

Senior School Blended Learning

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

2022

ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY



SENIOR SCHOOL BLENDED LEARNING GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

January 2022

Whilst the aim is to maintain maximum face-to-face teaching and learning, this guidance outlines what has been put in place at St Chris in case of a Covid-related incident affecting the normal school attendance of pupils or staff.

We have reflected on how technology might help us to achieve our educational goals. We have learnt from the period of fully Remote Learning (RL) during lockdown and gathered feedback from our pupils, staff, parents and carers to create a Blended Learning approach that will ensure pupils remain engaged no matter their whereabouts or circumstances in the current situation.

Blended Learning (BL) means different things to different institutions, so to clarify: At St Chris, Blended Learning means a two-way process of teaching: the first is face-to-face in school, whilst the second involves simultaneously teaching or learning remotely through a video-conferencing platform (at St Chris we use Microsoft Teams).

The model allows us to continue to maximize the educational impact of what we do when pupils are both at home for a Covid-related reason or still in school.

At St Chris we are mindful of the need for schools to make learning in the current environment both a stimulating and engaging experience, but to also ensure the conditions we create (both in the classroom and remotely) are supportive and safe.

We recognise that personal contact with our pupils is key to maintaining motivation and engagement, as well as sustaining fruitful relationships, both teacher/pupil, peer to peer and with parents.

We also recognise that when providing BL, variety is key. The research is clear that pupils should be facilitated to engage in a variety of learning activities, including direct instruction, real time lessons, recorded sequences, quizzes, formal assessments, discussion forums, break out rooms and online material (including those set on Satchel One).

We also consider ongoing pastoral support to be central to ensuring our pupils remain linked to the St Chris community. There is more detail about the pastoral support available for pupils in the section below.

BLENDED LEARNING: KEY INFORMATION

Blended Learning (BL) will be provided to pupils who must remain at home/self-isolate for a Covid-related reason. BL will not, as a matter of course, be provided to those who are at home for other reasons – but the School will consider all cases on an individual basis.

To access a BL lesson, the pupil will need video and audio facility on either a laptop, desktop, tablet or (though not ideal) a mobile phone.

If a pupil is at home for a Covid-related reason (as detailed in the Government guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>) this information must be communicated to the School as soon as possible.

The name of the pupil will be added to the Blended Learning list ('the list') by the Pastoral Assistant.

At the end of each day, the Attendance Administrator will send an email to all teachers with 'the list' of individual pupils (with COVID) are absent the following school day (for a Covid-related reason) and therefore eligible to access Blended Learning (BL) provision.

In the case of most subjects, there is the option to join their lesson via Microsoft Teams. Some subjects (such as the creative arts) may take a different approach and further details will be provided by those subject teachers.

Resources for lessons should be uploaded to Teams or Satchel One prior to the lesson so the remote/blended learners can access them in good time

Work completed by the pupil should be submitted at the end of the lesson using Satchel One, email or Teams, as per the teacher's preference.

Pupils have access to short, clear videos guiding them on use of Teams, Satchel One and how to access their school email. These can be accessed on our website here: <https://www.stchris.co.uk/covid19/>

If a pupil is having technical difficulties this should not disrupt the lesson; the pupil may need to work independently on that occasion until they are able to resolve the problem.

Sometimes it may not be possible for a teacher to plan, organise and resource a BL lesson for the following day if a pupil on 'the list' is the only pupil in the class who is absent. However, with one weekday's notice, teachers with pupils on the list will plan for and provide BL access to their lessons. Of course, if the teacher can organise a BL lesson at shorter notice then that is clearly beneficial.

Pupils required to be at home who are in classes where BL is already being provided (for example for another pupil who is already off) can of course join in the BL lesson via Teams straight away.

Creative and Practical Subjects

A particular note on the creative and practical subjects where joining in remotely would offer a limited experience:

For Art, Photography and 3D Design work will be set on Satchel One, however, teachers are very happy to communicate through Teams should pupils require further support and guidance, please contact via email in the first instance.

For Food and Nutrition lessons and activities will be provided on Satchel One for pupils to access.

For Drama, lessons and activities will be provided on Satchel One unless they are GCSE or A Level *theory* lessons which will be live via Teams.

For PE, lessons and activities will be provided on Satchel One unless they are GCSE or A Level lessons which will be live via Teams with supplementary work on Satchel One.

One to One Lessons

If a pupil has any one-to-one lessons during the day such as music lessons, LAMDA or individual tutoring their teacher will contact parents directly to arrange this.

The lessons must take place on MS Teams and be part of the normal St Chris day, as if the lesson were taking place in person.

