



Essa Academy Remote & Blended Learning Policy

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1. Aims

This remote and blended learning policy for staff aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to remote and blended learning for students who are not in school
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to remote and blended learning
- Provide appropriate guidelines for data protection

What is Remote Learning?

Remote Learning is work undertaken by students when they are unable to work in their normal school environment. It will generally comprise of digital learning that is in three specific parts:

1. **New Learning** – this will be in the form of information, videos, podcasts, tasks, resources, and activities on Essa Live!
2. **Talking** – this part of the learning process will take place on Microsoft Teams, which can be accessed through www.office.com using a student's school email address and password. Students are encouraged and rewarded for contributions using Class Charts. These are awarded for posting discussion points, asking/answering questions or seeking clarification. Students are encouraged to help each other if they can answer a peer's question. Teachers use these contributions to identify any misconceptions, intervene and provide differentiation or extension tasks for individuals or key groups within a class.
3. **Doing** – this part of the learning process will involve an assessment of student progress. It will take the guise of a Microsoft Form or other faculty-specific platform (i.e. GCSE Pod or MathsWatch – as directed by Faculty Leaders).

What is Blended Learning?

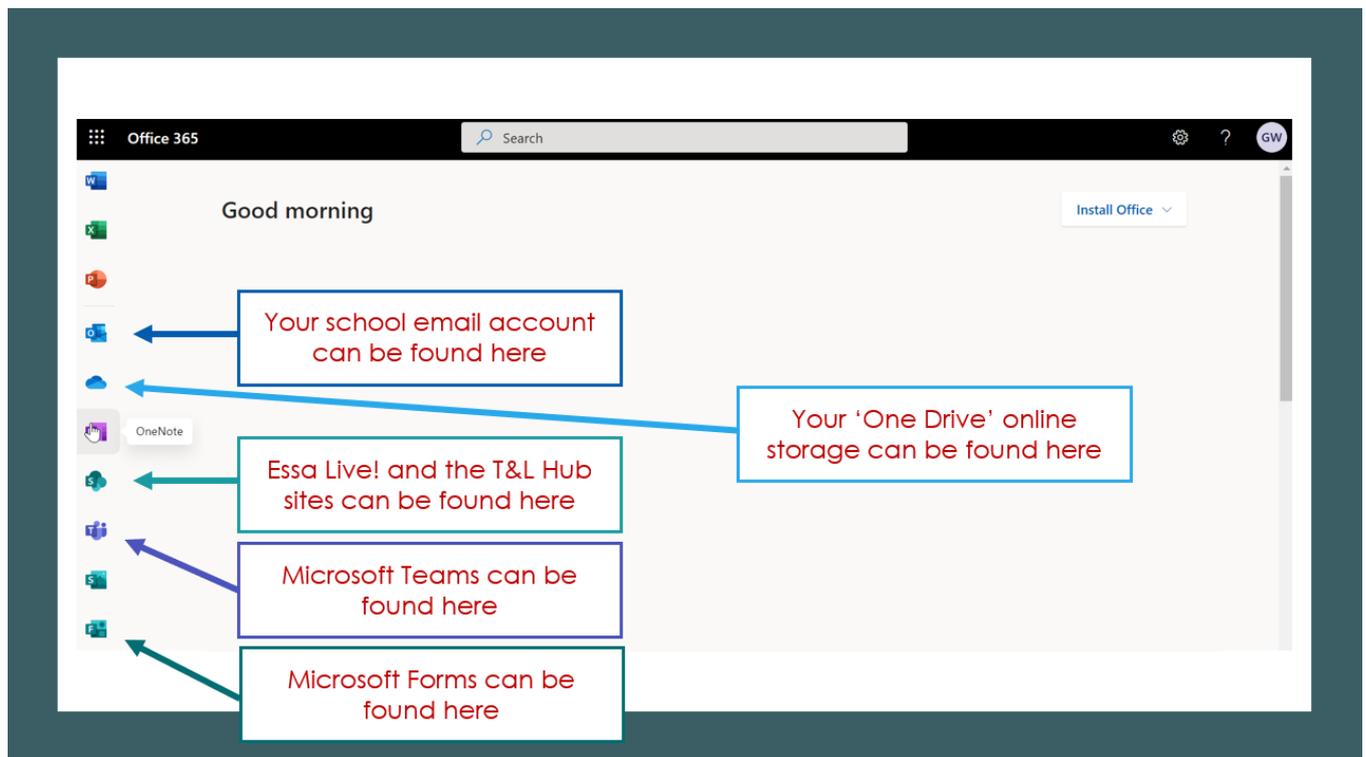
Blended Learning is the use of Essa Live! to follow up in-class learning, with student being directed, or independently seeking further information and material on the lesson content. This can also be in the form of a flipped-learning lesson (where students view lesson content prior to the timetabled lesson in order to maximise time for other classroom strategies).

