



Villa Real School
together we achieve

Home and Remote Learning Policy and Guidelines 2023

Responsibility: Jill Bowe

Date: January 2023

Signed and Adopted by the Governing Body:

Chair of Governors

Date: 24.04.2023

Date to be reviewed: February 2024

Introduction

Villa Real School offers a holistic approach to learning, aiming to develop pupils/ students in all areas. Academic progress runs alongside physical, social and emotional development as pupils/ students mature and grow. Many of our pupils/ students find the generalisation of skills a real challenge and need regular opportunities to practice taught skills in a range of settings. As such home learning has a real importance in the life of a Villa Real School pupil/ student.

Whilst some home learning may follow the traditional route of academic reinforcement through reading books, spellings or maths worksheets; for some pupils/ students, reinforcement of everyday life skills such as dressing, shopping or physiotherapy tasks may be more appropriate.

It is our intent to ensure that school learning, in the more academic sense, is usefully reinforced by some work done at home. It is however, vitally important that a balance is struck between the need to reinforce and extend academic and other learning and the need for children to have time to socialise and follow interests other than those of school. We recognise the difficulties some parents/carers may have in dealing with their child's specific needs, where time is limited due to high care needs.

We recognise that as pupils/ students grow older and are more able to work independently or to give guidance to a helper, it may be expected, in this sense that the amount of home learning will gradually increase. Parents/carers will be informed of the class home learning timetable where appropriate, and they will be given help and support in order to facilitate the successful completion of any set tasks.

Aims

- To extend and reinforce skills/knowledge learned in school
- To ensure parents/ carers are informed of the work/activities undertaken in school with a clear view of how they can support their child at home
- To ensure pupils/students have the means to work at home
- To provide appropriate and meaningful opportunities to continue learning at home as appropriate
- To meet the priorities for the development of all pupils/ students including independence, thinking, curriculum topics, life skills, communication, gross and fine motor skills
- To liaise closely with parents/ carers, therapists, outside agencies including if necessary the L.A. and relevant staff in school to ensure the home/school links are established and yielding positive results
- To give credit for home learning successfully completed and provide and facilitate systems to support home/schoolwork (home learning club)

- To complete specialist programmes at home to assist with sensory regulation and SALT

Homework Guidelines

These guidelines are a reflection of the practice throughout the School. They should not dictate the home learning to be set, as this needs to be sensitive to the pupil/ student's individual needs and their home circumstances. For some pupils/ students; lap top computers, computer software and switches go home periodically to assist pupil/student's output.

Home learning resources are available in school. These resources are for specific home learning tasks. These resources have been devised and purchased in consultation with parents/ carers, teachers and therapists.

Specific tasks linked to some element of 'special' work will be sent home periodically. This work will include foundation curriculum subjects; i.e. linked to art and design work undertaken with community artists etc. Homework can be set weekly, or termly and be topic based to support learning in school.

Conductive Education Department
Parents/carers receive regular letters, which inform them of the current topic and ideas for activities to be carried out at home. This may be arranged through the home school diary. Specific pieces of work or activities will be sent home; i.e. stories, fine motor tasks, etc. periodically throughout the school year. Tasks set will be of a practical nature i.e. games, play activities, stories and as pupils/ students develop, linked to more functional activities.
Speech and Language Support
Home learning forms a part of the process of investigation of what children are able to do, understand and respond to. Arrangements through the home school diary will include home learning on pre-reading/exercises, reading practice, number as well as language work. Activities undertaken may often be in the form of games which parents/carers and children may play together. All individualised SALT programmes are sent home to be completed as part of home learning.

In our Early Years classes (pathway 1), home learning forms a vital part of the observation, planning and assessment process. Parents/carers are asked to contribute to their child's learning journey via several means, including "Special Moments" from home, the home-school diary and stay and play sessions in school.

For pupils/students on pathway 2, home learning should be appropriate and relevant to the pupils/students. This could be a mark making task, sensory activity.

For pupils/students working on pathway 3 and 4, 1 piece of Literacy/English and 1 piece of Numeracy/Mathematics work should be sent home every week. This will be set by class staff and reinforce learning in lessons. Class staff should record what work is sent home.

Home learning at 14-19 is linked to the external accreditation syllabus. This includes a wide range of curricular topics. Parents/carers are given guidance on the accreditation undertaken and the links home learning has with accreditation and life choices on leaving school. Home learning tasks will be set in line with course requirements and that is an expectation that pupils/students will revise at home. Home learning will also be part of Careers Education and Independent Travel Programme.

Book Bag Books

The teaching of Reading at Villa Real School aims for all of our pupils/students to make progress against their unique starting points, with the ultimate aim of making all of our pupils/students 'readers'.

