

**Euston Street P.S.**

**& Nursery Unit**

**Blended Learning Contingency Plan**

**September 2020**

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**Euston Street Primary School & Nursery Unit**

**Blended Learning Contingency Plan**

**Mission**

*‘Achieving Excellence Together’*

*‘To work together for excellence in: our learning; our school; our community; and our future’.*

Our purpose therefore is to be an excellent school. We continually strive for excellence in every area of school life. To achieve this aim we must always have the right school **vision and values** and these must be at the heart of all that we do, including our School Development Plan.

**Vision**

In order to achieve excellence in each aspect of school life, our vision is:

*'To create a safe, happy learning community. A community where together, we inspire and equip our pupils so that they fulfil their potential, use their talents and follow their dreams now and always.’*

**Values**

We believe that our school is a place where the child is at the centre.

*‘We value kindness, integrity, hard work and mutual respect.'*

Good attendance at school is essential for a pupil’s education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life.

**Introduction**

The purpose of this plan, as with all of our policies, is to support us as we strive for excellence in every area of school life. To achieve this, we must always have the right school **vision and values** and these must be at the heart of all that we do, including our engagement with parents and guardians.

This plan outlines the procedures that will be followed should school be required to adopt a part time attendance and a blended approach to learning between school and home comes into operation.

**Why would ESPS be required to adopt a blended learning approach?**

As in March 2020, it would become necessary to adopt a blended learning approach in ESPS if schools were directed by the Education Authority or DENI to reduce bubbles further, to send home a class, if there was a large scale outbreak of Covid-19 in school or a need or directive to close the school.

**What is blended learning?**

Blended learning is the combination of traditional, face-to-face learning methods with technology-based, eLearning methods. In ESPS we use Seesaw as a platform to set and assess learning activities that can be accessed by parents and pupils from outside the school environment.

**What is Seesaw?**

Seesaw is a Learning Journal app that enables students to create an online and digital portfolio of their learnings in class and at home. It enables students to reflect on their learnings and even on the learning process that happens in class.

Seesaw helps pupils, staff and parents alike to be aware of where the children are in terms of their learning and progress as well as offering opportunity for assessment for learning by providing pupils with an understanding of how to further improve their performance in class. The interface of the app is student-friendly that even those in the lower grades can easily use it. Using various media such as photos, documents, videos, or voice recordings, students can document what they have learned in class.

Taking it further, pupil learning is readily available for the teacher to view. The documents, pictures, or videos are properly organised in folders. The teacher also moderates the Seesaw group of the class. Log-in problems and issues for younger children are also answered and given a simplistic solution by the Seesaw app using log-in text codes or QR codes. This wonderful app also provides a bridge for the parents to see and understand how their child is learning in class. This, hopefully, gives the parents a more transparent view of the learning that happens in class. Furthermore, it gives guidance on how they can assist their children when they study at home.

Seesaw offers staff the flexibility to set whole class or individual differentiated learning, so that all needs are catered for.

ESPS have chosen Seesaw as it is free to parents & pupils and cost effective. ESPS have also chosen Seesaw as it was already a platform App known to staff and pupils and because it is user friendly for even the youngest of pupils. The use of Seesaw is cost effective for parents as no printing is required. It is also cost effective for schools for the same reasons. Seesaw is eco-friendly which is important to the school ethos.

**Plan overview**

**How will school communicate learning activities with parents/carers?**

Most parents will now be familiar with Seesaw. Emails will be resent to all parents explaining the login system and a ‘how to’ guide will also be sent explaining how to access class and pupil learning activities set each week.

Translations of the help sheets are available on the school website. Newcomer parents will be direct to the website to read these translated copies. Other letters are sent to parents and posted on their website in a manner that means parents can translate them using the website translation tool.

**What is school expected to do to support learning?**

**School will be expected to:**

* Communicate with parents (see above)
* Plan each week for blended learning
* Set curricular based learning activities as required
* Set differentiated learning as required
* Assess and assess all completed learning on Seesaw
* Give feedback to pupils/parents on Seesaw
* Address any learning or technology concerns
* Communicate with SEN and vulnerable pupils on a regular basis
* Monitor and evaluate access to learning by pupils at home
* Contact and support when engagement on Seesaw at home is low
* Inform SLT if pupils are not completing online learning
* Continue normal T&L when in school

**What are parents expected to do at home to support learning?**

**Parents/carers will be expected to:**

* Support the blended learning approach.
* Use the learning activities set to support their child’s ongoing learning and attainment.
* Try and engage their children in their learning.
* Contact school if difficulties arise in the learning or the technology.

ESPS recognise that supporting home learning can be difficult for some parents for a variety of reasons. Staff in ESPS also acknowledge that it is the primary responsibility of teachers to support pupil learning under a blended learning approach. Given the amount of time that a pupil may be spending at home if a blended learning approach is required, it is essential that parents engage with and support their child as they complete the learning activities so as not to further impact on the progress and attainment of their child.

ESPS will give as much support to parents as possible. Parents will not be expected to complete daily literacy and numeracy activities. The majority of literacy and numeracy learning would be completed in school. Instead, school will provide a variety of curricular based activities that are accessible for all parents regardless of ability and language. All learning activities will also be differentiated where possible to support different pupil abilities.

**Classroom Assistants**

Under a blended learning scenario, assistants will have several roles to fulfil.

They will continue to support pupils in class. They will also provide comments to assist the teachers in their assessment of learning. Assistants may also conduct calls to support SEN and or vulnerable pupils at home.