There must be a parent or carer supervising the child (in addition to the 'remote' teacher) when a session is taking place.

All one to one sessions must be recorded.

Morning Registration and Company Time

- Pupils working at home need to Register each morning
- Pupils need to be online, contactable by school email and ready to start the school day at **8.30am**
- To register, pupils should contact their Adviser or Personal Tutor via Microsoft Teams during the normal Company Time (8.30-9.00am) – this can be by message rather than by video call.

Morning Talks

Pupils working at home will be emailed the link to the Teams broadcast Morning Talk by their Adviser/Personal Tutor.

Morning Talks take place three times a week

- Monday – All pupils
- Thursday – Years 12 and 13 (Sixth Form)
- Friday – All pupils

Lesson Registration

Teachers will register pupils at the start of each lesson.

Use of Video and Recording

Lessons will be recorded as this represents a useful resource for any pupil who is not well enough to attend the BL lesson 'live'. It is also helpful from a safeguarding point of view.

If a teacher is streaming a lesson on Teams neither they, nor their class, have to appear on video. (However teachers will of course have audio enabled.)

If the teacher needs to illustrate something visually they will use the video function to allow those at home to see.

Behaviour Expectations for those Learning at Home

Running a productive Blended Learning lesson is not straightforward and relies on positive engagement and co-operation. Expectations about good behaviour when participating in Blended Learning are very important. Pupils causing disruption or preventing the smooth flow of the lesson through either video, audio or the chat facility will be warned and if they do not respond they will have the privilege to participate removed.

Staff Illness

If a member of staff is absent and ill the School will inform remote learners and parents. The member of staff, or their Head of Department, will set cover work for their lessons, which will be available via Satchel One.

PASTORAL SUPPORT DURING BLENDED LEARNING

St Chris is committed to excellent pastoral care, which we recognise is more important than ever at the moment. It is something that parents and families have always chosen St Chris for, and the School is committed to delivering excellent pastoral care no matter where a child is based during Blended Learning.

There will be a number of ways for pupils to remain connected to school from home, but to properly support our children during Blended Learning we will ensure that there is direct contact with each child each week.

Company Time

- Advisers/Personal Tutors will contact those pupils who are at home, and contact parents, if needed, using Microsoft Teams during Company Time at least once a week to check on wellbeing.
- Advisers/Personal Tutors will also use this period to establish peer contact with children who are at home.

PSHE

- Lessons will run as per the normal timetable, with adaptations for Blended Learning
- PSHE content will be flexible, and altered to meet the children's needs and the wider Covid context to support pupils.

Counselling Service

The Counselling Service operates in person at the moment, (and can continue to do so through blended learning).

Any new referrals should go via the Cordy Lewis/ Head of Year.

SAFEGUARDING

- Safeguarding and Child Protection is everyone's responsibility during a Blended Learning approach. Keeping pupils and teachers safe during remote education is essential.
- St Chris will continue to follow the Department for Education statutory guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.
- In addition, we have developed an Online Teaching and Learning Policy (April 2020) to reflect the changes that are in place due to the pandemic.
- Our Blended Learning guidance takes into account other St Chris policies and procedures, including Code of Conduct, Curriculum, Behaviour and Online Safety to incorporate Blended Learning.
- Copies of all of these policies are available on our website (<https://www.stchris.co.uk/about-us/policies/>) or by contacting toni.warner@stchris.co.uk
- There are appropriate pathways for children and their families to report safeguarding concerns arising through work with teachers, Advisers, and support staff during Blended Learning. The primary pathway is through the pastoral system for Blended Learning.
- There are systems in place for staff and tutors to report safeguarding concerns arising through work with children and their families. The most direct route is via the Heads of Year, the DSL team and MyConcern.
- All academic lessons should be recorded and all classes can be accessed by the DSL team.
- For further information, please refer to the government guidance on safeguarding and remote education here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#safeguarding-pupils-and-teachers-online>

KEY STAFF & CONTACT DETAILS

- James Stirratt is responsible for the Senior School's Blended Learning approach to ensure consistency in the implementation. James can be contacted at james.stirratt@stchris.co.uk
- Nat Baker, as Designated Safeguarding Lead, reviews (with the 'DSL team') all policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection. Nat can be contacted at nat.baker@stchris.co.uk
- Cordy Lewis is responsible for pastoral care in the Senior School – cordy.lewis@stchris.co.uk

APPENDIX

These guidelines draw on:

- Recommendations made in the NASUWT report on blended learning <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/in-the-classroom/remote-and-blended-learning.html>
- The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research evidence on supporting pupils to learn remotely <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/covid-19-resources/best-evidence-on-supporting-students-to-learn-remotely>