

Distance Learning Policy

1 Purpose

TSPS is committed to providing the best quality education for all of our students across all Phases.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, TSPS provides three modes of learning for students; fulltime distance learning, blended learning which is a mix of in-school learning and distance learning, and fulltime in-school learning. All three modes of learning provide opportunities for students to work online.

This policy states the scope of online learning provision provided by TSPS, the safeguarding provision for that and the expectations and responsibilities of all stakeholders in ensuring the online safety of students and protection of staff who provide that.

TSPS aims to ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding across all phases with clear expectations for children, parents and staff.

TSPS aims to support all families to enable effective distance learning.

2 Scope

During an emergency or in extraordinary circumstances when the school campus is not accessible for students and/or staff, TSPS may be required to fully switch from an in-school learning environment to a 100% online distance learning environment. This decision will be made only under the directives of KHDA.

During all times of distance learning, a positive and collaborative effort by the community is essential to ensure learning remains purposeful and successful.

TSPS has developed comprehensive and rigorous virtual learning platforms that are designed to maintain educational standards and deliver, with support of the latest technology, the best possible online learning experiences.

The main virtual learning platforms used by TSPS are:

- Tapestry (Foundation Stage)
- Schoology (Primary)
- Schoology & Microsoft Teams (Secondary & Post- 16)

Zoom is used to support the delivery of live lessons when appropriate.

3 Phases

3.1 Foundation Stage (FS1 and FS2)

Tapestry serves as the school's main online virtual learning platform in Foundation Stage. Tapestry allows teachers to upload learning resources, pre-recorded lessons and other activities. It similarly allows parents to download these and then repost their children's responses in the form of pictures, videos or audio responses.

Tapestry provides the ability for teachers and parents to post notes and comments

on student's uploaded responses, which can then act as an interactive formative assessment tool, mapping the individual learning journey for every child. Parents can access 24/7 their child's learning journey which will be evidenced by these uploaded student responses to activities. This results in ensuring that parents are kept well informed about their child's progress.

3.2 Primary (Year 1 to 6)

Schoology is the online platform used in the Primary phase. This virtual learning platform is enhanced by the use of Zoom to enable live conferencing with distance learning students. Schoology helps to create and manage academic courses for the students while providing a centralised method of managing lessons, engaging students and sharing content. It is a secure, safe, and easy-to-use way for teachers, students, parents, and administrators to seamlessly communicate and collaborate which results in enhanced student learning opportunities. Teachers may add students to their specific subject related courses through a unique password for each class. Schoology also helps teachers track students' engagement by providing data on student activity. Teachers can create assessments and lessons linked to the Mark Book and Mastery features which are aligned to the learning objectives in lessons. These extra tools provide opportunities for summative and summative assessment data to be tracked. Parents can also log in using their own password and log on information and track their student's grades and assignments.

The supplementary platforms/apps used in the Primary phase include:

- Zoom - Zoom is used for live conferencing and communication.
- GetaPic- Get Pic may be used for research and story time.
- Oxford Owl and Phonic Bloom - these may be used for developing skills in phonics and reading.
- Nearpod - for interactive lessons.
- Quizizz - for use in assessment.
- Read theory - used to enhance reading skills.
- Kutubi -Arabic reading platform.
- Gizmo - for use in Science.
- Kahoot and Zoom break out rooms - used to support collaborative learning in smaller class groups.
- Google Expedition - used for VR application.
- Curriculum resources - Cornerstones, WhiteRose etc

3.3 Secondary & Post 16 (Year 7 to 13)

Secondary students are generally more independent learners, and they are encouraged to be so when they are not in school. But TSPS recognises that they do still need support, guidance and encouragement to learn at their very best. The distance learning programme in Secondary aims to be very interactive- with significant levels of contact from teachers on a daily basis. Lessons are delivered as per the scheduled timetable. Interactive sessions are hosted through Schoology and Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Office 365 Teams facilitate both synchronous and asynchronous discussions, meetings and the sharing of resources. Through these platforms, teachers are able to provide resources, support and deliver tutorials to enable learning to continue. Microsoft One Note is used for submission, correction and feedback.

