

Purpose

The following guidance clarifies Midlothian Council's expectations for all stakeholders with regards to remote learning. The guidance takes account of that provided by the COVID Education Recovery Group (CERG) and GTCS, and supplementary information is provided reflecting the contexts of Midlothian's schools and settings.



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Key Principles (from CERG Remote Learning 08.01.21)

- remote learning will not replicate face to face in school teaching – in style, approach or hours of delivery
- class teacher retains responsibility for planning and organising children's and young people's learning, with learning supported by parents and carers
- opportunities for learners to progress and extend their learning
- approaches to assessment of learning and providing feedback that support and capture children's and young people's achievements in school and at home
- provision of learning activities to ensure engagement for all, considering the age and stage of development of learners, and introducing increasing opportunities for independent study as appropriate
- provision of learning activities for learners who require additional support for learning and any learners who may be particularly vulnerable or disadvantaged
- a shared understanding between home and school of the remote learning approach and the respective roles and responsibilities of all involved
- continued endeavours to tackle digital exclusion, including the provision of devices and connectivity solutions to support learning
- partnership working with community providers and third sector organisations to support provision.

In line with these key principles, children and young people are entitled to:

- a coherent curriculum with clear progression to support learning when they return to school
- access to high quality remote education resources
- on-line tools that will be consistently used across learning to all interaction, assessment and feedback
- regular high quality face-to-face learning and teaching using technology or other remote methods, with a daily registration/check-in available with a teacher for every learner. The format for this daily check-in may vary depending on the age and stage of learners
- learning opportunities which reflect the principles of Curriculum for Excellence allowing learners to develop their knowledge, skills and attributes in a variety of relevant contexts and across curriculum areas
- learning in literacy, numeracy and health and well-being, suitable to their age and progress
- a balance of live learning and independent activity
- access to key learning which is available for learners to revisit as often as necessary
- ongoing dialogue, reflection and feedback with teachers in relation to their own learning
- opportunities for informal engagement with other pupils.

Working Week

Teachers should continue to work within the 35-hour week. Typically, time should be split between the following activities during remote learning:

- Planning, delivering and assessing remote learning
- Engaging with children young people and families
- Supporting learners remotely
- Collaborating with colleagues
- Curriculum development
- Professional learning

Further guidance will follow.

Establishing a Routine

In 'normal' times, schools provide a structure that is comforting and reassuring to a child. Losing this routine can leave children unsettled. Teachers, parents and carers can build some structure by setting predictable times and routines for action.

A clear framework for when work is issued and returned will help children maintain good working habits throughout the week and allow families to plan use of work space and resources.

It is important for teachers, parents and carers to create a balanced routine, ensuring time to relax and exercise and to model this good practice to pupils.

How much school work should pupils expect?

The learning activities provided should proportionately reflect what pupils would expect if they were in school.

ELC

- It is important to continue to offer a broad curriculum
- Practitioners should plan for learning with the main focus being on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Learning in other areas of the curriculum can also be included. This may take the form of open ended family activities, specific outdoor learning or seasonal themes. This should provide a progression in learning and consider new learning
- Practitioners should identify suggested areas of learning for children relevant to current season, weather, local/national holidays etc. Additional activities which link to this should be shared weekly
- Key workers should continue to engage with their group of children wherever possible to ensure consistency and continuity for children and families. Other interactions which could happen during the week include, phone calls home, group chats and celebrating achievements and life events
- Parents should be encouraged to send information about completed activities e.g. photos /drawings etc and wider achievements via email, closed group social media or post

Primary

- It is important to continue to offer a broad curriculum
- Primary pupils should expect a literacy and numeracy task each day, in line with their experience of a typical school day
- Where appropriate, activities can be designed to incorporate multiple curricular areas
- Health and Wellbeing should be a feature of the daily timetable, both as a standalone subject area, and permeating other curricular areas

Secondary

- S1 - S3 pupils will be provided with learning across all curriculum areas with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. This will reflect their 'normal' school timetable allocation of subjects.
- Senior Phase pupils' allocation of work and their learning experience will be closely aligned to their current timetable
- A selection of activities for Health and Wellbeing will be threaded through the week, delivered by class teachers as appropriate

How long should each activity take?

Classroom and remote learning are completed in very different environments and learning activities may take pupils significantly longer to complete at home. This could be due to variable access to technology, a teacher input being required or a shared workspace with siblings and/or parents.

Teachers should bear this in mind when planning their learning activities and communicating their expectations.

What should be taught?

