



Guidance for Remote Learning

Principles

- Approaches to remote learning will protect and promote the health and wellbeing of learners, teachers, parents and the wider school community.
- Remote learning will support the delivery of education continuity in Shetland.
- Remote learning is not expected to replicate normal education delivery.
- School managers and teachers should work collegiately at school level on approaches to remote learning.
- Remote learning recognises the need for flexibility to suit the needs and circumstances of all learners and their families.
- Teachers will be supported to deliver remote learning with advice, guidance, technical support and signposting to professional learning.
- All learners will be supported to access some aspect of remote learning provision or an alternative.

Background

The impact of COVID-19 virus presents an unprecedented challenge for education in Shetland. Remote learning will play a central role in maintaining education provision and supporting Shetland's children and young people through this period.

The aim of this guidance is to set out key terminology, expectations and arrangements for delivering high quality remote learning opportunities for our children and young people. This guidance should be read alongside:

- ICT Security Policy 2019
- Guidance for Learning in the Broad General Education
- Guidance for the Provision of Education for Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs (this will be shared by Lesley Simpson today)
- Guidance for Learning in the Senior Phase (under development)

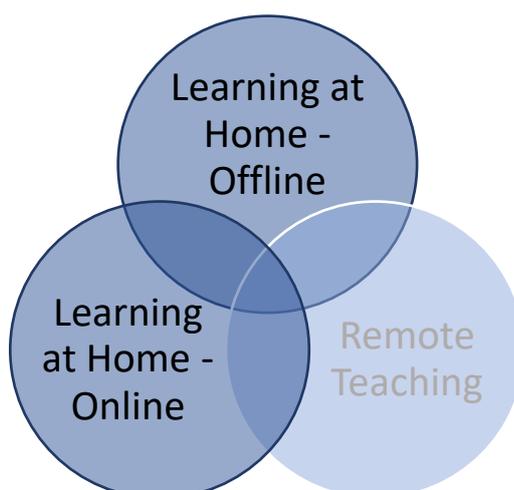


What is Remote Learning?

Remote learning is the umbrella term describing ways of learning without there being regular face-to-face contact with a teacher in a classroom. Remote learning is already used extensively across Further and Higher Education settings and, as technology plays a greater role within primary and secondary education, the approach is being adopted across Scotland. In Shetland aspects of remote learning have been part of the system for some time and remote teaching through live lessons has been successfully delivered in music instrumental, history and modern foreign languages.

Remote learning does not always require technology and Head Teachers should consider a range of approaches that promote learning at home. This may include the creation and sharing of paper based materials to support learning however, limited access to printers and other resources mean that a digital approach should remain the primary mechanism for delivering remote learning. It is always worth noting that play, dance and outdoor learning (subject to government advice on social distancing) are valuable, creative learning activities and important contributors to the overall package.

There are three aspects to remote learning:



Learning at Home – Offline



This is a **core** aspect of remote learning and involves pupils accessing learning activities without the need for an ongoing online connection. Learning activities can be communicated via email, Microsoft Teams and Glow Blogs, and, in some circumstances, paper learning materials. Online activities can be downloaded at home and completed at a time most suitable to the learner and their families. Work in Glow can be synced offline to allow access to the materials even if a learner is not online. Glow then updates the documents when a connection is established.

Learning at Home – Online

This is a **core** aspect of remote learning and involves pupils accessing links to Class Blogs, Educational websites, videos, online webinars and tutorials, pre-recorded lessons and ‘*how-to*’s’ that will require an element of ongoing online connection to access content and complete work.

There are links and activity suggestions on the Shetland Digital Hub Blog <https://blogs.Glowscotland.org.uk/sh/digitalschoolhub/>.

Resources and materials for learning can also be uploaded to Glow for pupils to access from Sharepoint or within Microsoft Teams. Teachers can create assignments within Microsoft Teams for pupils to complete and submit back to the teacher for feedback.

Remote Teaching (Live Lessons)

This is an **extended** aspect of remote learning which involves Teachers delivering live lessons via a Web browser application for pupils to link into at an agreed time and day. Lessons can be followed up with drop in virtual sessions or via the chat function in Microsoft Teams on the Glow platform.

This a well-established, tried and tested approach for a small number of teachers, instructors and pupils and it may be that some teachers feel confident to progress to this level of remote teaching over time. It is **not** an expectation that Teachers are Remote Teaching at this time. Further reading on Remote Teaching can be found [here](#).



Across all aspects of remote learning, teachers should be in regular contact with learners to provide feedback on their learning.

How do I create effective conditions for remote learning?

Preparing for remote learning

The effective implementation of remote learning requires key preparatory tasks to be completed and procedures to be implemented as soon as is practical. Head Teachers have been asked to return information regarding their school and staff's overall readiness for remote learning, which, will in turn, help design the level of support required in each school.

