

Barley Lane School

Hard work, humility, kindness

Remote Well-Being and Learning at Barley Lane School (summer 2021 edit)

Our ethos and values

These must imbue and flow through and must be tangible every day in all of us and all our work:

- **Friendship:** respect-empathy-forgiveness-compassion-protection
- **Optimism:** self-aware- self-improving -problem solving -happy-affirming
- **Hardwork:** gritty-determined-resilient- makes a difference -things get done

How do these impact our effort to support our children and families remotely?

- **Friendship:** we make sure our compassion motivates us to work hard and deliver tangible support to our children and families isolating or in any future wider lockdown or partial school closure.
- **Optimism:** we know a “can do” pragmatic, problem solving and bespoke approach will be essential.
- **Hardwork:** there is no avoiding it will generate extra work to teach in school and remotely.

Aims: what do we want to achieve?

1. To build on the trust and warmth and rapport built between home and school and more notably and specifically individual teachers and support staff and the children and families during lockdown.
2. To apply lessons learned during lockdown about delivering “remote learning” (appendix 1)
3. To keep the children and young people at home safe and to protect and promote their wellbeing.
4. To deliver bespoke and meaningful and doable learning at home that the children can and will do and their families can realistically support them in.
5. To have reliable sense of how our children and families are feeling and the emerging and accumulating challenges and risks they are facing and how best we can help them?

6. To create and sustain a sense of belonging that keeps those at home a part of our school community and makes returning to school easier: to maintain a togetherness and connection where school community and its ethos extends “remotely” to and embraces home.
7. In all of this to be sensibly mindful of the workload and so wellbeing and morale out teaching and support staff.

Objectives: what will we do to achieve our aims?

1. Whether a child or young person is in school or at home teachers and their support colleagues will maintain that habitual, warm and supportive and sometimes necessarily challenging contact with home and negotiate and agree the nature and frequency of contact with families so they are empowered in this.
2. Teachers will as they set out during lockdown be mindful “*we understand our students struggle to engage in academic tasks for long periods of time and have found that tasks which are short, snappy and easy to understand prevent pupils from feeling overwhelmed when they are being educated remotely – we incorporate a variety of tasks to engage students whilst trying not to overwhelm them*”
3. Children at home or for any reason not full time will be flagged and considered at daily briefings and debriefings and remain a part of the habitual conversation about safeguarding risks and subject to the same escalating interventions: we will be mindful too of those supportive and affirming phone calls and opportunities for outreach and fun for children and young people who find themselves at home for lengthier spells.
4. Staff will build bespoke packages for individual children and families mindful of the learning context at home and what they know about the child’s learning style and preferences in short what “will work” but also and pragmatically what “won’t work “as that can increase pressures and so stresses at home.
5. Staff will be alive through their diligent and reliable remote pastoral-work; typically regular phone calls but doorstep visits were powerful in lockdown to emerging risks and increase contact and build support.
6. If we do the above reliably aim 6 will be achieved
7. We will maintain a conversation about our own wellbeing and how we are feeling and the impact of teaching in school and out...

Measures of and benchmarks for success: how can we know if what we are doing (our objectives) is helping us achieve or at least make progress towards our aims?

1. Parent feedback was our most simple but powerful and credible measure during “lockdown” and remains alongside pupil feedback our best measure and strong approval ratings the goal.
2. Teachers can show how “bespoke” any package is and explain credibly their decisions about its nature and content for each child at home they are supporting: there is evidence work is being completed and reliably assessed and learning progress made.
3. Any random unannounced visit from our DSG and or monitoring in-house by DSL and DDSL can evidence the children at home or not in school are prominent in our daily sharing and CPOMs provides an evidence trail of both concern and critically intervention plus case studies will be helpful for DSG where significant risks emerge. Daily attendance records are completed and sent to our Safeguarding Officer by 10am to allow us to identify any students we have concerns about and follow these up. It also ensures we know where each of our students are at any given time of the day or week and that they are safe.
4. See bullet point 2 above and appendix 1 below.
5. CPOMs will evidence activity and again as above case studies for DSG can explain and evidence any escalating risk and consequent intervention to make safe.
6. It has been demonstrable that because we stayed open throughout “lockdown” for a significant and incrementally growing number of pupils and had a very well developed support package for those at home we have reopened fully in a COVID secure world and measurably had our best the opening half-term (good attendance lowest FTE and recorded serious incidents and physical interventions) and we should anticipate this at an individual level as children return: parent and pupil feedback will be powerful in this too as it is in bullet point 1 above.
7. Team feedback direct to CoG has been hugely powerful and credible.

