

German School London

Remote Learning Guidelines for the Primary School

Remote Learning Guidelines – Primary School

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1. Development of Microsoft Teams

1.1 Organisation of Year Teams

The German School London uses Microsoft (MS) Teams for its Remote Learning Programme. Both staff members and pupils have access to this platform, with email addresses on Microsoft Office. Parents or guardians are expected to manage their children's email accounts.

The program MS Teams can be found in the folder marked 'Teams'. In the four years of primary school, all Microsoft teams are similarly structured. Each year group has its own year team (*Jahrgangsteam*) and, within that year team, its own form team (*Klassenteam*), for example, Form 1a Remote Learning (*Klasse 1a Remote Learning*). Respective year groups and teams are listed in the Teams folder with sections for Comments (*Beiträge*), Files (*Dateien*), Course Notebook (*Kursnotizbuch*), Assignments (*Aufgaben*) and Marks (*Noten*).

These sections can be accessed at any time by the members of a given team, for whom additional channels can also be set up. In a year team's folder, teachers who work in that year group can communicate solely with one another. In the Files section, documents can be found which are only available to teachers, for example attendance lists. (The attendance of pupils is checked by form tutors in live online conferences - *LOU* - and then recorded on these official attendance lists.)

Each form's folder is accessible to its teachers, pupils and parents. In the section marked Comments (*Beiträge*), pupils can communicate with their teachers. In Files (*Dateien*) and in Assignments (*Aufgaben*), work plans and educational materials are uploaded. Weekly assignments for pupils are set by teachers in the Assignments folder. Once pupils have completed their work, a parent or guardian should upload it onto Assignments. The deadlines for teachers posting assignments and for pupils submitting them will be set by respective teachers and their pupils.

1.2 Management of the Teams

The technical organisation of Microsoft Teams is managed by the DSL Remote Learning Administration. The headteacher is responsible for the management of the DSL Remote Learning Community. The primary school head and her two primary school coordinators administer the DSL Remote Learning Primary Group and the DSL Primary School Year Team. The form tutors for each year group are in charge of organising their form teams.

1.3 The DSL Remote Learning Community and DSL Remote Learning Primary Group

The DSL Remote Learning Community and the DSL Remote Learning Primary Group are areas of MS Teams created to facilitate communication during the school's remote learning phase, along with Microsoft Office's Outlook. Through the DSL Primary Group, primary school staff members have their own separate team.

In the DSL Remote Learning Primary Group, the Comments section also promotes communication, for example, by enabling users to both send invitations to virtual conferences and actively participate in them. In Files or one of its subfolders, useful documents can be found, such as the minutes of teacher conferences or of the meetings of year team speakers.

In the DSL Remote Learning Community Team, under Files, members can access additional documents, such as those with the school's remote learning guidelines or with technical support for Microsoft Teams.

1.4. On-site Teaching

With on-site teaching being gradually re-established, there will be adaptations to the remote learning in what we call the hybrid phase. This will affect the number of assignments given and LOUs offered.

2. Members of the Remote Learning Programme

2.1 Headteacher and Primary School Head

The headteacher and the primary school head are responsible for organising, coordinating and managing the implementation and updating of the Remote Learning Programme in the primary division. Based on feedback from parents, students and staff members and in cooperation with all members of the school community, they further develop and revise the existing concepts and procedures of the programme. The latest versions of relevant documents 'Concept and Design of the Remote Learning Programme – Primary School Division' (*Konzeptentwurf zum Remote Learning - Abteilung Grundschule*) and 'DSL Remote Learning Primary Group' are available on the German School London homepage (<https://www.dslondon.org.uk/>).

2.2 Year Team Speakers

The year team speakers are form tutors from each of the four years of the primary school who have been selected by colleagues to represent their year group. The duties of the year team speakers include the collection of

feedback and concerns from members of their year group and the communication of these to the school administration. To that end, they attend weekly online meetings with the primary school head and coordinators on Microsoft Teams in the DSL Primary School Year Team. When appropriate, other staff members can also attend these meetings. The minutes of these weekly sessions are kept in the DSL Primary School Year Team under Files (*Dateien*) and Minutes (*Protokolle*). As a follow-up, speakers must organise further meetings within their year group to pass on relevant information to form tutors and subject teachers. This information can be shared either orally or in writing.

