BEAMINSTER SCHOOL REMOTE (DIGITAL) LEARNING PLAN

June 2026 Update

Beaminster School

Blended Learning Plan

Rationale

Beaminster School is ambitious for its students. We want all students to experience high quality teaching and learning, at all times.

This document replaces our response to the teaching and learning adaptations required during the Covid-19 pandemic. It builds on lessons learned and skills gained and developed during the pandemic.

Specific Aims

- To outline our approach for pupils who require remote teaching, for example through unforeseen school closures.
- To ensure the safety of all in accessing remote education.

Who Does the Plan Apply To?

Every child is expected to attend school wherever possible. In some circumstances the school may need to provide remote or online learning that fits into two broad categories:

- School closures or restrictions on attendance, where school access for pupils is restricted.

- Individual cases where a pupil is unable to attend school but is able to learn.
  There will be limited circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend school but is able and well enough to continue their education remotely. These circumstances should only involve a short-term absence and might include:

  - pupils recovering from short-term infectious illnesses;
  - pupils preparing for or recovering from some operations;
  - pupils recovering from injuries where attendance might inhibit recovery.

  In some exceptional cases, these circumstances might also include pupils whose attendance has been affected by a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) or a mental health issue. In these circumstances, and after the pupil's absence from school has been established, we will consider providing pupils with remote education on a **case-by-case basis**. This will be part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, and only when it is judged that providing remote education would not adversely affect the pupil's return to school.

Background and Requirements

Attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including for their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Remote education is not to be viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school.

For this reason, and in line with Government guidance, we consider remote education a last resort when the alternative would be no education, and only after it has been established that the pupil is, or will be, absent from school.

In such cases, remote education / online learning can have the benefit of allowing absent pupils to keep on track with their education and stay connected to their teachers and peers. Pupils absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be marked as absent in the register.

NB: Schools should continue to record pupil absence in the register in line with Working Together to Improve School Attendance August 2024 and The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 using the most appropriate code (gov.uk).

Remote education should only ever be considered as a last resort where a decision has already been made that attendance at school is not possible, but pupils are able to continue learning (gov.uk).

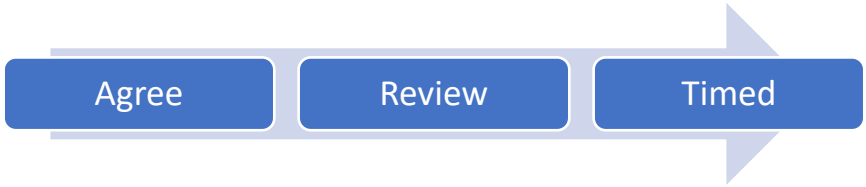
Remote education is a short-term solution allowing absent pupils to keep on track with their education and stay connected to their teachers and peers. Pupils with long-term medical conditions, or any other physical or mental health needs affecting attendance, may require additional support to continue their education that falls beyond the scope of the school to provide. Under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (s.19 duty) If a child is likely to miss **15 school days or more** because of health needs, the responsibility shifts largely to the Local Authority. The Local Authority must arrange suitable education for children who would otherwise not receive one. Schools should work with the Local Authority in those cases

When a pupil is absent, we will seek to overcome the barriers to attendance and provide support for the pupil to attend, regularly reviewing any barriers in conjunction with the pupil, parents or carers, and if appropriate, a relevant medical professional.

Remote education is not viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school, and providing remote education during a pupil's absence does not reduce the importance of bringing the absence to an end as soon as possible.

In the limited circumstances when we decide to use remote education for individual pupils, when they are absent, the following will be considered:

- Ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the school, parents or carers, potentially pupils, and, if appropriate, a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or has a social worker, the Local Authority should also be involved in the decision.
- Where remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity.
- Setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.



Work provided during periods of remote education should aim to be high quality, meaningful, ambitious, and cover an appropriate range of subjects to enable pupils to keep on track with their education.

