



SHERBORNE GIRLS

Curriculum Policy

Approving body: SLT

Owner: Deputy Head Academic

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Executive Summary

This policy is for staff and outlines the broad and innovative curriculum offered at Sherborne Girls (SG), which has a strong emphasis on developing an enquiring mind, instilling a good work ethic and striving for excellence. The document outlines the approach to teaching and learning within the SG curriculum and gives the overview for each year group. Appended is the plan for remote delivery of the academic curriculum in the case of prolonged absence of a significant number of pupils and/or staff from the School.

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Curriculum

Sherborne Girls offers a broad and innovative academic education with a strong emphasis on developing an enquiring mind, instilling a good work ethic and striving for excellence. Our curriculum expands knowledge and academic experience beyond the rote learning of pre-prescribed specifications for examination success, focusing on understanding and depth of knowledge, exploring lines of enquiry for long-term academic success within and beyond school. Central to this is our Learner Profile aligned to our School Values. We focus on the development of skills for life-long learning and success.

The curriculum incorporates the advancement of life skills including self-confidence, emotional intelligence and resilience, to prepare our pupils as successful current and future leaders, communicators, performers and good citizens, and the teaching of creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication. The developing brain can be trained in many directions and maintaining a breadth of experiences is an important part of the education, stretch, and challenge that we offer to all our pupils. Our curriculum caters for an all-round education with a highly academic focus.

At Sherborne Girls, in the context of a full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), all pupils are entitled to a curriculum which is:

Broad

To bring pupils into contact with the elements of learning (knowledge, understanding, concepts, skills and attitudes) and the areas of learning (aesthetic, creative, human and social, linguistic and literary, mathematical, moral, physical, scientific, spiritual and technological). The schemes of work must not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Appropriate

To ensure that:

- i. each element and area of learning will be given appropriate attention;
- ii. all pupils have the opportunity to learn and to make progress; also,
- iii. the subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of our pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, those with learning needs and/or disabilities and those who have EHC plans;
- iv. where a pupil has an EHC plan, she will receive an education which meets its requirements;
- v. where the School has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities is available which is appropriate to their age, aptitude and needs and/or disabilities;
- vi. effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in a British and global society;
- vii. the importance of a full and appropriate Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) is recognised as fundamentally important both to reflect the School's aims and ethos but also to contribute to the full and appropriate education of our pupils. This should encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (a).

Coherent and challenging

To:

- i. ensure that all pupils will acquire and develop skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy;
- ii. embrace the different elements and areas of learning so that these do not appear as unconnected but as contributing to overall progress and achievement;
- iii. stimulate wide ranging and independent learning to provide a framework of skills for future progress.

Forward-thinking & digitally prepared

To:

- i. ensure the pupils' readiness for new experience, both in terms of their learning and of their lives in more general terms;
- ii. prepare pupils adequately for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- iii. prepare pupils for an increasingly digital workplace;
- iv. ensure that the School provides accurate, up-to-date careers guidance to its pupils, in an impartial manner, enabling them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options thus encouraging them to fulfil their potential;
- v. ensure the School supports pupils in preparing for their future lives through activities and experiences that lie outside of the curriculum;

- vi. recognise that the School's PSHEE programme has an important part to play in this preparatory process.

Adaptive Teaching

To:

- i. allow for the different abilities and aptitudes of pupils within the same year group and class (set or not set);
- ii. acknowledge that pupils learn in different ways, and that teaching takes into account any SEND needs;
- iii. ensure that differentiation is reflected in a variety of teaching approaches, resources and classroom organisation. It is imperative that pupils have opportunities to read, listen and discuss their work. Differentiation is not any one thing but involves:
 - knowing what is to be learnt;
 - communicating to pupils what is to be learnt;
 - having a selection of teaching styles/learning tasks;
 - giving pupils feedback on achievement;
 - reflecting on what has to be done to improve.

The most important pre-requisite of good differentiation is accurate knowledge of each pupil by the teacher.