2.3 Form Tutors and Subject Teachers

Form tutors collect and formulate relevant information concerning their form groups, which they communicate via email to respective subject teachers and parents. Form tutors and subject teachers further ensure that pupils are kept up to date by sending them the latest information and developments via Microsoft Teams. In addition, form tutors use the platform to set up form teams (*Klassenteams*) for their pupils and, optionally, special group channels for them. The form tutor is responsible for the management of his/her form team and for the organisation of its files, folders and documents with clear and consistent designations. Subject teachers are expected to ensure that their area is similarly organised with appropriate files, assignments and documents.

The duties of form tutors and subject teachers also include consulting with colleagues to create, coordinate and manage materials for their pupils' lessons. Form tutors are responsible for uploading assignments and materials for the upcoming week by Sunday at 6 pm. Deadlines for completed work should be noted. Pupils and parents can access these assignments on Sundays under MS Assignments (*Aufgaben*), but not before 5 pm. It is the duty of teachers to check submitted assignments and to provide pupils with feedback. The form tutors are primarily responsible for providing sufficient supplementary materials to support the pupils and their parents on MS Teams.

Finally, form tutors and subject teachers are expected to set up live online lessons (*LOU*) in their respective subjects. The departments that currently offer these lessons are German, mathematics, English and natural and social sciences (*Sachkunde*). In addition, form tutors must arrange for a weekly live online session with their form.

Provided that there is no on-site teaching taking place, the set times for *LOU* in each year group are as follows:

Year 1: 8:30-9:30
Year 2: 9:30-10:30
Year 3: 10:30-11:30
Year 4: 11:30-12:30

Through MS Teams, subject teachers invite their pupils to a live online lesson at a time specified by form tutors, who are in charge of the form's weekly schedule. These lessons can be offered to a whole class or to smaller groups of pupils. It is up to the form tutor to inform parents of the form's weekly live online lessons, including the subject and specific grouping of pupils invited to a particular session. Any online lessons which are scheduled to take place outside of the official time slot allotted to a year group must be first agreed upon by the school administration, the year team and the parents.

Teachers must follow the regulations of the 'DSL Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy' as well as the 'Covid-19 School Closure Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection'. These documents can be found on the German School London homepage.

2.4 Pupils

Pupils have access to Microsoft Teams, along with school email addresses. Parents and teachers should support pupils, so that they learn to independently use this online platform to work at their academic level of achievement. In MS Teams under Comments (*Beiträge*), pupils can find information sent by their teachers. Under Files (*Dateien*) and Assignments (*Aufgaben*), they can access weekly work plans and materials for their lessons, as well as assignments for the upcoming week, which are made available to them on Sundays at 6 pm. These weekly assignments are shaped by the educational standards and objectives set by our school curriculum and by the official regional curriculum of Baden-Wuerttemberg. They should be seen as part of a pupil's learning process, to be completed to the extent that his/her current abilities allow. The assignments are structured so as to correspond to three different skill levels, with basic tasks, more entailed tasks and supplementary and more challenging tasks. Deadlines are marked on the pupil's weekly work plan (*Wochenarbeitsplan*) on MS Teams under Assignments.

2.5 Parents

Parents are the educational partners of pupils and teachers. Together with teachers, they are expected to support their children's remote learning programme as far as possible. The parents of primary school age children have a particularly important role to play regarding data

protection and internet security. They should ensure that the appropriate child-protection functions are activated on their children's devices. Parents should also monitor the digital content to which their children are exposed to ensure that it is age-appropriate, as per official ratings. It is the shared responsibility of parents and educational institutions to make children aware of how to use personal data carefully and responsibly.