An Evidence Based Approach

1. Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered.
2. Ensuring access to technology is key, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
3. Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes.
4. Supporting pupils to work independently can improve learning outcomes.
5. Different approaches to remote learning suit different types of content and pupils.

Education Endowment Fund (April 2020) (source Teacher Toolkit Sept 2020)

When providing remote education we will consider, as far as possible:

- Age, stage of development, and independent study skills.
- Any SEND or other additional needs the pupils might have.
- The pupil's home environment, which includes having a suitable place and opportunity to study.
- Screen time, making reasonable allowances for adequate breaks for pupils and staff during digital remote education.
- Any significant demands on parents' or carers' help or support (some children with SEND might require high levels of adult involvement to support their engagement with remote education, which can make it a particular challenge for these groups).

Feedback from our Students

Students were interviewed about their experiences during lockdowns. They highlighted elements that are beyond the direct control of the school as being important to them coping, or causing them to struggle, with their work. These elements included:

- The appropriate support (and understanding) of parents in encouraging and monitoring them completing work set.
- Having an area in which they could work.

Within the school's control, several features are to be noted in terms of what the students felt contributed to quality remote lessons. These elements echo key findings from the Education Endowment Fund (April 2020) and include:

- Clarity of where the work will be found or signposted (ClassCharts).
- Work set according to their timetable, on the days they expected it.
- Absolute clarity of what was to be done, and clarity of what they were expected to learn (objectives).
- Longer pieces of work, i.e. those referencing workbooks, being broken down into specific lesson by lesson chunks.
- Feedback, even if it is just to let the students know they are on the right track.
- Powerpoints or similar clearly setting out what was required.
- Quality online videos to support, that clearly explain how something was done, or access to online lessons such as Oak National Academy.
- Tasks that were achievable but that included variety.
- Platforms such as Seneca and Kahoot were also valued.

Platforms and Access

All remote learning is centred around **ClassCharts**. This platform is used for homework and rewards and is accessible by teachers, pupils and their parents/carers. ClassCharts will be the platform for setting or communicating remote / home learning in the case of an individual, group, year group or school shutdown. Every student and parent/carer has their own confirmed access to ClassCharts. The off-site platform ensures that any school issues will not impact upon service.

In some cases, or in the case of school shutdown, **MS Teams** may be used to provide tasks.

If parents or students are experiencing online access difficulties they should contact the school who will seek to provide printed resources and work to support them.

Completed Work and Feedback

Learning completed by pupils should be submitted via the platform specified by the teacher (see below). This can take various forms including documents and photographs of the work pupils have completed. For the purpose of remote education, feedback will vary from acknowledgement and awards given via ClassCharts to more detailed information on how to improve.

Alternatively, work that pupils complete on paper should be kept safe and returned to school when able to do so.

Use of platforms such as Seneca allow the teacher to monitor the time a student spends on a task, and their understanding of core topics. Crucially, it supports the school's focus on using assessment formatively. The school recognises the vital role that feedback plays in motivating and encouraging students, allowing the teacher to identify areas of weakness and respond to student need.

Student Engagement

We will facilitate student engagement by:

- Distributing school-owned devices accompanied by a user agreement or contract if and where necessary and possible.
- If required, ensuring equal access through the provision of printed resources, supplemented with other appropriate forms of communication between the school and pupils.

Safeguarding
Please refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Data Protection and Sharing Personal Data
Staff members are unlikely to need to collect and/or share personal data. However, if it does become necessary, all data collection will be compliant with GDPR guidelines using GDPR compliant school systems (e.g. ClassCharts, Teams and MyConcern). When accessing personal data, all staff members will only use their official school accounts.

Keeping Devices Secure
All staff will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. Computers should be locked if left inactive for a period of time. Operating systems must be kept up to date.

Monitoring Arrangements
This plan will be reviewed when Government guidance is updated, or based on feedback from participants in the school community, or when the biannual review is due.

