



NORTHAMPTON  
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST  
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

## NORTHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

### REMOTE LEARNING POLICY

#### Including protocol for staff/pupil absence, Guided Home Learning and Mixed Model Learning

##### Rationale

In the event of a full school closure that means pupils have to be taught remotely, the school is committed to providing continuity of education and will do so through a process of (online) **Guided Home Learning (GHL)**. Where certain pupils or teachers cannot attend school there may be occasions when **Mixed Model Learning (MML)** is appropriate. This refers to a mixture of online and face to face teaching and learning with the pupils or teacher either present in the classroom or working remotely.

This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term school closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short-term student absence. Remote learning and GHL take place via the GDST **Google Classroom (GC)** environment, unless there are technical reasons why this cannot happen and another platform may be nominated in limited circumstances.

Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when students, in agreement with the school, have a period of absence but are able to work at home (MML). This may apply in cases such as exclusion from school, or longer-term absence, assuming students are able to complete schoolwork at home. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, students are self-isolating at home but are not suffering with relevant symptoms.

There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention to school or government guidance. This may apply, for example, if parents choose to take students on holiday during term time. Similarly, this might apply if parents made the decision to keep a child away from school 'as a precaution', against official guidance and without permission from the school, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

The term '**critical-worker children**' refers to pupils whose parents have a crucial role in society and therefore are unable to support GHL at home. The government usually sets a definition of which roles fit this description, but it may also include certain vulnerable pupils for whom a request to work in school has been granted by the Head. These pupils will generally be able to come into school and will be supervised while undertaking GHL.

This policy is for the whole school, although remote learning arrangements for junior school pupils will generally be managed by the Head of junior school on a case by case basis, as requirements are different from senior school.

### **Remote learning for individual students**

**Mixed model learning (MML)** refers to a mix of in-class teaching and remote learning taking place via video call and Google Classroom. Pupils can access class teaching in this model via video and teachers can teach from home, with classes in school learning via video with a supervisor.

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide MML for students who are unable to attend in person. This will take place according to the usual timetable with teachers connecting with absentees via video call and GC etc.

If there are any issues with the compilation of work, tutors should liaise with the relevant head of year or subject leader (particularly if a classroom teacher is unavailable).

There is no defined set of circumstances that qualify a student to be allowed to access lessons in this way, beyond the expectation that the student is well enough to complete the work. However, if a pattern emerges that suggests a student and/or parents might be avoiding attendance at school when, objectively, there is no good reason for doing so, this will be investigated and dealt with on a case by case basis by SLT.

Please see further advice and protocol for MML at the end of this document.

### **Remote learning in the event of extended school closure (Guided Home Learning – GHL)**

In the event of an extended school closure, the school will provide continuity of education in the following ways:

- a) Direct, live, instruction from teachers, following the set timetable, with the ability of students to communicate directly with teachers online via video calls, GC, etc.
- b) The setting of work that students complete electronically and is returned by the teacher, with feedback, via GC
- c) Critical-worker children supervised in school, following GHL

Students and teachers are expected to have access to the internet whilst at home. The school recognises that many families may not have home printers and will therefore not require the printing of material. The primary platforms the school will use to deliver continuity of education are:

**GC and Google Drive** accessed via the relevant app or the 'waffle' (9 dots) on any google search page

**Firefly:** access to firefly is via the relevant app or any browser, using the URL:

<https://northamptonhigh.fireflycloud.net/>

MS Teams/OneDrive may also be accessed via the relevant app or desktop application, or via the following URL:

<https://teams.microsoft.com> or [www.onedrive.com](http://www.onedrive.com) but these are only used in specified circumstances.

Access to these platforms is via a student's normal school GDST login; if students have difficulty with logging in, they should contact the school's IT support.

In a complete closure, GHL will take place according to the timetable with teachers available online on live video throughout the whole lesson. This can be either from home or school, assuming teachers have the Head's permission to come in. The expectation is not that teachers will be actively teaching for every minute of the lesson, but the video will need to be on throughout and all students expected to attend until the end of the lesson so that a plenary can take place.

