Blended & Online Learning Policy
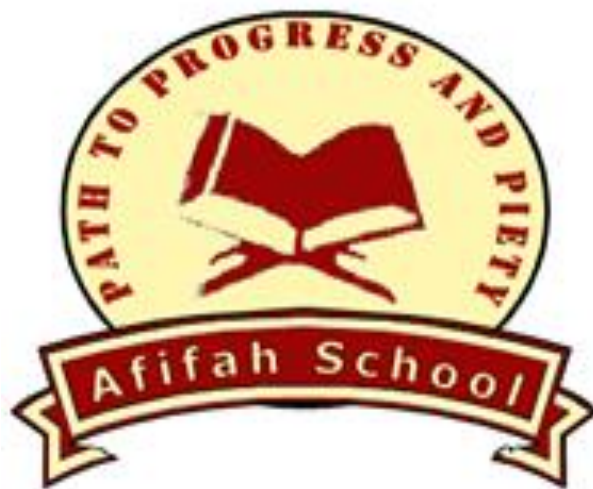
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Contents

Online Learning Policy

1. Background

In recent years, online learning has formed an integral part of teaching and learning. Online resources are regularly accessed to enhance the curriculum and to promote independent learning, with the vast array of resources accessible in school and at home, as appropriate.

Following school closures in March 2020, online learning became the main avenue to continue teaching and learning with the view that this would continue alongside a blended model of at home/in school education for coming months. This policy brings together important information linked to best practice, online safety, resources as well as support for teaching staff, parents/carers and our young people. Our approach is that online learning does not replace face-to-face teaching but it is a vehicle to continue teaching and learning and ensuring we uphold our school vision statement:

"Afifah School's aim is to develop every students' mind, body and soul by promoting academic progress and nurturing their intellectual, physical, spiritual and social potential for the benefit of the wider community."

(Afifah School Mission Statement)

2. Google Classroom

Google Classroom is the main area used to upload work (Class work and homework), communicate with pupils and return classwork. An introductory video shows how to use google classroom and there are guides available from school website.

By using Google Classroom as main portals, online safety is maintained for staff and pupils. They also ensure consistency for all involved as these have been used throughout the school.

4. Equity for All

As young people may be disadvantaged by this new way of learning, much has been done to support our young people such as IT issued to households, hard copies of resources delivered and support from teachers via Google Classroom. This is good practice and will continue following ongoing analysis of pupil engagement. Staff who have concerns around a young person not accessing the curriculum should report this to the relevant Teacher of Pupil Support in the first instance.
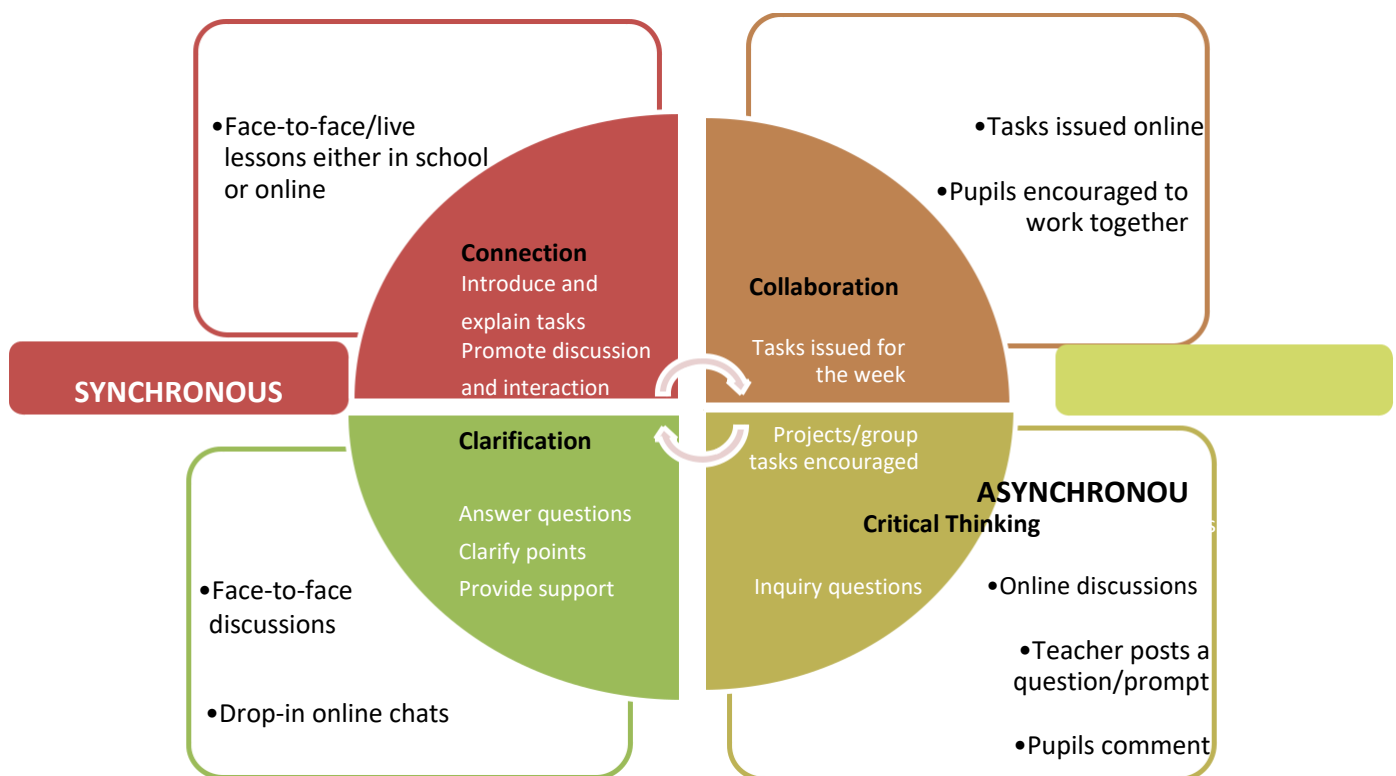
5. Blended Learning Model

