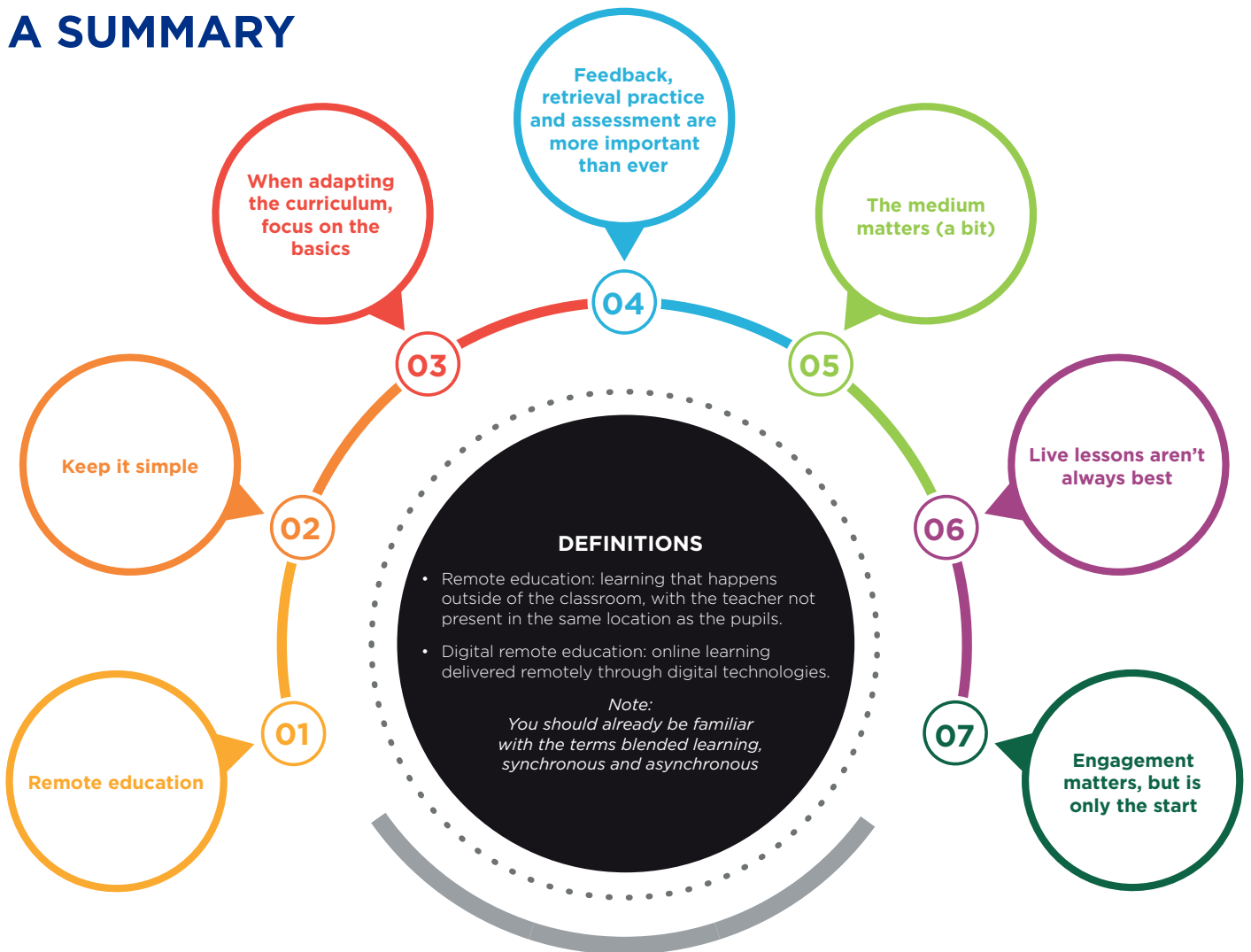


GUIDANCE

What's working well in remote education

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A SUMMARY



01

REMOTE EDUCATION

- The remote curriculum needs to be aligned to the classroom curriculum as much as possible and be carefully sequenced with explicit goals.
- It isn't the same as digital education. Sometimes it may be more effective to deliver remote education through worksheets or a textbook.

