Coronavirus crisis: Distance teaching and learning

Guidance for secondary teachers:

1. Taking care of your own physical and mental health is crucial at this time: this goes for children, parents and teachers. Keeping minds active and happy, ready to return to school when the time comes is the most important factor.

2. Teachers working at home can only carry out a reasonable workload and this must be negotiated with staff. Teachers should not be asked to personally contact their students daily, except where they have agreed with the headteacher a system/rota for contacting vulnerable children and families. Teachers must not use personal phones, emails or social media to carry out this contact.

3. Teachers should not live-stream lessons from their homes, nor engage in any video-calling, unless in exceptional circumstances with the parent.

4. Not all pupils will have a quiet place to work, and some will be expected to take care of younger siblings or perform household chores.

5. Schools should suggest activities that children can complete on their own regardless of ability level. We must recognise that most parents are also trying to work from home. Parents cannot be expected to become teachers.

6. Variety is key and bite-sized chunks of work are more likely to be completed and could be part of a bigger project. We cannot expect pupils or parents to replicate the classroom at home.

7. Set tasks that can be completed to varying degrees of success with more complex and additional tasks for the most able pupils. Tasks that require little or no access to technology are preferable in order to cater for everyone. Where schools do use technology, they should use the technology that pupils and teachers are familiar with.

8. A list of flexible tasks that cover different areas of the curriculum allows pupils to choose the tasks that interest them and makes it more likely that they will complete them. Post-16 learners might be able to carry out more open-ended, independent work, but structure and guidance is still needed for them.

9. If schools have systems set up for online lessons, these should be kept to a minimum as the interaction needed between teacher and pupils in school is high and cannot be easily replicated for a young audience, even at KS4 level. Any school which carries out online lessons must have protocols in place to protect staff and safeguard pupils, and no teacher should be expected to carry out any online teaching with which they feel uncomfortable or in the absence of agreed protocols.

10. At this time, teachers should not be expected to carry out routine marking or grading of pupils’ work. To do so would be to disadvantage those who do not have the resources and support available at home to make that fair.

 Lots of resources are available for schools and teachers HERE.