Line managers should be added to google classes as teachers and should be able to attend lessons held on video call as required to offer support and guidance.

Note that in Nursery the normal platform is currently iConnect and in Reception it is Tapestry. Parents are not expected to be able to access firefly or GC in these year groups. Live sessions are led using Zoom in Reception and parents are asked to be present during all calls.

### **The setting of tasks in GHL/mixed model settings**

Subject areas will provide work in line with students' timetables, using GC as a default setting for managing workflow. Tasks will be set in accordance with existing schemes of work, and assignments will be designed to allow students to progress through schemes of work at the same pace as if they were in school, where possible.

Naturally, remote learning will require students and teachers to take a different approach to working through content, but tasks should ensure the pace of content coverage is as close as possible to in-school teaching, and ensure students do not fall behind. The nature of tasks set should allow students to learn independently, without the specific support of an adult at home (junior school arrangements may differ).

Unless there is a good reason not to, tasks will be set for individual classes (and individual pupils within the groups as needed). The type of task set will vary between subjects, but examples of appropriate tasks might include:

- Reading and noting new material from a common subject area textbook or electronic resource
- Working through subject-specific presentations or worksheets provided by the subject area and/or watching a relevant video resource and making notes on it
- Completing a listening exercise (e.g. in languages)
- Written responses to prompt questions, essay plans etc. and/or completion of practice questions or past papers, particularly for those in examination years
- Working through relevant exercises offered by external providers (e.g. SenecaLearning, HegartyMaths)

Teachers should set tasks through GC as outlined above. It is the responsibility of teachers and students to ensure they know how to use this functionality effectively; instructions are made available separately and support is available on request.

### **Live sessions - video calls for lessons, with Google Meet**

As per the 1 to 1 device policy, all students must have a computer or tablet that allows them to access the internet and the GDST cloud provisioning services. Devices must have a webcam so students can access Google Meet (and, in rare cases, MS Teams) for video conferencing purposes.

Students will be provided with details of sessions and will be expected to participate in them. Teachers will register classes in SIMS Lesson Monitor (senior school only) and absences should be recorded and followed up in the normal way.

Teachers and students must remain in live sessions throughout the session. This is to ensure students are engaging and can be supported individually. Teachers will take a register and/or ask each student a question at the beginning. If any students are absent from the live sessions, teachers should follow the absence protocol in place. At the end of each session, teachers should run a formal plenary activity to ensure students have followed the lesson effectively and know what the next steps are. Again, each student should be asked to contribute individually, however briefly.

In most cases, when full GHL applies, timetabled lessons will last 1 hour for KS3, or 1 hour 15 minutes for KS4/5. It may be appropriate sometimes for a teacher to end a session after 1 hour in KS4/5.

The expectation is that backgrounds should be blurred or neutral. When using the audio/video functions, teachers must follow GDST protocols (**important**: see also Appendix and expectations of students and teachers below).

### **Prep during a school closure**

The concept of prep in a GHJ setting is hard to define, as there is no clear line between classwork and homework. Some pupils may find themselves working excessively in this situation and others may not engage as well as required. To avoid this confusion, instead of referring to prep for KS3, pupils should be guided towards optional enhancement and enrichment opportunities (generally held in firefly but GC work streams are also applicable). KS3 pupils are generally expected to be able to complete curricular work within the school day, with an additional period to allow for completion and enhancement work. Recommendations are approximately 1 hour of additional time in the week for Year 7, 1.25 hours for Year 8 and 1.5 hours for Year 9.

Teachers can refer to prep with KS4/5, if this is helpful. The key message to these year groups is that we must cover the courses properly or we risk underachievement in exams, so there has to be work beyond the lessons themselves (as is normal). Timing recommendations are included in the prep policy.

### **Assessment and feedback**

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, this can be facilitated easily in GC and teachers should endeavour to provide individual feedback to students on pieces of work that they are required to submit. However, under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers and this would continue to be the case under GHJ. It is helpful to use the materials function in GC if work is not expected to be handed in. Also, ensuring a clear labelling of assignments helps signal to students if work needs to be returned.

