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REMOTE LEARNING STRATEGY

2020-21

Southwark Diocesan
Board of Education
Multi-Academy Trust



OUR RATIONALE

We are committed to providing the pupils across our schools with the best possible life chances, regardless of the challenges that we face as an education community. Our schools are currently evaluating and shaping their approaches to remote learning in ways they could never have imagined pre-2020. The challenges of COVID19 have meant our schools have had to work collaboratively to ensure that our remote provision is highly effective. We are proud of how our schools continue to adapt and reshape to these challenges.

We realise that the most effective approach to developing our remote learning offer is one that will serve our school communities both during, and beyond this pandemic. This will ensure that our strategic decision making will have sustainable impacts on the staff teams within our schools, so that they can then provide the best possible offer for the pupils within their school communities.

Our rationale is rooted in the belief that by developing a well-resourced infrastructure, we can provide our schools with the tools that they need to be successful. We then believe that by developing digital confidence across our workforce, we will be able to shape an excellent remote offer that is bespoke to each of the schools within our Trust. Lastly, we want to ensure that there is a sustainable legacy to our remote offer that can continue to evolve over time.

“The MAT's support has been integral in helping us aim high to fulfil our vision of every child in our care having equal access to high quality remote education and digital learning.”

The Senior Leadership Team, St Matthew's CE Primary School

OUR AIMS

The trust is committed to providing the pupils across our schools with excellent opportunities for remote learning. We understand the challenges that have arisen during COVID19 and our remote learning strategy is driven by four key aims:

- To create a strong infrastructure for remote learning with equality of access for all
- To support teacher confidence through CPD and networking
- To ensure that our remote learning offer is of high quality
- To ensure that our remote learning strategy influences sustainable improvement

NOT JUST A UNIFORM APPROACH

Each of our schools is very different and they will make strategic remote learning decisions based on the needs of their own community. As a Trust, we believe that this earned-autonomy model allows our schools to control key decision making in a way that works for them. They know their learners best and work hard to use the best resources that are available to them, enabling a strong and sustainable remote learning offer that offers value to their pupils. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) found that, ‘Approaches to remote learning vary widely and have different strengths and weaknesses’ and that, ‘Teachers should be supported to consider which approaches are best suited to the content they are teaching and the age of their pupils’. We trust our schools to make these decisions and offer support and challenge as appropriate.

Our schools are able to use the online platform and curriculum resource of their choice to support remote learning. This means that they can exploit existing school infrastructure and expertise that they have already acquired.