Furthermore, ICT have produced guidance notes and instructions to support remote access including:

- A Guide to logging in to the VPN;
- Accessing the council network from home using the SecurEnvoy Soft Token.

Access to Glow for all staff and learners is an essential element of remote learning. Office staff should ensure SEEMIS records are updated to ensure that Glow accounts are in place for every staff member and all pupils.

Teachers can change any pupil password, and schools should ensure there is a proper procedure in place to reset teacher passwords. This will be achieved by allowing some school staff additional Password rights whilst ensuring an appropriate email is set up for an individual's password reset. In the event these people are not available then our ICT service desk and Glow key contact can do these resets.



The remote learning environment

Teachers, and other school staff, will be required to adapt their approaches to learning, teaching and support whilst finding working patterns which suit the needs of their learners and their own personal circumstances. This may take some time but establishing these working arrangements should be a priority for all staff early in term four if not before.

Key points to consider in creating an effective working environment at home include:

- Create a work station with consideration given to the Display Screen Equipment Policy
- Create a separate work station in the home where possible
- Monitor working hours to avoid working in excess of agreed hours per week
- Engage in professional learning opportunities regarding remote learning to build confidence, skills and efficiencies in ways of working digitally.
- Create remote learning opportunities which can be consumed in chunks. Excessive screen time for teachers and learners will impact on health and wellbeing and a healthy balance of offline and online learning is advised.

Teacher's Use of ICT to deliver Remote Learning

We know through our consultation with school managers and teachers that teachers' digital skills, access, knowledge and engagement with training is variable and that the pedagogical shift from normal classroom teaching to remote learning is challenging.

Key points to consider in supporting Teacher's Use of ICT

- Consider the varying skills of all staff in moving towards a consistent approach to remote learning across a school
- Arrive at school level approaches to remote learning through collegiate, professional dialogue
- Promote professional learning opportunities through Education Scotland, the local authority and other training opportunities

At a time when planned and incidental dialogue in school is no longer possible, it is important to establish regular check-ins with staff to have these supportive



conversations. Virtual coffee breaks, via Vscene, are one way of creating an informal discussion space for staff.

Communicating approaches to remote learning

Sharing information, guidance, instructions and learning opportunities across different groups within the school community and seeking feedback from parents, staff and learners as the term progresses will be a critical part of getting this right.

Key points to consider in achieving successful communications:

- Follow policies, guidelines and protocols for communicating
- Plan and control the frequency and volume of information
- Ensure explanations and instructions are clear
- Agree protocols for communicating with learners and parents and for how parents can contact the school
- Use existing methods of communication where this is still possible

Recommended methods of communication are outlined below:

Staff to parents

- Corporate email or Glow mail
- Glow Blogs and information on the school website
- Phone calls, letters and packs within existing protocols

Staff to learners

- Email - Glow mail is the preferred method
- Corporate Email but only if this system was in place prior to school closure
- Microsoft Teams
- Glow Blogs
- Links from the [Shetland Digital Hub Blog website](#)
- Sharing documents from OneDrive
- Paper packs - this approach should only be used for learners who do not have access to IT or where the IT connection is poor.



Staff to staff (including meetings)

- Corporate email or Glow mail
- Sensitive documents or materials should only be shared via corporate email
- Microsoft Teams
- Vscene Hubs

It is not recommended that other social media platforms are used to communicate with parents. Staff should give due attention to Shetland Islands Council's Social Media Guidelines (2013) available on the intranet and the [GTCS Professional Guidance on Electronic Communication and Social Media](#).

Devices

Staff and learners can take a laptop home and this will allow access to the internet, Glow and Office 365. Staff can access their One Drive and any documents or learning and teaching materials they have stored there. No sensitive materials should be uploaded to Glow.

Staff with a Shetland Islands Council Corporate laptop or desktop should ensure this is taken home.

If staff and or pupils have a suitable personal device they have enrolled, or are willing to enrol, they can use that to work effectively from home. This is the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model and means that all staff can access their One Drive and any documents and learning and teaching materials they have stored there.

Staff should be aware that in the event of the personal device becoming compromised, ICT may need to restore the device to the default setting if it is being managed on the council network.

iPads and other handheld devices including mobile phones can be used on home WiFi to access Glow and the tools within Office 365. Guidance can be found on the Glow platform. Google classroom is not being used at this time and ICT have been instructed not to download this on to any teacher's Launchpad in Glow.



Addressing the Digital Divide

We know that not all children and young people have access to a device, the internet and adequate broadband speed for all aspects of remote learning.

Where learners do not have access to what is required to access remote learning, the school is permitted to loan devices and schools should record the loan using agreed protocols. We have developed guidelines for pupils and staff taking school laptops home and guidance on how to logon to various devices i.e auto login. These can be found in Appendix 3.

