St Laurence School
Policy on Distance Learning during prolonged school closures

Aim:
To develop an increasingly consistent way in which we deliver the curriculum, assessment and feedback that attempts to support all students, parents/carers and staff during school closure by:

- Putting well-being at the heart for all stakeholders
- Reflecting on feedback we have received from staff, students and parents/carers
- Creating a structure which is simple, achievable and continues to embed knowledge but ensures neither staff, pupils nor parents are overwhelmed by unrealistic expectations[1]
- Acknowledging the different experiences that students will have depending on their ICT provision, home circumstances, other resources available, their age and ability
- Providing opportunities for students to submit work and receive feedback (according to a schedule detailed below) which then informs future planning
- Recognising the learning that is taking place and reward this through ClassCharts

External guidance to schools:
The Department of Education has produced a list of online education resources to support students while at home and the BBC will enhance is education provision to include daily lessons, starting 20th April[2]. In addition to this, there has been some clear guidance given to schools as set out in last month's COVID-19 joint union guidance[3]. The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and The National Education Union (NEU) have stated that:

- "This is not education as we have known" and therefore "it is not reasonable, or feasible for schools to continue to provide a 'normal' school education during this time"
- Schools "need to be mindful of these very different circumstances, particularly pupil's access to technology which may have changed as whole families are working from home. There may be children who aren't able to complete online work, and, in these situations, schools should set alternative or complementary learning activities that do not require technology."

Directed learning:
Taking into account this policy's aims, the external guidance and feedback from parents/carers, we will continue to direct work on ClassCharts in line with the school's timetable as we begin an extended closure.

Heads of Departments will maintain responsibility for the consistency of work set within their department. There will be:
- 30-40 minutes of work set for every lesson in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
- 60 minutes of work set for every lesson in Year 12

This will still provide about three hours' structured learning a day (as recommended by external guidance[4]) and allow for a routine around learning. This means that all students can keep up to date with work, if there are competing needs for technology in a family home

We recognise that learning takes many different forms; this is no longer 'normal' education and we therefore can deviate from a set curriculum and embrace other types of learning. We would expect students to do this independently and a range of ideas and activities has been provided to students and parents/carers.

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[1] https://www.ascl.org.uk/ASCL/media/ASCL/Help%20and%20advice/Leadership%20and%20governance/Coronavirus-Leading-learning-during-coronavirus-school-and-college-closures.pdf
[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing
[3] https://www.ascl.org.uk/ASCL/media/ASCL/Help%20and%20advice/Leadership%20and%20governance/Joint-union-advice-on-COVID-19-3-April-2020.pdf
[4] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-52151411

Many families will have different experiences based on their own personal situations (e.g. access to ICT provision, number and age of children, parents/carers' own jobs, confidence of parent/carer to support)

A normal lesson in school will include teacher explanation, class discussion/debate etc. Therefore, setting and expecting one hour's work per lesson is likely to create an intense and pressurised experience that may impact on the students' well-being and could be counter-productive over time

Protocols for directed work:
Working remotely is not usual for the teaching and there may be some occasions when we don't always manage to deliver a first-class service due to circumstances beyond our control (e.g. staff illness, staff access to technology, competing pressures of providing childcare for key workers' children). However, we will ask teachers to:

- make work available for 8am on the day the student has that timetabled lesson
- offer a realistic time frame in which the work should be completed, rather than that same day
- suggest how the work can be broken down into more manageable tasks if it extends over several lessons
- create tasks which will allow for differentiation and extension (where possible)
- provide some appropriate weblinks to videos/webpages as a starting point for research-based tasks
- share answers or a model answer via ClassCharts where the task requires it
- be on hand (where possible) to respond to questions via if students have exhausted other options of finding out the answer

We recognise that it may be more difficult in some subjects/year groups for students to complete work that focuses on new content, therefore, consolidation/revision of prior learning may be more appropriate and this is a perfectly valid activity. Some subjects may choose to issue portfolio or research-based activities which can be submitted when school re-opens.

Having considered our safeguarding procedures and knowing that not all students have the same ICT provision at home, we will not, at this stage, be offering interactive lessons or live webcam-based lessons. As a result, communication from school to home will continue via school email and the school phone system.

Opportunities for Feedback:

We recognise the importance of an on-going dialogue between students and their classroom teachers and that feedback is important to help students in their learning/understanding and will allow them to maintain motivation during this period. We have therefore created a schedule for assessment over Term 5 (and provisionally into Term 6) which will be shared with parents/carers via an updated parent/carer guide.

Other subjects will continue to set work alongside this schedule but only these key pieces will receive bespoke feedback which will be provided directly to students via ClassCharts in the form of a WWW (what went well) and, where appropriate, an EBI (even better if).

Enrichment of Learning
There continues to be a variety of educational activities available to students that will enrich their learning beyond the curriculum in its current form and offer opportunities for students to pursue individual interests or to involve other members of the family in their wider learning. These do not require direct instruction from St Laurence staff and can be accessed online or offline depending on individual preferences. A detailed list of resources will be provided in the guide circulated to parents/carers and students.

Responsibilities:

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is effectively implemented across the school and communicated to parents

The Assistant Head (Curriculum, Standards and Assessment) (in conjunction with the Assistant Head (Director of Sixth Form)) is responsible for:

- ensuring that the policy is shared with students, Heads of Department and classroom teachers
- ensuring that HoDs have read and understood the policy and associated guide
- updating the associated guides for staff, students and parents/carers
- investigate alternative ways in which the curriculum can be delivered and sharing good practice amongst teaching staff
- developing approaches to quality assurance of remote learning

The Heads of Department are responsible for:

- ensuring that subject teachers have read and understood the policy and associated guidance
- ensuring that subject teachers adhere to key assessment timescales
- monitoring the quality of work set on ClassCharts
- ensuring that feedback takes place within the specified time frame
- coordinating the key assessed pieces of work
- considering which elements of the curriculum they want to retain and shape, linking it to their subject's curriculum intent

Teachers are responsible for:

- reading the policy and associated guidance
- setting work on a daily/weekly basis in line with the policy
- adhering to key assessment timescales
- marking and providing feedback to the students within two weeks of the assessment block's deadline
- issuing positive reward points to students through ClassCharts

Students are responsible for:

- checking ClassCharts daily and completing all work set by teachers
- seeking help or advice from their teacher via email once they have exhausted other options of finding out the answer (e.g. parent, carer, sibling, friend)
- submitting key pieces of work by the deadline, following the schedule for feedback
- reviewing the feedback provided and recording this in the subject sections of the planner
- sharing concerns about their workload with their parent/carer

Parents and carers are partners in the education process and their positive involvement during this time is essential. They are responsible for:

- reading the policy and associated guide for parents/carers
- liaising with school if there are ongoing concerns regarding completion of work
- monitoring their child's online activities