In addition, the following platforms, other applications and websites will be utilised to enhance the learning. These include supplementary resources that are

used to develop and enhance enquiry, listening, problem solving, and critical thinking skills.

- GeoGebra
- Math Box
- Transum
- Math Pad
- Maths Genie & Exam solutions
- Transom
- Nearpod
- Snap Science
- Phet Simulations
- Kahoot
- Socrative
- Pickers
- Quizlet
- Edpuzzle

4 Assessments

Assessment is an important part of the teaching and learning process. During distance learning, assessment will take place as follows-

- Formative online assessment (assessment for learning)
- Summative online assessment (assessment of learning)
- Continuous assessments of students' completed class work
- Diagnostic online assessment (initial assessment)

All forms of assessment during distance learning will contribute to the student's school report and end of year KHDA grades. Parents need to ensure students complete all the assessments and classwork in order for teachers to assess students' progress and provide an accurate attainment level.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Teachers

- Providing a balance of learning experiences- both new learning and consolidation learning opportunities.
- Responsible for all online learning resources provided for students in their class.
- Monitoring student's attendance.
- Delivering live tutorials or setting learning tasks as per the set timetable.
- Regular marking and feedback of all online work posted by students.
- Providing open lines of communication to parents, students and teachers between the school hours to support the effectiveness of the online learning provided.
- All lessons will be recorded by teachers. This allows students who have been unable to attend the live lesson to access the learning.

5.2 Head of Department/Year Leads and Subject Co-ordinators

- Responsible for the monitoring and quality assurance of the online learning experience in that subject.
- Responsible for the monitoring and quality assurance of the year group online learning experiences.

- Monitoring and quality assuring feedback is being provided to students and that effective assessment procedures are in place that track student progress.
- Supporting parent and student queries.
- Ensuring a consistent and progressive approach to the provision of online learning throughout the school.
- Monitoring cohort attendance to courses and lessons and student responses to online learning tasks.

5.3 Students

- Dedicating appropriate time to online learning that is consistent with in-school teaching and the school timetable.
- Keep healthy habits and take breaks away from the devices between scheduled lessons.
- Be present and on time for online tutorial sessions as directed by school.
- Actively complete all tasks as assigned by teachers and submit work before the stated deadline.
- Adhere to any school distance e-learning student agreement or e-learning behaviour policy or school rules.
- Report any misuse of the online platform by other students to their subject or form teacher.
- Actively participate in live sessions.
- Be responsible for the safe use of hardware or software used to support e-learning.
- Ensuring that cameras are switched on for all lessons and that they wear appropriate clothing for appearance in front of their teacher and classmates. All students are expected to be visible online at all times.
- Ensuring that they have set appropriate passwords set on their devices.

5.4 Parents

- Providing an environment conducive to learning for their child.
- Providing the necessary hardware, software and internet access to their child to enable them to effectively carry out their e-learning activities.
- Ensuring that all online safety measures are in place on their child's remote learning devices that will effectively safeguard their child.
- Monitoring the time spent by their child in engaging in online and offline learning and ensuring that their online behaviour is aligned to school policies.
- Supporting their child with managing effectively online submission deadlines.
- Ensuring their child attends all live sessions as set in their respective timetable.
- Ensuring that cameras are switched on for all lessons and that their child wears appropriate clothing for appearance in front of their teacher and classmates. All students are expected to be visible online at all times.
- Ensuring that their child has appropriate passwords set on their devices.
- Create a culture in the home where internet activity is discussed and concerns openly shared. In doing creating the first element of online safety for their child and being an adult with whom the student can discuss their fears and problems related to online learning.

6 Online Safety and Wellbeing

Loss of face-to-face contact for an extended period of time may well be an issue for some students, teachers and indeed, parents. It is important that school and parents work together to take an active role in teaching students about online dangers, and how to act safely when using the internet.