Teachers and schools should continue to be ambitious in their aspirations for pupils and this period is not to be solely used as consolidation, reinforcement or repetition but additionally include new curriculum content, scaffolded by teacher instruction via video or text, as appropriate to the needs of individual learners.

Year plans have already been created at the beginning of the session. Teachers should continue to use these as appropriate to inform their planning, along with ongoing evaluations of current remote learning experiences.

What an online learning lesson might look like

Below is an abbreviated example of what a singular learning activity might look like. **This is a guide and should be adapted by teachers to suit the needs of their pupils.**

- Text or recorded video/audio introduction to the task (5 minutes max)
- Learning intentions and success criteria shared with the activity resources
- Pupils complete assigned learning activities

- Pupils submit their task for feedback
- Teachers review the task and provide feedback
- Teachers use the information gathered to plan next steps

● Differentiation

Despite learning activities being delivered in a different way, the principles of differentiating learning to meet the needs of pupils remains unchanged. Key digital platforms for learning (Google Classroom, Seesaw and Microsoft Teams) all include the ability to assign differentiated activities to specific individuals or groups. As such, teachers should continue to differentiate learning activities for their pupils and schools should make arrangements for our intervention programmes and Support for Learning departments to continue to support pupils in their care.

Another approach to achieving differentiation is to set activities without a specific outcome or 'right' answer, allowing a more interpretative or creative approach. This gives pupils the flexibility to arrive at a more personalised result, with outcomes that match their current level of understanding.

● Assessment

Learning activities should incorporate opportunities for formative and summative assessment.

There should also be planned opportunities for high quality assessment.

Gathering this information is key to inform next steps in learning.

Further information regarding administration of SQA assessments will follow

● Feedback

Timely feedback is essential to learning; this is especially so in online learning environments where learners are unable to ask questions as they normally would in a classroom setting. Teachers should provide clear communication regarding where/how pupils should ask questions and seek clarification specific to learning targets, task requirements, and/or deadlines.

There should be some form of response to all submitted work to encourage and develop dialogue between teacher and pupil. Feedback should be appropriate to the task and not all set work will require detailed comments.

● Methods of Lesson Delivery

Remote learning is learning that is directed by practitioners and undertaken by children and young people who are not physically with the practitioner while instruction is taking place.

Remote learning can be delivered in a variety of ways. It may include reading, doing, creating and inventing, playing, problem solving, observing and investigating with some of the best learning examples not requiring technology at all, although in the current context, digital and online approaches will be commonly used.

The national guidance gives further information here, including details of supports offered nationally:

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/covid-19-education-recovery/cerg-guidance/>

Midlothian Expectations and Responsibilities

Local Authority Roles and Responsibilities

- Continue to provide support and challenge to Head Teachers to secure improvement and quality of provision
- Provide regular opportunities to check-in with Head Teachers and local authority staff to monitor health and wellbeing, and consider specific HWB online events and activities
- Keep abreast of national updates and policy changes, and ensure these are communicated timeously
- Meet weekly with Head Teachers to provide updates, support and advice
- Meet with Parent Council Chairs termly to provide updates, and to gather feedback
- Communicate regularly with parents and carers to provide authority-wide updates
- Gather learner feedback to inform planning

Head Teachers/ Senior Leadership Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- Quality Assurance of high quality learning and teaching and assessment remains the responsibility of the Head Teacher. Expectations should be shared with all teachers about robust planning and delivery of quality learning and teaching to ensure that all children make appropriate progress in their learning.
- Ensure all school staff are aware of their continued safeguarding responsibilities and related reporting procedures
- Provide regular opportunities to check-in with staff to monitor health and wellbeing, and consider specific HWB online events and activities
- Senior Leaders should have access to children's learning in order to support the quality assurance process in the most appropriate way
- Ensure the remote learning experience is equitable for all and that all children have access to and are engaging in, an appropriate curriculum. Where there are concerns around engagement actions to mitigate this should be implemented and outcomes recorded.
- Ensure all learners have access to the learning materials they need

- Ensure processes for tracking and monitoring of pupil engagement are in place
- Ensure Support for Learning teachers and support staff provide learning opportunities and support where this would usually be in place in partnership with other agencies
- In Secondary Schools, ensure Pupil Support staff will continue to provide support for wellbeing as appropriate, in partnership with other agencies
- Communicate regularly with families to let them know when remote learning will be shared with children and young people. This will provide children and families with a consistent approach of delivery.
- Communicate regularly with staff, parents and the wider school community
- Create a paper version of regular remote learning for children and young people with no or limited access to a device/internet
- Ensure that any shielding pupils are appropriately supported
- **Gather staff, parent and learner feedback**

Teacher Roles and Responsibilities

There may be times when teachers are unavailable to provide support for their timetabled classes. In these circumstances, other teachers or promoted members of staff will assume responsibility for them.

