

Distance Learning Policy

Approved by:	Mrs Zarah Gadatara	Date: 14/09/2026
Last reviewed on:	14/09/2026	
Next review due by:	14/09/2027	

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As staff, we are committed to ensuring our students continue to learn at Just Learn. Whilst learning is important, the communities' well-being is at the forefront. We understand that there may be times of illness, caring for the vulnerable and caring for others within the home, and this must be the priority for the community. However, we will endeavour to support our learners at this time and continue to learn and grow.

Rationale

In the event of a school closure/partial closure, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its learners and will do so through a process of remote (online) learning. Extensive remote learning would apply particularly in a situation in which the school is closed for an extended period, but a high proportion of learners and teachers are healthy, and able to work as normal from home. This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term school closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short-term learner absence.

Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when learners, in agreement with the school, have a period of absence but are able to work at home, at least to some extent. This may apply in cases such as exclusion/suspensions from school, or longer-term illness, assuming learners are able to complete schoolwork at home. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, learners are self-isolating at home but are not suffering with relevant symptoms.

There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to learners who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention to school or government guidance. This may apply, for example, if parents choose to take learners on holiday during term time. Similarly, this would apply if parents made the decision, without prior agreement with the school, to absent their child from school 'as a precaution', against official guidance, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease. Just Learn will however do our utmost to support all families with work packs/ online learning in this instance.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Head of school:** Oversees the delivery and implementation of home learning processes, ensuring that subject teachers and support staff are following the correct procedures.
- **Subject teachers:** Ensure that work is set and uploaded to the relevant platforms at least a day before the lessons take place. This should be completed as part of good lesson planning practices.
- **SENCo:** Supports in ensuring that learners are being provided with differentiated tasks alongside teaching staff to maintain accessibility and meaningful learning.

Remote learning for individual learners

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the learner in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for learners who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual learner, the collation of work and communication with the parent/carer will be coordinated by staff from the school. Though every case will have its own specifics, a rough guideline for the frequency of communication between school and parent/carer would be once per week. Every case will have its own specifics therefore staff may be in contact daily if the learner does not sign in for their designated online lessons or if work packs have been agreed upon. Regular welfare calls will be made by staff to ensure the safety of its learners. If a significant number of learners are absent from school, but the school remains open, the Head of school will decide whether the method of remote learning operated will take the form outlined here, or as outlined below.

Remote learning in the event of extended school closures

In the event of an extended school closure/partial closure, the school will provide continuity of education in the following ways: a) Regular direct instruction from teaching teachers, with the ability of learners to ask questions online via Zoom.

b) The setting of work that learners complete, written responses (if relevant) completed electronically and or in books that will be picked up Friday of each week, a new book given, books to be marked by staff the following week and returned the following Friday.

c) The assessment of specific assignments that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided the school recognises that many families may not have home printers and will therefore will not require the printing of material. The primary platforms the school will use to deliver continuity of education are Zoom and Kaizena: accessed via the relevant app or desktop application

Live sessions

Academic subject areas may also arrange for teaching teachers to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by text or audio and/or visual means). This will be carried out with the blended learning approach of live lessons as well as individualised learning via Zoom/Kaizena. Zoom is the platform that we will use to allow for resources to be shared, teachers to provide feedback, and learners to ask questions in 'real-time'.

Learners will be provided with details of their lessons/sessions and will be expected to participate in them if they are asked and able to. Live sessions can be particularly helpful as they can help communication, with learners able to respond to teachers' questions (and ask them) via the conversation functionality in teams and meet. This is also a time in which staff members use to check the welfare of our learners and ensure their safety.

Assessment

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and whilst this may be more challenging with remote learning, teachers will endeavour to provide regular feedback to learners on pieces of work that they are required to submit.

Under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers, and this would continue to be the case should the school employ remote learning. Given the nature of the tasks, the type of feedback teachers can provide may not have the same format as marking an exercise book. Teachers are encouraged to ensure, when they set assessed work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided.

Possible methods may include:

- Providing whole class feedback rather than feedback on individual pieces of work – this is an effective way of providing feedback, supported by findings from educational research.
- Using the chat/comments function on Zoom or the assignment section feedback on Kaizena.
- Sending direct feedback to learners via books with specific feedback / targets.
- Feedback via another website / piece of software.

