

# Diocese Sheffield Academies Trust



Virtual Learning



## DSAT guidance for Remote Learning during school closures.

*Meeting DfE requirements for Remote Learning January  
2021*

# Our commitment to remote learning in DSAT

New guidance has been published which sets out clearly that it is a requirement that all children working from home during periods of school closure should have access to remote learning. All DSAT schools aim to meet this requirement currently.

DSAT schools are all very different in terms of context and staffing available, so remote learning will look slightly different dependant on this. However, there are some core principles and guidelines all our schools adhere to.

The DfE state that Ofsted will be looking at the quality of remote learning in any monitoring visits they carry out this term. Ofsted will inspect schools – of any grade – where there are significant concerns about safeguarding or the quality of remote education being provided. This could be triggered, for example, by complaints about remote learning from parents. All of our schools are meeting more than the minimum requirement for remote learning and we therefore have nothing to worry about in this instance – we have much good practice to share.

# Meeting the requirements

## ***So, what are the DfE minimum requirements?***

The amount of remote education provided should be, as a minimum:

- EYFS and Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average, with less for younger children
- Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day

## ***What should remote education include?***

In DSAT, we prioritise live lessons (direct teaching with the staff member virtually), as we believe that children benefit most when they are able to ask questions and interact with the class teacher (or teaching assistant at times).

Sometimes, we supplement this with videos or other teaching materials, particularly for those pupils who struggle to access the internet.

Remote education includes learning objectives from the broad curriculum. We believe strongly in DSAT that lessons should match where possible lessons in key worker provision, and, where this is possible the teacher delivers live lessons into homes and key worker provision, so that all children have access to first quality teaching and no child is being left behind.

DSAT schools use a combination of TEAMS and ZOOM to deliver live lessons. Our remote learning offer in DSAT includes:

- *Access to live teaching, allowing opportunity for interaction*
- *Opportunity for independent work and for children to complete set tasks*
- *High quality lessons, planned and delivered by the teacher*
- *Regular assessment and feedback opportunities. Most of our schools use the portfolio on Class Dojo for pupils at home to share their work with teachers and to allow for feedback opportunities.*
- *Access to the teacher remotely to support pupils who are 'stuck' and need help*
- *Support for pupils with special educational needs to access work at their level.*

# What do school leaders need to do?

School leaders should ensure that processes and procedures are in place if a staff member involved in remote delivery is ill or unable to teach for some reason. This could include temporarily providing work remotely rather than live lessons, although if the period of staff absence is likely to be prolonged more than a few days DSAT will support the school where possible to look at alternative arrangements.

School leaders need to ensure that children are kept safe online. Typically in DSAT, the following happens:

*1/ Two members of staff are present in live virtual lessons. Currently, 95% of schools in DSAT have two members of staff involved in the lessons. This could include the teacher delivering the virtual lesson plus another adult in key worker provision where children from the class are accessing the live virtual lessons.*

*2/ Where this is not possible, due to staffing shortages, it is possible to record the lesson, saving this for a period of up to 6 months. It is important that recordings of virtual lessons are never shared with families when children's cameras are turned on for safeguarding reasons. This is at the discretion of the school.*

School leaders also need to ensure that virtual lessons meet the requirements as laid out in this guidance and by reviewing and self-assessing their current practice. DSAT central team can help with this by supporting with any remote learning monitoring activity.

It is a requirement that all schools have a named person with overarching responsibility for the quality and delivery of remote education, and we recommend this is a school leader.

Leaders need to publish details of their remote education provision on the website by 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The DSAT 'Virtual Learning Strategy' covers the key requirements needed in this document.

# Overcoming digital barriers

Any digital barriers need to be overcome by:

- Where possible, distributing any school owned or DfE provided laptops or devices, accompanied by a user agreement.
- Providing printed resources where applicable rather than expecting parents to print from home.
- Having systems in place whereby parents can contact school if they are having problems with access to remote lessons, so that school can work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern.
- Providing families with basic stationary materials such as exercise books pens, pencils.

## Our DSAT vision for remote learning:

In response to the ongoing challenges facing our schools as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, DSAT continues to be committed to ensuring that all children within our trust have equality of access to high quality education regardless of their location: home (self-isolating or in lockdown) or at school.

DSAT is a team of committed school leaders, teachers and support staff who are all determined that every DSAT child will have access to daily teaching despite our current challenges. All DSAT schools have designed detailed plans to ensure children recover missed learning due to the summer 2020 lockdown. We recognise that one of the main barriers to ensuring our recovery plans are effective is the need for children and staff to self-isolate or work from home in the event of school closure.

Therefore, we strive earnestly to put consistent, robust procedures in place in all of our schools to ensure that virtual, online learning is effective and excellent.

All school leaders within DSAT are united in this commitment and work together tirelessly to refine good practice in this area of provision.