Head Teachers should continue to identify pupils in their school who require access to devices supplied by the Council.

Work is underway to help learners and families access better internet connections in poor connectivity areas by way of 'data bolt ons', 'increasing data' and WiFi 'hot spot dongles'. This work is being developed and further information will be communicated to schools in due course.

Key roles & responsibilities within the remote learning context

Senior Leadership Team:

- Communicate with staff, parents and the wider school community.
- Work collegiately with staff to develop school specific curricula for remote learning.
- Oversee the deployment of remote learning and/or online resources for their faculty.

Principal Teacher/Class Teachers:

- Collaborate with colleagues to design remote learning experiences for learners.
- Communicate with, and provide feedback to, learners.



Support for Learning Teachers:

- Work within the Guidance for the Provision of Education for Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs.
- Support classroom teachers to deliver the remote learning curriculum

Guidance/Pupil/Pastoral Support Teachers

- Communicate, where appropriate, with learners identified as requiring additional support in accessing the remote learning curriculum.
- Make appropriate PSE / Health and Wellbeing learning materials available for remote access.

Specialist/Peripatetic Teachers:

- Collaborate with relevant class teachers to design subject-specific remote learning experiences / online materials for learners.
- Music instructors should communicate with their pupils directly to find a time and day that is mutually agreeable, bearing in mind that there will need to be some degree of flexibility due to other class or family commitments.

Learners

- Dedicate appropriate time to learning, as guided by your teacher(s)
- Check appropriate online platforms, as directed by the school, for information on courses, assignments, activities and resources regularly.
- Identify an appropriate space to study/learn.
- Submit all assignments in accordance with provided timeline and/or due dates.
- Be mindful of your social and emotional well-being.

Parents

Parents can support their child / children in their learning by:

- Providing an environment conducive to learning (access to technology, appropriate study space during daytime).
- Engaging in conversations on posted materials / assignments / activities.



- Monitoring time spent engaging in online and offline learning, including variables such as preferred learning times (morning, afternoon, evening). Too much screen time must be avoided.
- Support emotional balance by providing ample room and time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, and down-time.

Support and Professional Learning

Training and support for staff on approaches to remote learning, the use of Glow and other digital platforms can be accessed via the following:

- Dialogue with your line manager;
- Dialogue with school colleagues, stage partners and subject specific colleagues;
- Discussion with Quality Improvement Officer;
- Online tutorials and webinars on Glow or from various partner providers such as Education Scotland;
- [Shetland Digital Hub Blog](#);
- Glow key contact – Tracy Langley
- SIC Workforce Development – VOR and iLearn

Further Guidelines for Remote Learning

When designing remote learning experiences it is helpful to consider the following:

Feedback

- Timely feedback is essential to learning: this is especially the case for remote learning environments where it is challenging for learners to ask questions in real time as they normally would in classroom setting.
- Provide clear communication regarding where/how learners should ask questions and seek clarification specific to learning targets, task and activity requirements, and/or deadlines.
- Actively monitoring your email and online tools such as Microsoft Teams for questions and communications from learners, families and colleagues.
- Feedback can also be given via the tools within Office 365 – adding comments.



OfflineTasks

- Avoid issuing tasks which require printing at home. All tasks should be designed to be completed on a device or uploaded as a picture.
- Consider including offline activities in your lessons such as reading, engaging in discussions with a family member or friend remotely, writing, taking pictures or making a video. Opportunities for learning through play, games, dance, making objects etc should be encouraged.
- An internet search of the term “Flipped Learning” will direct teachers to a range of resources that will support this simple but very effective learning and teaching strategy.

Bandwidth

- Consider the size of the files to be downloaded by learners as learners’ internet connection may have limited bandwidth.
- If you embed videos, keep the size of the files small and avoid HD / 4K quality.
- For remote teaching, or live lessons, please be aware that Microsoft Teams requires more bandwidth than VScene.

File Management

- Try to post only PDF or documents available online (Office 365) as they are universal and available on all platforms without having to worry about converting them.
- Consider using ‘Shared with Me’ through OneDrive for submissions of work.
- Systems within class Notebook can be used to house resources for whole classes as well as individuals. Teachers will have access to all areas and pupils will only have access to their own part of the note book, along with library and collaboration space.
- Consider requiring all submissions to take place through a digital workflow tool such as Microsoft Teams.
- No sensitive files should be uploaded through Glow.



Time Management

- Keep tasks simple and directions clear to ensure learners understand what they are required to do and to be able to complete tasks in quantifiable sections: break learning and teaching into chunks.
- Provide learners additional time to complete learning tasks. This can be up to double the time normally required in class.
- Schedule time for breaks