There are many different types of blended learning models but the main traits remain the same as defined by the Oxford Dictionary:

"A style of education in which students learn via electronic and online media, as well as traditional face-to-face teaching"

The teaching and learning is both *synchronous* (takes place at the same time for the teacher and pupils) and *asynchronous* (takes place at a time suitable for the teacher/pupils). In order to be successful, a blended learning model must be meaningful, enhanced, motivating and engaging for all pupils.

Blended Learning Model: What does a typical week look like?

SYNCHRONOUS

- Face-to-face/live lessons either in school or online

Connection
Introduce and explain tasks
Promote discussion and interaction

- Tasks issued online
- Pupils encouraged to work together

Collaboration
Tasks issued for the week
Projects/group tasks encouraged

Clarification
Answer questions
Clarify points
Provide support

- Face-to-face discussions
- Drop-in online chats

ASYNCHRONOU
Critical Thinking
Inquiry questions

- Online discussions
- Teacher posts a question/prompt
- Pupils comment

6. Online Delivery

It is important to use professional experience when allocating tasks online. Some tasks may require direct teaching and support and be more suited to face-to-face lessons. Tasks which do not require significant teacher input or that can be done offline, away from screens, are best completed at home. This may mean the order of course topics/units may need to be altered.

Teachers will already have resources such as presentations, videos and web links which can be shared easily using Google Classroom. There are also many resources available online which pupils can access such as **Maths Watch (High School)**, **Spag.Com (Primary School)**. These useful resources which has been purchased by Afifah should be used as part of the blended learning model.

Paired and group work can continue during remote learning by using the collaboration tools on Google Classroom. This allows more than one person to contribute to documents or presentations.

Below is good practice when planning and organising online learning:
Let pupils know when you will/will not be available.

Turn off notifications after you have finished working for the day.

Share activities for the day/week as an assignment in Google Classroom.

Classroom names should be specific, and not simply "S1", as students will have multiple classes in that year group.

Any instructions need to be clear and specific.

Checking on pupil progress is important to monitor and track understanding and progression. Seneca, Kahoot and Quizlet are just some of the tools that can be used to set up quizzes, polls and mini-tests. They are self-marking, allowing you to analyse results by class or individuals.

