Great Academy Ashton - Remote Learning Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Teaching & Learning and Homework Policies.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the safe and effective use of ICT for remote teaching and learning during a school closure. It also covers the ongoing education of pupils who cannot be in school but are able to continue with their education when the school remains fully open. This policy has been drawn up to protect all parties: pupils, parents and staff, and applies to all teachers, teaching assistants and admin staff.

1: Rationale

1.1: In the event of a school closure, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of remote learning. Where possible, this will be online, although we acknowledge that there is a need for some pupils and families to access hard copies of any work set.

1.2: Extensive remote learning would apply particularly in a situation in which the school is closed for an extended period of time, but a high proportion of students 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 student absence.

1.3: Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when students, 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 from school, or longer term illness, assuming students are able to complete school work at home. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, students are self-isolating at home but are not suffering with symptoms that prevent them from learning.

1.4: There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to students 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 students on holiday during term time. Similarly, this would apply if parents made the decision, without prior agreement with the school, to absent their child(ren) from school against official guidance, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

1.5: As with any substantial school closure, the context of the event will inform the school's approach to providing continuous schooling. For example, the extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning, owing to widespread illness, for example.

2: Remote Learning For Individual Students

2.1: If this takes place for an individual student, the collation of work and communication with the parent will be coordinated by the student's Head of Year.

2.2: Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for students who are unable to attend in person.

2.3: Work will usually be provided via the school's VLE and Microsoft Teams (accessed through the student's School Microsoft Account), but in some cases may be in hard copy, for collection from school by a nominated individual.

2.4: Parents should contact the Head of Year in the first instance if there are any issues regarding work set remotely but students can contact teachers directly through Microsoft Teams.

2.5: If a significant number of students are absent from school, but the school remains open, the Principal or Vice Principal will decide whether the method of remote learning operated will take the form outlined here, or as outlined below.

3: Remote Learning In The Event Of Extended School Closure

3.1: In the event of an extended school closure to all or to groups of students, the school will provide continuity of education in the following ways:

A. Regular direct instruction from teachers, with the ability of students to ask questions online (via MS Teams).
B. The setting of work that students must (if relevant) complete electronically or in hard copy and store.
C. The assessment of specific assignments that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided.

We recognise that access to technology may be a barrier to some students and families and we will try to provide work in a format that does not discriminate against any student.

3.2: Where internet access is available, this will be the school's preferred method of providing continuous education. The primary platform the school will use to deliver continuity of education is Microsoft Teams (for the delivery of lesson and for communication with pupils). If students have difficulty with logging in, they should contact the school's IT support.

3.3: Students accessing learning from home should log into their TEAMS account using their email address and password, as in school, and ensure to check all subjects and groups at each lesson changeover – eg 9.05am, 11am and 1pm. They should prioritise the lesson showing on their timetable as – where whole classes are learning from home – teachers, if well, will log in to be available online for setting work, assignments and responding to questions. Where teachers have lessons in school but some students are studying from home, the corresponding lesson will be uploaded at the earliest convenient opportunity for those at home.

3.4: The extent to which different methods of instruction and / or assessment are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any school closure and the ability of both students and teachers to participate in remote learning. For shorter closures, for example, teachers may set work for submission in person once the school has reopened. For longer closures, teachers would make more use of live or recorded sessions (see specific guidance below and appendix) and electronic assessment. The school reserves the right to vary the range of methods used to provide remote learning tasks, feedback and interaction, based on the circumstances of any closure and based on our experience.

4: The Setting Of Tasks

4.1: Subject areas will provide work broadly in line with students' timetables through the school's VLE and Teams. Tasks will be set in accordance with existing schemes of learning, and tasks will be designed to allow students to progress through schemes of work at the same pace as if they were in school, where possible. Naturally, remote learning will require students and teachers to take a different approach to working through content, but tasks should ensure the pace of content coverage is as close as possible to in-school teaching, and ensure students do not fall behind. The nature of tasks set should allow students to learn independently, without the specific support of an adult at home. Unless there is a good reason not to, tasks

will be set for individual classes. The type of task set will vary between subjects, but examples of appropriate tasks might include:

- Reading and noting new material from a common subject area textbook or electronic resource
- Working through subject-specific presentations or worksheets provided by the subject area
- Watching a relevant video resource and making notes on it
- Completing a listening exercise (e.g. in languages)
- Written responses to prompt questions, essay plans etc.
- Completion of practice questions or past papers, particularly for those in examination years
- Working through relevant exercises offered by external providers (e.g. Seneca Learning, Hegarty Maths, GCSE Pod)

Teachers will set tasks via MS Teams and it is the responsibility of teachers and students to ensure they know how to use this functionality effectively. Teachers should include line managers as co-owners of Teams to allow them to monitor and support as required. Training will be provided to all users in the first instance.

