



# To aspire, endeavour and thrive together

13 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your overwhelming support over the past days and weeks as we all navigate our way through the many updates, announcements and government U-turns. We are very much aware that there is a lot of communication from the school and really wish this could be avoided. However, it is essential that our students and you, as parents & carers, are not kept in the dark and are confident of the arrangements in school and for remote learning.

Clearly since the last national lockdown schools have gained much more experience in delivering remote education and as a school we have learnt a great deal and based on our experience and the feedback from parents I hope you will agree that our remote learning offer has improved. However, we are also aware that there are still areas we need to improve:

- How do we ensure all students are 'attending' school and engaging with lessons?
- How do we ensure the wellbeing, safeguarding and mental health of all of our students?
- How do we ensure equity of access to both technology and the curriculum?
- How do we get remote teaching and learning as good as it can possibly be?
- How do we ensure good channels of communication with all parents and students both to keep them informed and support them?

These will be our priority areas for improvement this term and we will be implementing actions in order to address these as a matter of urgency. Please refer to future communications for specific details.

## **Remote Learning**

Please click on the link below to review our provision for remote learning. This document aims to provide a comprehensive summary of what, as a school, we provide for students working at home and how this will be delivered. Please note, the DfE expectation is that 5 hours a day of remote learning is provided for all students in KS3-5: this is what we provide for all students as part of their usual timetable. This does not mean students have to be sat in front of their computer screens listening to their teacher for 5 hours, this time includes the work on independent tasks set by teachers. Students in the Sixth Form are also, according to national guidelines, expected to find an additional 4 hours a week for each of their subjects to complete wider reading and independent learning work. It is essential that students maintain these expectations whilst they are working remotely.

[https://www.glossopdale.derbyshire.sch.uk/docs/Summary\\_of\\_remote\\_education\\_Jan\\_2021.pdf](https://www.glossopdale.derbyshire.sch.uk/docs/Summary_of_remote_education_Jan_2021.pdf)

## **Access to technology**

Our aim is to ensure all students are able to work online via Google Classroom. Having completed a student survey after the first lockdown, we identified all students without access to a computer at home and have provided laptops for these students. We are also aware that some students have to share one device amongst several family members and that this



## To aspire, endeavour and thrive together

can be difficult to manage. If you feel your child is falling behind with their work due to having to share devices within the family, or if you have any other issues with your online provision, including access to the internet or the availability of wifi, please email school via [info@glossopdale.school](mailto:info@glossopdale.school) or contact your child's Year Manager/Progress Leader directly and we will do our best to solve any issues that may arise.

### **Teaching videos**

We know that some students have been experiencing problems watching lesson videos online. This appears to be an issue where multiple users in a household are trying to access the internet/videos at the same time, or where internet bandwidth is low. This is an issue nationally given the amount of people using domestic internet agreements. Where possible (and we know this is difficult), students should watch videos when other users in the house do not require such internet strength. You will no doubt have seen the media campaigns to allow users to use specific (educational) websites for free, without eating into their internet data packages. The campaign is thankfully gaining momentum so it is likely to become easier and faster to view videos and use other education platforms.

### **Live lessons**

After evaluating the evidence and impact of live lessons against pre-recorded lessons, we have made the decision as a school to use pre-recorded lessons. There are a number of reasons for this. While live lessons can have benefits and can be useful in maintaining contact between students and teachers, there are a number of disadvantages. We cannot ensure that all students have the appropriate access to technology at the time every lesson takes place; many, if not most, households have some degree of sharing of technology and to timetable live lessons is likely to mean that some students would not be able to access the lesson. Pre-recorded lessons have the benefit of being planned and delivered well, students can pause, rewind and return to the lesson at any point they wish and therefore they are valuable learning tools, well delivered. As the EEF evidence reiterates, teaching quality is more important than the medium of lesson delivery; this is what we have focused on as a teaching body.

