



Remote education provision: information for parents

This information is intended to provide clarity and transparency to students, parents or carers about what to expect from remote education where national or local restrictions require entire cohorts to remain at home.

The key aim of our remote education provision is to be able to deliver our full school curriculum, so that students know more and remember more. All teachers in school have reviewed the curriculum over the past year and details of the curriculum content in each subject area are available on the school website. Since this new lockdown, staff have been deciding what content should be taught online right now. When students return to school the other components of the curriculum will be delivered, so that no student falls behind or misses out. Students will be taught the same curriculum they receive in school, as set out on their school timetable. Some subject areas will require adaption, particularly the practical subjects such as science, technology, dance, drama and PE.

Remote teaching and study time each day

We expect that remote education (including remote teaching and independent work) will take students 5 hours a day i.e. broadly equivalent to the time they would spend in lessons each school day. We are not expecting students to complete additional home learning on top of these 5 hours, although extension work is available on request.

Accessing remote education

Friern Barnet School has been using Firefly for a number of years now. Staff in school have developed it considerably in that time. Firefly has a number of academic and pastoral pages containing a wide variety of information. All daily work is set on this platform and students and parents can access it remotely. There are details on the school website on how to get help with any problems, including a link to the Firefly help page which contain a range of helpful videos. All students can access Office 365 using Firefly and this gives them access to the online Microsoft suite, which includes Word and PowerPoint. We deliver live lessons using MS Teams.

Digital or online access at home

We recognise that some students may not have suitable online access at home. We take the following approaches to support those pupils to access remote education:

Friern Barnet School has tried to ensure students in need of a laptop or router (4G internet access) have access to one. We have given out over 120 laptops during the various national lockdowns. We have a small waiting list for when we are able to get some more laptops into school. Please let the school know if you require either a laptop or a router. Teaching staff are aware of students who may not be able to submit their work online and have put other arrangements in place. Should it be required in any instance where a student is not able to access resources via the online provision, our teaching staff can provide printed materials to take the place of the digital online learning, so that no child is disadvantaged.

Teaching remotely

We use a combination of the following approaches to teach students remotely:

We have learnt a great deal since the first lockdown about how teaching and learning works best online. We have developed a blended approach. Some lessons will be 'live lessons', and some will be 'pre-recorded lessons'. Others may only have a limited teacher input, followed by independent work; some may require group work, others may require students to watch content from external sites such as Oak National Academy or BBC iPlayer.

Engagement and parental support

It is harder to engage students when they are not in the classroom with their teachers and we are very aware of the other distractions that can occur in the home online learning environment. Learning should be enjoyable and our teaching staff will endeavour to ensure that our students enjoy their learning, even in this most challenging of times. Effective partnerships between the school, the parent and student have never been greater than right now. Parents can support their child's learning in the following ways: if possible, ensure their child can be in a quiet room or area to reduce background noise and allow them to concentrate; check their child's timetable (this can be seen on Firefly) and ensure that their child is attending and participating in their lessons throughout the school day; consider the background where their child is sitting and ideally ensure that it is plain and blank; ensure that their child is wearing appropriate clothing for live lessons. Parents and students should not record, share or comment on public forums about individual teachers. We have conducted and will continue to send out regular surveys so that parents and students can share their views on how well the school is providing their child's education remotely and how it could be improved.

Checking whether or not students are engaging with their work

Attendance in lessons is obviously critical and during this period all the usual school expectations around high attendance exist. Teachers log attendance in lessons every day using SIMs and this data is analysed by pastoral staff and the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO). Absences are addressed daily with parents and carers. During live lessons, teachers are proactively posing questions and asking students to complete tasks in lessons so they can check that the students are engaging with the lesson content.

Assessing progress

Feedback can take many forms and may not always mean extensive written comments for individual children. For example, whole-class feedback or quizzes marked automatically via digital platforms are also valid and effective methods, amongst many others.

Feedback and assessment are more of a challenge online. Teachers use different ways to do this; immediate feedback is being given through chatroom discussions, low stake quizzes and live one to one questioning. More detailed formative feedback is being given on Firefly after students have uploaded their work. Summative assessment (how a student performed in a test) is also being delivered in traditional ways such as teachers marking assignments and tests. Typically, extended feedback is given at least twice per half-term at KS4; at KS3, the expectation is at least twice per half-term for core subjects and once per half-term in foundation subjects.

Additional support for students with particular needs

Some students, for example those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), may not be able to access remote education without support from adults at home. This presents difficulties for families and we will work with parents and carers to support those students.

The learning support department and teaching assistants will provide support to students with EHCPs and other key SEND students. Some of these students will be in school getting direct face to face support. When assisting with remote learning, teaching assistants will be available during usual working hours. There are systems in place for checking whether or not students are engaging with their work and parents will be informed when engagement is a concern. TAs will also work with the class teacher to personalise and differentiate resources further for their key students so that the work is accessible. This support may involve liaising with the student via MS Teams calls where appropriate.