4.2: 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). The methodology for this is likely to be Microsoft Teams, a platform that allows for resources to be shared, teachers to provide exposition, and students to ask questions in 'real-time'. Students will be provided with detailed 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 facilitate contemporaneous communication, with students able to respond to teachers' questions (and ask them) via the conversation functionality in Teams. In a live session, there is no need for teachers or students to broadcast audio or video, though teachers may choose to. The text (conversation) function is adequate to provide communication and interaction for most purposes and will form the most common form of exchange in most circumstances.. Teachers who wish to use the audio / video functions must follow GAET protocols and inform their line manager.

5: Assessment

5.1: 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 students 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.

5.2: Assessed work will be set with clear due dates given to students for completion, thereby helping students to organise their time. Pupils may submit work at any time, but teachers may not provide feedback immediately. Students and teachers should keep accurate records of all work completed, submitted and assessed. 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 "Comments" function on online documents on MS Teams;
- Sending a direct email to students with specific feedback / targets;
- Feedback via another website / piece of software (e.g. OneNote, Seneca Learning, My Maths);
- Recording oral feedback and sharing an audio file with the student.

5.3: Additional functionality is available is in MS Teams, if teachers want to create assignments for students to complete. These might include, for example, the creation of a tailor-made quiz (containing either multiple choice or extended answers) and teachers are able to use assignments to give feedback within MS Teams.

6: Expectations Of Students

6.1: Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, students 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. Students will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a form tutor) on a regular basis. In the event of an extended school closure, teachers will continue to deliver content in line with existing schemes of learning once the school is reopened; if any student misses significant parts of the content, they will be able to view material posted online and the school will give consideration to the practicalities of helping students to catch up once the school reopens.

6.2: If there are questions about a student's overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the student's Head of Year. Teachers must work on the assumption that students will not necessarily have the full range of books and equipment that they would usually have in school.

6.3: The school does not expect students to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school (e.g. Science or Art). Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case students do not have access to them at home.

7: Expectations Of Teachers

7.1: Teachers should try to ensure, where possible, that they have effective internet and a phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, teachers can request a school device. If there are IT related issues while remote working, teachers can contact the school's IT Support.

7.2: 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 students' 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 Faculty and Subject Leaders are responsible for overseeing the nature and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas.

7.3: All teachers should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that students have a range of activities to complete at home and are not exclusively working on a screen. Heads of Faculty and Subject Leaders will monitor this regularly. Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their students in a timely manner. Subject Leaders are responsible for overseeing the form and regularity of feedback and will liaise with the Assistant and Vice Principal to ensure consistency. 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.

7.4: Subject areas are expected to:

- Plan and deliver 'live or recorded sessions' where appropriate in consultation with Faculty Heads and Assistant Principal (for any audio/video links);
- Respond to reasonable amounts of communication from students, parents and teachers;
- Plan and set tasks for their students using the tasks functionality in MS Teams;

- Be able to set and mark assessed work promptly, in line with school and subject area policies, returning it to students electronically (or after the period of remote working for written and project work)

7.5: Teachers should be available to contact parents if needed, by email, including from home if working from home, or phone (when in school or if using a school device). If contact is deemed excessive the line manager will be able to support and, if necessary, escalate to SLT. Teachers are not expected to contact or respond to students or parents outside working hours but are able to work flexibly in such circumstances that demand it.

7.6: In order to ensure teachers are able to perform the minimum expectations outlined above; the school will provide a range of training opportunities that teachers should have access to before any *planned* school closure. Teachers should ensure that they have understood specific instructions and attended training sessions as required.

7.7: If teachers require support with any aspects of remote learning, they are encouraged to consult their line managers or the relevant Senior Leader. All communication should take place during usual office hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 4pm, although every effort should be made to ensure responses should be given 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. Professional communication must always occur via official school channels, and not through personal accounts or other websites.

8: Support For Pupils With Send, EAL & Other Specific Learning Enhancement Needs

8.1: Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all learners when setting online tasks. Profiles are available for SEND pupils and advice can be sought from the SEN(D)Co.

9: Pastoral Care During A School Closure

9.1: In event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents / guardians. However, GAA takes this aspect of our role seriously and pastoral teams will check in regularly with their students to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. They will be expected to pass on feedback to Heads of Year, or other senior staff particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication.

10: Safeguarding During A School Closure

10.1: In the event of a school closure, pupils, parents 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. Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs Gill; rachel.gill@gaa.org.uk

11: The responsibility of parents

11.1: It is the responsibility of parents during a period where remote learning is to become a routine in any form to ensure their child completes the work and engages as requested, has a space to work that is quiet and allows concentration and behaves well as in normal circumstances

11.2: Parents should ensure they check the students can access the learning online or contact the school to arrange an alternative

11.3: There is an expectation that parents understand their responsibility in ensuring their children's appropriate use of the technology in use at all times