

Coronavirus: Feedback from ASCL members on how they are leading remote learning

The following document is a summary of what ASCL members have told us about how they are approaching remote learning in their schools and colleges. A wide variety of approaches are being taken, however, none of these are offered as 'best practice', it is simply what members have described. We hope it is useful to see what other schools and colleges are doing and that this will help you to give you reassurance about your own approaches, or ideas you might wish to try.

Key issue(s)	Description
Medium-term planning	<p>Broke approach into three phases. Moving towards all subjects having a five-week mid-term plan. Four aspects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • week commencing / date • topic • learning objectives (so students have absolute clarity on what they should have learnt and can review their work later on) • resources <p>Aim is to provide big picture for students and parents. Uploaded onto remote learning webpage. Work is directed through Microsoft Teams. Key question moving forward: what should be balance between consolidation and new content?</p>
Parent communication	<p>Zoom parent information evenings for 30 mins Monday-Thursday next week. School will be sharing approach with parents and answering questions.</p>
Managing workload	<p>Planning done at department level, rather than by individual teachers. Helping workload. TAs and HLTAs modifying as appropriate to make accessible for pupils. Teachers available via email for questions</p>
Accessing materials	<p>Made decisions that some content shouldn't be taught remotely and moved curriculum around accordingly.</p> <p>Have identified which pupils aren't engaging with online resources and are following that up to overcome any obstacles.</p> <p>Have directed staff as to how much work is needed per subject/year group.</p>

Community and communication	<p>Week's work goes live on Monday morning. Due in by Friday.</p> <p>Holding virtual assemblies by podcast. Building SMSC into them.</p>
Transition	<p>Planning a transition curriculum for Year 11 and 13s to help them move onto next stage. "Graduation diploma." Compulsory units and electives (based on what they are going on to study).</p>
Diagnostic testing Home study for leavers	<p>Using low stakes diagnostic testing to check what pupils are remembering.</p> <p>Leaders need to support teachers to help pupils do this effectively, to recall what they've learned and to identify what pupils know.</p> <p>Home study for Year 11 leavers is important. Leaders will need to support staff with this so they can support pupils.</p>
Parent communication & feedback Workload	<p>Published a learning and teaching update for parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasises wellbeing - Advises of the school's remote learning timetable - Asks parents to stay in touch, reminds them of school Facebook page. <p>Took views of parents and made following adjustments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff do not set work that needs printing off. 2. The quantity of work is cut down to more manageable amounts. 3. Where possible there are fewer attachments (this is not always possible as some files are too big, but we will try) 4. Teachers do acknowledge that we cannot replicate the classroom at home and that it is hard for working parents or parents with the whole family at home. 5. Whilst you have asked that we do not send emails / Epraise messages late we have to acknowledge that some of our teachers are only able to work after their own children have gone to bed. For this reason, their timings have to be more 'flexible'. Please simply switch off emails / Epraise until the next morning if you can as there will be no expectation of an immediate response from either party.
Virtual lessons	<p>Using Google Classroom and Google Hangouts to deliver lessons. Follows normal timetable. Some lessons aren't delivered over Hangouts but teachers are available during the scheduled times to answer questions.</p> <p>Years 1-4 using Seesaw. Reception is using Class Dojo. To maintain the link between school and home, we are encouraging pupils to send in photos and videos of themselves doing school activities or other any activities at home, which we post on social media and on the school website.</p>

Staff meetings	Family support worker has weekly Zoom catch up sessions with key pupils and vulnerable children have been divided up amongst the DSLs who maintain contact with pupils and parents by telephone.
Parental feedback	Weekly staff meetings via Google Hangouts. Good feedback from parents, although some have said there is increased pressure at home. Families with one device can also find it difficult. So, it is continuing to be reviewed.
Curriculum model	Consulted staff on a revised KS3 model. Made clear it's not a timetable, but about helping to manage work for staff and pupils. Some subjects being delivered in 'short bursts' of 30 minutes (eg maths and MfL), other sessions are designed to take longer (up to 2 hours), eg in Art and DT.
Parent communication	Student and parent guides published to help them understand the new approach.
Assignment deadlines	Deadlines for assignments are given but they are not closed to submission after that date, to allow for greater flexibility at home.
Staff feedback	Held an online forum for Heads of Department to discuss pros and cons of phase 1 approach. Created an infographic for staff to capture key advice for phase 2.
Phased approach	Divided it up into stages.
Communications	Stage 1: - get all staff and students using the VLE. Repurposing existing resources. Stage 2: - Develops communication between home and school. FAQs piece, electronic submission, shared email accounts for departments. Evaluating available resources and incorporating as appropriate. Creation of longer-term schemes of work. Stage 3: More interactive communication for additional support. Online meetings etc. Plus, thinking about longer-term adjustments that will need to be made to the curriculum.
Lessons learned from piloting full remote timetable	Tried to run a full remote timetable but found it didn't work as well as hoped and adjustments were made in consultation with parents. Whilst the timetable doesn't complete a full five hours of learning, what we have learned is that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. families are complex and often older children are helping with younger children during the day whilst parents work (away or at home). 2. family IT facilities rarely allow for smooth learning and a "school timetable" to be fulfilled. 3. some families have only mobile phones – often with a cracked screen (we are posting work home). 4. some families have no workspace for children. 5. some families are trying to do everything, for fear of their child "getting behind" and the stress is becoming too much. 6. some families have unrealistic expectations of teaching staff.