**What are pupils expected to do when learning from home?**

**Pupils will be expected to:**

* Engage in their learning as required
* Complete learning activities to at least a reasonable standard
* Complete learning activities on time
* Discuss difficulties with parents/teachers

ESPS realise that home learning is difficult for pupils for a variety of reasons. They will continue to support pupils as best possible in the learning at all times.

**Marking and assessment Seesaw learing**

All learning activities completed on Seesaw will be assessed when completed. Feedback will be provided in a variety of forms including but not only:

* Written comments
* Recorded voice comments
* Marking
* Images and photos
* Virtual stampers

Marking will follow the school marking & assessment policy.

**Monitoring and evaluating**

All pupil learning on Seesaw will be continually monitored by the class teacher. Pupils failing to complete learning, complete learning on time or complete to a reasonable standard will be referred to leadership. Parents will then be contacted to ascertain any difficulties or reasons for learning not being completed satisfactorily. ESPS will continue to support parents and pupils as best possible.

**Safeguarding and blended learning**

ESPS will follow all agreed Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements if blended learning is in operation. The school Safeguarding Team will remain in operation at all times.

Whilst pupils are at home under a blended learning approach, ESPS will complete a series of measures and practices to help ensure that they remain safe and secure. Parents will receive a copy of the school Acceptable Use Policy, e:Safety Policy and Seesaw Policy (as on the school website).

Staff will discuss acceptable use, e:safety and how to use Seesaw with the pupils in school before and during use.

Teachers will continually monitor the use of Seesaw and report any concerns to the school safeguarding Team immediately.

SLT and staff will continue to monitor vulnerable pupils when they are learning at home and will immediately inform the Principal and or Safeguarding Team with any concerns.

Parents will be encouraged to report any online concerns to the school leadership or Safeguarding Team immediately. Parents will also be reminded through other policy documents that only appropriate content and images can be shared on Seesaw and this includes no video images or still images of pupils or family members in unsuitable clothing etc. Parents will be reminded that images of their children will not be required for Seesaw learning activities.

ESPS will monitor and address any pastoral issues identified as required.

**SEN and Newcomer pupils and blended learning**

Whilst every care will be taken to ensure that pupils with SEN and Newcomer pupils have been provided with appropriate learning activities at their level, meeting their learning needs, teachers will monitor that the learning is being completed satisfactorily. Mrs McKeown and Mrs Gillespie will be available for any concerns that staff, pupils and or parents have about learning set.

**Readiness for Continuity of Learning at Home**

Staff

ESPS wants to best support our pupils and parents should school ever have to close again for learning at home. This will also help us support pupils if they have to isolate for reasons of Covid-19. We are still using **Seesaw** for home online learning.

We will:

**Access**

* Survey parents about internet/device access
* Support families with devices as able to do so
* Provide alternative learning materials for those who cannot access a device or the internet
* Provided explanations and guidance on Seesaw including translations
* Issued consent and explanation for Zoom calls
* Issue opportunity for parents to give feedback on their child’s wellbeing

**Routines**

* Keep lesson protocols clear
* Keep expectations of learning and engagement clear
* Provide a checklist for daily online learning
* Provide a reminder about the limit of screen time and healthy breaks
* Provide a Zoom registration lesson (no cameras) to include Pastoral Care

**Learning and Afl**

* Differentiate learning as required
* Provide learning activities in all curricular areas
* Encourage development of PDMU and TSPC
* Provide feedback on all completed learning
* Use a variety of feedback mechanisms including individual, whole class, verbal, recorded, video, stampers and written.
* Implement Multiple Choice testing
* Provide opportunities for learning through Education City and Bug Club.
* Provide opportunities for pupil self-assessment (peer assessment if applicable)
* Have Year Group teachers support the learning in both classes in the case of teacher illness
* Short Term Planning monitored and evaluated each week

**Infusing/Monitoring wellbeing and Pastoral Care**

* Provide learning in PDMU
* Provide Wellbeing Weekly/daily activities
* Monitor engagement
* Implement non-engagement protocols – in line with attendance policies (see below)
* Provide nurturing welcome on registration classes
* Provide encouragement in written feedback
* Complete Vulnerability Indicator (VI) if required
* Contact parents of those not engaging to monitor wellbeing

**Communication with parents**

* See Access
* See Routines
* Provide regular emails
* Post relevant updates, guidance and encouragement on website and Facebook
* Provide monthly newsletters (if applicable)

**The following information will continue to be relayed to parents**

* Please do your very best to ensure that your child engages with their learning each day
* Engagement in learning is their attendance
* Engagement in learning will help ensure that they continue to make progress and reach their potential
* Engagement in learning will help keep them ‘school ready’ for when restrictions ease, if school has been closed
* Set routines and follow the daily timetables set by the teachers as best possible
* Try and find a quiet place for your child to compete their learning
* Some activities like reading can be left to the evening if needed
* A balance of Screen Time and exercise and fresh air are most important for your child’s health and wellbeing
* Try and encourage drinking lots of water and eating healthily when at home
* The staff will explain all the daily learning activities and give daily feedback on all activities completed
* The staff will try and balance learning in all areas of the curriculum
* The staff will have a registration Zoom call on designated mornings to try and explain the learning, encourage your child, set expectations, consider their wellbeing and support them in any way they can
* Please contact the teacher on seesaw or contact the school if we can help with access to learning, wellbeing or anything else.