

Eskdale School Remote Learning Policy

Updated 5/1/2021 (due to Covid school lockdown 2)

Use of technology for teaching lessons and contacting pupils and their families during the COVID lockdown.

Eskdale School has issued this guidance for staff, students and their families to help ensure that online learning digital communication is safe across the school during remote learning.

The sudden nature of the most recent lockdown on the 4th November has created much confusion and has meant that the school has had to re-evaluate the current system and give advice to all parties without the typical allocated time. We have created this document specifically for the period of lockdown from January 5th onwards. This document will be regularly reviewed, you will be updated of any changes.

The current practice and guidance for remote teaching and learning allows a great deal of flexibility for staff in how they teach their lessons. We want staff to be able to use the technology with confidence, however we accept that the speed at which we have had to increase its use has not been as we wished.

The DFE have stated since October that schools have a new legal duty to provide a remote education to any pupil unable to attend lessons because of COVID-19. With the increase of infection from December 2020 the government released new guidance and expectations of schools on the 5th January 2021. We expect this to change as time moves forward and therefore will continue to assess the situation.

In brief, the DFE expects schools and its teachers to set assignments that are meaningful and ambitious every day. The content should be clear and delivered by a teacher or through high quality curriculum resources or videos. As a school we have struck a good balance of all of these expectations, with live teaching being a key driver to assist with students learning. Staff have a great deal of flexibility to move between the different styles of teaching to assist with their own pressures that they have within their home or family. The school teaching day has been reduced and key stage 3 are receiving 60% of their timetable with the remaining 40% made up of self-directed study using resources placed on google classroom.

Use of the google classroom and remote learning apps and tools are subject to all members of the school behaving in a respectful manner in line with the school's code of conduct regarding behaviour for all parties. Students who fail to meet the standard will be removed from the online groups and will be unable re-join until a meeting has taken place with a member of the senior leadership team and a family member. Continued breaches of the expectations will result in a pupil being moved to task based online learning permanently.

This policy is here to encourage good, safe practice that will benefit all members of the Eskdale School community. Nationally, there are few cases while writing this document where students have abused the rules and expectations that are similar to those set out in this policy. It is essential that our students follow the clear guidance and expectations set out. Breaches of the rules will be dealt with severely.

Student code of conduct (non-negotiable)

- Be on time for your lesson.
- Be prepared, be ready, try your best
- Students must not share the meeting link with anyone outside of Eskdale School
- When the register is taken students will be asked to show their faces on the camera. After this they can turn the camera off. Refusal to identify who you are will mean you will be removed from the session
- Check the area you are learning in is appropriate to help your learning (quiet, warm, well-lit area)
- Dress in appropriate daytime clothes, not pyjama's or provocative clothing!
- Ensure your microphone is muted, teachers will also check this function. You will be invited to speak or input when required.
- After the register is taken you may turn the camera off if this makes you feel more comfortable.
- Be focused, pay attention, and engage in the lesson. Do not attempt to disrupt or be silly on the screen. You will be removed and reported to your HOY should you do this. Contact home will be made to your parents.
- Use the chat function when people are talking, raise your hand if you would like to participate.
- Speak clearly and get involved in the learning; ask questions.
- Be respectful to one another and encourage each other. Use the thumbs up icon when someone does well.
- Use headphones to reduce background noise.
- Students are not permitted to record any sessions either on their computer or mobile device.
- Any sessions recorded without permission and subsequently published online by students will be seen as a serious breach of the school code of conduct policy.
- Failure to comply with the expectations will result in a student being banned from live sessions and potential further actions taken.

Use of school channels to communicate

Staff shouldn't communicate with parents or pupils outside the school's agreed channels (e.g. they shouldn't talk to parents using their personal Facebook accounts, or contact them giving their personal email addresses or giving them their phone numbers). During lockdown staff have assisted with contacting parents using their own phone. If you choose to do this then you must block your caller ID number. Staff must not contact students directly but always communicate via the parent contact number. The headteacher or deputy will only contact a child directly if required, with a witness present. For example, this may be required if there is a Safeguarding concern about their well-being and safety.

Parents contacting staff through an agreed school platform such as a school email address is appropriate and staff should reply. This also applies to students who contact via the school email system. Staff are reminded about the expectations already set out in our code of conduct for communicating with pupils and parents and for staff-pupil relationships. Staff are not expected to reply outside of their working hours, however if a safeguarding issue arises then we would expect staff to pass this on immediately including outside of normal hours.

Any safeguarding concerns should be immediately communicated to the headteacher or deputy head verbally either in person or by phone. This should then be followed up in an email by the staff member ensuring that staff cc both Head and Deputy at minimum.

