DOWNSEND
SCHOOL

Inspiring Young Minds

Online Teaching and Learning Programme

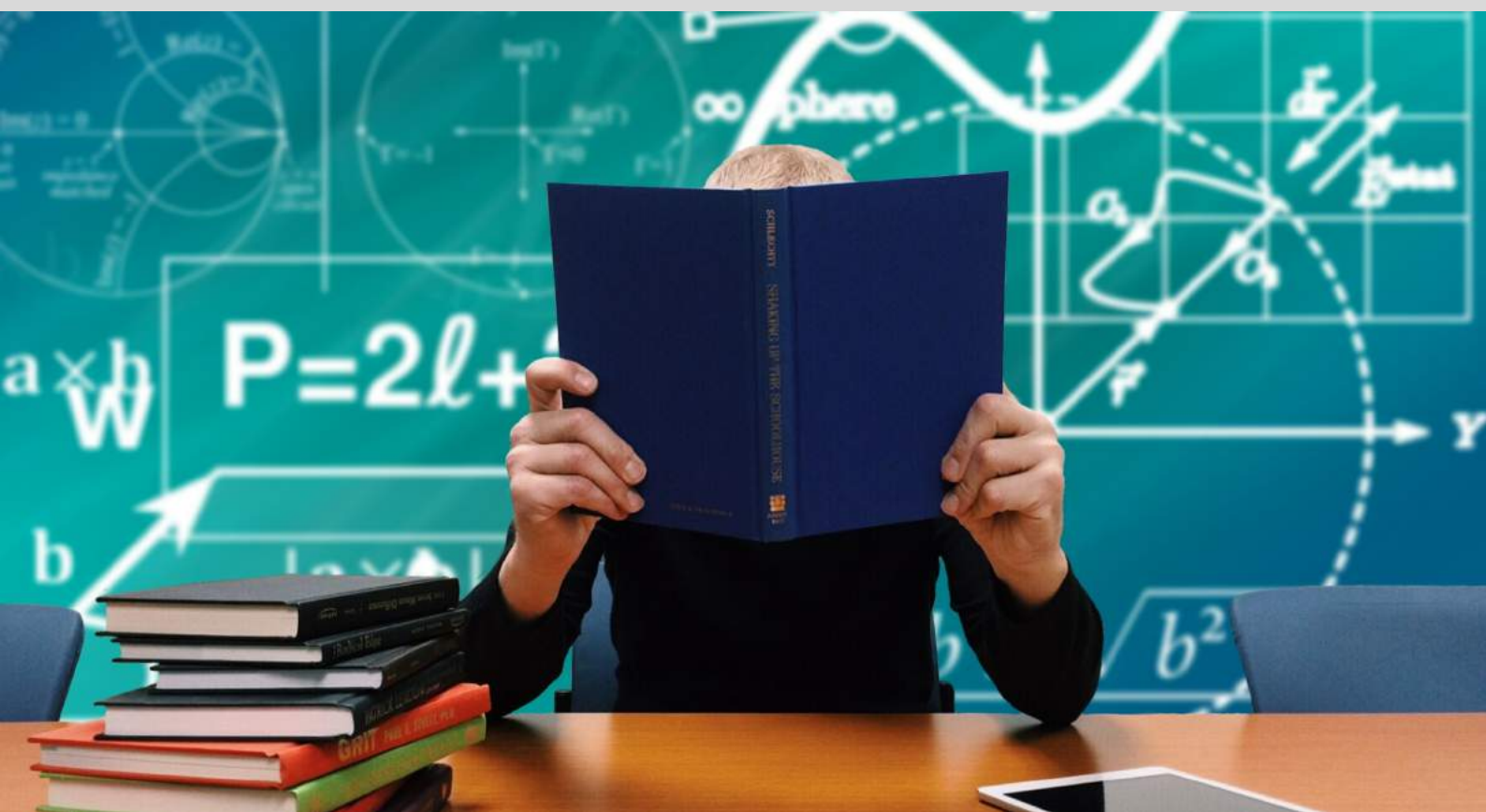## Senior School

Updated January 2021

Introduction

We have once again had to move at an exceptional pace after Mr Johnson's dramatic U-Turn on Monday 4th January. We felt, as last time, that a document that helped to outline our approach to Online Teaching and Learning for the Spring Term of 2021 would be valuable for us all.

