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2025/2026

Building foundations and providing opportunities to create confident, aspirational, and independent members of our community.

Approved by Governing Body on:	25 June 2026
Signed by Chair of Governors:	<i>P. A. Evans</i>
Executive Head Teacher:	O M Flowers
Lead Personnel:	B Taylor
Date of Review:	25 June 2028

This policy sets out how The Westminster School will provide remote education when a pupil cannot attend in person but is well enough to learn. It replaces earlier COVID-era arrangements and reflects current school practice, including the use of online platforms and individually planned provision where appropriate.

1. 1. Aims

This remote learning policy aims to:

- Set out how the school will provide high-quality remote education where attendance at school is not possible and remote education is the most appropriate short-term arrangement
- Make clear that attendance in school remains the priority and that remote education is not viewed as an equal alternative to in-person education
- Ensure that pupils who learn remotely can continue to access a broad, ambitious and appropriately adapted curriculum
- Clarify the processes for identifying pupils for remote or online learning, including where this follows an alternative provision referral or other professional decision-making
- Set out expectations for staff, pupils, parents and carers in relation to engagement, communication, safeguarding and data protection
- Support inclusive practice for pupils with SEND, medical needs, anxiety-based school avoidance, or other barriers to attendance

2. 2. Legislative and guidance framework

This policy is informed by current Department for Education guidance on providing remote education, statutory school attendance guidance, statutory guidance on alternative provision, and safeguarding requirements. It should be read alongside the school's attendance, safeguarding, SEND and data protection policies.

Where a pupil cannot attend school because of health needs, the school will work closely with the local authority, parents or carers and relevant professionals. The school recognises that, where a child of compulsory school age would otherwise receive no suitable education because of illness, exclusion or otherwise, the local authority has duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to arrange suitable education. This policy does not replace those statutory duties.

3. 3. Overview of remote education

Remote education will only be used when a pupil cannot attend school in person but is able to engage in learning. In line with current Department for Education guidance, attendance at school remains the priority and remote education will be considered as a last resort, not as an equal alternative to face-to-face education.

Remote education may be used for individual pupils in a range of circumstances, for example following a short-term medical need, where attendance is temporarily not possible, where a pupil is accessing online learning through a named platform, or where an AP referral process has identified online learning as an appropriate part of provision. Any decision will be based on the pupil's needs, ability to access learning safely, and the school's wider attendance, safeguarding and SEND duties.

- **Types of remote education:** The school may provide remote education through a combination of teacher-prepared work, recorded input, live teaching where appropriate, structured tasks, and externally hosted platforms. This may include school systems such as Evidence for Learning and Microsoft Teams, alongside other approved online providers used for named pupils, including platforms such as Tute where this forms part of an agreed package of support.
- **Access and suitability:** Before remote education begins, the school will consider the pupil's access to a suitable device, connectivity, adult support where needed, SEND needs, and whether remote education is a safe and realistic option. Where online access is limited, alternative arrangements such as printed materials, adapted tasks or blended provision may be used.
- **Attendance and registration:** Pupils receiving remote education because they cannot attend school in person will still be recorded as absent in the register using the most appropriate attendance code. Remote education does not replace the school's duty to promote and support attendance, and staff will continue to work with families and relevant professionals to reduce barriers to returning to on-site education wherever possible.
- **Use of Online platforms:** Approved digital platforms may be used for communication, pastoral contact, live teaching, recorded learning, assignment setting and feedback. Staff must only use school-approved systems and must follow safeguarding, staff conduct and data protection expectations at all times.
- **Live teaching:** Live online teaching may be used where it is suitable for the pupil or group and where it can be delivered safely. Live sessions should be proportionate, educationally purposeful and adapted to pupils' age, need and readiness for online learning. Some pupils may instead access recorded input, self-directed work, or lessons delivered through an external online provider as part of an agreed programme.
- **Online learning through alternative provision or referral pathways:** In some cases, staff may complete an AP referral form or work with senior leaders, families and external professionals to identify that a pupil would benefit from online learning. Where this happens, the school will record the rationale, intended outcomes, review arrangements, safeguarding considerations and responsibilities for oversight. Remote or online learning arranged in this way will be monitored carefully and kept under review.

Remote education plans will be communicated clearly to parents, carers and pupils. This will include how learning will be accessed, who to contact for support, expectations for engagement, and how progress and wellbeing will be monitored.

3.1 Initial planning and review

- When a pupil is being considered for remote education, staff will make timely contact with the family to discuss the reason for absence, whether the pupil is well enough to learn, any barriers to access, safeguarding considerations and the most appropriate educational offer.
- The arrangement should be reviewed regularly, particularly where remote learning continues beyond a short-term period or forms part of a wider alternative provision plan.
- Review considerations may include access to a device, internet connectivity, support needs, suitability of the home environment for learning, levels of engagement, and whether additional input from the attendance team, SEND team, safeguarding team or external professionals is needed.