Expectations of Learners and Parents

Assuming that a learner is healthy and well enough to work, learners will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Learners will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g., an email or call from a tutor) on a regular basis. Learners should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any administrative tasks that allow the school to monitor their progress.

If learners or parents have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant subject area. If there are questions about a learner's overall workload (e.g., a learner feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the learner's head of year. Teachers must work on the assumption that learners will not necessarily have the full range of books and equipment that they would usually have in school.

Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case learners do not have access to them at home. Online textbooks are helpful in this regard, and many subjects are now moving over to these. but teachers will make no presumption of the learner's ability to print at home.

Staff can expect pupils learning remotely to:

- Be contactable during the school 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 teaching assistants
- Alert teachers if they're not able to complete work

Staff can expect parents with children learning remotely to:

- Make the school aware if their child is sick or otherwise can't complete work
- Seek help from the school if they need it – if you know of any resources staff should point parents towards if they're struggling, include those here
- Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff

Expectations of Teachers/Teaching Assistants

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet and a phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, teachers can request a school device. The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with school and subject area policies. Under normal circumstances, subject areas take different approaches to the setting and assessment of learners' work – for example, the frequency of substantive task set, and the regularity of written assessment provided – and subject area policies will be applied in the event of remote learning.

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, heads of school and subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the nature and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas. All teachers should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that learners have a range of activities to complete at home and are not exclusively working on a screen.

Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their learners in a timely manner. In the event a teacher is unwell during a period of remote learning, it becomes the responsibility of the line manager to ensure work is set to her/his classes. Teachers should be available to contact parents if needed, by email or phone (when phoning from personal devices, dialling 141 before the number will ensure the teacher's own number is kept anonymous). If contact is deemed excessive the line manager will be able to support and, if necessary, escalate to SLT. If parents ask for additional work beyond that set as part of the requirements above, subject areas should have a bank of general resources available and point pupils and parents in that direction.

Teachers also should ensure their communication with learners does not encourage unhelpful work habits. All communication should take place during usual office hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 3:00pm, although responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day in normal practice. For those who are on part-time contracts, communication is expected only on the days on which they would usually work. Communication must always occur via official school channels, and not through personal accounts or other websites.

Permitted methods are

- Email using school email addresses only
- Zoom or Kaizena

When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants are responsible for:

- Which pupils they'll need to support
- How they should provide support
- Attending virtual meetings with teachers, parents and pupils – cover details like:
- Ensuring adequate locations (e.g. avoid areas with background noise, nothing inappropriate in the background)
- If teaching assistants will also be working in school, where relevant explain who will cover the responsibilities above during this time.

Expectations of Senior Leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote learning approach across the school – if you've assigned one member of staff to lead on this, highlight them here
- Monitoring the effectiveness of remote learning – explain how they'll do this, such as through regular meetings with teachers and subject leaders, reviewing work set or reaching out for feedback from pupils and parents
- Monitoring the security of remote learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations

Support for pupils with SEN, EAL etc.

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all learners when setting online tasks. Profiles are available for SEN pupils and advice can be sought from the SENCo. In addition, the SENCo will maintain contact with pupils on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/learners and feed back to teachers using internal methods if required. Any regular support a child receives e.g. overlays and readers will be sent out via work pack.

Safeguarding

In the event of a school closure, pupils, parents, carers and teachers are reminded that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between pupils and teachers. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school. **Please refer to our safeguarding policy available on our website.**

Data Protection

Personal Data

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

Explain:

- How they can access the data.
- Which devices they should use to access the data.

Processing personal data

Staff member may need to collect and/or share personal data such as email addresses as part of the remote learning system. As long as this processing is necessary for the school's official functions, individuals won't need to give permission for this to happen.

However, staff are reminded to collect and/or share as little personal data as possible online.

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

Who to contact

- Issues in setting work – **Ms N Islam**
- Issues with behaviour – **Ms S Mackenzie / Ms S Osman**
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – **Mrs Z Gadatara / Ms S Osman**
- Concerns about data protection – **Mrs Z Gadatara**
- Concerns about safeguarding – **Ms S Osman / Ms S Mackenzie**

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Mrs Zarah Gadatara. At every review, it will be approved by the board of trustees.