7. Live Lessons

Live videos can be used within Google Classroom. The teacher can share their desktop with pupils during a Google meeting, allowing a presentation to be delivered, with the teacher talking to pupils. Staff should also be involved in this process to monitor the comments within the chat section or disable when require, allowing the teacher to teach the lesson and comments to be discussed at the appropriate time. It also allows the chat area to be monitored for any inappropriate language/comments.

Pupils should also mute their microphones when required. Teachers can then invite pupils to speak, if they wish, by asking them to unmute their microphones. This cuts down on background noise which can inhibit others from hearing properly. Teachers can keep the webcam and microphone on, if they wish, but they can also just use the microphone on its own. If using the webcam, it is important to be aware of your surroundings and have no personal items in view.

8. **Recorded Lessons**

Being able to record lessons is a useful tool as these can be shared with pupils online and also used at a later date to remind pupils of prior learning. Below are a few ways to easily record lessons:

PowerPoint to Video

Existing PowerPoint files can be converted to narrated videos or automatic PowerPoint shows. A step-by-step guide is available to help if using PowerPoint on the desktop.

Record your iPad screen

If you have an iPad, you can record your screen by following the instruction guide.

Online Screen Recording

There are free online screen recorders that can be used to capture your screen such as Screenapp and Screencastify. There are often time limits to the length of video you can create.

You can share your recorded lessons on Google Classroom.

9. Information for Teaching Staff

"Teachers have a responsibility to be positive role models to learners; exercising sound judgement and due care at all times when online, and setting an example of good digital habits."
                                                                                (GTC(S), April 2020)

The GTC(S) has issued information to teachers including expectations,

how to keep safe online and how to communicate online with young people.

Education Scotland has addressed many areas of online teaching and learning, providing regular newsletters and webinars to support teaching staff. These webinars are then available on their YouTube channel.

The Learning and Teaching Online document includes information on planning online delivery, useful resources and general advice.

Safeguarding of young people is of paramount importance and there are some useful links

within the Scottish Government guidance. If there are any concerns around a young person's

welfare, East Ayrshire Council's Standard Circular 57 should be followed.

11. Information for Parents/Carers

It is important to allow learners and families to engage when it is most appropriate for them and their family/home circumstances. For example, there may only be one device in a house where there is more than one child who requires access to learning or parents/carers may have to use the device for work purposes. The National Parent Form for Scotland has produced useful information leaflets on how to support learning at home as well as useful advice on keeping children safe online.

Online Safety

Securing your devices

Learning at home in lockdown

The National Online Safety Hub has devised numerous guides to support parents and carers with online issues and information about particular websites such as Snapchat, Zoom, etc.

Parents and carers can contact their child's Pupil Support teacher if there are any issues they would like to discuss pertaining to their child's wellbeing or academic progress.

12. Health and Wellbeing

The benefits of online learning are manifold however there are also implications for personal health and wellbeing. Working remotely can have a negative impact on confidence, it can make people feel isolated and it can be frustrating. It is therefore important to ensure good health and wellbeing. The Scottish Government has issued support for staff with advice and links to websites.

General advice includes creating a routine, having regular breaks, setting goals, communicating with colleagues/peers regularly and making time for activities away from teaching and learning.

If parents or carers wish to report a wellbeing concern, they can do so using the Wellbeing Form available on the school blog or Twitter account.

13. Useful Links

Digital Learning Community (links to subject resources)
Education Scotland Professional Learning

Inclusion, Wellbeing and Equalities
Education Scotland YouTube Channel
Parentzone Scotland

SQA Parent/Carer Information

Support for Families with Additional Support Needs

Remote Learning Contingency Plan – COVID-19

The COVID – 19 pandemic impacts on all aspects of our lives and it is currently unclear what will happen in the future. To ensure we are fully prepared for all eventualities, the aim of this plan is to give all stakeholders clear understanding of their roles, in the event of any partial or full closure, to ensure pupils continue to learn.

Full or Partial Afifah's Closure
In the event of a full or partial closure, pupils will be sent home with:
- A letter informing the parents about the closure and further information.
- Exercise books to record their learning in
- A timetable of learning to help to organise the day (uploaded on school's website)
- A list of their logins to appropriate online learning platforms e.g. Google classroom, play phonics etc.

If a class, a Bubble, a number of classes, or a number of Bubbles have to close due to a positive COVID-19 test, then they will follow the procedure described for full closure.