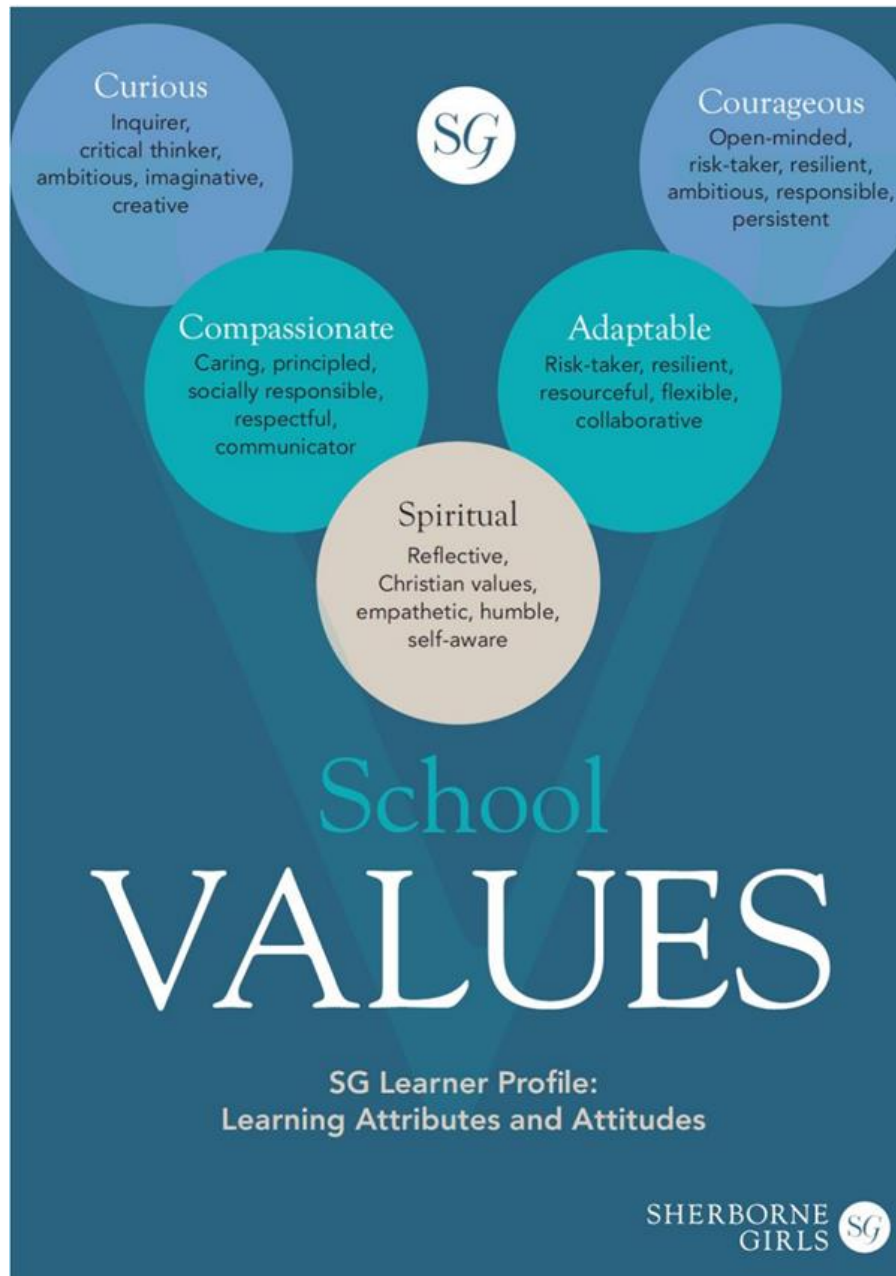
Teaching and Learning

Sherborne Girls places emphasis on the notion that teaching and learning processes are as significant as curriculum content in determining pupil progress and achievement. These processes are two-way and meaningful communication between pupils and teachers and are a key feature of successful teaching and learning.

The School will endeavour to:

- promote the view that learning should be experienced as something which is enjoyable, engaging, rewarding and confidence building;
- regard marking, monitoring and assessment as an integral and valuable element of the learning process, in order to diagnose difficulties and chart progress (see also Whole School Marking Policy).