General Contact
We endeavour to respond to emails as promptly as possible. Parents/carers should contact the school office via telephone or the school office email address for general enquiries and/or where the issue is urgent.

Parents/carers are reminded to respect staff wellbeing with the frequency of communication. The school's expectation is that generally emails will be answered during the school working day (Monday to Friday). Communication with parents may take longer if/when the school has multiple staff absences and we ask for parent/carer understanding regarding this.

Free School Meals
Where pupils eligible for benefits-related Free School Meals are receiving remote education, we will work with our school caterer and/or other agencies to issue a food voucher if available. This will ensure that eligible pupils continue to be supported for the period they are unable to attend school.

Remote Education during a Suspension or Permanent Exclusion
In line with Government guidance we will take steps to ensure that work is set and marked for pupils during the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion. This may not be through remote education (i.e. the student may take 'school books' home and complete work set in these). Any suspension is done in line with the law on disciplinary suspensions.

Provision for Pupils with SEND
If pupils with SEND are not able to attend school and require remote education, their teachers are best placed to know how their needs can most effectively be met to ensure that they continue to access the curriculum. We will endeavour to put in place an appropriate curriculum, teaching and support that will enable the pupil to continue learning effectively.

We acknowledge that some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support. In these cases, we will work collaboratively with families and put arrangements in place that allow pupils with SEND to access remote education successfully.

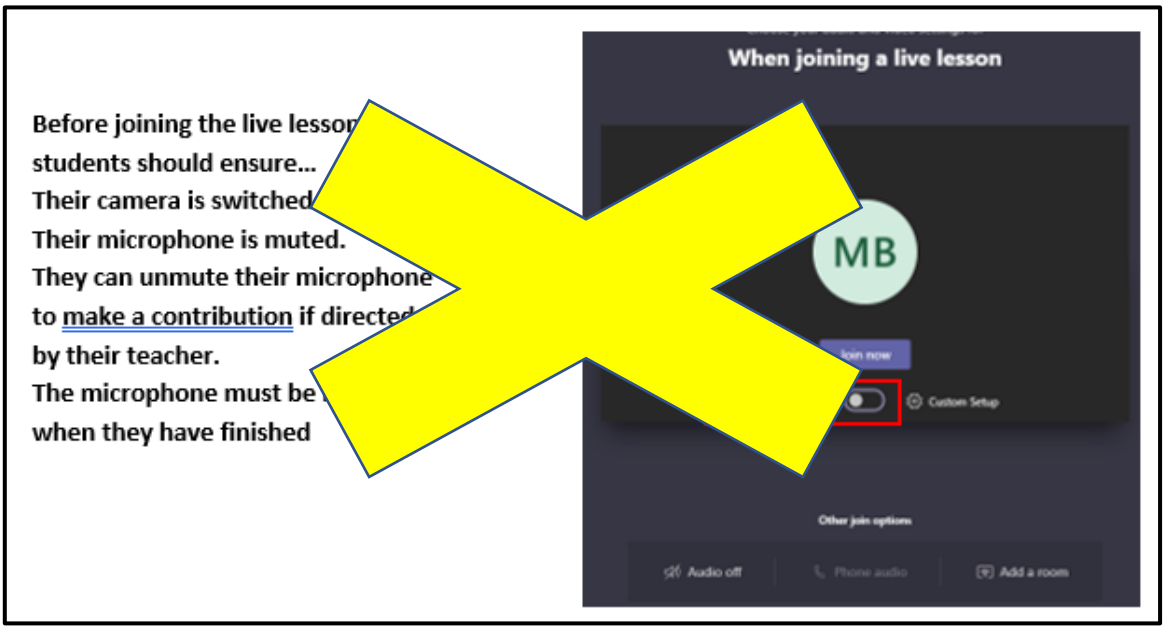
Decisions on how provision can be delivered will be informed by relevant considerations, including the support families will require and types of services that the pupil can access remotely.