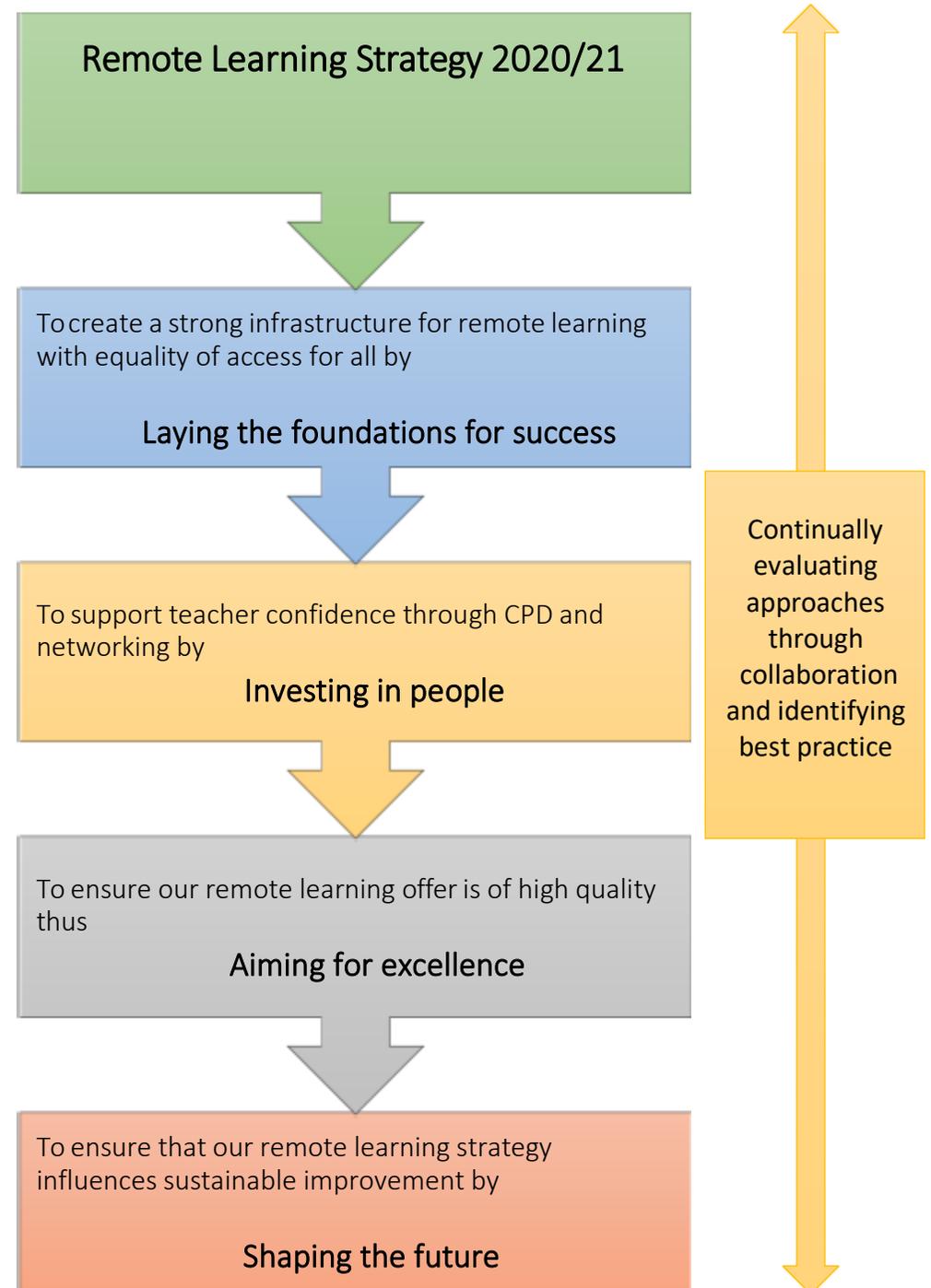
This is also the case regarding the delivery of remote learning. Currently, schools are considering a range of approaches that include live lessons, blended learning, asynchronous education as well as imaginative approaches to remote assessment. Our schools will develop their own strategic direction as to how they wish to deliver their curriculum and we will look to provide them with the tools that they need.

OUR REMOTE STRATEGY 2020/21

By using our four core aims to underpin our strategy, we are able to create a cohesive and developmental approach delivering remote learning across our Trust as well as laying the foundations for the future. Each stage of our development is underpinned by our aims and are as follows:

1. To create a strong infrastructure for remote learning with equality of access for all by Laying the Foundations for Success
2. To support teacher confidence through CPD and networking by Investing in People
3. To ensure that our remote learning offer is of high quality thus developing Aiming for Excellence
4. To ensure that our remote learning strategy influences sustainable improvement by Shaping the Future

Our schools will be at different places within each stage of our strategy dependent on their remote learning maturity. It may also be the case that schools look to return to different stages to secure future improvements. Our developmental stages will evolve over time as our schools acquire new skills and reflect on their offer. No part of our strategy remains static as we are continually learning.



1. LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

We firmly believe that the best way to secure a high-quality and sustainable remote offer is to ensure that the foundations to these strategic approaches are developed and fit for purpose. If our schools have invested in the right tools, expertise and infrastructure for remote learning, they are more likely to be able to achieve success that will have long-lasting impacts. This viewpoint is supported by the research provided by The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) in April 2020 found that, 'Many reviews identify lack of technology as a barrier to successful remote instruction'. It is for these reasons that our Trust are working alongside our schools to ensure that they are equipped with the technology and skills to develop well-developed approaches to remote learning. These initiatives include:

- Our schools benefiting from using either Microsoft 365 or Google Suite as their remote learning platforms. Some of our schools also use Seesaw and Tapestry as a remote learning platform for the EYFS as this suits this age-range.
- Co-ordinating the distribution of devices for pupils centrally through the DfE 'Get Help with Technology' initiative. This has led to over 250 devices being distributed to our schools during January 2021 for disadvantaged pupils who were without access to a device.
- Working with our schools to ensure that their families have adequate internet access. This is being achieved through cascading information to our schools regarding government and commercial support from both the DfE and Vodafone, for example. We want to ensure that we are able to remove any potential internet access barriers that the families across our schools may face.
- Supporting our schools to develop their own school-based remote learning strategy that focuses not only on the current need to provide remote learning, but also provides strategic direction for their 'digital future'.

We know that we have a 'challenge to overcome' in ensuring that every child across our schools has access to a suitable device. For these reasons, we will continue to make sure that high quality teaching and learning is our priority, as opposed to how the lessons are delivered. Remote learning can also mean providing a child with textbooks and non-digital resources. This approach is reinforced in the Ofsted guidance paper, 'What's working well in remote education', which urges schools to, 'Think carefully about whether pupils have access to the right kind of device when we're using digital remote education. If they don't, and we can't provide enough devices, it might be better to consider non-digital approaches as well.' Our schools work hard to ensure that any non-digital learning is aligned with the remote offer that other pupils are accessing.

2. INVESTING IN PEOPLE

As a Trust we believe passionately in ensuring that our staff teams benefit from the very best professional development available. Our schools are proactive in investing in their staff and this commitment has enabled them to develop strong curriculum offers. We want to support our schools so that they can deliver their curriculum remotely as effectively as possible. We have looked to achieve this by brokering and hosting focused training for our schools, so that they can align what we are offering, with the needs of their staff. The EEF cite the importance of, 'Ensuring that teachers and pupils are provided with support and guidance to use specific platforms is essential, particularly if new forms of technology are being implemented'. We are committed to developing the appropriate expertise across our schools at a level that aligns with a school's digital maturity.

Our schools have benefited from the Government funded EdTech Demonstrator Programme during this academic year in a range of different ways. This has allowed our schools to benefit from a bespoke training package that has been designed to meet the needs of the school. The EdTech programme has supported schools in understanding the basic functionality of their remote education platform through a tiered level of training: basic, intermediate and advanced. This programme has included:

- Entrance surveys for staff to complete so that training needs could be identified
- Training sessions being organised by the demonstration schools, based on survey feedback from schools
- Trust schools with similar development needs sharing training sessions
- Reshaping training for our schools as training needs change

Training available to schools has encompassed the full range of professionals that work within the school so that support staff, such as SENCO's, office personnel and teaching assistants, as well as teachers, are able to benefit from this input and develop their digital skills.

Through the EdTech Programme, we have also been able to develop our understanding of 'digital strategy'. We have been able to access exemplar materials and attend workshops provided by demonstrators that have been able to share excellent practice. This has helped to provide practical short-term guidance as well as support in developing long-term strategy.

Our schools have also developed their own training packages for their school communities and have shared successful approaches with colleagues from other schools. This has enabled a sharing of best practice and a culture of mutual support across our schools.

At Archbishop Tenison’s School, we have been very lucky to benefit from Derby College via the Ed Tech programme. This has really helped to develop our remote learning offer. We were able to broker training for our school when our knowledge of Microsoft Teams was in its infancy. Additionally, Derby College were (and continue to be) available via email to answer any questions we have. All of this advice and support has filtered down through the school, to continue to upskill staff. This has included advice on links to Edpuzzle and Streams, as well as training on MS Forms, which has been invaluable.