Direct contact with families

Staff making contact with parents via email or telephone is a normal process that we have historically done in the school. This hasn't changed, however staff doing this now would require using their own personal phone. If staff wish to make contact with parents during lockdown then they should ensure they block their mobile number. If you are making regular contact with students, the school may be able to loan an emergency handset. Heads of Year make regular contact with families and already use these safeguards, this doesn't affect their current arrangements that they have in place.

Procedure to follow when needing to make contact with a student

- Use the school email system in the first instance to make contact.
- If no response make contact with a parent via email also (contact details available on SIMS).
- You may use video calls for small group contact such as intervention, the school is clear that you do not make video calls to individual students.
- Contact via the parent's phones only.
- Call in school hours as much as possible, protect your own number
- Keep a record of the date and time of each call
- Ensure the parent is there with the child when you speak, and have the phone on speaker phone

You can use an app like [3CX](#) that will route calls through your school's number rather than their own, or block their number so parents don't see it. (Give parents a heads-up by email of what time you'll be calling if you're blocking numbers so they're more likely to pick up.)

Guidance for using Google Classroom suite to set work and to teach lessons

Non negotiable

Teachers and students can only use the work account assigned to them when working with students. **DO NOT USE A PERSONAL GOOGLE ACCOUNT WHEN CONDUCTING LESSONS.** Staff may use their own personal computer at home or borrow a school machine. Ensure that non work-related apps, email accounts and programmes are turned off when working with pupils.

Decide when delivering a lesson:

- Whether you'll allow pupils to post and comment in the communication 'Stream', or disable this function for them (see below)
- What they can talk about in posts and comments, if allowed to

(If you disable pupil comments in the 'Stream', pupils will still be able to respond to feedback from their teacher on work they've handed in – they just won't be able to post on the 'Stream' page.)

To disable pupil comments in the 'Stream':

1. Open your class in Google Classroom
2. Click 'Settings' (the cog icon)
3. Scroll down to 'General'
4. Click the drop-down option to the right of 'Stream' and select 'Only teachers can post or comment'
5. Click 'Save'

If you allow pupils to comment, tell them they should only talk about school work in the 'Stream' and that you may 'mute' them, i.e. stop them from posting or commenting (see below), if they post anything that's inappropriate or bullying in nature remove them from the lesson and contact the HOY.

To 'mute' a pupil:

1. Click on a class in Google Classroom
2. Click 'People'
3. Next to the pupil you want to mute, check the box
4. Click 'Actions' > 'Mute'
5. Click 'Mute' again to confirm

To delete inappropriate comments (you'll still be able to view them if you need to use them as evidence – see below):

1. Go to the class
2. Find the post or comment you want to delete
3. Click 'More' (the 3 dots) > 'Delete'
4. Click 'Delete' again to confirm

To view deleted posts and comments:

1. Go to the class
2. Click 'Settings' (the cog icon)
3. Next to 'Show deleted items', click 'Show' to toggle on
4. Hide the deleted items again by clicking 'Hide' to toggle off
5. Click 'Save' to save your changes and return to the 'Stream' page

Using Google Meet for live streams

Tell teachers to:

- Sit against a neutral background
- Avoid using their bedroom if they can (if that's not possible, use a neutral background)
- Dress appropriately – no pyjamas!
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language

Take a register either using SIMS remotely or forward a list to the office of who's there participating. The office admin team will update the register for you.

In 'view-only' Google live streams, pupils will be [automatically muted and won't be visible](#), so you don't need to worry about what other adults in their homes might do that gets caught on camera.

If you [schedule meetings](#) in Google Calendar or Gmail, pupils won't be able to re-join once the final attendee has left. This means pupils won't be able to re-join for their own private calls.

You might still want to ask for pupils to be on mute with webcams off. If pupils are on screen, then they should be dressed appropriately and ask participants to be mindful of what they say and do in the background.

If there is information you wish to record for students at a later date such as a revision session, then inform students that you are recording this section and ask them to blank out their screens. You too may want to blank your screen. Ensure their microphones are muted unless you want them to actively engage in the discussion. The video should not be published on social media or platforms such as YouTube.

To [record](#) in Google Meet should you wish to do this:

1. In the meeting, click 'More' (the 3 dots) > 'Record meeting'
2. Wait for the recording to start
3. When you finish, click 'More' > 'Stop recording'
4. Click 'Stop recording' again to confirm
5. Wait for the recording file to be generated and saved to the Meet Recordings folder. The meeting organiser and the person who started the recording will also get an email with the recording link

Ask teachers to:

- Set their videos to 'Unlisted' so that only people who have the link (e.g. parents who you've emailed) will be able to see the video
- Set the audience as 'Made for kids', so that adverts won't appear at the start of the video and comments will be disabled