Supporting leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive behaviour points ('gold slips') which recognise efforts of students. Parents and students see these points and comments. Points can be converted into rewards which students can claim. <p>Staff wellbeing is also vital, and a similar range of systems are also used. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team Zoom Lunchtimes, allowing a team to all come together 2-3 times per week and enjoy lunch together. - Digital services support, providing a background IT support to facilitate distance learning, seven days a week! - HR and wellbeing support available via email. - Weekly 'pub quiz' with prizes for all staff. - 'Zoomba" (Zumba via Zoom) allowing staff to get fit and work-out together. - Physical daily briefings (which still take place), are recorded and shared with staff. - Constant communication from the Head to keep everyone informed. <p>Supporting students who have left us early remains a priority. We believe that maintaining regular contact is vital. Some of the things we are doing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sending weekly emails and updates from us, as the 'final exams grades' picture develops. This also includes messages of support and a reminder that we will continue to be accessible to them should they need us. - Developing packs for students to prepare for post 16 studies. - Producing s system for students to submit memories and photos, for the production of a digital leavers book. - Regular phone conversations with our most vulnerable. - A promise and commitment to the holding of end of year events, such as Prom and transition events (when feasible).
Parent communication	<p>Shared a guidance booklet with parents which explains the approach and the new timetable for each year group, including dedicated time for reading. Core subjects are put in a particular slot on the timetable but pupils can move the foundation subject work around. Slots each day for PE and mindfulness.</p> <p>Parents reminded of key contact information for staff (email addresses).</p> <p>Newsletter features messages to each year group from heads of year, examples of quality work and suggested resources and links for each subject.</p>
Using platform to track engagement	<p>Using ShowMyHomework as main tool as students are familiar with platform as they use it for homework in normal times. Also allows tracking of engagement.</p> <p>For post 16 lessons using Teams – but not compulsory if staff member not confident.</p>
Changes to schedule and quantity of work	<p>Initially started by setting a full 1 hour less for each of 5 lessons per day but feedback indicated this was too intense and now setting 30 minutes per lesson. However, time taken for this work varies significant from student to student.</p>

<p>Vulnerable pupils</p> <p>Online access</p>	<p>Lots of positive feedback but small minority of parents say it is 'too much' or 'too little'</p> <p>Key workers contact vulnerable students regularly by phone to check on wellbeing and help with work if required. Each head of year sends age-specific emails/ tasks/ wellbeing suggestions to their year group.</p> <p>Take up of key worker/ vulnerable student places has been low and often zero – common for most high schools in area.</p> <p>Have provided some laptops for students and data dongles to families with no IT at home.</p>
<p>Using platform to track engagement</p> <p>Vulnerable pupils</p> <p>Online access</p> <p>Wellbeing</p>	<p>Using Google Classroom and as far as possible following typical school day timetable. Students used to using Google for homework so hasn't been a huge jump for students and teachers.</p> <p>Staff can track when a student has entered the 'classroom' and can check who is accessing learning.</p> <p>Not insisting that real time is followed as families will compete for computer time and also, staff with young children at home cannot always be available for lesson time.</p> <p>About to send out learning projects/ induction assignments to Year 11 students returning to sixth form to prepare them for A level/ BTEC courses. UCAS preparation for Year 12.</p> <p>Head of Year has kept a track of those really struggling – each has a school mobile and parents have contact numbers – and followed up accordingly.</p> <p>Learning support assistants allocated to most vulnerable students and make daily contact with them.</p> <p>Anticipated closure and asked parents whether they would have any problems with resources for remote learning. Have consequently loaned out 30 laptops and chrome books. Also bought dongles using PP funds for families with internet problems</p> <p>To date 90%+ engagement but do know some students are struggling, especially those with pre-existing mental health issues.</p> <p>Enabled school counsellor to be approached as needed – by both students and staff.</p> <p>Using Go4Schools to log behaviour and using positive house points as motivator for effort on remote learning.</p>
<p>Online platforms & access</p>	<p>Using a single sign in platform RM Unify. Once logged students and staff can access preferred learning platforms without further sign in – Show My Homework, SAM Learning, SENECA learning, BBC, as well as TED talks, UNIFROG etc. Used these for a while so students used to them.</p>