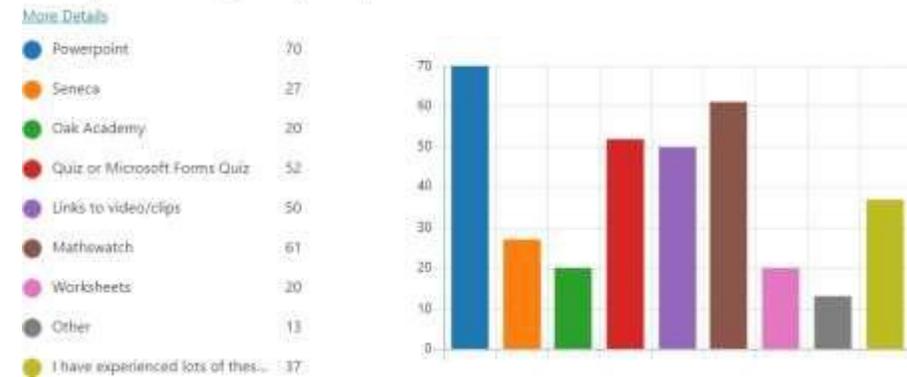
In November, Glynn, the remote facilitator from Derby College, led staff training on MS Teams with a focus around ensuring our schools were able to access a range of remote teaching strategies. As a consequence, a recent survey with our students showed that their experience of remote learning had shifted significantly since March 2020. Six months ago, our remote offer would have consisted mainly of PowerPoints. The support through EdTech has given our staff the confidence to use a range of remote teaching tools as part of their delivery. The pupil voice survey results below, conducted in January 2021 indicate the progress the school has made:

CASE STUDY
ARCHBISHOP TENISON SECONDARY SCHOOL

NATASHA FOX

ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER
ARCHBISHOP TENISON SECONDARY SCHOOL & REMOTE
LEARNING LEAD

What types of learning have you experienced



In January 2021, Derby College and I delivered a remote workshop to parents so we could show them how we use Microsoft Teams as a learning platform and how they can support at home. This session attracted a very high attendance, a clear indication of how we have progressed with our remote offer. We are going to continue to grow this link and we are hugely grateful for the support through the EdTech Programme in delivering our remote learning strategy. There still much to learn but we are committed to making sure that our pupils receive the best remote offer we can provide.

3. AIMING FOR EXCELLENCE

Our schools understand that remote education is a way of delivering their own curriculum offer for pupils not able to attend school. This means that everything they know about what a high-quality curriculum looks like still applies. Each of our schools is very different and they will make remote learning decisions based on the needs of their own community. As a Trust, we believe that this 'earned-autonomy' model allows our schools to develop their remote provision so that it aligns with their own curriculum model. Our schools have been proactive in ensuring that their remote offer to pupils is aligned with their own specific curriculum intent.

We believe that teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered. The EEF promote the rationale that schools should aim to, 'Ensure the elements of effective teaching are present – for example clear explanations, scaffolding and feedback – is more important than how or when they are provided.' Ofsted support this approach in their guidance, 'What's working well in remote education' by stating, 'Just as we don't need 'all-singing, all-dancing' lessons in the classroom, remote education often benefits from a straightforward and easy-to-use interface'. And that rather than over- complications, 'More important is attention to the key elements of effective teaching. This research prompts us to remind ourselves that our teaching staff are best placed to shape their strategies to teach and that the best way for us to develop excellent practice is to work alongside our staff, providing them with the support and guidance that they need.

When our schools have needed to develop additional curriculum elements, they have introduced schemes from The Oak National Academy alongside bespoke support from Pearson, who have provided excellent support to our schools when needed. This has enabled our schools to shape their remote curriculum, offering a broad, balanced and progressive offer.

Our Trust use their termly Subject Leader Network Meetings to ensure that middle leaders from across the schools are able to access and use the latest information and resources that are specific to their subject area. This means that they are able to develop their own remote learning strategies and support programmes for their own staff. All of our schools have full staff access to the National College training suite and this has been invaluable in providing a range of excellent CPD, focused on developing remote learning skills as well as other current educational themes.

