

WeST Guidance on Safeguarding Remote Learning During Coronavirus

Purpose

This document should be used alongside existing Safeguarding, Staff Code of Conduct, Advice on Social Media Use, e-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policies and WeST Guidance on remote learning to ensure that all staff, pupils and parents are aware of how to harness the benefits of remote learning (i.e. learning through devices connected to the internet) as safely as possible.

Useful Websites

Technology and its use to support remote learning is rapidly developing. Any written policy is likely to become out of date quite rapidly. As such, Westcountry Schools Trust recognises that the core team, individual school staff and in turn pupils and parents/carers may need to refer to online sources of guidance which are more likely to be kept up to date.

At the time of writing the following websites were deemed to be 'trusted' sources of such advice. They were used to compile this summary and it is hoped they will be cross-referenced by readers of this guidance in the future as a source of current information.

[DfE Guidance on Safeguarding and Remote Education](#)

[NSPCC Advice on Remote Teaching](#)

[Advice from UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Key Principles for Staff

1. As far as possible staff should use school devices and internet connections to deliver remote learning.
2. If delivering remote learning from home staff should use school devices as far as possible. WeST schools will take reasonable steps to ensure all staff are provided with suitable devices. However, WeST recognises that this will not be possible in all cases, and to 'blanket ban' the use of personal staff laptops etc. to deliver remote learning could be detrimental to the quality of education offered. Therefore, staff may use their own devices, if they are willing to do so, and have no other alternative. In these circumstances they should take extra care to consider e-safety principles when delivering remote learning. Pupil data **must not** be saved to personal devices.
3. Staff **must** only use their work email to communicate with pupils and parents/carers. Under no circumstances should staff communicate with pupils or parents/carers using personal email addresses or social media accounts.
4. Staff should use the locally agreed software to deliver remote learning. In most WeST schools this will be the Microsoft 365 suite, but some will use the Google platform. In either case staff **must** use their school 'username' (typically their school email) not a personal account.
5. As far as possible telephone calls to support remote learning or pupil welfare should be made using school devices. WeST recognises that not all staff will have access to a school mobile 'phone and there will be occasions when contact with a pupil and/or parent/carer is necessary, e.g. safeguarding or welfare checks. Under such circumstances staff should take steps to hide their phone number/caller ID before making a call.
6. When delivering remote learning in which they will be visible staff should consider carefully the location they use, their dress and their device settings. For example, staff:
 - a. **must** dress appropriately in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct;
 - b. should not deliver remote learning from bedrooms (if there is no alternative staff should discuss this with their Headteacher / DSL and a note of the decision made should be recorded);
 - c. choose a 'quiet' location in their house where it is unlikely that other household occupants can be seen/heard in the background;
 - d. brief other household occupants that they are delivering remote learning and that as such they should not be disturbed, except in an emergency;
 - e. should give due consideration to the background that will be visible if using a webcam and, where possible, use appropriate 'background effects' to mask details of their home location;

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- f. be careful if 'screen sharing' that no other, unsuitable content is visible elsewhere on the screen outside of the main window intended to be viewed;
7. In addition to the above if conducting 'live lessons' staff:
 - a. **Must** ensure that these are recorded, and that the recording is stored on an approved server (e.g. if using MS Teams the recording would be saved via MS Stream to a secure location within the school's Microsoft 'ecosystem');
 - b. Should explain to pupils how the lesson will be conducted and remind them to behave respectfully at all times (as if in school);
 - c. Should establish and maintain clear routines regarding participation from pupils. For example,
 - i. they should instruct them in the appropriate use of the 'mute/unmute' facility on the platform being used
 - ii. explain how question will be asked and answered
 - iii. consideration how functions such as 'chat', 'Q&A' and 'hands up' on platforms such as MS Teams and Google Meet will be used.

***NB** - WeST recognises that the wide variety of staff experience and learning scenarios means that it is not prudent to recommend a blanket approach to how staff/pupils use these software facilities. Staff should follow local guidance and seek clarification through their usual line management routes if they have queries.*

Key Principles for Pupils

Individual schools should consider the most appropriate mechanism by which to ensure as far as possible pupils, and their parent/carers, are aware of and follow these principles. Schools should modify, as appropriate, the language in the statements below to take into account the age of pupils and those with SEND.

Pupils should:

1. only use school email addresses to contact staff;
2. only use their school 'usernames' to access any internet-based learning platforms being delivered by staff;
3. **not** share their username and/or password for internet platforms;
4. as far as possible, engage in remote learning in a shared space, such as a kitchen or living room. They should avoid using individual bedrooms.
5. dress appropriately, e.g. they should not wear pyjamas or 'revealing' clothes (a benchmark for this is what the school would normally allow on a non-uniform or 'Mufti' day);
6. sit against a neutral background and be mindful of what others might see behind them;
7. where possible, be taught the benefits of using appropriate 'background effects' to mask details of their home and be encouraged to use these;
8. if considered vulnerable, e.g. due to age or other circumstance, receive remote learning with a trusted adult in the vicinity;
9. behave as if they were in a classroom at school, following the school's general behaviour expectations and specific instructions from the member of staff delivering the remote learning.