You will have received much of this information previously, but we hope in bringing it together at the start of term, it helps to answer questions and to provide you with the reassurance that the Downsend community is doing everything it can to support your children both academically and pastorally.

We will continue to update this document as our programme evolves.

We continue to learn as we go and, in true Downsend style, are getting better every day. We are in a far better place now than we were st the start of the last lockdown, with the roll out of digital 1:2:1 devices, staff and pupil training, and the experience, successes and learning outcomes of the last period of remote learning to build upon. We have been so grateful for your wonderful feedback and continued support of the entire teaching team.

The Academic Curriculum

Teachers will continue to plan and deliver the curriculum the children would have been accessing in school. They will, as always, when planning for learning, ask the questions:

- What do I want students to learn?
- What will learning success look like?
- What is the best task or experience? (on/off line)

But, in these changed times, we will work with age-appropriate technology platforms to deliver that learning in a way that delivers the best possible experience for your child.

As we are mid-year, wherever possible we have tried to ensure continuity of provision in terms of your child's education. Clearly, a balance between screen time, live and asynchronous teaching is important, but we have also ensured that there are plenty of enrichment activities built into the new timetables, which also factor in the limitations and restrictions we all face during this mid-winter period.

In addition to morning form periods, we will run year group and Senior School assemblies, online tutorials and House meetings, and all our academic and pastoral staff are available via the Chat function for any questions/support that is needed.

If they choose to, and have completed their curriculum studies, pupils will have the additional option to undertake some STEAM based activities that will be set and reviewed periodically over the spring term.

There will be additional challenges and extension tasks set on the VLE.

You will notice that Lessons have been increased to 50 mins since the last lockdown. But the Timetable now has 10 mins of down time at the end of each lesson to have a drink, finish any notes, and prepare to Login to the next lesson.

Technology Platforms

Microsoft Teams

This platform will be used for the synchronous element of teaching and learning. As you will see from your child's timetable, we have tried as much as possible to keep to the timetable structure that your child is used to in school.

A key additional platform this year is Microsoft OneNote, and the Class Notebook function. This allows staff to teach live on Microsoft Teams, whilst each pupil work in their own digital notebook, with staff able to provide real time, targeted feedback. This improves the feedback loop, allows for personalised and expeditious feedback, and also means pupils can complete and submit work independently, without relying on broadband coverage at all times.
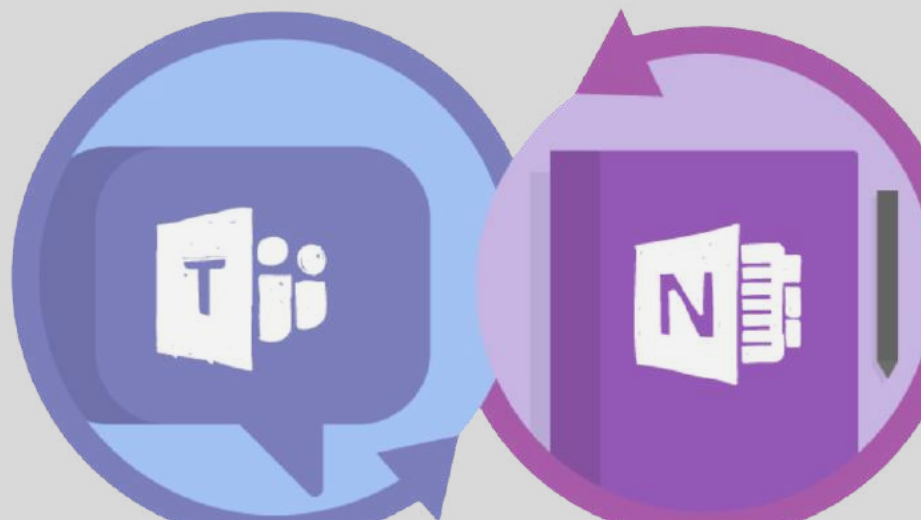
All sessions will be recorded and will be available to be accessed later if the time of these is not suitable for you owing to your own working pattern or technological limitations at home.