When they set assessed work, teachers must ensure it is designed in such a way that **meaningful feedback** may be provided. Feedback is at the heart of our assessment policy and, when given well, has arguably the greatest impact in terms of improving outcomes of any pedagogical approach. Possible methods may include:

- Recording **oral feedback** and sharing an audio file with the student via Mote or a Qwiqr code. Hearing the teacher's voice is hugely important to students, especially in a GHJ setting. Furthermore, it can often make the delivery of feedback less onerous to teachers.
- Providing whole class feedback rather than comments on individual pieces of work – this is an effective way of providing feedback, supported by findings from educational research
- Using the "Comments" function on online documents, or in GC assignments
- Feedback via another website / piece of software (e.g. onenote, SenecaLearning, MyMaths, Kahoot challenges etc.)

Additional functionality is available in GC if teachers want to create assignments for students to complete. These might include the creation of a tailor-made quiz (containing either multiple choice or extended answers).

Training in the use of the cloud-based systems mentioned above is available in the CPDL section in the staff firefly pages. For support, please speak to the Deputy Head or Head of junior school.

### **Providing cover for absent teachers during a school closure**

With all teaching online, where a teacher is unavailable to work unexpectedly, work should be made available as usual in GC. Ideally this should be set by the teacher, or failing that, the line manager is able to access the class and can ensure work is available.

Where absence is planned, e.g. for leave of absence/INSET etc. live cover should be provided, where possible, from within the subject or faculty involved.

For longer term absence within GHJ, a discussion should take place between the Head of Faculty and Deputy Head Academic to discuss arrangements. In some cases, classes may be amalgamated and/or shared so that the same class does not always receive the cover work. Where part-time teachers are available within the expertise of the

subject, following consultation with the Head, it may be possible to arrange overtime. Likewise, supply teachers who know the schools GHL processes may also be used if agreed.

Teachers should report absences as in normal circumstances.

Tutor absences will be managed as above by the Head of Year and Deputy Head Pastoral. Class teacher absence will be managed by the Deputy Head Juniors in junior school.

### **Expectations of students**

Students will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending all live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Students will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a form tutor) on a regular basis.

Students are expected to keep their video cameras and microphones on throughout each live video lesson. Teachers may choose to mute microphones if required. Students should respond quickly when asked a question or prompted by a teacher and all students should expect to respond to a register or similar prompt from the teacher within the first 5 minutes of any session. Likewise at the end of a session a formal plenary should ensure that all students have spoken again and that they understand what is required of them in terms of any ongoing work. Students should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any administrative tasks that allow the school to monitor their progress.

For example, where assignments are set using GC, then they should mark tasks as “done” so teachers can monitor their progress. If students or parents have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant subject area. If there are questions about a student’s overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the student’s tutor or head of year.

In GHL, teachers must work on the assumption that students will not necessarily have the full range of books and equipment that they would usually have in school. However, if advance notice is possible, teachers will instruct students to take relevant equipment from their lockers home, or for parents to ensure they have duplicates. The school does not expect students to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided by the school (e.g. science or art). Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case students do not have access to them at home. Online textbooks are helpful in this regard and many subjects are now moving over to these. More information is available on the teaching and learning site here: <https://sites.google.com/nhs.gdst.net/teaching-and-learning-digest/>

The school expects that parents have internet access at home to access remote learning resources, but teachers will make no presumption of the student’s ability to print at home. PDF editing software such as Dochub (which links to Google Drive) should be considered if needed. Support for this can be requested.

### **Expectations of teachers (and subjects)**

Teachers should ensure they have effective internet and phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, teachers can request a school device. If there are IT related issues while remote working, teachers can contact the IT Operations Manager via the service desk email – [servicedesk@uk.gdst.net](mailto:servicedesk@uk.gdst.net) (more information is available in the remote working folder in the information for staff team).

The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with school and subject area policies. Under normal circumstances, subjects take different approaches to the setting and assessment of

students' work – for example, the frequency of substantive task set, and the regularity of written assessment provided – and subject area policies will be applied in the event of remote learning.