At the heart of the Sherborne Girls education are the learning attributes and attitudes of our Learner Profile, aligned to our School Values of curiosity, compassion, spirituality, adaptability and courage.



Technology for Learning

Sherborne Girls uses Microsoft Teams and OneNote Class Notebooks as the main digital platforms for teaching and learning. With consistent use of Teams and OneNote across the School, pupils can focus on their learning rather than navigating different technologies. The School also encourages the use of other apps and websites where they enrich the learning experience. Teachers are encouraged and supported in the development of the use of technologies to enhance teaching pedagogy and to engage with pupils as individuals and individual learners.

Teaching staff are provided with a Microsoft Surface device and a Microsoft 365 Business Account. The School encourages teachers to create learning atmospheres that enable dynamic interactions and collaboration between all pupils and staff which use a blend of technology and traditional teaching resources.

The National Curriculum

In order to achieve greater flexibility and breadth within the School's curriculum, Sherborne Girls uses material from a range of educational offerings rather than solely the National Curriculum. Individual departments are at liberty to follow the curriculum they feel is best suited to their subject and the pupils they teach so some may select the National Curriculum. The School provides a compulsory PSHEE education which includes all DfE statutory guidance and content.

At Sherborne Girls, we recognise that communication is a fundamental part of learning, this is embedded within our values and plays a large role in achieving our vision and mission. We promote language competence to improve communication in a multicultural and multilingual environment, where languages and culture are respected and celebrated. Developing such skills, raising literacy and employing inclusive terminology are key expectations promoted by staff at Sherborne Girls.

Learning about Languages and Culture

- Sherborne Girls uses languages to educate pupils in ways that allow them to develop as internationally minded thinkers and effective communicators within a global society.
- Sherborne Girls recognises the importance of language and the links to culture for all staff and pupils in the School.
- The School sees the pupils' languages as an important part of their development and cultural identity.
- The School recognises that the esteem needs of pupils with less common home language can be met by providing opportunities for all languages to be spoken and celebrated.
- Learning additional languages allows further understanding of other cultures and helps to develop greater knowledge and appreciation in an international community.

The working language of Sherborne Girls is English. This is the language in which the School communicates with its stakeholders and in which it is committed to providing a range of services for the implementation of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and Advanced Level (A Level). It is an additional language for some, but all pupils have a good enough proficiency in English to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

All assessments will be completed in English apart from language acquisition assessments. The admissions process assesses the language competence of prospective pupils to ensure the minimum standard of English is achieved. Pupils are fully supported by our English as an Additional Language (EAL) department to ensure their language needs are met.

We recognise that for languages less commonly spoken at Sherborne Girls, parents play a crucial role in the development of that language and pupils have the opportunity, where possible, to celebrate their home language within the local community in many ways, including by reading and teaching younger children in local primary schools. Pupils who may be fluent in other languages have the opportunity to sit GCSE examinations in their home language at the end of the Upper Fifth year, alongside their other subjects if such a qualification is available.

We are aware that learning challenges can hinder the development of language skills and are able to support pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). For information on our support for individual learning needs please refer to our [Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy](#).

Religious Studies

All pupils will follow a course in Theology, Philosophy and Ethics (TPE) until the end of the Lower Fifth (Year 9) and have the option to select Religious Studies as a GCSE course. TPE L5 and PSHEE from L4 to U6, are two of the many ways in which the School can provide human and social education and promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. As one of our school values, spirituality is core to our co-curricular and boarding ethos. We encourage respect for all people and pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (a) which include Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.

Physical Activity

All pupils in Years 7 to 11 (L4 to U5) receive one Physical Education lesson per week and all pupils have a minimum of two and a half hours of Games per week.

Year group curriculum outline

The Fourth Form

Years 7 – 8 (age 11 – 13 years): L4 & U4

(More details are provided in our Fourth Form Information Booklet)

The curriculum is broad and includes a full suite of academic and creative subjects. All subjects are taught by specialist staff and all pupils complete the Sherborne Girls Diploma. The Diploma focuses on the learning skills of Collaboration, Communication, Creativity and Critical Thinking, and fostering the qualities outlined in the SG Learner Profile which concentrate on attributes aligned to the School Values and which facilitate pupils as learners with due regard to the importance of developing qualities and attitudes essential for a balanced life and community spirit.

