



## BLENDING LEARNING POLICY

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## **BLENDED LEARNING POLICY**

### **1. Purpose**

The 2020 pandemic brought about new challenges for teaching and learning. The sudden need to adapt to distance learning allowed limited time for teachers to implement detailed procedures and fully develop their craft to move to a remote world. During this lockdown period, departments could set work either daily or weekly depending on their current circumstances. Departments could also set work using methods and platforms of their choice, although Microsoft Teams was encouraged. Weekly assessments and engagement trackers helped curriculum and pastoral teams support students through this difficult and challenging time.

From September, Wyke adopted a partial remote teaching model as part of the student induction; 50% of a student's course would be taught in the classroom at Wyke with the other 50% delivered and taught remotely. The rationale for the induction was to familiarise both staff and students to remote learning and aid preparation for when the College would be required to incorporate a blended learning approach. It also enabled a phased return on site which would aid with embedding our Covid-19 safety measures. This induction meant there was a requirement to ensure a more consistent, formalised and structured approach to blended and distance learning.

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

This policy draws on research from 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/>

This policy also draws on recommendations made from JISC and Microsoft on supporting students to learn remotely:

<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/creating-blended-learning-content>

<https://pulse.microsoft.com/en/work-productivity-en/education-en/fa2-find-out-how-to-deliver-enhanced-education-through-blended-learning/>

The Government guidelines to schools and colleges on planning for future restrictions states that, as we begin to think about learning and teaching for the next academic year, we should consider, "a blend of 'in college' and 'out of college' learning driven by a single curriculum: learners should not expect or experience two parallel curriculums, but practitioners will need to think how learning outside the classroom supports the valuable and limited contact time.

This policy will outline the types and methods of blended learning; provide guidance on the approach to blended learning that should be taken by staff, students and

parents; and aim to ensure consistency of approach across all departments here at Wyke.

Wyke will continue to provide engaging, exciting and challenging learning opportunities, both in College and at home, which will ensure our students continue to feel proud, are prepared for the world, thrive in the community and are on target to achieve academic excellence.

## 1.1 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. The evidence of what works is clear and strengthening. The EEF have identified the following key areas to consider for successful blended learning provision.

- **Teaching quality is more important than how teaching is delivered.** Providing that the established principles for introducing new knowledge are adhered to (explanation, scaffolding, and 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Different approaches to remote learning suit different types of subject 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.

A planning framework is available here:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/support-resources-for-schools/>

## 1.2 Types of Blended Learning:

- **Face-to-Face Time with students**  
This is the most traditional form of teaching and learning. It is a ‘teacher-centered’ method of education and takes place in College and in person. Students benefit from increased levels of interaction with their peers, as well as with their

teacher, and are allowed the opportunity to bond with other students. In face-to-face learning, students are held accountable for their progress at the specific time the lesson is taking place, for example, using Assessment for Learning techniques.

- **Flipped Learning**  
The flipped learning model deliberately shifts instruction to a student-centered approach, where in-class time is dedicated to: exploring topics in greater depth; introducing complex concepts; answering questions; addressing misconceptions; setting clear expectations around work to be completed at home (online or paper based); and creating rich learning opportunities.
- **Online Learning**  
The College's platforms for sharing online resources and setting work is Microsoft (MS) Teams and Moodle, with the aim for full migration over to the cloud-based platform (Office 365) in the spring/summer 2021. Students will also be able to return/submit completed tasks through this platform. It is recognised that a considerable amount of engaging and effective work has been set through platforms such as Moodle, MS Teams and YouTube over the lockdown period. The continued use of these platforms is consistent with this policy and to be encouraged.
- **Asynchronous Learning**  
Asynchronous learning is learning that does not necessarily happen at the same time for the teacher and the students. There is no real-time interaction; the learning resources are created and made available for students to use later. The main features of asynchronous learning are:
  - Resources and activities delivered online, e.g. through MS Teams;
  - Recorded lessons/video instruction/podcasts;
  - Flipped learning - students engage with material before discussions in class.
- **Synchronous Learning**  
Synchronous learning is teaching and learning that happens where the teacher is present at the same time as the students, meaning that there is real-time interaction between them. The main features of synchronous learning are:
  - Live, streamed lessons;
  - Live online/ telephone pastoral/achievement team check in sessions;
  - Paper packs and work booklets;
  - Textbooks;
  - Resources needed for projects, games, and activities, for example, music, art, performance subjects.