02

KEEP IT SIMPLE

- Our brains don't learn differently using remote education so we don't have to make huge changes to the way we teach.
- Don't overcomplicate resources or platforms and use simple graphics to highlight key concepts.
- Provide an overview of the bigger picture and where a specific lesson or activity sits within a sequence of lessons or activities. Have clear and high expectations and communicate these. Guide students in the discovery of new content through tasks, projects and internet searching as some may be novices.
- Ensure explanations are clear if you are using recorded lessons as misunderstandings or misconceptions can't be corrected.
- Consider the 'split attention' effect. As students can find it hard to concentrate, integrating pictures or graphs is important. Text should be integrated with images to allow students to focus on what is most important.
- Divide content into smaller chunks to aid concentration. Short presentations or modelling of new content can be followed by exercise and retrieval practice.

03

WHEN ADAPTING THE CURRICULUM, FOCUS ON THE BASICS

- Avoid offering too much new subject matter at once. Key building blocks need to be understood first and students should be assessed to determine this.
- Focus on the most important knowledge or concepts students need to know.
- Consider what alternatives exist for traditional practical activities. What can be done at home? use simulations for example. Worked examples and modelling can work very well in remote digital education.
- In many cases, practising and a focus on developing existing knowledge and skills may be useful.

04

FEEDBACK, RETRIEVAL PRACTICE AND ASSESSMENT ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

- It can be harder to deliver immediate feedback remotely than in the classroom, but some ways this can be done is through chatroom discussions, 1-to-1 interaction tools, interactive touch-screen questioning in live recorded lessons, adaptive learning software.
- Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes. Consider enabling these through chat groups, forums or video-linking functions. These will also help students maintain their social skills.
- It is important to stay in regular contact with students. If necessary, use technology to automate communication. You could set up automated check-in emails to students to identify where they are with set tasks. This also gives a perception that you are 'watching' while students learn remotely.
- Assessment is built into some online platforms and most textbooks. Low-stakes quizzes can be built in to remote education, as can written assignments and retrieval practice activities. It can be helpful to make sure students are 'warmed up' and 'readied' for content through an introductory task or scene-setting. Students can then be invited to re-visit and process the main content further in an additional task or later in the lesson through retrieval practice.

05

THE MEDIUM MATTERS (A BIT)

- Quality of teaching is far more important than how lessons are delivered. There is some evidence that the medium does matter, especially in digital remote education. Students tend to spend longer accessing a remote lesson when they are using a laptop than when using a phone (tablets are in between).
- Consideration needs to be given in relation to access to devices and the internet, in addition to where content is hosted (to mitigate distraction).

06

LIVE LESSONS AREN'T ALWAYS BEST

- Some think that a live lesson is the 'gold standard' of remote education. This isn't necessarily the case. Live lessons have a lot of advantages. They can make curriculum alignment easier, and can keep students' attention, not least as the teacher has more control over the learning environment. But live lessons are not always more effective than asynchronous approaches.
- There are some specific difficulties in doing live lessons. It can be hard to build in interaction and flexibility. This means that giving feedback can actually be less effective than when we use recorded lesson segments followed by interactive chats, or tasks and feedback.
- Because evidence suggests that concentration online is shorter than the length of a typical lesson, recording a classroom lesson may be ineffective.
- Different approaches to remote education suit different types of content and pupils. Mixed models may be effective. For example, you could use the so-called 'flipped learning' model. In this, new content is taught through an asynchronous recorded lesson. Practice, tutoring and feedback are then done synchronously.

07

ENGAGEMENT MATTERS, BUT IS ONLY THE START

- It's harder to engage and motivate students remotely than when they are in the classroom. There are more distractions, and as a teacher you're not physically present to manage the situation. Communicating and working with parents, without putting an unreasonable burden on them, can help support home learning.
- A lot of attention has been paid to ways in which online education can be made more engaging. For example, we can make sure different types of tasks and activities are alternated, or build in rewards and incentives to make learning more 'game-like'.
- While it is important to engage students, this is only a precondition for learning, not the thing itself. There is only so much a teacher can do to engage students remotely. We therefore need to make sure that efforts to engage don't distract us from teaching the curriculum. We also need to check whether pupils have actually learned the content we want them to through assessment.
- Engagement increases when students feel part of the college community. Consider ways to engage them further e.g. through newsletters to students and parents.