

ARA Remote education provision: information for secondary phase parents

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

For details of what to expect where individual students are self-isolating, please see the [Blended Learning Strategy](#) which is published on the ARA website.

The remote curriculum: what is taught to students at home

A student's first day or two of being educated remotely might look different from our standard approach, while we take all necessary actions to prepare for a longer period of remote teaching.

What should my child expect from immediate remote education in the first day or two of students being sent home?

At ARA, we use Microsoft Teams as our learning platform for all blended and remote learning. Work is delivered directly to students either in the form of assignments that are pushed out directly to students or live-streamed lessons that are provided.

Following the first few days of remote education, will my child be taught broadly the same curriculum as they would if they were in school?

We teach the same curriculum remotely as we do in school wherever possible and appropriate. However, we have needed to make some adaptations in some subjects. For example, in practical subjects such as DT, Art and Music, we may adapt practical components or choose to focus on theory while remote learning is necessary.

Remote teaching and study time each day

How long can I expect work set by the school to take my child each day?

This will depend on the reason why a student is learning from home. For full details, please see our [Blended Learning Strategy](#) on the ARA webpage.

Accessing remote education

How will my child access any online remote education you are providing?

All students have a Microsoft Teams profile, which was tested at school. They also have access to the Microsoft Office Suite (PowerPoint, Word, Excel) across five devices. All children know how to access these, but should they experience any difficulties, they can reset their password by clicking the appropriate link on our [Blended Learning](#) page. This is how all learning will be accessed. During a full lockdown, all lessons are scheduled on ClassCharts so that parents can keep abreast of their child's schedule.

How will my child be taught remotely?

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

Our online learning platform is Microsoft Teams. We use this for the following approaches (see the Blended Learning strategy on our [Blended Learning page](#) for full details):

- live teaching (online lessons)
- recorded teaching (e.g. Oak National Academy lessons, video/audio recordings made by teachers)
- printed paper packs produced by teachers (e.g. workbooks, worksheets)
- textbooks and reading books pupils have at home or are made available online
- commercially available websites (like Kerboodle) supporting the teaching of specific subjects or areas, including video clips or sequences.

If my child does not have digital or online access at home, how will you support them to access remote education?

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

In the Secondary Phase, we surveyed all parents/carers to find out information about the number of devices that they had in their home available for home schooling in the event of remote education. We recorded the number of students who would have no access as well as the number who would have to share a device with two or more people. We were allocated a number of laptops from the DfE and also purchased laptops from our budget. We firstly distributed laptops to all children who had no access at all. After this we distributed laptops to the children in Years 10-13 who were sharing devices between 3 people or more. In the second week of January 2021, we submitted the number of laptops still required for students in Years 7 to 9 to the DfE and we await their decision as to whether or not we will be allocated anymore. We will update parents/carers by email as soon as we are given this information. Should our parents/carers need further information about the allocation of laptops, they should contact their child's SaFE Worker by email at enquiries@alecreedacademy.co.uk.

Prior to the January lockdown, we had distributed DfE-issued dongles to the parents/carers who told us that they did not have an internet connection. Since the January lockdown, we have issued data increases, applied for 4G routers and given out Vodafone SIM cards to students when they have had temporary and permanent problems with an internet connection. Should our parents/carers need further information about the allocation of data increases or 4G routers, they should contact their child's SaFE Worker by email at enquiries@alecreedacademy.co.uk.

Aside from the cases where a student's circumstances may have recently changed, we are confident that all of our students now have some access to online learning, even if this is shared. As a result, all work should be able to be submitted on Microsoft Teams. We have created and promoted a range of helpful videos to support students and parents/carers in being able to use the functions of Microsoft Teams which are in the [Blended Learning](#) section of our website. Where applicable, we have printed materials for our children with SEND and these resources can be sent back to the Academy digitally on Teams (using a photograph) or sent back to the Academy by post. We will conduct home visits to collect and distribute work when using photographs and/or the postal service to submit work is not possible. Should our parents/carers need further information about accessing and/or submitting printed work, they should contact their child's SaFE Worker by email at enquiries@alecreedacademy.co.uk.

Engagement and feedback

What are your expectations for my child's engagement and the support that we as parents and carers should provide at home?

We have published an Online Variety Schedule (which can be found on our [Blended Learning](#) page) which indicates which lessons are live-streamed and which are activity-based. Students are expected to engage with their learning activities during their normal timetabled time. To keep parents informed, teachers log activities on ClassCharts.

How will you check whether my child is engaging with their work and how will I be informed if there are concerns?

Parents will be informed of issues regarding engagement via ClassCharts or contact made by their class teachers or the pastoral team.

How will you assess my child's work and 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 Microsoft Forms or third party websites (such as Educake) are also valid and effective methods, amongst many others. Our approach to feeding back on pupil work is as follows:

- teachers use marking features of Microsoft Forms to automatically mark student responses
- some third-party auto-marking features
- teacher comments in Microsoft Teams
- marking rubrics created by teachers in Microsoft Teams.

Additional support for students with particular needs

How will you work with me to help my child who needs additional support from adults at home to access remote education?

We recognise that some students, for example some students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), may not be able to access remote education without support from adults at home. We acknowledge the difficulties this may place on families, and we will work with parents and carers to support those students in the following ways:

- All parents of children that have an EHC Plan will be contacted at least once a week to discuss the work that is being completed. If the school fails to make contact directly with a parent, then a home visit to check that all is well will be carried out.
- If there are situations where additional support is needed – that support will be provided – either in school during the 'small school' sessions or at home through feedback and phone calls with a member of staff. If parents feel that their child needs additional support beyond what is already provided, they should contact their child's SaFE worker by emailing enquiries@alecreedacademy.co.uk.
- If your child would normally, during the course of a school week, have a Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy session, then these may still be available through the online remote learning. Please check with a member of staff during your contact phone call.

Remote education for self-isolating students

Where individual students need to self-isolate but the majority of their peer group remains in school, how remote education is provided will likely differ from the approach for whole groups. This is due to the challenges of teaching students both at home and in school.

If my child is not in school because they are self-isolating, how will their remote education differ from the approaches described above?

Please see our Blended Learning strategy on our [Blended Learning page](#) for full details. In short, some lessons for some year groups will be live-streamed while other lessons will be activity-based. Work is distributed by SaFE workers.