on options	To be approved
Name of the author	Abbie Rock
Date written	July 2021
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Policy/Procedure to be published on the trust website	Yes
Policy/procedure to be published on the Academy/Primary website	Yes
Amendments/Updates	

Blended Learning and Remote Learning Policy

1. Context

The closure of schools in March 2020 due to Covid-19 saw a wide variety of home learning policy and practices implemented over the lockdown period. Essa Academy developed Essa Live (SharePoint) and the use of Microsoft Teams to engage students in learning from home. Our use of technology in relation with home learning has significantly improved over the past 12 months, which has led to a new approach to home learning.

2. Rationale

This policy is an opportunity to ensure that home learning is fully embedded into the delivery of the Academy's curriculum in a meaningful and sustainable way for all students. Its purpose is to provide a structured approach to blended learning and remote learning which ensures consistency and equity for all pupils, making the most of the systems and strategies which were so well-developed during lockdown. Reading is also a key priority for our students at Essa Academy and we aim for this policy to support the development of reading through a focus on pre-reading using Newsela and Essa Live.

3. Aims

- To ensure equity of learning and curriculum opportunities for students in school and at home.
- To develop reading through a blended learning approach using through Newsela (or other appropriate sources) and Essa Live.
- To allow students to make connections to the wider world at home and in the classroom through pre-reading and prior learning at home.
- To empower faculties to plan blended learning and remote learning around their curriculum and the needs of their subjects and students.
- To ensure any students who need to learn from home are able to continue with their education remotely.
- To set out expectations for all members of staff with regards to blended learning and remote learning across the Academy.
- To ensure a consistent yet faculty-driven approach to blended learning and remote learning which is understood by staff, students and families
- To provide appropriate guidelines for data protection and safeguarding around blended learning and remote learning.

4. Principles

- Pupils are inspired, motivated and engaged to learn through blended learning approaches.
- Pupils are encouraged to become independent learners and readers.
- Making connections and links across subjects and the wider world is at the core of our curriculum model.
- Literacy and communication are recognised as important attributes and core skills for staff and students as part of our eight wonders.
- Digital literacy is recognised as an important attribute and a core skill for academic staff and students as part of our eight wonders.
- Consolidation and retrieval are integral aspects of learning.
- Teacher workload must be taken into account when deciding on the blended learning and remote learning offer; this approach is built around maximising potential output in the most efficient way possible.
- Staff are encouraged to find their own strategies and systems within the blended learning and remote learning policy which fit the needs of their classes, subjects and students.
- Staff are encouraged to be innovative and share best practice.

5. Blended Learning

- At Essa Academy home learning intends to prepare students for their upcoming lesson or consolidate learning previously studied. The majority of blended learning should be set digitally through Essa Live, with exceptions made for students who are unable to access this or in the case of practical subjects or tasks.
- Blended Learning should have a focus on literacy / reading where possible to encourage students to read at home.
- Every Faculty has a blended learning plan with activities / texts pre-planned and mapped into the curriculum.
- The Academy's platform for sharing blended learning resources and setting work will be on Essa Live with a link shared on Microsoft Teams / ClassCharts.
- Pupils will be able return/submit completed tasks through Teams / ClassCharts through Quizzes / Forms in assignments, however the majority of student output from blended learning should be measured in class during the lesson.
- All Blended Learning tasks should be uploaded to ClassCharts by the class teacher, so they can be viewed by students and parents.

5.1 Blended learning approaches

The ownership is placed on faculties and subject teachers to develop a blended learning plan which meets the needs of their students and is mapped into curriculum plans. Below we have highlighted some proven blended learning approaches which we recommend, however each faculty will have a different approach to this.

Within this blended learning policy however we do expect tasks to be set regularly for each class with the expectation of:

- Core subjects: 1 x blended learning task per week
- Non-core subjects: 1 x blended learning task every two weeks

Blended learning tasks must be recorded on ClassCharts.