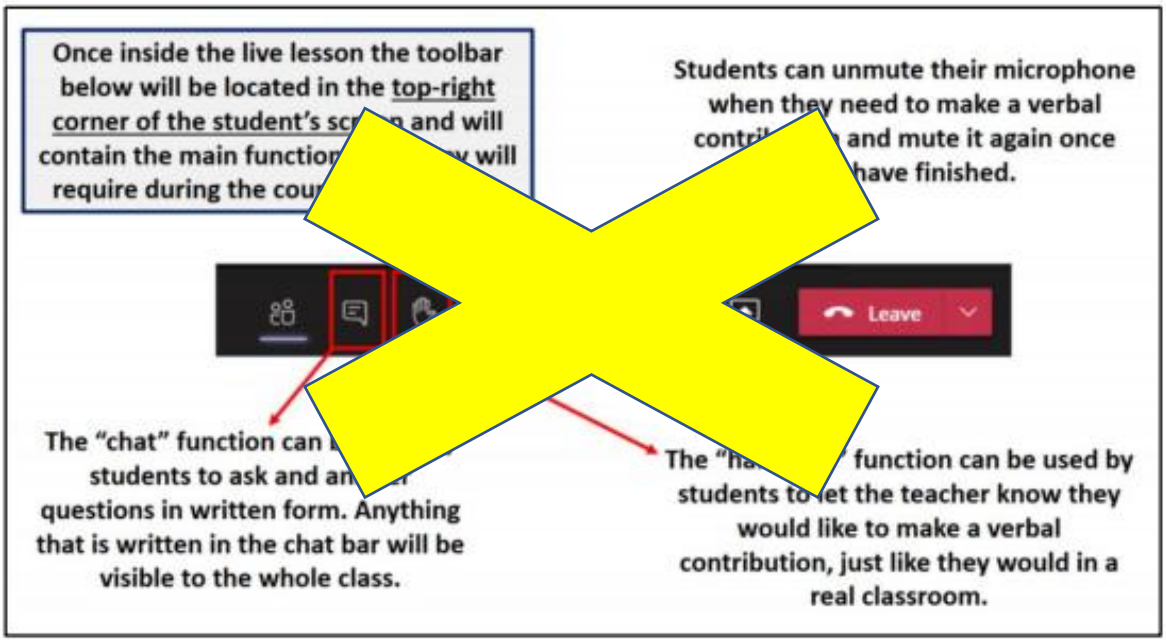
We acknowledge our duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 to use our 'best endeavours' to secure the special educational provision called for by a pupil's special educational needs, and that this continues to apply when remote education is in place.

In addition, if a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), we will work with the local authority to ensure that all the relevant duties under the 2014 Act continue to be met.

We understand that the duties under the Equality Act 2010 relating to disability (and more broadly) also continue to apply, such as to make reasonable adjustments, not to discriminate and to have due regard to the statutory objectives in the public sector equality duty.

It may be challenging or impossible for the school to deliver remotely the kind of approach that it does in the classroom, for example, the provision of certain differentiated resources and the support of a Teaching Assistant. If this is the case, we will consider, in cooperation with the Local Authority (if the child has an EHCP), other ways in which we and the local authority can meet statutory duties, working closely with the parents or carers.





Important Conversations with Parents, Carers and Students

In conversations with parents, carers and students we will emphasise the importance of a safe online environment, which amongst other things, means keeping any passwords and credentials safe. It is especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do, including:

- sites they will be asked to use.
- school staff their child will interact with.

Reporting Concerns

All school staff will continue to act immediately (following our Child Protection Policy and the processes set out in it) if there are any concerns about a child or young person's welfare, whether the child or young person is physically in school or learning from home.

Children will be encouraged to speak up if they come across something worrying online. Reporting routes will be made clear so that students, teachers, parents and carers can raise any safeguarding concerns in relation to remote online education.