Pupils are taught in year group sets for Mathematics, English, and Science. Pupils are given the choice of studying Spanish or French as their Modern Foreign Language (MFL) option in addition to all studying Latin.

The Fifth Form

Years 9 -11 (age 14 – 16 years): L5, M5 and U5

(More details are given in the Fifth Form Information Booklet)

Most pupils enter the School in Year 9 with a few pupils entering in Year 10 where space permits. The curriculum is broad in Year 9, providing pupils the opportunity to study a range of subjects prior to selecting GCSE choices. In Year 9, pupils have the option to study up to three languages (choice of two MFLs plus Latin if they wish).

Years 10 and 11 form the two academic years leading up to the GCSE examinations. During these two years Sherborne Girls aims to:

- maintain for each pupil a broad and balanced curriculum;
- lay the foundations for A Levels and Higher Education.

To this end the School curriculum for this age-group combines a core of compulsory subjects (Mathematics, English, and Science) with a wide range of optional subjects. At the end of Year 11 pupils will take public GCSE examinations, which will prepare them for studying A Levels. In some subjects pupils sit the reformed International GCSE (IGCSE) examinations.

The Sixth Form

Years 12 -13 (age 16 – 18 years): L6 and U6

(More details are given in the Sixth Form Information Booklet)

Pupils are encouraged to take three A Level subjects and those who request to study four subjects will have individual meetings with senior staff to ensure this is an appropriate and sensible path to pursue. Pupils in the Sixth Form follow a two-year A Level course in all subjects with no AS examinations at the end of Year 12. The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), Core Maths, DELF (French), DELE (Spanish), PLIDA (Italian), HSK (Mandarin), Goethe Certificate (German) and SEG (Japanese) are all offered as enrichment.

Staff guide pupils in their selection of A Level subjects whilst being mindful of the following:

- ability and/or aptitude for each chosen subject;
- interest and enthusiasm for each chosen subjects;
- the relation of the chosen subjects to each other;
- plans for Higher Education and a career.

Some pupils for whom English is not their first language may need to gain an English qualification to enter a UK or US university. This qualification can be taken during the Sixth Form where necessary. Pupils also cover information on ethical, moral and religious issues in PSHEE 'drop down' days and all Sixth Form pupils attend a series of lectures given by speakers from inside and outside the School.

Supporting documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School documents:

- Examinations policy
- PSHEE and RSE policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy

To request a copy of any of the documents listed above please contact the Policies, Inspection and Strategy Coordinator: g.shavesmythies@sherborne.com

Appendix 1: Summary of Changes

- Job titles updated throughout.
- Curriculum Summary removed (formerly Appendix 2).
- Update to the delivery of PSHEE and Religious Studies (now TPE).
- Some terminology updated in line with current practice e.g. 'Adaptive Teaching' and 'home language'.

Appendix 2: Delivery of Academic Curriculum Contingency Plan

This plan allows for remote delivery of the school's academic curriculum, in case of the prolonged absence of a significant number of staff or pupils, for example due to travel restrictions, or the unavoidable closure of the school site for a period of time. Examples of situations in which this plan may be enacted include, but are not limited to:

- natural disasters domestically or abroad, e.g. flood, earthquake, volcanic eruption;
- pandemics or similar extensive incidences of disease;
- terrorist activity.

The plan may cover the whole curriculum, or only certain classes where not all are affected by absence. The plan assumes that staff and pupils are prevented from attending school but fit for work or school attendance; any who are ill or otherwise incapacitated, are to be treated as absent in the usual way.

The decision to move to remote delivery of the curriculum in whole or in part may be taken following discussion among the Senior Leadership Team but ultimately rests with the Head, who may delegate it as appropriate.

Platform for remote delivery

Remote delivery of the curriculum will make use of Office 365 and primarily be conducted via Microsoft Teams. Each class already has an existing Team, meaning that remote delivery is effectively a continuation of face-to-face delivery and in most cases involves minimal disruption. Use of school platforms and accounts for all interactions is essential for safeguarding, and the school servers effectively replace the school's physical environment.