Examples:

Pre-reading:

Setting pre-reading for blended learning is an excellent way to develop reading skills, make connections to the wider world and set a task which can prepare them for a future lesson. Newsela is an excellent resource for sourcing appropriate pre-reading material for all subjects as it provides differentiated texts around a wide range of topics. These texts can be downloaded as PDFs and shared with students using Essa Live. See the flowchart below:

Blended Learning Flow Chart for Pre-Reading Teachers

1. Use the Faculty Curriculum Plan to identify where pre-reading fits. Choose an article which links to this section of the scheme of work.



Your Literacy Lead may have saved articles on Essa Live already which fit in with the curriculum. You can also use other sources for texts providing they are suitable.

2. Upload the article(s) to Essa Live in your faculty / subject's pre-reading section.



If you have a mixed ability class you may want to set up an Essa Live page with the article available in different levels, so your students can select a level appropriate to them.

Lexile Score Table from www.lexile.com

Age	School Year	Typical Lexile Level
7	3	300-800
8	4	400-900
9	5	500-1000
10	6	600-1100
11	7	700-1200
12	8	800-1300
13	9	900-1400
14	10	1000-1700
15	11	1100-1700
16	12	1200-1700

Use this chart to help identify an appropriate level for your class.

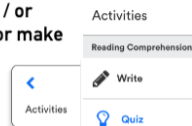
3. Set the pre-reading for your class.

Pre-reading should be set regularly and should be mapped into the curriculum plans for each subject. This way, reading is purposeful and connects with the learning.

- a) Show students how to access the pre-reading on Essa Live
- b) Students to write the deadline for pre-reading in planners
- c) Post link to pre-reading in Teams just to make sure!

4. Check understanding and engagement (low stakes quiz)

Newsela comes with a ready-made quiz and / or writing prompt for every article. Use this to (or make up your own!) to check understanding and engagement in the next lesson. This could be completed as a Do Now.



5. Discuss the bigger picture

How did this article connect to the wider world, Essa world, careers and / or the lesson / topic you are studying?

Low stakes quizzes:

Microsoft Teams can be used to set low stakes quizzes for students through Microsoft Forms. These can be used to assess understanding of a previous lesson, assess prior knowledge ahead of an upcoming lesson to allow teachers to plan appropriately, or assess students based on a pre-reading task or multi-media task they have been set to complete at home.

Recall and Revisit:

As all lesson resources and PowerPoints are available on Essa Live, an effective blended learning task may be for students to be asked to revisit a specific lesson studied in a previous topic or year in preparation for an upcoming lesson to recap prior knowledge and help students make connections.

Other:

Faculties are given the flexibility to plan blended learning in a way which they feel best meets the needs of the students in their subjects. Other blended learning approaches may be taken providing the non-negotiables are still met:

- At least 1 x task per week for core
- At least 1 x task every two weeks for non-core
- Blended learning tasks are recorded in planners

6. Remote Learning

In the instance where a student needs to learn from home, for example for Covid-related absence (self-isolation or bubble closures) or other event, remote learning will be available for students in the following ways:

The blended learning approach considers how to incorporate:

Synchronous Learning

Synchronous learning is teaching and learning that happens where the teacher is present at the same time as the pupils, meaning that there is real-time interaction between them. E.g. flipped learning / pre-reading - pupils engage with material before discussions in class.

Asynchronous Learning

Asynchronous learning is learning that does not necessarily happen at the same time for the teacher and the pupils. There is no real-time interaction; the learning resources are created and made available for pupils to use later.

6.1 Individual student isolation

If an individual student is isolating and the remainder (or majority) of their class or year group are still in the Academy, students can access remote learning via Essa Live.

Students can find the lesson they are studying on Essa Live, complete the work set and send it to their teacher via Teams. Students should follow their normal timetable.

Teachers can also send students their work directly using Microsoft Teams, either through an individual message or through the class Teams group.

6.2 Whole class / year group / Academy isolation

In the event where a full class is isolating at home the teacher will teach their lessons live through Microsoft Teams. The students should follow their normal timetable and log into Teams at the start of every lesson to access their live lesson. This usually follows the structure of the following:

- Live introduction by the teacher (10 minutes)
- Independent learning on the set task and submission of work (30 minutes)
- Live plenary by the teacher (10 minutes)

In the event of a full class isolating, the teacher should record 'live lesson attended' or 'live lesson not attended' at the end of every live lesson on ClassCharts.