- Plan and deliver appropriate learning opportunities to ensure all children and young people receive their entitlement to a full time education. This should include core learning to ensure progression and opportunities to practise and consolidate skills.
- **Provide learners with a creative and high quality learning experience to engage them in remote learning tasks**
- Continue to plan for assessment of learning and track progress and achievement
- In Primary Schools, teachers planning for the class should include opportunities for face to face learning interactions, for example a recorded message from the teacher, sharing a story or a song, Teams class meetings, virtual assemblies, pre-recorded lessons, live delivery of an experience

(Example to follow)

This may not be solely the class teacher and could include a visiting specialist, member of SLT etc

- Daily registration/check in for every learner, recognising that the format for this may vary depending on the age and stage of learners

- Face to face learning interactions vary in style and method and it is important that staff feel confident in using different modes if they choose to do so. For that reason, CLPL will be available to those who wish to develop skills in this area further
- Remember that remote learning is not a substitute for full time classroom based learning and teaching. Learners should not engage in online learning for the entirety of the school day. Try to include activities such as independent research, personal projects, discussions and debates, and other non-technical activities.
- Remember that many parents will be trying to balance work and looking after children- try to support and encourage parents to do the best they can
- Provide regular feedback on learning
- Continue to use secure methods of communication to support the delivery of learning, teaching and assessment through the preferred online platform

ELC Practitioners and the Early Years Team Roles and Responsibilities

- Plan and deliver appropriate learning opportunities to ensure all ELC children receive their entitlement to an ELC experience
- In ELC this could include opportunities for some face to face learning interactions, for example a recorded message from practitioners, video clips of 'how' to do things eg making playdough, reading stories, singing songs or sharing rhymes
- Face to face learning interactions vary in style and method and it is important that staff feel confident in using different modes if they choose to do so. For that reason, CLPL will be available to those who wish to develop skills in this area further.
- Key workers should continue to engage with their group of children wherever possible to ensure consistency and continuity for children and families
- Consider the individual needs of each child and build on their learning priorities. Continue with the observation and planning cycle remotely and respond as responsively as much as we can.
- Communicate with parents in a variety of ways being mindful that many parents will be trying to balance work and looking after children- try to support and encourage parents to do the best they can
- The Early Years team will provide a programme of online CLPL for practitioners delivered virtually and with an emphasis on high quality learning
- The Early Years team will provide examples of quality home learning for ELC families that can be used and adapted by settings

- The Early Years Team will support collaboration and an opportunity for sharing experiences within the ELC community

Support for Learning Teachers Roles and Responsibilities

- Work with class teachers to plan and deliver learning to specific groups of children or individuals
- Communicate with parents of learners with CSPs and IEPs to discuss any additional support requirements
- Support staff, parents and learners via phone or email where appropriate

Learning Assistants Roles and Responsibilities

- Liaise with the class teacher to provide support to teachers by assisting with learner questions and providing interventions to further learner understanding
- Where appropriate, and in discussion/ with the direction of the class teacher, communicate with parents of learners with IEPs to discuss any additional support requirements
- Complete tasks assigned to them by line managers and other appropriate staff
- Support any other learning activities as directed by the Head Teacher

Pupil Support Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- Support the wellbeing of all pupils
- Provide targeted support to pupils as appropriate
- Support learners experiencing barriers to learning
- Support the differentiated learning offer
- Support transition activities

Specialist Teachers Roles and Responsibilities

- Collaborate with relevant teachers to design subject-specific learning experiences for learners

- Communicate with and provide timely feedback to learners
- Communicate with parents, as required

Parents and Carers

Updates about the remote learning experience in each school should be sent out regularly to parents and carers

Support your child to engage and be actively involved in their learning as best you can

- Communicate with school early if you have any issues or concerns
- There's no expectation that parents will become teachers- ask the school for help if you need it
- Find ways that work for your family

Children and Young People

- Engage in remote learning as best you can
- Follow online learning code of conduct - be respectful to all when online
- Ask for help when you need it to support your progress whilst remote learning

Enhanced Provisions

- All Midlothian Enhanced Provisions have offered bespoke packages to pupils based on individual needs
- Normal timetables should continue, where possible
- Provisions will provide weekly updates of contact with families where pupils are not in full time