What is Essa Live!

Essa Live! is the Essa Foundation Academies Trust online learning platform. Each faculty has its own bespoke area on the platform containing lessons, information, and activities for students to complete. It should reflect and support the planned curriculum, providing opportunities for students to reinforce in-class learning, or make links to prior and future learning. It will be a critical tool in addressing gaps in student knowledge and understanding, allowing them to move between teaching and learning from previous year groups to facilitate access to their current learning. The platform will be the medium used to facilitate remote learning in the event of a school closure or if a student is unable to attend.

How to get onto Office 365

1. Visit www.office.com and click on 'Sign in'. Use your school email address and password to access the Microsoft Dashboard. An overview of the Microsoft Dashboard can be seen below:



2. Roles and responsibilities

A range of key staff at Essa Academy will have responsibility for the production, administration and removal of barriers associated with remote and blended learning. These include:

- Class Teachers
- Faculty Leaders
- Senior Leaders
- Learning Support Assistants
- The Wellbeing Team
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- IT Support Staff
- Student and Parents
- Governing Body

2.1 Class Teachers

When providing remote and blended learning, teachers must be available between normal working hours. It has been made clear to students during their remote learning training that staff will not respond to questions before 8:15am or after 3:45pm.

If staff are unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, this should be reported using the normal absence procedure.

Staff should take their electronic school devices home each day in case of a school, bubble or local closure.

When providing remote and blended learning, teachers are responsible for:

➤ Setting work:

- For classes that teachers are timetabled to teach. Work should be set each lesson and teaching staff should be available to provide answers to questions, address misconceptions, or provide extension activities where appropriate. Availability for providing timetabled support will not be required if the teacher is re-deployed to cover or support another class at the same time.
- Work should be set using the three-step process described in Section 1 of this document. Lesson should have video instructions and/or clearly signposted tasks for students to complete. Additional training on the use of Office 365 to set remote and blended learning tasks can be found [here](#) (@efatrust.org email address required).
- The amount of work provided should require students to work at their computer for approximately 20 minutes. Additional tasks away from the screen can be provided to engage students for the remaining lesson time.
- Work should be completed by students within 24 hours of the timetabled lesson. Students meeting that deadline with high quality learning should be rewarded using Class Charts. Missed deadlines, incomplete work, or work that is below the desired standard should be recorded using the 'Remote Learning Consequences' on Class Charts.
- For remote learning, submitted work should be submitted as an 'Assignment' on Microsoft Teams. This will allow teachers to accurately assess the level of student engagement and submission. Blended learning tasks may or may not have submission requirements, but if they do these can be completed via Microsoft Teams, or through an embedded form on the Essa Live! page. Faculties using bespoke software solutions to support remote learning (i.e. MathsWatch or GCSE Pod) may

complete assessments using those platforms. The Class Charts process outlined above should be followed to record student engagement.

- **When all students in a class/Year Group/bubble are isolating:** access your class on Microsoft Teams. The lesson has three parts:
 1. A link to your Essa Live! lesson.
 2. The opportunity for students to ask questions on Microsoft Teams. This is where you will stretch students or intervene.
 3. Students then complete an assessment of learning using Microsoft Forms or equivalent
- **When individual students in a class are isolating:** Work should be set on Microsoft Teams.
 1. Use the 'Chat' tab and search for the student in question.
 2. Send a link to the Essa Live! lesson that you want the student to access. For example:



11:58 AM
Hi Oscar, click on the link below for today's lesson: <https://efatrust.sharepoint.com/SitePages/Comic-Strips---The-Brief.aspx>

- **When all of your students are in class:** Use Essa Live! to develop a '**Blended Learning**' approach to your teaching. You can set work using Microsoft Teams to direct students to content. This is to reinforce learning and close gaps in knowledge. You can ask students to independently address gaps in their knowledge and understanding by exploring Essa Live!