The teacher should also record 'work submitted' or 'work not submitted' on ClassCharts once a week for every class they teach remotely.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The Senior Leadership Team

- Develop, monitor and evaluate the whole Academy strategy for blended learning.
- Track blended learning and remote learning using ClassCharts.

- Communicate with, and provide support to, faculties, staff, pupils and parents, to ensure effective implementation of blended learning and remote learning.
- Provide opportunities for appropriate CPD and appropriate resources to ensure that staff can deliver blended learning and remote learning effectively.
- Ensure accountability of the blended learning and remote learning processes through quality assurance, faculty and teacher self- evaluation.

7.2 Teaching and Learning Team

- Research, trial and develop excellent practice and new innovation, using varied strategies for blended learning and remote learning (including pre-reading).
- Provide a forum for colleagues to discuss, trial and implement strategies to: improve the quality of blended learning and remote learning; share good practice; develop ideas; and reflect on teaching and learning.
- Work towards helping to create a proactive school culture where the quality of blended learning and remote learning is openly observed, discussed, challenged and enhanced within a supportive and non-judgemental environment.
- Promote high quality blended learning and remote learning

7.3 Faculty Leaders

- Ensure that teachers set regular blended learning tasks in line with Academy expectations for students to complete at home (at least once per week for core and once every two weeks for non-core).
- Lead and support the faculty in the design and development of a high-quality blended learning programme for students built into curriculum plans.
- Ensure Essa Live is up to date with curriculum resources at least one term in advance.
- Support teachers and literacy leads in ensuring that any pre-reading materials used fit in with the curriculum and are relevant for the needs of the students.
- Monitor and evaluate the provision of blended learning and remote learning through quality assurance and faculty self-evaluation.
- Quality assure the pre-reading materials on Essa Live and the follow up process within the lesson (e.g. through a low stakes quiz)
- Ensure teachers in the faculty communicate with students and parents (as appropriate and as per the Behaviour Policy) to ensure engagement and progress with blended learning and remote learning.
- Disseminate excellent practice amongst colleagues, both formally and informally.
- Work with the faculty literacy lead to alert members of the team to available resources (on Newsela and from other sources) to support blended learning.
- Ensure that the workload of team members is commensurate with their normal teaching commitment.
- Inform their Line Manager with any issues regarding the delivery of blended learning or remote learning.

7.4 Literacy Leads

- Work with the Faculty Leader to source available resources (on Newsela and from other sources) to support the pre-reading approach to blended learning.
- Populate Essa Live with faculty / subject specific pre-reading materials linked to different topics and parts of the curriculum.
- Model best practice across the faculty and share ideas / strategies for developing blended learning through pre-reading.
- Utilise Newsela to source articles in line with 'making connections' including careers articles and articles which link the subject to the bigger picture.
- Hold CPD within Faculty where necessary around blended learning and pre-reading.
- Attend the Literacy personalised CPD pathway as part of the wider Academy CPD offer.
- Attend one to one meetings with the Assistant Principal for Literacy.
- Support faculty leader with quality assurance of blended learning both on Essa Live and in the classroom.

7.5 Subject Teachers

- Set regular blended learning tasks for students to complete at home (at least once per week for core and once every two weeks for non-core) in line with faculty approaches and expectations.
- Ensure Essa Live is up to date with curriculum resources at least one term in advance.
- Check their registers for any students who are isolating or working from home. Ensure that work is set on Essa Live (non-negotiable) and a direct link to the lesson sent on Teams where possible.
- Deliver live lessons to students via Teams in the event of a full or mixed class isolation.
- Collaborate with colleagues to design and develop high-quality blended learning and remote learning experiences for pupils mapped against the curriculum, in accordance with faculty and whole school plans.
- Continue to strive to deliver consistently excellent lessons in accordance with the Teaching & Learning policy which incorporate blended learning.
- Engage with CPD to ensure proficiency in delivering effective blended learning and remote learning.
- Plan and deliver blended learning experiences for all students centred around pre-reading.
- Ensure blended learning and remote learning is inclusive of those with additional learning needs, taking into account Individual Development Plans and ensuring that pupils' needs are fully catered for.
- Ensure any texts provided for pre-reading are suitable for the reading ages of students in the class. Newsela can be used to effectively ensure this.
- Communicate with students and parents, as appropriate and as per the Behaviour Policy, to ensure engagement and progress with the blended learning experience. Teachers are expected to respond to pupils and/or parents within the normal working hours only.
- Ensure blended learning tasks are followed up in the lesson to assess student engagement and understanding. This could be done through low stakes quizzing, questioning, discussion or written / practical task.
- Ensure all blended learning tasks are recorded on ClassCharts.
- Ensure remote learning is recorded on ClassCharts where appropriate.
- Provide paper packs to students if and where necessary (although the expectation is that blended learning and remote learning provision is on Teams and Essa Live in the vast majority of cases)
- Provide support to students via Microsoft Teams where necessary within designated working hours.