Any concerns should be forwarded to the relevant heads of school who will investigate the concerns thoroughly. Regular surveys will be distributed to students, parents and teachers to assess the wellbeing of the community and how this is affected by online learning.

Students' wellbeing remains at the heart of our Distance Learning Policy. During any period of extended distance learning an emphasis will be placed on whole school events and assemblies that can be joined remotely and in live sessions to help foster TSPS spirit.

Any child identified at being of risk of developing negative attitudes towards distance learning or poor well-being will be highlighted to Achievement Leaders or Year Leads.

Wellbeing is also a priority when supporting teachers both mentally and physically. Regular meeting via zoom or Teams will take place to support staff during periods of distance learning provision. Staff Wellbeing surveys will be regularly completed to monitor how staff are feeling, which will be reviewed by the SLT, who will connect with staff if there are any concerns and offer further support.

Parent wellbeing will be supported by clear and open channels of communication with their child's Form Tutor and wider school community. Parents should continue to access the school mobile app – D6 communicator, as the primary avenue of communication, with email and zoom as additional platforms as required. Subject and Key stage specific parent webinars will help support parents and answer frequently asked questions. As a school we understand the family circumstances will vary across our school community and as such, we will endeavor to meet these varied needs on a case-by-case basis.

Parents should remind their children on the following points and monitor their child's learning.

- Student passwords should not be shared.
- Teachers will use official school accounts and never personal accounts.
- Students will only be asked to use the apps that are detailed in School Distance Learning Policy.
- Teachers will announce to all student participants when recording sessions.
- Parents must ensure that their children maintain appropriate behaviour online.
- Private chats and unmanaged virtual meetings between the students will be strongly discouraged.
- TSPS rules of behaviour will apply during the online learning. Bullying, posting inappropriate comments/ images/ profile pics or doing anything that makes others feel bad/unwelcome will be dealt as per the school safeguarding and child protection policy.

7 Inclusion Support

The procedures and support for students on the SOD register are adapted to meet the need of students who are on distance learning as well as blended learning. Provisions are put in place through 1:1 or group support lessons with the learning support teachers online for students on distance learning. The provisions as well as the level of support are based on the universal graduated WAVE approach as stated in the Dubai Inclusion Framework.

Regular meetings will be held with parents; such as reviewing student's Individual Education Plan or Behaviour Intervention Plan, home interventions, therapeutic interventions, strategies necessary to be adopted by parents and external providers to help in the transition to blended learning, and provision of social-emotional support will all be organised with stakeholders through the Microsoft Teams or Zoom platform.

Provisions for distance learners will continue as follows: -

- Students will access their specific learning activities through Schoology and Teams.
- Timetabled learning support lessons to meet the IEP targets, social-emotional, or developmental milestones.
- Regular meetings are held via zoom to support and guide parents regarding the student's progress by the Head of Inclusion.
- Curricula adaptations and modifications in the lessons to meet the needs of individual students
- The inclusion team will work closely with the subject teachers to ensure that barriers to learning are identified and need appropriate support and guidance are provided during lessons.

8 Contact details

Teachers are available throughout the hours of the school day and staff will give a response within 24 hours to discuss any matter regarding e-learning with either students or parents.

9 Pastoral Care

Head of Pastoral - grace.aluoka@sheffield-school.com

Assistant Principal – Primary - caroline.pinto@sheffield-school.com

Assistant Principal- Secondary- sue.cook@sheffield-school.com

10 Academic Issues

Any academic issues should be first raised to the form tutor/ subject teacher. If further action or clarification required, then raise it to Year Lead/ Achievement Leader.

11 IT/ Technical issues

IT Helpdesk: help@sheffield-school.com can be contacted for immediate support and all replies from the IT team are cc'd to the respective student's parent and Form Tutor's email. The IT Team will only have remote access to any student's device with parent/ guardian permission.

Approved by – Principal, Mr. James Batts

Reviewed: March 2021

Next Review: July 2021