We have developed good relationships with DfE funded hubs, such as the Maths, English, Computing and Science Hubs. This has meant that our schools have access to ongoing remote training and subject development programmes that our regional hubs are offering. As well as specific remote learning curriculum development, our Trust has been able to create purposeful links with the SEND Gateway, where they can access high quality remote training and support to ensure that their special educational needs provision and CPD offer is robust.

Our schools are proactive in evaluating their remote learning offer and are committed to ensuring that this forms part of effective school improvement. Each of our schools has their own Diocesan School Improvement Partner (DSIP) who delivers a comprehensive programme of support and challenge to our schools. As part of this offer, our DSIPs evaluate the effectiveness of each schools remote learning offer, identifying strengths and next steps for the school.

We acknowledge that we are developing our expertise as each day goes by and like many other schools and Trusts up and down the country, we are working hard to find out what works well, and what can be done differently. As a Trust, we are firmly focused on working together and reflecting on our practice so that our commitment to continuing to develop high-quality teaching and learning can remain our core ambition.

REMOTE LEARNING - LINKS AND FURTHER READING

DfE – Schools National Lockdown Restrictions (including DfE remote education guidance)
January 2021 [School national restrictions guidance.pdf](#)

Education Endowment Foundation – Remote Learning: Rapid Evidence Assessment April 2020 [Remote Learning Rapid Evidence Assessment.pdf](#)

Education Endowment Foundation – Evidence Review: Key Summary
[Rapid Evidence Assessment summary.pdf](#)

EdTech Demonstrator Programme
[Home | EdTech Demonstrator Programme \(lgfl.net\)](#)

English Hubs and resources
[English Hub schools | National Literacy Trust](#)

GOV.UK – Adapting Teaching Practice for Remote Education
[Adapting teaching practice for remote education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Gov.UK – Get Help with Remote Education
[Get Help with Remote Education - GOV.UK](#)

GOV.UK – Remote Education Good Practice October 2020
[Remote education good practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

LGFL – Bridge the Divide
[The National Grid for Learning - Devices \(lgfl.net\)](#)

The National College
[The National College | Remote video CPD for school leaders & teachers](#)

Ofsted – What's Working Well with Remote Education January 2021
[What's working well in remote education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Oak National Academy – Guidance for Schools January 2021
[Remote Education Oak National Academy Guidance.pdf](#)

SEND Gateway (Nasen)
[NASEN SEND GATEWAY](#)

STEM – Science Hubs and other resources
[STEM Ambassadors supporting schools and colleges | STEM](#)

Teach Computing – Computing Hub
[Network of Computing Hubs - Teach Computing](#)

4. SHAPING THE FUTURE

COVID19 has undoubtedly meant that schools nationally have had to expediate their approaches to delivering remote learning. This means that there will be some elements of provision that have been shaped at a faster pace than would be the case otherwise. We can be certain the changes that have taken place over the past year will have changed the educational landscape forever. As a Trust, we want to be able to use this period to influence positive change so that the hard work of each and every member of our school teams, leads to a better future for the children within our schools. We want our remote learning strategy to help shape the future and the 'can do' attitude that our schools have adopted over this period give us every confidence that we can continue to excel moving forward.

Beyond the pandemic, we want our schools to be able to:

- Take stock of their decision-making and ask critical questions of themselves
- Evaluate their actions and establish: what has been successful? What could have been done differently?
- Be clear on which elements of their remote learning strategy are going to be part of the school offer as they move into 2022 and beyond
- Ensure that the digital confidence that exists across the Trust is used exceptionally well and leads to sustainable change
- Develop the next phase of their school-based strategy and link these with our Trust Remote Learning Strategy

As a Trust, we are committed to making sure that we evaluate our approaches to remote learning and use this intelligence to shape the future. This will enable us to continue to make the most of the resources and expertise that is available to our schools. This will be achieved by developing a SDBE-MAT Remote Learning Focus Group, that will work hard to help shape strategic direction as we move in to 2022.