Home support is encouraged with Book Bag Books which include high quality texts and helpful questions which allow parents to be involved in their child's learning. As the children progress and become more confident, individual home readers are provided with parents being encouraged to read daily with their child and communicate with school through comments in a reading diary.

Reading for Pleasure

Pupils/students will be able to access our school library and select a book to read at home and school. Choice will be guided by classroom staff, to help support with reading ability and age-appropriateness, but the main choice will be the pupils/students. These books will be changed weekly.

Earwig is utilised to share work with parent/carer and parents/carers to share work with staff. This is linked to EHCP targets and should be utilised alongside the school's Assessment Policy.

Remote Learning

Remote Learning refers to the provision of work, class staff support, therapy input, assessment and feedback from school staff to pupils/students in the event that normal lessons are unable to be delivered 'face-to-face' as normal.

Situations where this policy may apply include:

- Pupils/students unable to attend school due to a period of advised self-isolation but who otherwise remain well
- An extended period of school closure

This policy does not apply in situations such as:

- A pupil/student who absents themselves from school without prior authorisation from the school, with or without parental permission, e.g. a family holiday taken in term time
- A parental decision to absent their child as a precaution against an outbreak of infectious disease but contrary to official medical advice from Public Health England or the UK Government.

Individual Remote Learning

This section of this policy applies in situations where school remains open and working as normal, but an individual pupil/student is unable to attend lessons as normal for a period of 3 or more days but is otherwise well and able to work, e.g. a period of advised self-isolation or an absence that has been authorised by the school in advance.

In these cases, class staff will provide suitable tasks and will share these with parents via an appropriate means e.g. email, post. These tasks will be appropriate to the individual learner and should include OT programmes and specific SALT activities where appropriate. These tasks will be recorded by class staff and monitored by class managers.

Blended Learning

This section applies in situations where pupils/students are able to attend school on a part-time basis due to partial closing or their medical needs. Blended learning is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online, with traditional place-based classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and pupil/student, with some elements of pupil/student control over time, place, path, or pace.

Extended school closure

Villa Real School is committed to providing continuity of education for its pupils/students in the event of an extended school closure. While such situations are inevitably highly varied in their causes and ramifications, we will endeavour to provide continued learning for our pupils/students during any period of closure in the following ways:

- Class staff will provide suitable tasks and will share these with parents via an appropriate means e.g. email, post. These tasks will be appropriate to the individual learner and should include OT programmes and specific SALT activities where appropriate. These tasks will be recorded by class staff and monitored by class managers.
- Regular, live teaching from staff, with the ability for pupil/students to ask questions of their teachers in real time
- Tasks set on Earwig
- Where appropriate, the provision of relevant, developmental written work where appropriate which enables pupils/students to make continued progress
- The opportunity for pupils/students to have their work assessed by their teachers and receive feedback on it.

- On-line activities through platforms known to the school

During a period of whole or bubble school closure, pupils/students will be given the use of a school laptop if needed. These will be returned to school on re-opening.

For a short-term closure (up to five working days) class staff will email set age-appropriate tasks to parents. In the event that the school is closed for longer than 5 working days, we will move to a model by which class staff will email work, supported by 'live' contact with teachers via Microsoft Teams.

The school reserves the right to vary the methods described in the light of developing situations surrounding the reasons behind any closure. Teachers will assess the work and return it to pupils/students with feedback attached in a timely fashion.

Expectations of staff assuming they are well enough to work; staff are expected to:

- Ensure that work is set and made available at the start of each week to cover the calendar week ahead, and that sufficient resources are made available to pupils/students, and their parents via electronic means to allow them to carry out this work at home.
- Pupils/students causing concern through a lack of engagement with live lessons or work tasks are flagged with SMT on a weekly basis and recorded on CPOMS.

Contact between pupils/students and staff through personal telephones or personal email accounts, or any other third-party messaging software or video conferencing software (e.g. WhatsApp, Skype etc.), is strictly prohibited.

When staff are unwell during a period of school closure, they should notify Jill Bowe. If they are able to set work for any lessons that require it then they should do so, otherwise responsibility for work falls to the HLTA/SSA in the class.

Pastoral Care

Villa Real School is committed to providing exemplary pastoral care, and this will continue during any period of school closure or remote learning. During such periods the normal channels of communication regarding pastoral care remain open. A member of the safeguarding team will be available at all times, contacted via their email addresses which will be provided to families at time of closure.

School Closures

In the event of school closing during term time, class managers will set an appropriate amount of work to be completed at home. This can be traditional book work or interactive online activities and arts and crafts. Work must be personalised and relevant to that pupil/students' personalised curriculum. School will also liaise with health and Social Care colleagues during this time to ensure the needs of the children are being met holistically. Virtual support will also be provided by Future Steps and Ruth James re therapeutic programmes. Care will be taken to ensure that those who do not have electronic facilities are not disadvantaged by either printing out work or providing laptops/ iPads as appropriate.