

Junior School Blended Learning

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

2020 – 2021

ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL
LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY



JUNIOR SCHOOL BLENDED LEARNING GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

January 2021

This document outlines guidance for parents and carers about the move to Blended Learning (BL) that will take place at St Christopher Junior School in case of a Covid-related incident affecting the normal school attendance of students or staff. The aim is to maintain maximum face-to-face teaching and learning.

Reflection on how technology might help us to achieve our educational goals has been crucial. We have learned from the period of fully Remote Learning (RL) during lockdown and gathered feedback from students, staff, parents and carers to create a Blended Learning (BL) approach. This will ensure students remain engaged no matter whereabouts or circumstances.

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 (Microsoft Teams).

The model allows us to continue to maximize educational impact for all students concurrently as well as for staff teaching from home.

The aim of this guidance is to consider the practical implementation of BL across a number of eventualities in order to ensure students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders are clear about expectations and responsibilities.

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 students is key to maintaining motivation and engagement, as well as sustaining fruitful relationships, both teacher/student, peer to peer and with parents.

We also recognise that when providing BL, variety is key. The research is clear, students should be supported to engage in a variety of learning activities, including direct instruction, real time lessons, recorded sequences, quizzes, formal assessments, discussion forums and online material.

We also consider ongoing pastoral support to be central to ensuring our students remain engaged with the St Chris community. There is more detail about the pastoral support available for students in the section below **Pastoral Support During Blended Learning**.

BLENDED LEARNING: KEY INFORMATION

The challenging impact that RL can have on junior school aged children means that timetables and provision have been adapted accordingly.

Fully Remote Learning, where staff and children (either within a bubble or as a whole school) revert to learning entirely remotely, will be referred to in the section below **Fully Remote Learning**.

BL will be provided to students who must remain at home/self-isolate for a Covid-related reason. BL will not be provided to those who are at home for other reasons – but the School will consider all cases on an individual basis.

When a student is accessing the BL programme, the live sessions will be as follows:

- Early Years (Monte and K Group, Nursery and Reception) and KS1 (J and H Groups, Years 1 and 2) one live session per day
- KS2 (G to D Groups, Years 3 to 6) two live sessions per day

If a student 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-homeguidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>) this information must be communicated to the School as soon as possible.

The name of the student will be added to the BL list by the Office Manager. At the end of each day, the Office Manager will send an email to all teachers with 'the list' of which bubbles and/or individual students are absent the following school day (for a Covid-related reason) and therefore eligible to access BL provision.

Parents will receive a timetable indicating what teachers are offering as a 'remote' experience, detailing each day's sessions, including those that are live. Swimming, music, PE and Forest School will be excluded from the BL programme.

To access a BL lesson the student will need video and audio facility on either a laptop, desktop, tablet or a mobile phone, although the latter is not ideal.

Resources for lessons will be uploaded to Teams by 6pm the day before so the remote learners can access them in good time.

Work completed by the student should be submitted at the end of the lesson using email or Teams.

Students and parents have access to short, clear videos guiding them on the use of Microsoft Teams and how to access their school email. These can be accessed on our website here:

<https://www.stchris.co.uk/covid19/>

If a student is having technical difficulties this should not disrupt the lesson. The student may need to work independently, or with a guardian, on this 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 student on 'the list' is the only student in the class who is absent. However, with one weekday's notice, teachers with students on the list will plan for and provide BL access to their lessons.

One to One Lessons

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

The lessons must take place on Teams and be part of the normal St Chris day.

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.

Registration

Students working from home need to register at the start of the school day and once during the afternoon, as indicated on their timetable. Students need to be online and ready to start the school day at 8:30am.

To register, students (or their parent/guardian) should contact their class teacher during the normal registration time of 8:30am – this can be by message/email rather than by video call.

Morning Talks

Students working at home will be able to access Morning Talks through their calendar on Teams.

Morning Talks are for all junior students and take place three times a week:

- Monday
- Wednesday
- Friday

Use of Video and Recording

Lessons will be recorded as this represents a useful resource for any student who is not well enough to attend the BL lesson 'live'. It is also part of the safeguarding protocol.

If a teacher is streaming a lesson on Teams neither they, nor their class, have to appear on video. (However teachers will 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. Students 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/unable to teach remotely, the School will inform remote learners and parents. Remote Learning packs will be sent out to students by the Office Manager.