The SMT will:

- Ensure the home learning tasks set are to a high standard in line with year group expectations
- Monitor the phone logs to ensure families are called regularly and any issues are followed up
- Monitor the engagement of pupils learning.
- Monitor any safe guarding concerns regularly.
- Communicate regularly with families through phone calls
- Meet daily with staff to address any positives and next steps
- Respond to parents queries and concerns
- Ensure the day to day running of 'remote' education and the learning and safety of those on the Afifah's site.

Class Teachers will:

When providing remote or blended learning, teachers must be available according to their working hours.

If they're unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this to admin and head teacher a day before via email before 8AM.

When providing remote learning, teachers are responsible for:

❯ Planning and timetable
- Follow their usual planning for all subjects
- Follow their usual timetable of learning each day, through a virtual platform for high school. Primary school students will get reduced timetable in case of remote teaching.

❯ Online Lessons:
- Provide live remote lessons (using Google Meet) and record them for pupils who cannot attend the lessons and ensure pupils understand their learning tasks

> **Setting work:**

- Provide one piece of work per session on regular basis and upload it in Google Classroom along with resources.
- Co-ordinate with their teaching assistants and add them to their Google Classroom as Co-teacher.
- Co-ordinate with other teachers, including those teaching year group, to ensure consistency across the year.

> **Providing feedback on work:**

- Feedback to pupils on their uploaded learning (on Google Classroom) following school's marking policy (PATR) within one week of submission.
- Maintain Grade Book on Google Classroom.

> **Keeping in touch with pupils who aren't in school and their parents:**

- Monitor the daily engagement of pupils and contact the families of those not engaging to offer support.
- Add parents as guardian in Google Classroom so that they get reports on regular basis.
- Provide additional support for children/parents through phone calls, email.
- They should handle any complaints or concerns shared by parents and pupils.
- Log any behavioural issues, such as failing to complete work on Pupil Asset.
- Inform member of the Safeguarding Team if there are any safeguarding concerns.

> **Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents and pupils:**

- Dress code
- Locations (e.g. avoid areas with background noise, nothing inappropriate in the background)

Teaching Assistants will:

- Support the learning of pupils they usually work with at Afifah.
- Support the class teacher they usually work with.
- Make weekly phone calls to pupils to check on their learning and well-being
- Inform member of the Safeguarding Team if there are any safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding Team will:

- Call identified families regularly to offer support and check on children's well-being
- Liaise with outside agencies, including the Police as appropriate to need
- Take part in remote meetings as appropriate to need
- Monitor concerns on a daily basis and follow up any concerns promptly.

IT staff will:

- Fix issues with systems used to set and collect work.
- Help staff and parents with any technical issues they're experiencing
- Review the security of remote learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the data protection officer
- Assist pupils and parents with accessing the internet or devices

Pupils will:

- Log on to the Google Classroom each morning and attend their online lessons on Google Meet.
- Join remote live learning sessions, taking a full and active part in them
- Complete the learning set by their teacher each day and upload their learning as requested by the teacher – photograph/video
- Use on line resources such as PhonicsPlay, Seneca Learning, quiz let etc. any other resources provided by Afifah.

Parents will:

- Set a clear routine with each child using the timetable and the daily learning set
- Read all communications that come out from Afifah to ensure they are fully aware and up to date with news.
- Support their children to complete all of the learning set
- Liaise with school staff and seek support on behalf of their child when needed, with class teacher via email
- Ensure courtesy and politeness to any member of staff within any communication
- Provide access to the learning offered for their children
- Support their children by emailing the teacher pictures of completed work for assessment and feedback (for EYFS using
  Tapestry)

Governing board will:

- Monitor the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible
- Ensure that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons

Who to contact:

If staff have any questions or concerns about remote learning, they should contact the following individuals:

- Issues in setting work – talk to the relevant subject lead or SENCO
- Issues with behaviour – talk to the relevant head of year or pastoral
- Issues with IT – talk to IT staff
- Concerns about data protection – talk to the DPO
- Concerns about safeguarding – talk to the DSL

If the class teacher is ill and unable to work, another member of staff will take over their role and ensure the remote learning is set up and running as described.