Approval, commissioning and review of online alternative provision

Where remote education is delivered through an external online provider, including through an AP referral pathway, the school will ensure that the placement is suitable,

time-bound where appropriate, and subject to clear oversight. The school will not treat online alternative provision as a default or open-ended arrangement. Any placement must be based on the pupil's individual needs, risks, barriers to attendance, and intended outcomes.

- The reason for the placement, expected duration and intended outcomes must be recorded
- Parents, carers and relevant professionals should be involved where appropriate
- The school must check that the provider is suitable, safe, and able to meet the pupil's educational and safeguarding needs
- There must be a named member of school staff responsible for oversight, communication and review. This named person at the school is **Ben Taylor**.
- Attendance, engagement, progress, welfare and safeguarding information must be monitored and followed up regularly
- Review points should be agreed from the outset, including plans for reintegration to on-site education or transition to the next agreed placement where appropriate

3.2 Staff barriers and technical issues

Where staff experience technical barriers that affect remote education delivery, they should report this promptly through the school's usual IT and line management processes so that learning disruption is minimised.

4. 4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Teachers

When providing remote education, teachers are expected to work within their normal directed time and in line with agreed school systems and timetables.

If they are unable to work for any reason, for example due to sickness or caring responsibilities, they should inform their line manager in line with the usual absence procedures.

When providing remote learning, teachers are responsible for:

- Planning learning that is meaningful, appropriately sequenced and matched to the pupil's curriculum, ability and needs
- Setting work or facilitating access to approved online platforms within agreed timescales
- Adapting materials for pupils with SEND where required and liaising with support staff about reasonable adjustments
- Monitoring engagement, responding to barriers and escalating concerns where a pupil is not accessing learning
- Providing feedback in line with the school's assessment and feedback expectations
- Maintaining appropriate communication with families and recording key information in line with school procedures

Where remote education is being provided for an individual pupil or a small group, the exact format may vary. Some pupils may access work through school platforms, some may participate in live or recorded lessons, and some may receive learning through an agreed external online provider or a blended package.

- Teachers should ensure the remote offer is realistic, sustainable and clear for pupils and families to follow

- Where pupils are receiving online tuition or lessons through an external provider, school staff must remain involved in oversight, communication and review
- Paper-based or offline resources should be made available where a pupil cannot reliably access online learning

Teachers delivering live sessions or coordinating external online provision should have access to appropriate planning time, relevant information about the pupil, and clear escalation routes for any safeguarding or engagement concerns.

Where a pupil continues to experience barriers to technology-based learning, teachers should contribute to alternative arrangements that enable the pupil to continue learning as effectively as possible.

Feedback

- Provide feedback that helps pupils understand next steps and maintain engagement
- Use a proportionate range of methods for feedback, including verbal feedback, written comments, platform-based responses or discussion during live sessions
- Record concerns where work is persistently not being completed and follow school procedures for support or escalation

All staff must follow the school's staff conduct, safeguarding, online safety, data protection and acceptable use expectations when working remotely or delivering online learning.

Communication with pupils and families

Staff should only communicate with pupils and families through school-approved systems and accounts.

There is no expectation for staff to respond to messages outside of normal working arrangements unless agreed as part of a specific role.

Any safeguarding, behaviour, attendance or welfare concerns arising from remote education or online contact must be reported promptly using the school's usual systems and procedures.

4.2 Learning support staff

When assisting with remote learning, learning support staff are expected to work within their normal working arrangements and duties as directed by school leaders.

If they are unable to work for any reason, for example due to sickness or caring responsibilities, they should follow the school's usual absence reporting procedures.

When assisting with remote learning, learning support staff are responsible for:

- Supporting engagement and participation in remote learning
- Implementing planned adaptations and reasonable adjustments
- Contributing to live or recorded provision where directed
- Feeding back concerns about access, wellbeing or progress

Support staff must follow the same safeguarding, confidentiality, staff conduct and online safety expectations that apply to all remote education activity.