➤ Providing feedback on work – cover details like:

- Feedback on learning should be provided as and where appropriate, in line with curriculum plans.
- Feedback can be in the form of a task mark (provided in Microsoft Teams when teachers 'return' submitted assignments to students), written feedback (optional, but also provided when teachers who have written comments relating to a submission return an assignment), or through the use of the 'Chat' facility in Microsoft Teams (if for example an individual student has been working from home)

➤ Attending virtual meetings with staff, parents and students please ensure that you have considered:

- Appearance – teachers should be professionally dressed.
- Locations (e.g. try to avoid areas with background noise, ensure that there is nothing inappropriate in the background). Microsoft Teams has a built-in 'background settings' function which automatically blurs or changes the background to ensure an appropriate level of professionalism.

2.2 Faculty Leaders

Faculty Leaders should ensure the appropriate coverage of Essa Live! for their curriculum area. Alongside their teaching responsibilities, Faculty Leaders should be responsible for:

- Considering whether any aspects of the subject curriculum need to change to accommodate remote and blended learning

- Working with teachers teaching their subject remotely to make sure all work set is appropriate and consistent.
- Quality assure the remote and blended learning tasks that are being set by teachers in their faculty area.
- Working with other Faculty Leaders and Senior Leaders to make sure that work set remotely across all subjects is appropriate and consistent, and timely and appropriate deadlines are being set.
- Monitoring the remote and blended work set by teachers in their subject through regular faculty meetings and a clear plan on how their area of Essa Live! will be populated, reviewed and updated over time.
- Alerting teachers to resources they can use to teach their subject remotely or in a blended way.

2.3 Senior Leaders

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, senior leaders are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the remote and blended learning approach across the school.
- The SLT Teaching and Learning Team will quality assure lesson content on Essa Live! Monitoring the effectiveness of remote and blended learning through regular meetings with teachers and subject leaders, reviewing work set or reaching out for feedback from students and parents.
- Removal of barriers to learning. These might include the sourcing of appropriate hardware to support disadvantaged students, additional student training or communication, co-ordinating digital services for students without access (i.e. temporary internet provision).
- Monitoring the security of remote and blended learning systems, including data protection and safeguarding considerations.

2.4 Learning Support Assistants

When assisting with remote and blended learning, non-teaching members of The Bridge must be available between normal working hours. It has been made clear to students during their remote learning training that staff will not respond to questions before 8:15am or after 3:45pm.

If staff are unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, this should be reported using the normal absence procedure.

Staff should take their electronic school devices home each day in case of a school, bubble or local closure.

When assisting with remote and blended learning, non-teaching members of The Bridge are responsible for:

- Supporting students who they act as keyworkers for when those students are not in school. This pre-existing relationship should ensure that staff are aware of:
 - Which students they will need to prioritise for support
 - How that support should be provided, both supporting learning and continuing to support with SEND and EAL interventions digitally.
 - Which parents of SEND/EAL students may need additional information or guidance to support their child's ability to work remotely.
 - Ensure that work-packs are provided for any students who are unable to access digital learning due to cognitive learning barriers.

- When attending virtual meetings with teachers, parents and students, non-teaching members of The Bridge team should consider:
 - Appearance – teachers should be professionally dressed.
 - Locations (e.g. try to avoid areas with background noise, ensure that there is nothing inappropriate in the background). Microsoft Teams has a built-in 'background settings' function which automatically blurs or changes the background to ensure an appropriate level of professionalism.

2.5 The Well-being Team

When assisting with remote and blended learning, non-teaching members of The Well-being Team must be available between normal working hours. It has been made clear to students during their remote learning training that staff will not respond to questions before 8:15am or after 3:45pm.

If staff are unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, this should be reported using the normal absence procedure.

When assisting with remote and blended learning, non-teaching members of the Well-being Team are responsible for:

- Supporting students to register online each day and access their work remotely when those students are not in school. This pre-existing relationship should ensure that staff are aware of:
 - Which students they will need to prioritise for support
 - How support should be provided to access work, including barriers to working digitally. In this instance, they should liaise with the SENDCo and Faculty Leaders to ensure that work packs are provided.
 - Which parents may need additional information or guidance to support their child's ability to work remotely.
 - The identification of disadvantaged students who are unable to access remote learning in the event of short and longer-term school closures. These students may need digital devices delivering to their homes.
 - The Well-being team will continue to make daily phone calls to vulnerable and identified child protection students, under the guidance of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- When attending virtual meetings with teachers, parents and students, non-teaching members of The Wellbeing team should consider:
 - Appearance – teachers should be professionally dressed.
 - Locations (e.g. try to avoid areas with background noise, ensure that there is nothing inappropriate in the background). Microsoft Teams has a built-in 'background settings' function which automatically blurs or changes the background to ensure an appropriate level of professionalism.

