

## Access to Education – Remote Learning

The purpose of Gloucestershire’s Hospital Education Service (GHES) is to meet the LA’s statutory duty to provide equal access to appropriate education for young people medically too unwell to attend school (due to either physical or mental health needs). As a service, and registered Medical PRU (Pupil Referral Unit), GHES addresses inclusion and reintegration issues specific to young people with medical needs making it possible for a child to have a seamless educational transition between hospital, home and school. Children at GHES are supported to continue to achieve, thrive and reach their potential despite their medical needs.

### Provision

The following statement is taken from GHES Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy:

#### **Education provision for paediatric outpatients – GHES outpatients team**

Admission to GHES is via an appropriate referral from a medical professional. The GHES outpatient team provides education for young people who are confirmed as being too unwell to attend school. Lessons are provided either in the home, in our Cheltenham Classroom, or through live on-line tuition. Sometimes young people are referred to GHES following a period of time in hospital or sometimes the young person is under the care of a paediatric consultant and being cared for in the community. There is close liaison between the GRH schoolroom and the GHES outpatient team when pupils transfer from one branch of the service to the other. Education at home, online or elsewhere, is provided as quickly as possible after a referral is accepted. This avoids further disruption to education. Requests for support from the GHES outpatient team are accepted only from a hospital consultant, community paediatrician or CYPS tier 3 professional, who confirms the medical need and advises on anticipated type, amount and duration of provision with regard to the pupil’s health. The GHES referral process acknowledges that the provision offered has to be responsive to the changing demands of a young person’s health status. Full-time equivalent education is available if the pupil can access this.

#### **Lesson Delivery**

Lessons are provided either in the home, in our Cheltenham classroom, or through live on-line tuition with GHES staff or through a third party provider – Academy 21. During the initial visit we go through the following to ensure all students are able to access their lessons and other learning resources online:

- Internet availability and quality of connection
- Devices available to support learning. If a student does not have a suitable device we will loan them a GHES curriculum laptop
- Policies & Documentation: acceptable use policy, internet safety, expectations of students and parents during lessons

- Students are all given a GHES curriculum email address and given usernames and passwords to access educational resources on Moodle. Students are expected to set up their own Showbie account to facilitate the marking and feedback of work remotely
- Student age, ability, medical condition, and ability to engage is all taken into account when determining the best mode of lesson delivery for a student. This does not remain fixed and will change over time e.g. working in groups as opposed to individually is better for student wellbeing. Face to face group lessons in our Cheltenham classroom is considered a good stepping stone to transitioning back to their main school.

Following an initial visit, students may require the loan of a curriculum laptop and setting up at home ready for online learning. This takes place in the student home by our Learning Technologist. All students receive a series of induction lessons to enable them to use our online platform; Adobe Connect, Moodle and Showbie.

### **Internet Safety in the home**

Before lessons commence, students and parents are expected to read through, sign and adhere to our ICT Acceptable Use Policy. For students in YR to Y6 teaching online is more unusual, but if this does happen we expect the parent to support their child during the lesson.

Throughout the year we run an e-safety programme, which is delivered via teaching staff, link tutors, and has updates to parents and students at regular intervals during the year.

As part of the induction and initial visits with parents we ensure there is a frank discussion about appropriate content, how a parent can restrict content viewing, and how they 'police' what their child is looking at whilst using a device in the home.

### **Internet Safety in our Cheltenham Classroom**

Along with the above, in our Cheltenham classroom we have several PCs and laptops that students can use. Access to the internet is filtered through South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL).

### **Adobe Connect & Academy 21 (AC21)**

Adobe Connect is our chosen online learning platform and is also used by our third party provider AC21. This is used to deliver 'live' lessons by our teaching staff or teaching staff at AC21. Adobe Connect allows the following:

- Video conferencing
- Student and staff discussion either speaking or using the 'chat' facility
- Use of a whiteboard
- Ability to upload, share and interact with documents
- Screenshare
- Lessons to be recorded (we expect staff to record every lesson)

### **Showbie**

Showbie is our chosen application that we use to enable students to share their work, enable staff to mark their work and provide feedback. It is a secure way of students sharing their work with



their teacher, and provides opportunities for staff to share any worksheets, powerpoints, pdfs, videos, internet links with their class or with individuals.

### **Other applications we use with students**

Moodle – our Virtual Learning Platform  
GCSEPod  
MyMaths  
Kahoot  
Quizlet  
Gmail – for their curriculum email account

### Contingency planning in response to COVID-19 (September 2020 onwards)

All students are set up to access online learning when they join GHES. The vast majority of students already have timetabled online lessons. As an initial response to when the UK entered lockdown in March 2020 we transferred all lessons to online. This has remained in place for the vast majority of students from September 2020 (the new academic year). However:

From September 2020 we have slowly phased back in:

- Face to face individual lessons in the home
- Face to face individual or group lessons in our Cheltenham classroom

These have been introduced cautiously due to the medical conditions of our students, the anxiety or preference of the student/family in response to COVID19, the engagement of students (for some students, live online lessons aren't as successful).

In the event that any member of staff or student has to self-isolate then we are able to continue with the timetabled lesson but delivery moves to being online through Adobe Connect. For the few students that find online lesson delivery challenging to engage with we adapt our mechanism for getting the lesson to the student – this might be a combination of email, phone call, through Showbie etc... Any lessons that are face to face or in our Cheltenham classroom would move back to being online in the event of a local lockdown.

All teaching staff and Link Tutors are competent users of Adobe Connect. As a general rule we always aim to cover staff absence due to illness with other members of our teaching staff. We have a group of casual tutors that have been appointed by us that we use when student numbers increase and we cannot staff lessons with our permanent staff. A part of our staff induction is being able to deliver lessons online using Adobe Connect.

For initial visits when we take on a new student, or for the initial set-up of using Adobe Connect, we would always prefer to do this face to face in the student home. If we are not able to do this due to student / staff shielding or illness we can do this remotely. Initial visits can be conducted through Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp or Zoom. If ICT equipment is required by a student we can still drop off equipment adhering to our risk assessments. We can work with students and families remotely to get them set up for learning using Microsoft Team, WhatsApp or Zoom.



For all SEND students who are on the Graduated Pathway or who have an Educational Health and Care Plan, we will make all reasonable endeavours to support their plan remotely through direct contact with the student, their family and all outside agencies such as CAMHS, Early Help, SEN Casework Team, and Social Care as well as their main school. We recognise that some students with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so we will work directly with the family to explore ways to continue to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum.

### Safeguarding of students during local lockdown

In the event of tighter restrictions, local lockdowns etc... our link tutors all have a letter that allows them to continue to travel for work (through education). Staff and families have been provided with our risk assessments to allow continuation of visits in the home either inside or as garden doorstep visits. We would continue with garden doorstep visits as we did through the initial lockdown in March 2020 if circumstances change. For higher risk students these would be weekly, for all other students they would be fortnightly as a general rule, but more frequent when a need is identified.

September 2020  
Beth Warren  
Head of Service  
Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service