In our remote learning programme, parents have many important duties to fulfill. First of all, they must make available to their children a suitable electronic device with a secure internet connection and with the Microsoft Teams app. They must further help their children to access materials for their lessons and ensure that they participate in the Live Online Lessons (LOU) scheduled for their year group. Parents should be attentive partners in their child's remote learning process, remaining nearby when children are online. They should help their children manage their weekly workload and, when necessary, should support them in their work on assignments. Parents' technical support is also essential when pupils submit their completed assignments online.

The German School London recognizes the special challenges facing families during the current period and offers individual help for parents and children. Knowing that each family has a unique set of problems to confront, we seek to support them with understanding and flexibility.

2.6 DSL Remote Administration

The DSL Remote Administration is composed of members of the IT department and a number of subject teachers. On the Technical Issues and Solutions Channel in the DSL Remote Learning Community, they provide German School staff members with a daily office hour and tutorial to answer their technical questions and to instruct them in the efficient use of the Microsoft Teams Program. These non-compulsory, virtual consultations take place Monday through Friday from 10 to 11 am. An additional online office hour for primary school staff is held on Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30 to 1:30 pm. Outside of these scheduled sessions, school staff should use the Technical Issues and Solutions Channel to inform the Remote Administration of all technical questions and problems which they or other members of the school community may be having, so that the Remote Admin team can work on appropriate solutions and offer advice, either in writing or through virtual consultations.

3. Procedures in the Remote Learning Programme

3.1 Assignments for Pupils

Primary school pupils regularly receive materials for their lessons, including weekly work plans outlining their assignments. The formats for assignments can vary; for example, project work might be one option. It is a requirement for mathematics, German, natural and social science (*Sachkunde*) and English that teachers provide a clear framework for how each assignment should be done.

The scope of assignments in terms of their content and completion time should be determined by the pupil's year and achievement level. Assignments, whose primary purpose is to monitor the pupil's understanding of a particular topic, should be submitted through MS Teams' Assignments (*Aufgaben*). This work will be checked and returned to pupils within a week, as required of all teachers. The amount of work assigned weekly should be strictly limited to one assignment per subject, for up to four subjects. This maximum of four assignments takes into consideration the challenges of remote learning for pupils and parents.

In addition, pupils will receive work for sports, art, religion and music, with each of these subjects assigning work once every four weeks. Sports lessons will start in the 5th week of the remote learning programme, after which art, religion and music will follow, with one of these subjects per week in that order. In these subjects, no regular live online lessons will be held. Assignments will either be integrated into the pupil's weekly work plan or will be provided in MS Teams under Files (*Dateien*) – Minor Subjects (*Nebenfächer*). Teachers will set the assignments and the deadlines for when completed work is due.

3.2 Communication with Pupils

Communication with pupils should be conducted exclusively through Microsoft Teams. The pupils of a given form meet during live online lessons (*LOU*) either in small groups or as a whole class. The arrangement of these groups is up to the form tutor. Under Comments (*Beiträge*) group meetings or chats can take place at which all members of a form's team are present. The pupils can then opt to speak with individual teachers on separate chats.

The online relationship between teachers and pupils is regulated by the German School London's 'Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy', which can be found on the DSL homepage [<https://www.dslondon.org.uk/uber-uns/schulordnungen> (Stand: Mai 2020)]. According to this policy, staff members are not allowed to conduct one-

to-one conversations with pupils. It is further required that communication with parents through their children's MS Teams account must be recorded. In this way, it can be proven that the meeting took place with parents and not with the child by him/herself. Parents must also be recorded giving their express consent for this procedure.

3.3 Live Online Lessons (*LOU*)

Pupils in primary school are offered live online lessons through the MS Teams platform. The timetable set for each year group includes slots for compulsory lessons in German, mathematics, natural and social sciences (*Sachunterricht*) and English. In addition, special live online meetings are scheduled for each form. If a pupil must be absent from a virtual session, parents are expected to inform the appropriate teacher by email. In their live online lessons, subject teachers can discuss the topics covered in their weekly assignments, communicating directly with their pupils and using diverse digital formats, such as Power Point or Whiteboard, to make topics and assignments more accessible and engaging. Teachers can invite pupils, or designated groups of pupils, to a specific live online lesson by using the calendar function in MS Teams.