Staff Self-Isolating: When Staff Need to Teach from Home

If a member of staff is teaching remotely from home, the BL model will not be impacted.

The class TA will ensure that the teacher's screen will be projected onto the whiteboard in the classroom and the sound connected to the speakers for students to be taught remotely.

There will be a camera and microphone facility in lessons so that the teacher will have an overview of the classroom whilst the TA will physically be in the class to ensure safety, monitor behaviour, answer questions and generally facilitate.

After a maximum of two days, if the class teacher has not returned to school, a cover teacher will be provided for the class.

FULLY REMOTE LEARNING

In the event of learning becoming entirely remote, either as a class bubble or the entire Junior School, a separate timetable will be provided and only swimming will be excluded from the curriculum. As with the Summer Term 2020, there will be a range of learning provision.

PASTORAL SUPPORT DURING BLENDED LEARNING

St Chris is committed to excellent pastoral care, which we recognise is more important than ever. It is an integral part of St Chris that parents and families have always valued. The School is committed to delivering excellent pastoral care.

There will be a number of ways for students to remain connected to school from home. However, to support our children effectively during BL, we will ensure that there is direct contact with each child each week.

Counselling Service

The Counselling Service operates remotely at present. It can continue to do so through BL. Any new referrals should go via the Nurse / Head of the Junior School.

SAFEGUARDING

- Safeguarding and Child Protection is everyone's responsibility during a Blended Learning approach. Keeping students 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/aboutus/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 and support staff during Blended Learning. The primary pathway is through the pastoral system for Blended Learning.
- There are systems in place for staff to report safeguarding concerns arising through work with children and their families. The most direct route is via the Head of the Junior School, the (Designated Safeguarding Lead) 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>

STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Katie Wright

Position: Head, Junior School

Email: katie.wright@stchris.co.uk

Zareena Subhani

Position: Deputy Head, Junior School, Year 6

Email: zareena.subhani@stchris.co.uk

Joanna Pitts

Position: Office Manager

Email: jo.pitts@stchris.co.uk

Lyn McGregor

PE and Games

lyn.mcgregor@stchris.co.uk

Year 6 (D Group)

Bryan Anderson

Year 6 (D Group)

bryan.anderson@stchris.co.uk

Ellie Snow

Year 6 (D Group)

ellie.snow@stchris.co.uk

Zareena Subhani

Position: Deputy Head, Junior School, Year 6

Email: zareena.subhani@stchris.co.uk

Year 5 (E Group)

Claire Plain

Year 5 (E Group)

claire.plain@stchris.co.uk

Lydia Somerville

Year 5 (E Group)

lydia.somerville@stchris.co.uk

Iain Wheeler

Year 5 (E Group)

iain.wheeler@stchris.co.uk

Year 4 (F Group)

Jim Sands

Year 4 (F Group)

jim.sands@stchris.co.uk

Year 3 (G Group)

Marcia Bonanni

Year 3 (G Group)

marcia.bonanni@stchris.co.uk

Year 2 (H Group)

Louise Day

Year 2 (H Group)

louise.day@stchris.co.uk

Chrissie Parry

Year 2 (H Group)

chrissie.parry@stchris.co.uk

Year 1 (J Group)

Carly Ougham

Year 1 (J Group)

carly.ougham@stchris.co.uk

Reception (K Group)

Rebecca Simon

Reception (K Group)

rebecca.simon@stchris.co.uk

Nursery (Reception)

Lesley Farrell

Lead Nursery Teacher

lesley.farrell@stchris.co.uk

Sarah Brown

Nursery

sarah.brown@stchris.co.uk

Natasha Paxton

Nursery Nurse

natasha.paxton@stchris.co.uk

Junior School Individual Needs

Karen Hoyle

Lead Individual Needs Coordinator/Junior
School Individual Needs Coordinator

karen.hoyle@stchris.co.uk

Jennifer Rigby

Individual Needs Tutor (2 days a week)

jennifer.rigby@stchris.co.uk

Seana Wallis

Individual Needs Tutor (2 days a week)

seana.wallis@stchris.co.uk

Joanne Clarke

Individual Needs Teaching Assistant

joanne.clarke@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/covid-19-resources/best-evidence-on-supporting-students-to-learn-remotely/>
- The government guidelines to secondary schools on planning for Tier 2 local restrictions
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions>

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