7.6 The Bridge

- In collaboration with the faculty literacy leads / EAL leads, provide support and assistance to faculties and teachers in sourcing appropriate resources where necessary for students with SEND / EAL.
- Assist with implementation of pupils' Individual Support Plans so that their needs are fully catered for through blended learning.
- Support their designated class with blended learning and remote learning where necessary.
- Provide support to the students via Microsoft Teams where necessary.

7.7 IT Staff

- Set up and support with any arising issues with systems used to set and collect work including Essa Live and Microsoft Teams.
- Help staff, students and parents with any technical issues they're experiencing where necessary within working hours.
- Review the security of remote learning systems and flag any data protection breaches to the data protection officer.
- Support the Assistant Principal for Blended Learning in developing innovative approaches to implementing effective blended learning and remote learning.
- Ensure IT infrastructure is maintained in a timely fashion to ensure minimum disruption to learning patterns.
- Monitor Office 365, ClassCharts and other systems and notify the senior team if any issues arise.

7.8 Students

- Complete all blended and remote learning tasks set prior to the lesson as directed by the teacher.
- Check ClassCharts once per day to view their blended learning timetable and record the completion of each task set.

- Check Microsoft Teams for other information on tasks, assignments and resources daily, throughout the school week.
- If isolating or working from home, follow the normal timetable and access work using Essa Live and Microsoft Teams. Submit work to teachers on time.
- Use Microsoft Teams to access links to communicate with their teachers.
- Use Essa Live to access links to remote learning / blended learning directly if necessary.
- Dedicate appropriate time to blended learning and remote learning, in order to complete the tasks set by the due date.
- Identify a comfortable and quiet space to complete blended learning at home.
- Engage in all learning set with academic honesty.
- Submit any quizzes / tasks linked to pre-reading prior to the deadline set by the teacher.

7.9 Parents

- Access ClassCharts to view the blended learning timetable for their students via School Gateway.
- Contact the school via email if their child is unwell or unable to complete blended learning tasks set.
- Contact the school if their child needs to self-isolate and therefore learn from home.
- Seek help if their child is struggling with any aspects of blended learning or remote learning, including accessing the provision.
- Check the student's ClassCharts timetable weekly to view blended learning tasks set.

7.10 Designated safeguarding lead

- Ensure that the referral system for dealing with any Safeguarding matters related to blended learning is known to all stakeholders.
- Ensure that all referrals are responded to as per normal safeguarding practice.
- Should the DSL Lead be unavailable the Deputy DSLs are fully informed

8. Data Protection

8.1 Accessing personal data

When accessing personal data for blended learning purposes, all staff members will:

- Make sure they know how they can access the data, such as on their password protected laptop, a work mobile phone or a secure cloud server (OneDrive).
- Know which devices they should use to access the data e.g. school provided laptop / work mobile phone. Staff should not be using their personal devices

8.2 Processing personal data

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as parent contact numbers as part of the remote learning system. Pupils will be provided with a school email address to avoid any issues regarding GDPR. However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online.

8.3 Keeping devices secure

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters (e.g. asterisk or currency symbol).
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device.
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time.
- Not sharing the device among family or friends.
- Installing antivirus and anti-spyware software.
- Keeping operating systems up to date – always install the latest updates.

9. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Literacy policy
- Safeguarding policies
- Teaching and Learning policy
- Data protection policies