Different approaches to remote learning suit different types of departments, subject content, and students. Courses have a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous learning during a partial remote teaching approach as well as full remote teaching. How departments conduct this is down to them with support and quality assurance from leaders. Teachers will be supported to consistently reflect on different approaches to remote learning and what will be most effective to deliver their subject content through ongoing CPD.

## 2. Expectations

- 2.1 Establish an MS Team for each individual class and ensure it is used in the most effective and efficient way; IT HELPDESK and MIS to create these. It is important that each individual class has their own shared area rather than being part of a 'Subject Year Group' Team. This will enable the class teacher to monitor his/her own students' engagement and progress.

Ensure that the title/label of the Team clearly identifies the class, subject and teacher so that students can easily identify and quickly access work.

**Teaching quality is more important than how teaching is delivered.** What matters most is that each learning sequence builds on prior understanding. All learning sequences will include:

- Clear alignment to the curriculum
- An activation task to generate thinking
- Explicit teaching and main theoretical input
- Guidance, practice and tasks
- Micro-assessment/Knowledge checks throughout the learning episode
- Provides some form of wellbeing activity for staff and students.

- 2.2 In the event of partial remote teaching, all students will receive four allocated lessons on their timetable (blocked lessons). Depending if this is a face-to-face week (In the classroom) or during a remote week will depend on the content and skills covered. The time allocated to the lesson will be the same time for both weeks; depending on the subject and how that course delivers their remote offering will depend on the use of that 70-minute remote lesson. Where appropriate, some students and subject areas may require students to be onsite in a higher proportion to deliver the assessment requirements of the course. For example, both performance and the arts subjects.
- 2.3 Assessment, challenge, and support must take place during this time. Departments can use this allocated live remote lesson to deliver, assess flipped learning or concentrate on analysis or evaluation. Teachers could also use this slot as breakouts to support different groups of students.
- 2.4 All live remote lessons must be conducted via MS Teams meetings and start on time with a register completion in the first half of the session (Corero). If students are engaging in a pre-recorded resource, completing assessment or tasks, teachers must be available for support and challenge when required during the 70-minute lesson).
- 2.5 Students must have their cameras on during the live remote lesson with blurred backgrounds enabled. **(Safeguarding addendum for more details).**
- 2.6 Recognise the need for setting up meetings in preparation for live remote lessons.

Ensure face-to-face learning incorporates (where possible): the introduction of new concepts; the explanation of difficult concepts; problem solving; explicit teaching of new skills; tasks that complement and consolidate the learning that takes place at home; interactive discussion; practical's (as/when appropriate); the use of class time to personalise learning.

Ensure at-home (remote) learning incorporates: tasks that complement and consolidate the learning that takes place in the classroom; tasks that students can complete to enhance learning that takes place in the classroom, for example, research of/reading about a new topic to be introduced; tasks that allow students to practice new skills learnt during face-to-face time in College; note-taking, summarising and formation of questions in preparation for face-to-face time in College.

- 2.7 Recommended where possible to 'chunk' work that is to be completed. Masses of content should not simply be 'dropped' into MS Teams with a completion date. Teachers should consider learning objectives for their learning sequence and ensure that all tasks to be completed (both in College and at home) allow students to meet these objectives. Communicate these objectives clearly.
- 2.8 Make deadlines for work completion clear to students. Make explicit the method of how students can submit completed written work (e.g. during face-to-face lessons on paper/ books, by uploading to MS Teams, Turnitin or department-specific assessment completion method etc.).

Provide clear instructions for how the work set can be completed. These instructions can be delivered during the face-to-face time with students but should also be available for students to access at home, either by uploading them to MS Teams or by including them in the paper resources provided.