4.3 Middle leaders

Alongside their teaching responsibilities, middle leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring curriculum plans remain suitable and ambitious when pupils access learning remotely
- Supporting staff to provide consistent, appropriate remote education across classes or pathways
- Monitoring the quality of remote learning and helping staff respond to identified barriers
- Identifying appropriate resources, platforms and approaches for their subject or area
- Supporting staff and families where concerns arise about the appropriateness or effectiveness of remote provision
- Reviewing remote education practice regularly so that provision remains current, safe and effective

4.4 Senior leadership team

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Maintaining a remote education strategy that reflects current guidance, school context and pupil need
- Overseeing decisions about when remote education is appropriate, including where this follows an AP referral, attendance concern, medical need or other individual circumstance
- Ensuring there is clear oversight of pupils accessing online learning through internal or external platforms
- Monitoring the effectiveness, safeguarding and inclusivity of remote education arrangements
- Working with attendance, SEND, safeguarding staff and external professionals to review barriers to attendance and support return to on-site learning where possible
- Ensuring staff have appropriate access to technology, systems and support
- Ensuring live teaching or online contact arrangements are planned and delivered safely
- Reviewing engagement information and responding where pupils are not accessing learning
- Ensuring remote education systems are secure and that data protection requirements are met
- Ensuring that the school retains oversight and accountability for pupils placed with external online or alternative provision providers
- Reviewing this policy regularly so it remains aligned with statutory duties and current operational practice

4.5 Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

- Attending and arranging, where necessary, any safeguarding meetings that occur during the remote learning period.
- Identifying vulnerable pupils who may be at risk if they are learning remotely.
- Ensuring that child protection plans are enforced while the pupil is learning remotely, and liaising with the Executive Headteacher and other organisations to make alternate arrangements for pupils who are at a high risk, where required.
- Liaising with relevant individuals to ensure vulnerable pupils receive the support required during the period of remote working ensuring all safeguarding incidents are adequately recorded and reported.

4.6 IT support

IT support is provided through the school's managed IT service, Agilisys. Agilisys supports the maintenance, security and operation of systems used for remote education. IT support staff are responsible for:

- Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work
- Helping the school support staff and parents with technical issues they are experiencing
- Reviewing the security of remote learning systems and flagging any data protection breaches to the appropriate lead
- Supporting the school to assist pupils and parents with accessing the internet or devices where possible

4.7 Pupils and parents

Remote education should be planned in a way that is realistic, supportive and proportionate. The school recognises that pupils and families may face barriers to online learning and that some pupils will need a highly personalised approach.

Staff can expect pupils learning remotely to:

- Engage with learning as well as they are able, taking account of age, SEND, health and home circumstances
- Seek help if they need it and respond to reasonable contact from school staff
- Follow the school's expectations for safe and respectful behaviour online

Staff can expect parents and carers of pupils learning remotely to:

- Keep the school informed about circumstances affecting attendance, wellbeing or access to learning
- Support their child to access learning as far as is reasonable and appropriate
- Raise concerns early if they need help with technology, access, wellbeing or the suitability of provision
- Communicate respectfully with staff and use school systems appropriately
- Help ensure that, where online learning takes place at home, the pupil is supported to access it in a safe and suitable environment as far as this is reasonably possible

4.8 Governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible and appropriate for the school community
- Ensuring that remote learning systems are appropriately secure for both data protection and safeguarding reasons
- Continuing to support and scrutinise the school's remote education strategy

5. 5. Key contacts

If staff have questions or concerns about remote education, they should contact the appropriate colleague or team through the school's current internal systems and role structure.

6. 6. Data protection

This section of the policy should be read alongside the school's Data Protection Policy, child protection arrangements, online safety expectations and staff acceptable use procedures.

- Staff must use school-approved platforms, accounts and devices wherever possible when delivering remote education
- Personal data must only be used, shared and stored in line with the UK GDPR, data protection law and school policy
- Staff must take care when using video, audio, chat and digital feedback functions so that information is shared only with the intended audience
- Attendance, safeguarding, welfare and engagement records relating to remote education must be kept securely and in line with school procedures
- Any concerns about confidentiality, inappropriate access, data breaches or misuse of systems must be reported promptly

6.1 Keeping devices secure

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices and accounts remain secure. This includes:

- Keeping the device password-protected with a strong password
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted where appropriate
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends
- Installing and maintaining appropriate antivirus and security software
- Keeping operating systems and software up to date

7. 7. Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains paramount during remote education. Any concerns raised during remote learning should be reported using the school's usual safeguarding procedures. The school will ensure that remote education arrangements, including live teaching and externally commissioned online provision, are planned and monitored with safeguarding in mind.

- Use only school-approved platforms and accounts for contact with pupils
- Follow agreed protocols for live sessions, including appropriate professional conduct and suitable online environments
- Report any safeguarding, welfare or online safety concern immediately
- Ensure that arrangements with external providers include clear safeguarding expectations, information sharing routes and named oversight from school
- Remain mindful that pupils who are absent from school or accessing alternative provision may be at increased risk and may need additional checks or support

8. 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, and sooner if guidance, legislation or school practice changes. Monitoring will include the quality and suitability of remote education, engagement levels, safeguarding, attendance considerations, use of external online provision, and feedback from staff, pupils and families.

9. 9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to:

- Attendance policy
- Behaviour (Wellbeing and Engagement) policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- SEND policy and information report
- Online safety / acceptable use policies