Personal accounts of staff or pupils must not be used.

The plan depends on broadband internet access for staff and pupils. It is not anticipated that this is likely to be an issue where those involved are on the school site or at home. Staff who are likely to have difficulty enacting this plan from home are to identify themselves to the Director of ICT and Director of Studies. Adaptations may have to be made for those in locations where internet access is insufficient or impossible, but these should be very much a minority in most circumstances; technical support will be overseen by the Director of IT, and teaching implications by the Director of Studies.

Teaching staff may need to look after their own children during a period of remote learning, and for this or other reasons it is possible that individuals may have difficulty operating their normal timetable. Where this is the case they should liaise with the Director of Studies about alternative arrangements.

Readiness for remote delivery

All staff have regular training in using Office 365, SharePoint and Teams. The Director of Studies and Director of IT Services will identify any staff for whom remote delivery is likely to require further training or support. How-to guides for the key operations needed for remote delivery (e.g. Teams meetings, setting Assignments, marking in OneNote) will be provided on SharePoint; this provision is to be overseen by the Director of IT Services.

Timetabled lessons

The usual school timetable will continue to provide the framework for the delivery of lessons, which will take place at the same times as in an ordinary teaching week. Staff and pupils are expected to be available for lessons just as if they were physically present at school. Staff and pupils will conduct the lessons remotely; there is a number of methods for doing this, the default being a Teams meeting, but staff will communicate clearly to pupils what they are required to do to join in a lesson. Resources can be shared with pupils through the Team, through SharePoint, or through OneNote as appropriate. The chat function in Teams allows for easy responses from pupils, while more detailed collaborative work may be undertaken in the Collaboration Space in class notebooks. Pupils may either work directly in their own areas on the class notebook, or in the collaboration space, or on paper and scan and upload their work.

Remotely delivered lessons are to be recorded for two reasons: so that those unable to take part in the 'live' lesson are able to catch up at a later point; and so that safeguarding needs are met where staff and/or pupils may be involved in lessons from a home environment.

Staff delivering remote learning will be sharing their computer screens with pupils, and will need to be aware of windows open on their devices in the same way that they would in a classroom, so that confidential material or other content not suitable for pupils is not visible. Staff and pupils should also be appropriately dressed, as while not all lessons will necessarily involve video of the teacher, it is always a possibility; formal business dress is not necessarily required, but 'smart casual' is an appropriate dress code for this situation. Where staff are off site, care should also be taken over what is visible in the background; if using Teams on a Windows device, the 'blur background' function is strongly recommended. Similar advice for pupils will also be communicated; but the expectation is that pupils should not be visible on camera during meetings. Pupils are asked not to be in their bedrooms during remote delivery; the nature of the exceptional circumstances envisaged may make this unavoidable, and in that case it is then an absolute requirement that they and their surroundings are not visible on screen.

Where resources are taken from textbooks or other copyright material, care will need to be taken to comply with legislation when distributing digital copies, and teachers may need to adapt their planned resources to account for this.

It may be the case that some staff or pupils are outside the UK and in time zones that are incompatible with the school's normal timetable. Staff should ensure that 'delivered' lessons are recorded and that pupils who are operating within a different time-zone, engage in Teams messages or email communication which the teacher can respond to in the next lesson.

Registering classes through iSAMS will not be appropriate as pupils cannot be registered as present in school when they are physically elsewhere. Attendance at and punctuality for lessons delivered remotely, however, should still be monitored by teachers and records kept. Parents will receive guidance that a normal timetable will be in operation and attendance at remote lessons is required, with 'absence' to be notified to the school. Teachers are asked to follow up with pupils and inform the pupil's tutor and the Director of Studies of unexplained absences and lateness. Tutors should then follow up with parents.

Independent Study

Pupils will continue to be set individual study assignments and guidance through Teams, as is the normal mode of operation in the school. Resources may be shared between pupils and staff through the same methods as outlined above; pupils may submit and staff may mark work through the Class Notebook, either directly or by scanning and uploading. All academic staff have pen-enabled devices enabling this to be done easily; pupils have been required to have these since September 2020.