Consider how videos / podcasts/ practical tasks can be used effectively to supplement, complement, and assist with the completion of, work set.

- 2.9 During closure and teaching becomes fully remote, students may engage in both synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning. All students will still receive four allocated lessons on their timetable (blocked lessons) with some form of live element. Departments can decide on the content and skills covered during this live element.

The time allocated to the lesson will be the same, 70 minutes; depending on the subject and how that course delivers their remote offering will depend on the use of that 70-minute remote lesson.

The expectations of a live remote lesson will not change and must:

- Be delivered live via the MS Teams platform during the allocated timetable slot
- Have a register taken with attendance marks recorded on the system
- Include a live element that
  - reviews prior learning,
  - checks of understanding of the tasks set
  - provides some form of wellbeing activity for staff & students.

### 3. Additional Learning Support

- Use clear, consistent layouts
- Use large, bold fonts where possible with uncluttered pages and plain backgrounds
- Be consistent with where students can access documents and how they should submit work
- Provide opportunities for learning in multiple ways which appeal to different learning styles e.g. combination of video, audio and images
- Avoid the use of jargon and acronyms (never assume that students know what things mean)
- Provide exemplar answers and offer scaffolding (in the same way that teachers would on-site)
- Offer opportunities for one-to-one support and allow time for questions.
- Specific or bespoke ALS could be required for individual students. Teaching staff to work with the ALS Department to support and facilitate this.

### 4. Marking, Feedback and Assessment

As per The College's Assessment Policy, not all submitted written work needs to be quality marked in detail by the teacher; however, it is important that work completion is tracked so that students who are not engaging with the work set can be appropriately supported. It is important to remember that feedback is considered so that learning, rather than simply provision, is taking place. The nature of marking and feedback given will depend on the type of work completed and the method of submission. The College's Assessment Policy should be followed as the overall framework on which to base our approach.

Staff should consider how students can be formally assessed so that progress can be effectively monitored and intervention prescribed where necessary. Self-assessment may be an integral part of a blended learning approach; however, for this to be effective, students must be able to accurately and confidently self-assess their work and progress; therefore clear guidance and expectations relating to this will need to be provided by subject teachers.

#### 4.1 Vocational Formal Assessments

- Delivery of vocational courses is as the wider College expectations (as above); where this may differ is in relation to the setting, production, and submission of formal assessments.
- The setting of formal assignments will be undertaken in face-to-face sessions where possible but will be publicised via one of the verified College platforms, and deadlines are made clear (Moodle & MS Teams).
- Ensure feedback to students on assignments is provided in a timely manner, is in line with the agreed department assessment plan dates and follows the exam board recommended timeline (*see Assessment Policy for more details*).
- Ensure that when learners submit work, measures are taken to ensure the work is authentic and has been completed by the learner (*See Behaviour Policy, plagiarism*). If the local picture requires the College to move to a fully remote

teaching experience, teaching teams will endeavour to follow the exam board recommended guidance on formal assessments when setting, submitting and feeding back to learners. This will be subject to regional and national constraints that may impact on our students' ability to achieve.

- Where students may be disadvantaged due to remote learning, the College will convene all relevant stakeholders to provide an individual learning plan and action accordingly.

#### 4.2 Heads of Faculty and Heads of Department

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, subject leads are responsible for:

- Considering whether any aspects of the subject curriculum need to change to accommodate remote learning
- Working with teachers teaching their subject remotely to make sure all work set is appropriate and consistent
- Working with other subject leads and senior leaders to make sure work set remotely across all subjects is appropriate, consistent, and deadlines are being set at an appropriate distance away from each other
- Quality improve and support teachers to set work for independent learning tasks
- Quality improve and support teachers to plan for online teaching in live remote lessons
- Monitor and review the remote work set by teachers in their subject – explain how they will do this, such as through regular meetings with teachers or by reviewing work set
- Alerting teachers to resources they can use to teach their subject remotely
- Encourage teaching teams to engage in CPD and facilitate conversations on remote teaching.