Appendix 1: some practical tips for the team rooted in our experience of lockdown

- There needs to be structure and ease of accessibility to the learning.
With this in mind, tasks are set digitally and are a combination of reading, writing, games, quizzes and activities to promote positive mental health, whilst allowing students to access all areas of the curriculum in a modified and independent way.
- Regular contact with parents and carers throughout the week reassures them we are available and wanting to help them in any way we can with remote learning. The positive relationships built during the last lockdown have been hugely beneficial in supporting our students when they returned to school in September and in returning to remote learning again now.
- As a school we understand our students struggle to engage in academic tasks for long periods of time and have found that tasks which are short, snappy and easy to understand prevent pupils from feeling overwhelmed when they are being educated remotely – we incorporate a variety of tasks to engage students whilst trying not to overwhelm them;
- Content is focused on the core subjects of English, Maths and Science as well as wellbeing. There are daily activities related to mental health or physical health and links to support services such as Childline and Kooth. In addition to this, a broad range of tasks are shared ‘just for fun’ to spark interest, creativity and problem solving skills.
- Work packs are created and sent out via the Class Dojo site as well as paper copies being posted to those students that require them. Every parent and student has been given access to and use of Class Dojo, which allows parents and students to upload examples of the work they have completed, to share and allow staff to offer praise as well as keep in touch with their class teacher. Dojo points for learning skills and attitudes can be added and exchanged for prizes as part of the wider whole school reward system, as well as E Praise points for those that attend online learning sessions.
- A dedicated Home Learning section on the school website signposts parents and carers to a range of online and printable resources.
- Some staff are using Zoom to conduct short lessons/meetings to keep in touch with students from their class on a daily basis.
- Using a variety of appropriate teaching methods and activities can have a positive effect on engagement and this is incorporated in the home learning packs and through the daily tasks posted on the Class Dojo.
- Not all pupils’ home environments will or can support their education. And some may not have access to a device or have an internet connection at home which allows them to learn online, or join in at scheduled lesson times – therefore these students have been identified and paper copies of tasks are sent out to students weekly through the post.
- Technology support and hardware has been and can still be given to home-learners; KS4 students without electronic devices at home were offered the use of school laptops and pupil premium students have been offered the loan of laptops through the LA . We are also able to

apply for Data top-ups for parents to increase their Data allowance to enable their children to access online sessions.

- Expectations of remote learning are different from that of school-based expectations; many of our students participate in a more vocational timetable that meets their learning needs and individual interests. Some of our students have been developing the skills they have learnt through college courses such as Construction and Catering, by working with parents and carers at home. Some have helped to decorate houses, plaster rooms, build and put in new kitchens and bathrooms, develop gardens and further enhance their catering abilities by helping with cooking and baking whilst at home.
- We actively encourage this and ask parents to share any photos or video footage of what our students have been achieving away from school, to build up a portfolio of their skills.
- For those students unable to access onsite activities but are in need of input from school and some structured time, 1:1 sessions are offered on a weekly basis with a known member of staff from school or, a member of a 1:1 mentoring service, that is familiar to the student. This allows them to go cycling, fishing, walking or take part in an activity that they enjoy and that is accessible during the current restrictions.
- Use of CPoms allows staff to keep track of engagement which has helped us understand how pupils are getting on, and to identify which pupils need more support. (Data is then collated by MMac weekly into a spreadsheet to monitor every student and to ensure their safety and wellbeing).
- Our children need mentally healthy staff, and it has been continually stressed that, even though staff may feel as if they are not able to contribute as much as they would normally, they are going to be able to do the best for children in the long term by keeping themselves healthy, safe and positive throughout the lockdown situation – the hugely supportive ethos from SLT and Governors reaffirms this.

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