We absolutely do not expect that all families will be able to access all synchronous sessions, we understand that life and your own jobs are pressured and busy.
Please do not feel that accessing all live sessions is essential. The content will still be available and the teachers also happy to discuss any issues or queries that arise from having done the work off-line. Course resources for these sessions will also be accessed through Microsoft Teams and your teachers will explain this to your children.

OneNote

Alongside using Microsoft Teams to facilitate live teaching, a key platform this year is Microsoft OneNote, and in particular the Class Notebook function. In easily facilitating live feedback in lessons (verbal / written), OneNote eradicates the need for pupils to then submit / email / save work separately, saving on the frustration for many during the summer lockdown last year.

Technology Platforms

The use of OneNote is enhanced by using the features available from the student 1-2-1 devices such as using the stylus and camera to insert written text / photographs straight into their work, again cutting out the need to separately import them from mobile phones or scanning in work. Additionally, the combination of Teams and OneNote facilitates collaboration and group work through the use of smaller breakout rooms / smaller study groups in lessons, as well as using the collaborative area on OneNote for groups to work together on shared assignments.

Other apps that are in use include Century Tech, Pearson Active Learn and Seneca, which run in parallel to live teaching giving instant diagnostic information to pupils and to staff. These are also designed to allow independent and personalised pathways for pupils.

Century Tech
Century Tech is a hugely impressive Artificial Intelligence (A.I) based teaching and learning product designed to deliver rich and engaging personalised learning paths for English, Maths and Science, through to KS4. Hence it is well positioned to supplement our core subject delivery, with dedicated tasks set by the subject specialists, but it may also be a platform your children will want to explore further in their curriculum enrichment/own time. The logins and content is ready to launch, but we are mindful that we do not wish to overload the children or you as parents at the start of the term, so we will liaise with you, via the specific academic staff who teach your children, on the launch date for Century Tech.

Firefly
If teaching staff need to set tasks in advance, they will either continue to do so using Firefly, or Microsoft Teams, but will inform the pupils directly of this. In addition, links to the morning activities and enrichment tasks will be embedded within Firefly, so we would ask that pupils regularly check their task list and clear those tasks when completed.

We know that there may be some challenges in using this technology, but the children are now much more confident and successful in this area.

Access to platforms
We now know that the technology that we have selected to use is both reliable and simple in terms of accessibility. However, as with all technology, things can go wrong. For this reason if you encounter any technical issues please contact:
OnlineLearningSupport@Cognitaschools.co.uk

Screen Time and Feedback

Screen Time
Guidelines suggest that screen time for children should be limited to not more than 2 and a half hours per day. We have kept this firmly in mind when planning our curriculum and will continue to provide work that does not require children to sit solidly in front of the computer. Synchronous sessions may have 15 minutes of face to face teaching, 20 minutes of independent work off screen and then another 10 minutes of face to face to reinforce learning and address any issues. This way children still get the engagement of live teaching, without too much extended screen time.

Feedback
Your child's teachers will continue to provide timely and constructive feedback to aid progress and attainment. They will also use a variety of methods to assess the learning of the children throughout this time, including marking work, asking formative and summative questions face to face and using quizzes to assess understanding. This will be in a variety of formats including:

- Marking work
- Audio messages
- Score for tests
- Use of success criteria
- Face to face during 'drop-in' sessions on Microsoft Teams
- Live feedback via OneNote

Teachers will not provide feedback via e-mail, but can be contacted via the 'Chat' function.

The Wider Curriculum

Despite changed times, we continue to value the wider curriculum. We will continue to expect children to attend their lessons in Art, Music, Drama, Humanities, MFL, Games and Technology as they would in school. During this lockdown, we felt it was important that the wider curriculum subjects were enjoyed by all the students so their participation is expected in all Timetabled lessons, but the tasks that are set have been designed with both the time of year and the availability of resources in mind.