Some of the evidence we have used in planning our curriculum can be found here:

[https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19\\_Resources/Remote\\_learning\\_evidence\\_review/Rapid\\_Evidence\\_Assessment\\_summary.pdf](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19_Resources/Remote_learning_evidence_review/Rapid_Evidence_Assessment_summary.pdf)

### **Google Meets**

We do, however, understand that the connection with the form tutor or teacher is something that many students miss while they are working remotely, in addition to the peer interaction that classrooms foster. The evidence above also emphasises the importance of peer interactions. We have been trialling tutor group Google Meets this week and plan to roll out live drop-in sessions to give students the opportunity to ask questions and say hello to their teachers and colleagues. Your children should check Google Classroom for details of which subjects will be offering these, and at what time they take place. In the meantime, your child should have received a welfare phone call by the end of this week where they can ask questions, request support or just have a chat.



# To aspire, endeavour and thrive together

## Curriculum content

You will hopefully already have seen that the curriculum content for all year groups for January and February is now on our website here:

<https://www.glossopdale.derbyshire.sch.uk/Curriculum-Content-Remote-Learning-Jan-Feb-2021/>

This details all the topics that your child will cover in each of their subjects this term, as well as how they will be assessed. Please use this as an opportunity to discuss your child's learning with them, to quiz them (you don't need to know the answers!) and to support them as they complete their remote learning. If you have any subject-specific questions, please refer to your child's subject teacher or Faculty Team Leader (contact details are on our website).

## Monitoring of Remote Learning

Clearly, it is vital that we ensure all students are completing their work at home, and that we evaluate the engagement and quality of work completed. It is important that parents and students are clear on the process and what to expect if work is not completed. Please see below the series of actions for teachers, leaders and parents in monitoring remote learning.

**Every 2 weeks:** Welfare call home from tutor/Year Manager/Progress Leader/TA/SLT

**By Monday 18/1/21:** THRIVE/behaviour points awarded for remote learning

Students who have not completed work: this will be followed up by the Class Teacher

**By Monday 25th January, if students still have not completed work:** this will be followed by the Faculty Team Leader and Progress Leader

**By Monday 1st February, if students still have not completed work:** parent/student meetings with Senior Leaders will be arranged. Rewards letters will be sent to students working well and producing excellent work.

**THRIVE and behaviour points will be added on a weekly basis by class teachers and our monitoring of the completion of work will be ongoing until students return to face-to-face learning.**

## Provision for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers

We now have a number of children in school from each year group who are separated into year group bubbles and completing the work set by their teachers on Google Classroom.

Could we please advise parents/carers of the latest government advice on provision by schools: 'Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other identified sectors. Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.'

We are happy to support parents in continuing their critical work by supervising their children in school. However, the purpose of educating most children remotely is to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 in school and therefore in the wider community. The more students we have in school, the more difficult it is to apply the most effective measures, such as social distancing and reducing the number of daily contacts for staff and students. We ask that parents are mindful of this and the risks involved.



## To aspire, endeavour and thrive together

Should your circumstances mean that you absolutely need to send your child into school, please contact Mrs Gilbert by e-mail: [sgilbert@glossopdale.school](mailto:sgilbert@glossopdale.school). In school places need to be booked by Thursday at 3pm for the following week.

### Q&A

Thank you to the parents who joined us last week for our drop-in Q&A session. We know that many parents are working and cannot take part during the day; we have therefore moved our next session to a later time slot. This will take place on Monday 18th January at 5pm. If you would like to ask a question of one of our Senior Leaders, please click on the Google Meet invite below:

[meet.google.com/mhr-ukpg-mra](https://meet.google.com/mhr-ukpg-mra)

In order to make the most effective use of our time and to provide the information you need, please can you pre-submit questions using the following form. This can be used by both parents and students, and both are welcome to attend.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yWa1Z0UI2kvlPr1Gr8q2W6qfZ7ZwmpPEbsYPonJaeTY/edit>

### BBC Resources

As I'm sure you will have seen, the BBC are hosting lessons on television for primary and secondary school students from 11th January. These are designed to supplement the taught curriculum. From what we have seen so far, these are excellent resources; enjoyable, accessible and relevant to KS3 and KS4 study. Please see details here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zvryp4j>

At the time of writing, BT, Plusnet and EE customers can access these resources for free without using their internet data allowance.

I do hope that I don't need to update you again before the end of the week! Please continue to refer to our website for guidance and information, we update it regularly. I hope you can join us for the Q&A, if you need to, but if you have any more urgent questions, please email [info@glossopdale.school](mailto:info@glossopdale.school).

Best wishes,

Debbie McGloin  
Headteacher