In order to provide a consistent approach, heads of faculty and subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the nature and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas. All teachers should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that students have a range of activities to complete at home and are **not exclusively working on a screen**. Line managers will monitor this and should be included in all GC groups so they can drop in to offer support and guidance as needed. There is further advice on this in the teaching and learning website noted at the start of this document.

Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their students in a timely manner. Subject leaders are responsible for overseeing the form and regularity of feedback, and will liaise with faculty heads and Deputy Head (Academic) to ensure consistency.

In the event a teacher is unwell during a period of remote learning, it becomes the responsibility of the line manager to ensure work is set to her/his classes. Note that illness in these cases will be treated as normal and recorded in CoreHR with back to work discussions conducted remotely if required.

Teachers and subject areas are expected to:

- Plan and deliver 'live sessions' where appropriate in consultation with faculty heads and Deputy Head (for any audio/video links)
- Respond to reasonable amounts of communication from students, parents and teachers
- Plan and set tasks for their students using GC (note – there may be differences in junior school depending on the year group in question)
- Set and mark assessed work promptly, in line with school and subject policies, returning it to students electronically

Teachers should be available to contact parents if needed, by email or phone (when phoning from personal devices, dialling 141 before the number will ensure the teacher's own number is kept anonymous). If contact is deemed excessive the line manager will be able to support and, if necessary, escalate to SLT.

If parents ask for additional work beyond that set as part of the requirements above, subjects should continue to use the enrichment and enhancement GHL pages in firefly or in GC, based on items such as interactive websites and support activities.

In order to ensure teachers can perform the expectations outlined above, the school will provide a range of training opportunities. Teachers should ensure that they have looked through specific instructions, watched walkthroughs, and attended teacher training sessions. If teachers require support with any aspects of remote learning, they are encouraged to consult their line managers or the deputy heads. The professional development pages in firefly and the GDST Hub (and on the teaching and learning site noted above) are useful sources of training – simply search for the element required.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, teachers will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, students and parents. Teachers also should ensure their communication with students does not encourage unhelpful work habits. All communication should take place during usual office hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 5pm (meetings may take place beyond this time as in normal operation, however). Responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day where possible. For those who are on part-time contracts, communication is expected only on the days on which they would usually work.

Communication must always occur via official school channels. Permitted methods are (please also see Appendix regarding live links and flipped learning):

- Email using school email addresses only (group email lists are available in the Information for staff team)
- Google Meet and GC (and Google Drive related such as docs/sheets etc.)
- Firefly messaging (which can allow teachers to reply to an entire class)
- Zoom - where sanctioned by SLT (but not for 1 to 1 sessions with students) - also Teams where agreed

### **Support for pupils with SEND, EAL and other specific learning enhancement needs**

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all learners when setting online tasks. Profiles are available for SEND pupils in the Learning Enhancement team and advice can be sought from the Learning Enhancement coordinator (LEC) or EAL coordinator (or Deputy Head Academic). In addition, the LEC in senior school and learning support teacher in junior school will maintain contact with pupils on their lists requiring regular support, by email or phone with parents/pupils linking up other teachers using CPOMS if required. The LEC will generally work on an individual basis with a group of students identified as having specific SEND needs during GHL. Sessions will take place during private study times or at lunch time. Teachers can refer students to the LEC via the referral system in firefly as usual.

### **Pastoral care during a school closure**

In event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents / guardians. However, form tutors (under the guidance of the Deputy Head Pastoral and Heads of Year) should check in regularly with their tutees to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Form tutors will be expected to pass on feedback to Heads of Year, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication. Form registration will take place via live video conferencing each day and registers taken on SIMS lessons monitor, followed up according to the attendance policy. Records of important communications should be kept in CPOMS as usual.

### **Safeguarding during a school closure**

In the event of a school closure, pupils, parents and teachers are reminded that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between pupils and teachers. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school.

More advice on safeguarding and pastoral issues is available in the guidance for teachers document. Any questions or concerns about safeguarding should continue to be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Rebecca Kneen [r.kneen@nhs.gdst.net](mailto:r.kneen@nhs.gdst.net)

## **Protocol for teacher/student absence (hybrid or mixed-model learning)**

The following protocol applies in the event that teachers or pupils are absent from school while self-isolating or awaiting the result of a test but are still able to work. Please see the note at the bottom where absence is because of illness. In the event of a **full school lockdown**, please see notes in the remote working policy.