The Creative Arts
You will see from your child's timetable that live teaching periods have been allocated for Art, Music and Drama. A great deal of thought has been given to the breadth of activities that will be provided for practical sessions and it is our hope to build on this provision with some choirs as the term progresses.

Food and Design Technology
The courses we would deliver in school have been adapted for the purposes of online teaching and learning throughout this period of lockdown.

Year 7s will continue working in their sets, rotating through a series of courses (CAD ear buddy project, Graphic Design, Food Tech) as they would have in school. Courses have been adapted as necessary to suit the current situation.
Year 8 - learn by layers 3D Printing course
Year 9 - GCSE Art and Design students will continue with their maquette lamp design. The course and teaching methods will be adapted as necessary throughout this period of lockdown.

PE and Games
During afternoon Sport sessions throughout the lockdown period, pupils will start off each lesson with a sport specific quiz followed by a choice of options to choose from:

1km run challenge
Workout of the Day
Yoga-cise
Ball Skills challenge
Sport Challenge
Online Match Analysis

These options are designed to allow pupils to personalise their online sport experience and ensure there is something for everyone.

Pastoral and Wellbeing

Pastoral Support
Your child will have access to their Form Tutor, Head of Year and class teachers at many points throughout the day. Mr Newland will also be popping into registrations and other sessions to see how the children are and how they are getting on. Each day, school will start off with a form period which is dedicated to pastoral time. Drop-in sessions will also be scheduled as necessary.
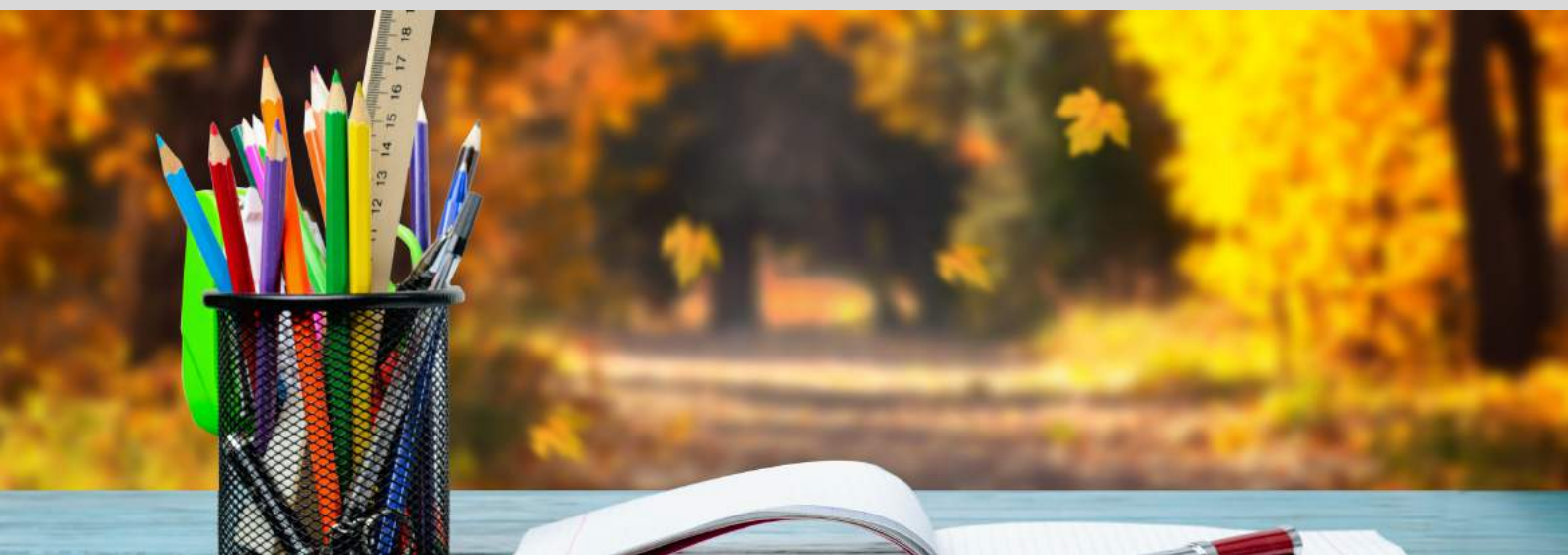
Reward system
Our usual system of Class Charts will be used to motivate and reward the children for their work, engagement, learning behaviour and good manners. As this is a cloud-based system, Class Charts will be used as usual and will continue to count towards personal and House totals. Pupils' house point totals will be communicated to them weekly by their Form Tutor.