Pupils, especially in younger year groups, may find working independently more challenging when working remotely and may therefore raise more queries with teachers as they look for support. Teachers should bear this in mind when setting work. Equally, teachers are not expected to deal with every query instantly; a normal pattern of working hours should still apply.

Schemes of work

In most instances the planned scheme of work may be delivered remotely. In certain cases it may be necessary to adjust a scheme of work, perhaps moving to a different topic during the period of remote supervision. For example, work dependent on a planned educational visit or practical task may not be possible. It may be feasible in some subjects to substitute alternatives, e.g. using videos of practical experiments to enable independent work to be done during remote delivery and revisiting the practical experiment in the laboratory on pupils return to school.

In certain subjects, e.g. Drama or Art, where pupils spend prolonged periods working on practical or collaborative projects, remote delivery is more challenging. Those parts of schemes of work for which remote delivery is inappropriate will be identified, and where alternatives are not able to be substituted, separate contingency plans will be made within these departments, with the Director of Studies retaining an overview of these.

Tutoring and Learning Support lessons

Tutors are expected to keep in regular contact with tutees during remote delivery, maintaining the usual pattern of tutor meetings as far as possible. Face-to-face contact through a Teams meeting is encouraged in preference to purely written contact. One responsibility will be to check on the proper completion of work, but another will be to monitor pupil wellbeing, especially in a situation where a pupil is potentially isolated for an extended period of time.

Learning Support lessons should also continue where practicable, especially as remote learning may prove more problematic for pupils with learning support needs, and the SENCo should maintain an overview of provision during this period.

Exceptions to remote delivery

The PE and Games curriculum will be suspended for those pupils unable to attend school, though pupils will be encouraged to maintain physical activity and, where relevant, training programmes as far as is possible. Sports staff may remain in contact with squad players to oversee training programmes. Where the school site remains open but Sports staff are unable to be present, these staff will be treated as absent for the purposes of curriculum delivery and the Director of Sport will ensure cover so that an appropriate PE and Games curriculum runs for those pupils who are present. Absent staff will still be required to fulfil any aspects of their role, e.g. administrative tasks, that may be carried out remotely.

This plan does not cover co-curricular activities, though it may be possible to run these in the same way as the academic curriculum. The Deputy Head Co-Curricular and Operations will

determine what co-curricular provision is possible under remote delivery and oversee implementation.

Expectations of parents

Parents of pupils unable to attend school, or equivalent responsible adults, are asked to ensure attendance and adherence to academic expectations.

Disruption to external examinations

Disruption to academic public examinations is covered under the Examination Contingency Plan. The Director of Studies and Examinations Officer will liaise with examination boards should this occur. In case of widespread or national disruption, it is likely that Ofqual will institute its own contingency plan.

In case of disruption to other examinations, e.g. ABRSM or LAMDA examinations, it may be possible to arrange examination at alternative centres, but in most cases postponement to the following term or next opportunity is likely to be the most straightforward option. The head of the relevant department (e.g. Director of Music, Director of Drama) will determine the course of action for these examinations and communicate these to the Deputy Head Co-Curricular and Operations.

Monitoring, and extended periods of remote delivery

The Director of Studies will review remote delivery with Heads of Department at the end of the first day, third day and first week of operation, and give feedback to the Deputy Head Academic and Head. The operation of the plan may then be adapted as deemed necessary.

If remote delivery continues beyond one week, the plan and its operation will continue to be reviewed at intervals of no more than one week.

Heads of Department should keep in regular contact with their departments so that they retain an overview of the delivery of curriculum in their areas and can give feedback to the Director of Studies and Deputy Head Academic. It may seem easiest simply to conduct department business by email when staff are absent from school, but maintaining and even augmenting the regular pattern of department meetings is encouraged wherever possible, not least because an extended period of remote delivery may leave colleagues feeling isolated, and so regular 'live' contact will be important for staff wellbeing. The department Team is the ideal forum for whole department communication.