### **For teacher absence:**

1. Contact the cover line by phone or email as usual to be added to the cover list.
2. Contact your line manager (and a colleague if needed) to ensure others are aware as appropriate.
3. Ensure all necessary presentations/assignments are available in Google Classroom (GC) for your groups.
4. When the cover list is available, contact the teachers involved by email to let them know how to access your lesson content. Please also include HRI/MLG and your line manager in communications.
5. Ensure the cover teacher knows how you intend to run your lesson 'live' – you may need to add them to your GC groups (see below).
6. Send a message to your groups, in GC or by email, to let them know there will be a cover teacher and how the lesson will be run.
7. Work should be collected electronically via GC assignments as usual.

### **For pupil absence:**

1. Parents/guardians/sixth former to inform the school as usual of absence.
2. The receptionist will ascertain if the absence is because of illness or if the pupil is well enough to work from home.
3. If the pupil is able to work, a list of pupils working from home will be available so that teachers can set up live remote learning (see below).
4. If the pupil is too ill to work from home, notification will be sent to the tutor only and the name will not be added to the working from home list.

### **Note about the running of 'live' remote sessions:**

Teachers should be available 'live' during their lessons when working from home via a live video link so that they can still deliver the lesson contents. They should inform their classes in advance via GC or email to let them know they will have lessons delivered in this way (group email lists are available in the Information for staff team).

Pupils who are at home should be able to access their lessons 'live' if possible too. This will involve teachers setting up computers to 'broadcast' via video link. This does not mean the teacher has to be visible on camera, but will allow the pupil to interact orally and to see the shared screen.

Google Meet allows screen sharing so pupils can 'dial in'. They can also be shown on the clevertouch screens in classrooms so everyone sees the same thing. A Google Meet code can be set up for each classroom and always stays the same so it is easy for pupils to find (it appears on the banner for each class). Training for this and other areas is available in the CPDL section of firefly [here](#). Note that students should wear earphones when working in a class setting with the teacher absent from school and available on video call. Students are expected to have their own earbuds but spare headphones are available.

If it is not possible to set up a live lesson in this way, work should still be made available in GC wherever possible and instructions made available to the cover teacher (along with access to the class in GC).



**Absence due to illness**

The priority for anyone who is unwell is to get better and there is no expectation of remote working if this is the case.

**Teachers** – contact the cover line and your line manager and follow the usual processes to ensure work is available for classes. Line managers/subject leaders should always be included in GC for the purposes of ensuring work is available for pupils and enabling cover teachers to access this, if required.

*Note: to avoid receiving unwanted notifications, line managers can alter the settings for any shared groups.*

**Pupils** - pupils who are unwell should be given advice about catching up on return to school, or when they are well enough to start working from home.

*It is recommended that subjects/faculties discuss a suitable process ahead of time and perhaps have a document ready that can be quickly adapted and sent to cover teachers.*

## **Appendix - remote working, flipped classroom, GDPR and safe working practice**

Please note that any remote working methods should adhere to GDPR guidelines and must use GDST accounts (google classroom / microsoft teams / outlook etc.).

Live sessions should take place within the GDST 'owned' platform (i.e. google meet). These can be recorded if needed for any absent pupils and **all 1 to 1 sessions should normally be recorded**, unless they are of a sensitive pastoral nature, in which case, copious notes should be taken instead. 'External' applications (such as Zoom) may be used if there is no way of using the GDST options. In these cases, the sessions **must not** be recorded and any 1 to 1 sessions on Zoom must be agreed with SLT.

Teachers must not set up or join social media groups for school use with pupils (such as WhatsApp etc.). Exceptions, such as Twitter, may be appropriate in discussion with SLT.

If you need to use any apps or materials that fall outside the GDST network, please ensure you have discussed with your line manager. Any possible GDPR queries should be resolved using the GDPR check in firefly, available through the staff links page in firefly.

<https://northamptonhigh.fireflycloud.net/information-for-staff/useful-links>

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