House system
The House System continues to operate online, where pupils receive housepoints for contribution to lessons and outstanding work as usual. In addition to the practical subjects, each week a House Challenge will be available through the 'Whole School Pupils Team' for children to engage with outside of their curriculum time. The first two weeks for example cover the Natural World and Sustainability, and there will be a variety of options as the term progresses. There will also be House meetings and Assemblies to bring our community together.

Pastoral concerns or queries
It is important that pupils and parents know that we are here to support them during our Online Teaching and Learning Programme. If you have any pastoral or wellbeing concerns, please contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance. They might choose to escalate this to the appropriate Head of Year, to Mr Silva or to Mr Newland. All concerns will be dealt with as swiftly and comprehensively as they would normally be in school.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding guidance for online working

We recognise that our pupils may have increased access to the internet, as they spend more time at home and as they access our Online Teaching and Learning Programme. We would therefore recommend the following guidelines:

Where possible, please ensure that you have the appropriate settings in place on the devices that your children will be using.

We will be treating the online environment as part of the school day. Children should ensure that they behave appropriately and are suitably dressed whilst online.

Please be vigilant about the sites that your children are visiting and any pop ups on those sites. You may need to check their work as well as having a good understanding of the tasks that they are undertaking.

We ask that parents supervise online sessions in an appropriate manner, but please note that parents do not need to be in lessons. Utilise the time!

The teachers will set out some ground rules and expectations for how each session will run. Please support them in helping your child to meet these expectations.

If your child is unwell or unavailable at the time of their scheduled lesson, please let the school office know.

Ensure your child has adequate breaks from devices. Children will be set a wide variety of tasks by staff to try and encourage the use of mediums other than electronic devices.

Our school safeguarding policy remains in place, which can be found on our school website with a specific home learning addendum, and if you have any concerns of a safeguarding nature then please contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Mr Newland: karl.newland@downsend.co.uk

Expectations

In our Online Learning Agreement, we outline our rules for using the internet safely and responsibly at home whilst the Downsend buildings are closed.

Please ensure that you have read and completed this agreement with your child. This is to ensure that our learners and teachers are safe online and that all behaviour is appropriate, constructive and responsible.

In addition to online safety, please also encourage your children to live a healthy lifestyle whilst not at school. Please support them to:

- Eat healthily
- Keep in personal contact with their friends
- Be punctual and appropriately attired for any live sessions
- Focus well on their school work – no gaming windows to be open during lessons
- Keep communicating with us.

Contacting us

Please be assured that staff are contactable each day during our term times and are available to support pupils through their Online Teaching and Learning Programme. If you e-mail a member of staff, they will endeavour to get back to you as soon as they can, but always within two school days. To allow staff to maintain healthy boundaries between work and home life, we are not expecting them to respond to emails outside of the working day.

Please direct general queries to your child's Form Tutor. With issues relating to specific pieces of work, please contact the relevant subject teacher in the first instance.

- For issues with the academic provision as a whole, please contact Mr Skitt, Leader of Learning and Innovation, or the relevant Head of Academic Department.

- For issues regarding our pastoral provision, please contact your child's Head of Year, Mrs Hawes, Mrs Mercer or Mr Silva.

- For general questions regarding safeguarding, please direct these to Mr Newland, the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- The Headmaster can be contacted if your concern is of a whole school nature and can be contacted via: Ian.Thorpe@downsend.co.uk

Please feel free to contact any other member of staff as you would normally do for all other school matters.

