



Department of Education, Sport and Culture *Rheynn Ynsee, Spoyrt as Cultoor*

Safeguarding and Remote/Distance Learning Provision

Support/Advice for Schools

This guidance is to help Isle of Man schools and teachers support pupils, parents and each other with safe remote or distance education during periods where schools are functioning differently due coronavirus (COVID-19). It should be read alongside best practice for statutory safeguarding in [keeping children safe in education](#).

Where a class of pupils are directed to self-isolate, or there is a local or Island lockdown requiring pupils to remain at home, schools will offer remote/distance education provision within 24 hours of the change. Schools will consider how to continue to improve the quality of their existing offer and have a contingency plan in place. This planning will be particularly important to support a scenario in which the logistical challenges of remote/distance provision are greatest, for example where large numbers of pupils are required to remain at home.

The guidance for remote/distance learning have been co-constructed by department officers and schools.

Safeguarding pupils and teachers online

Keeping pupils and teachers safe during remote/distance learning is essential. Teachers delivering remote/distance learning online should be aware that the same principles set out in the school's behaviour policy will apply. Schools may want to update their policies to reflect remote/distance learning.

Schools may wish to use these resources to understand more about how to ensure remote/distance education is safe:

- Remote/distance education advice from [The Key for School Leaders](#)
- advice from [NSPCC](#) on undertaking remote/distance education safely
- guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on remote/distance education
- guidance contained within the [Inclusion and Safeguarding Coronavirus support site](#)
- [Safer schools](#) – guidance on being safe with regarding existing and emergent technologies/sites/apps

Guidance on [teaching online safety in schools](#) provides information to help schools ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online.

School contact with parents and carers during this time can also be used to reinforce the importance of children staying safe online.

It is especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do, including:

- sites they will be asked to use
- school staff their child will interact with

Schools should emphasise the importance of a safe online environment and encourage parents and carers to set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites. These are usually free, but often need to be turned on.

Use these resources to support parents and carers to keep their children safe online:

- [support for parents and carers to keep children safe online](#), which outlines resources to help keep children safe from different risks online and where to go to find support and advice
- [Are you OK?](#) Isle of Man Well-being during the pandemic
- guidance on [staying safe online](#) which includes information on security and privacy settings
- [Thinkuknow](#) provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) on staying safe online
- [Parent info](#) is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- [Internet matters](#) provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [Net-aware](#) has support for parents and carers from the NSPCC, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) has tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services

Reporting concerns

It is essential to have and communicate clear reporting routes so that children, teachers, parents and carers can raise any safeguarding concerns in relation to remote/distance learning

Schools may wish to review the existing arrangements to ensure they are appropriate and reflect remote/distance learning, or whether additional or alternative arrangements need to be put in place.

Schools should consider referring teachers, parents and carers to the practical support that's available for reporting harmful or upsetting content as well as bullying and online abuse.

Harmful or upsetting content

Get support by:

- reporting harmful online content to the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- getting government advice and trusted resources from [Educate Against Hate](#) on safeguarding from radicalisation, building resilience to extremism, and promoting shared values
- [Safer schools](#)

Bullying or abuse online

You can:

- get advice on reporting online abuse from the National Crime Agency's [Child Exploitation and Online Protection command](#)
- get advice and support from [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) for children who are being bullied
- For older children and young people – [The Mix](#)

Communicating with parents, carers and pupils

Where education is having to take place remotely due to coronavirus (COVID-19), it's important for schools, teachers and pupils to maintain professional practice as much as possible. When communicating online with parents and pupils, schools will continue to:

- communicate within school hours as much as possible (or hours agreed with the school to suit the needs of staff)
- communicate through the school channels approved by the senior leadership team
- use school email accounts (not personal ones)
- use school devices over personal devices wherever possible
- advise teachers not to share personal information

Virtual lessons and live streaming

Should schools choose to provide remote/distance learning using live streaming or pre-recorded videos, guidance from the Isle of Man's [Office of Cyber Security and Information Assurance \(OCSIA\)](#). Useful guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) on [using video conferencing services securely](#) could also help schools to set up video conferencing safely. In addition, [guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning](#) and [Safer Schools site](#) include detailed advice on live or synchronous teaching.

Teaching from home is different from teaching in the classroom. Teachers should try to find a quiet or private room or area to talk to pupils, parents or carers. When broadcasting a lesson or making a recording, consider what will be in the background. Should teachers' own children be present whilst live, remote or distance delivery is taking place, they must of course be kept safe and supervised depending on their age.

Teachers should avoid situations online where they are streaming with just one pupil. Normal safeguards surrounding lone working between teachers and pupils should apply in the same way as they would in a physical school setting.

Providing pastoral care remotely

Where pupils are required to remain at home (for example, if pupils need to self-isolate or there are local restrictions) helping parents, carers and pupils to make a weekly plan or structure is important. These plans should include time for education, playing and relaxing to reduce stress and anxiety.

Good practice in this area is set out in [Public Health England's guidance for parents and carers](#), routine can give children and young people an increased feeling of safety in the context of uncertainty.

Schools might want to consider whether one-to-one sessions could be appropriate in some circumstances. For example, to provide pastoral care or provide support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

This should be discussed and approved by the senior leadership team to assess any risks. There may be helpful solutions, such as including a parent or additional staff member in the call.

Personal data and GDPR

Schools should continue to follow the best practice GDPR protocols set out in [data protection: toolkit for schools](#)

When managing personal data and may need to consider:

- taking care not to share contact details when emailing or communicating on a platform with multiple people
- being careful when sharing usernames and other personal data for access to online resources
- providing access to school data systems safely

Supporting staff well-being

Schools should continue to support the mental and emotional health and well-being of their staff in challenging times. Should schools, line managers or individual staff require support, guidance or advice, they can visit the [OHR Staff Welfare site](#)

Staff Absence through sickness

Should a member of staff need to inform the school of their sickness absence, they should follow the normal sickness/absence reporting channels/procedure the school has in place. From the moment a member of staff reports sickness, they are not required to provide remote/distance learning, just as they would not be required to provide cover. Once a staff absence is reported, it is the responsibility of the school to inform relevant parties and ensure learning continues for classes affected. The existing arrangements regarding funding for cover apply here also.