Staff meetings	<p>Posting online lessons, real time chats, students can submit work. Also have own private YouTube channel where for example posted an end of term assembly.</p> <p>Most students have access to a device – even if a phone. Bigger problem is siblings and parents all at home trying to access stuff on a limited number of devices.</p> <p>Has discovered that browser on games consoles can be used to log in to online learning platforms – with a USB keyboard it can be used like a computer.</p> <p>Have been zooming for staff and did an INSET day with training posted on One Drive and a live whole staff meeting.</p>
<p>Online access</p> <p>Staff/student Interaction</p> <p>Wellbeing</p>	<p>Bandwidth in rural area can be poor. Some households cannot have two people online streaming at the same time. So, one teacher delivering means no other person in the house can access similar learning.</p> <p>School has a model of staff/ student interaction that creates a chatroom for class discussion. This is not video. Staff have slots they have to be online and students have lessons they should complete in this time. Staff, parental and student response positive so far.</p> <p>Also includes a slot once a week for a living history project with the aim of considering mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Learning at home cannot look exactly like in school. Parents are working from home and children with learning difficulties could become less engaged if the balance isn't right.</p>
<p>Online platforms & engagement</p> <p>Vulnerable pupils</p>	<p>Using EDULINK – a Swiss army knife of educational software. Best feature is ability to send push notifications to student phones rather than emails.</p> <p>Like others, have noticed a big drop off in student engagement. Push notification allows them to contact students and parents in a quick and safe way.</p> <p>EDULINK also allows setting of work.</p> <p>Students with whose parents there is least amount of parental engagement struggle most to engage in online learning. As head of sixth form increasingly worried about students doing less and less because they assume 'we will have to over this all again when we are back anyway.'</p> <p>Heads of year doing weekly phone calls to targeted students, and safeguarding team doing Google meet video chats with most vulnerable.</p>

<p>Online access</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Community</p>	<p>Gave away about 40 laptops to students in need.</p> <p>Increasingly concerned about screen time and have started trying to set work with requires less or no screen time.</p> <p>For students with connectivity issues had work booklets made up before for other purposes but has been tricky trying to get them in and out.</p> <p>Handful of teachers delivering lessons via Google meets if they have a safeguarding person sitting in on the call – used for cooking and drama to good effect</p> <p>Like many schools, doing their bit in other ways – supplying minibuses and drivers to Herts CC and using 3D printers to make PPE for NHS and local care homes. Opened up part of field for residents to use for exercise.</p>
<p>Online platforms & engagement</p> <p>Schedule and quantity of work</p> <p>Vulnerable pupils</p> <p>Feedback</p>	<p>Making move across to Microsoft Teams Assignments this week as gives more control over monitoring students' work completion. Also offers more flexibility as parents have fed back issues over availability of hardware.</p> <p>Staff reporting good engagement. Teachers will report non completion to admin team who will collate and forward to head of year and pastoral support team to make contact and find out if there are any barriers.</p> <p>Deliberate move away from live lessons to deliver flexibility parents have requested regarding hardware access. Moving to more project-based work that covers several lessons to accommodate this – although MFL and maths prefer little and often approach.</p> <p>Also offer hard copy packs which are updated and distributed each Friday once work packs are completed and returned. About 3% of students accessing work this way.</p> <p>Also contact all deemed vulnerable on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Teachers only marking clearly identified assessment pieces. Most of the time, they upload evidence or maintain work in books. Staff make it clear what assignments are being marked and which are not so parents and students are clear.</p> <p>Handle questions from students via email with a copy to a dedicated email address to provide an audit trail.</p>

April 2020