Resources for parents

Video: wellbeing tips for parents during school closure

Family wellbeing during school closures

Video: practical tips for parents during school closure

Talking to your child about coronavirus

Video tips on wellbeing when staying indoors

Advice for teenagers during school closure

A range of resources, tips and advice to help families during school closures is available and will be continually updated on the Cognita website.

https://www.cognita.com/cognita-be-well/resources-for-families/

National Online Safety®
NOS
#WakeUpWednesday

REMOTE EDUCATION
10 TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS

Remote education ensures continuous learning outside the classroom. For parents and carers, remote education isn't always straightforward and there can be a number of factors they need to consider, especially around ensuring their children feel comfortable and are familiar with the whole concept. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers support their child in getting the most out of their remote education experience.

1. TAKE AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

As a parent or carer, your school may have explained how remote education works already, but children may still need help. Take an active interest in their learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.

2. MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S COMMUNICATION AND ONLINE ACTIVITY

It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.

3. ESTABLISH A DAILY SCHEDULE AND ROUTINE

Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting that children might associate more with play and a degree of freedom might take a bit of getting used to. Try to stick to a daily routine and use the timetable/schedule that schools have sent home to help children keep on top of their daily learning.

4. ENCOURAGE SCREEN BREAKS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWAY FROM DEVICES

Remote learning will inevitably require more interaction with computers, laptops and tablets. Teachers will invariably advise on screen breaks: however, it doesn't hurt to keep a check on their time online or encourage them to get some fresh air/exercise.

5. ENSURE YOUR LEARNING DEVICE IS IN PUBLIC SPACE IN THE HOME

It's important to consider where your PC or laptop is placed if live video is being used. Try to keep the background neutral, with no personal information visible and move learning devices out of the bedroom as this could be deemed inappropriate.

6. IMPLEMENT SAFETY CONTROLS AND PRIVACY RESTRICTIONS ON APPS AND SOFTWARE

Dependant on how your school implements remote education, your child may be required to download certain software or apps. Whilst these are likely to be relatively safe to use, like any other new app or platform, parents should still implement safety controls as a precaution.

7. ENSURE YOUR CHILD ONLY USES OFFICIAL SCHOOL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

It's important that all communication with teachers and school staff is directed through approved school channels, whether that be through the school's online portal or the relevant secure messaging site.

8. FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH RELEVANT SCHOOL POLICIES

Schools should have a policy on remote education that they can share with parents. Familiarise yourself with this and ensure you know what is expected of teachers and your child during lessons, both online and offline.

9. MAINTAIN FEEDBACK WITH TEACHERS

Engage in communication with teachers where possible, and try to feed back progress and development as well as any helpful suggestions around the learning process. Be transparent but remain professional and only use official channels to communicate.

10. MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Remote education will likely mean that your child won't get the same level of social interaction and might not see their friends for a while. Keep a check on their wellbeing and try to encourage them to get out as much as they can. Whilst learning from home might seem fun and exciting to start to with, missing out on seeing their friends every day might take its toll.

Glossary of terms

Synchronous online teaching with whole class:
This is when a teacher connects online, in real time, with a class group.
This could be for form time or a specific class. Teachers may arrange this for certain parts of a lesson in order to minimise elongated periods of time on the screen.

Synchronous online teaching with a group:
This is when a teacher connects online with a smaller group of pupils. This could be for a specific aspect of academic work, e.g. an English teacher working with 4-5 pupils. It could also be for a wellbeing check-in when a member of staff checks in with a group to discuss how things are going in this new way of working. This will usually take place as a 'drop-in'.

Synchronous one-to-one:
There may be instances when 1:1 input is required. This could be, for example, for peripatetic music lessons etc. Individual teachers may also wish to connect with pupils 1:1, however to keep within safeguarding guidance, these instances will be rare and parents always informed in advance.

Asynchronous teaching:
This is when a teacher pre-prepares teaching input, often by a short video or audio file and uploads this for pupils to access in their own time. This is an effective way of delivering short pieces of teaching content to support learning but to avoid prolonged screen time.

Asynchronous learning tasks:
This is when a teacher sets tasks and activities for pupils to access and complete.
These usually follow some teaching input. These tasks may reinforce previous learning, apply new learning or address misconceptions.