2.5 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding procedures should be followed for all remote and blended learning practices. These are outlined in the Essa Academy Child Protection Policy.

Additional CPD sessions are provided by our DSL for all staff on safe working practices. These should be undertaken by staff annually.

2.6 IT Support Staff

The IT Support Staff are responsible for:

- Fixing issues with systems used to set and collect work.
- The repurposing of school devices so that they are fit for use in student homes.
- Helping staff and parents with any technical issues they are experiencing.
- Reviewing the security of remote and blended learning systems and reporting any data protection breaches to the data protection officer.
- Assisting students and parents with accessing the internet or devices.
- The distribution of devices to parents, including the signing and recording of user agreements.
- Maintaining a detailed log of school devices and coordinating their safe and appropriate return to school.

2.7 Students and parents

Staff can expect students who are remote learning to:

- Be contactable during the school day – although consideration will be made that students may not always be in front of a device the entire time.
- Complete work to the deadline set by teachers.
- Seek help if they need it, from teachers, the Well-being Team or The Bridge.
- Alert teachers if they are not able to complete work.

Staff can expect parents with children who are working remotely to:

- Be responsible for the content that their child is viewing online.
- Make the school aware if their child is sick or otherwise cannot complete work.
- Seek help from the school if they need it.
- Be respectful when making any complaints or concerns known to staff

2.8 Governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote and blended learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible, and that school devices are deployed to those in greatest need.
- Ensuring that staff are certain that remote and blended learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons.

3. Who to contact

If staff have any questions or concerns about remote and blended learning, they should contact the following individuals:

- Issues in setting work – talk to the relevant Senior Leader ([GWH](#)), Faculty Lead or SENDCo
- Issues with behaviour – talk to the relevant Head of Year or Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Issues with IT – document concerns on Parago
- Issues with their own workload or wellbeing – talk to line manager
- Concerns about data protection – talk to the data protection officer ([MNE](#))
- Concerns about safeguarding – talk to the DSL ([SOC](#))

4. Data protection

4.1 Accessing personal data

When accessing personal data for remote and blended learning purposes, all staff members will:

- Be able to access apps via our remote desktop. Be conscious of your surrounding when using school apps outside of the school environment. Sensitive and personal information is potentially visible on your screen and you should be wary of who can see it This can be found at:

<https://remote.essaacademy.org/>

- The device(s) that you have been provided with (laptops, tablets, mobile telephones) should be the only device that you use to access sensitive or personal information about students or colleagues.

4.2 Processing personal data

Staff members may need to collect and/or share personal data such as telephone numbers or email addresses as part of our remote and blended learning system. As long as this processing is necessary for the school's official functions, individuals won't need to give permission for this to happen. However, staff should not be collecting and/or sharing any additional personal data from students or staff without clear direction from the Headteacher.

4.3 Keeping devices secure

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters (e.g. asterisk or currency symbol). These can be reset by our IT Support Team at any point to maintain safety. It is recommended that you regularly change your password to maintain safe practices.
- Ensuring the hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends
- Installing antivirus and anti-spyware software (these are automatically updated on Windows devices but please speak to the IT Support Team if you are a Mac user).
- Keeping operating systems up to date – always install the latest updates when prompted. You will need the IT Support Team to authorise these updates so please log the requirements using Parago to book an appropriate time-slot.

5. Safeguarding

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (SOC) is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding procedures should be followed for all remote and blended learning practices. These are outlined in the Essa Academy Child Protection Policy – [Click here for link](#).

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Essa Academy Senior Leader responsible for Remote and Blended Learning. At every review, it will be approved by the LGB.

7. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy – [Click here for link](#)
- Child protection policy – [Click here for link](#)
- Data protection policy and privacy notices – [Click here for link](#)
- Home-school agreement – [Click here for link](#)
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy – [Click here for link](#)
- Online safety policy – [Click here for link](#)