#### 4.3 Senior Leadership Team

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the College
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning; using staff meetings and giving professional development time
- Plan and deliver CPD for teachers to be able to deliver blended learning effectively and efficiently
- Quality improve and support teachers to set work for independent learning tasks
- Quality improve and support teachers to plan for online teaching in live lessons
- Ensuring staff have access to a suitable device in their classroom or, in the event of closure, that staff have suitable at home and if not, supply them with a device during the closure period
- Ensuring students have access to a suitable device in the event of closure, and if not look to supply them with one especially if disadvantaged student during the closure period
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.

#### 4.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

Please refer to the College Safeguarding Policy and Addendum.

#### 4.5 IT HELPDESK and MIS:

- Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work
- Helping staff and parents with any technical issues they are experiencing
- Reviewing the security of remote learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the Data Protection Officer
- Assisting students and parents with accessing the internet or devices.

#### 4.6 Students and parents should expect students learning remotely to:

- Be contactable during the College day – although consider they may not always be in front of a device the entire time
- Complete work to the deadline set by teachers
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers or pastoral teams
- Alert teachers if they are not able to complete work
- Attend all live remote lessons as per their College timetable
- Students should have their cameras on and with a blurred background enabled.

**See Safeguarding Policy Addendum for full direction and expectation of students during a Live Remote Lesson.**

### 5. Training

#### 5.1 To ensure that students can make the most of blended and remote learning, they may require training and support on:

- The effective use of MS Teams: how to navigate MS Teams; how to submit work; how to keep track of tasks/assignments
- The effective use of self-assessment grids/templates.

#### 5.2 To ensure that teachers can proficiently deliver blended and remote learning experiences, they may require training and support on:

- How to efficiently use marking software, e.g. 'Turnitin'
- How to organise MS Teams and classwork into categories: to photograph their work rather than upload a 'Word' document within MS Teams and use notebook
- How to create a quiz/assignment on MS forms
- The effective use of PowerPoint including creating and embedding podcasts and video clips into PowerPoint;
- Use of hyperlinks to bring students from PowerPoint to necessary documents.

#### 5.3 Teachers may use time not spent teaching to:

- Source/create podcasts/videos relevant to schemes of work for use when students are working at home
- Create prescriptive self-assessment templates for use with students, especially for tasks that will be completed at home that would not otherwise be teacher-assessed.

## 6. **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored by the Policy Review Group.  
This policy will be reviewed annually.

## 7. **Related College Documents**

Documents related to this policy are:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Curriculum policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Teaching and Learning policies: Policy for Improvement of Performance and Learning

## **Equality and Diversity**

*This policy has been reviewed to assure the promotion of equality on grounds of gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, disability, age, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. The review deemed it to be compliant with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.*

## **General Data Protection Regulations**

*This policy has been reviewed and is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations and the College's Data Protection Policy.*

## Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment

Policy, procedure, practice or strategy:	Blended Learning Policy		
Role responsible:	Assistant Principal – Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Date:	December 2020
Briefly describe the aims, objectives & purpose of this policy, procedure, practice or strategy.	The aim of this policy is to consider the practical implementation of blended learning across several eventualities in order to ensure that students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders are clear about expectations and responsibilities.		
	Please ensure the following characteristics are considered when assessing the questions below along with any others you feel to be relevant: Gender, Sexuality, Transgenderism, Age, Race, Religion/belief, Disability, Marital/Civil partnership status, Pregnancy or maternity. Responses may be based on learner and staff data, complaints, feedback, research, student/staff surveys and/or professional judgement.		
Is there potential, or opportunity that the proposed policy, procedure practice or strategy will affect any groups adversely (including possible discrimination)? Please include any equality concerns expressed during consultation.	No		
Is there potential for, or evidence that the proposed policy, procedure or practice either promotes or fails to promote equality of opportunity for all and good relations between different groups?	Yes promotes		
If any action is required as a result of this screening exercise please note them, along with any mechanisms for reviewing the impact of the policy, procedure or practice.	Review would be needed in a full college closure		