Making Safe and Effective Use of Pupils' Cameras in Remote Lessons

In remote lessons delivered using Microsoft Teams, it is desirable for all pupils to have their cameras on as this:

- supports engagement of pupils in the lesson;
- improves behaviour management as teachers can see when pupils are on task or actively listening;
- supports phonics with younger pupils, as primary staff can see and hear pupils making sounds and correct/ model as appropriate;
- supports safeguarding, as it is possibly to visibly check-in with pupils causing concern;
- supports pupils' social and emotional needs by allowing them to see their friends and feel more fully part of a class.

Having cameras on is not, however, without risk. Schools will need to manage this at a policy and technical level, and teachers will need to make judgements about individual pupils' use of their cameras.

Actions needed:

- The **IT Service** should ensure that all classes are set up within Teams and, ideally, this is automatically fed from the MIS to remain up to date with any changes to classes/ sets;
- The **IT Service** should set up Teams as advised by the Central Technology team so that features such as 'hard mute' are enabled and a 'No camera' user profile has been configured (see ['3. Teams Safeguarding Settings' here](#));
- The **Senior Leadership Team** should positively frame their expectations of the use of cameras and mics in remote lessons. Additionally, an amended Acceptable Usage Policy should set a framework for pupils' behaviour with regard to the use of cameras and microphones. This needs to be communicated clearly to parents, pupils and staff;
- The **Senior Leadership Team** should ensure that staff and pupils have received familiarisation training relevant to their role, so that they can use Teams confidently and effectively;
- **Teachers** should practise how they will manage the mics and cameras of pupils and decide how they will handle messaging/ asking for help (e.g. through the chat or by virtual hand-raising), and how they will receive work from remote pupils. Advice on effective remote lessons is under ['1. Isolated Teaching and Learning' here](#);
- **Teachers** should set their Teams Meeting Options as shown below.

This ensures pupils cannot join a lesson early and that, if removed, they cannot re-join.

This ensures that only you can unmute pupils, share your screen or remove pupils

This ensures pupils join muted and cannot speak until you are ready

Advice for teachers

To encourage pupils to have their camera on:

- make it clear that 'cameras on' is an expected norm of lessons;
- share with families, pupils and staff why having cameras on is important for learning;
- follow-up with pupils and families where cameras are not used;
- enable those who are uncomfortable with cameras on to speak to staff about their concerns;
- encourage use of a quiet, private part of their home so that they can participate in lessons without interruption.
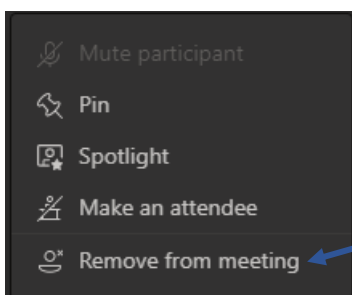
Please note that pupils should not be forced to turn on their camera (or punished for not doing), as there may be many reasons why they are uncomfortable about this – self-image, shame about domestic arrangements, etc – and a hard line is unlikely to result in positive learning behaviours.

Whilst Teams allows participants to blur their background, this is only possible in certain version of the Teams app. It is not possible when using the browser-based version of Teams (e.g. on a Chromebook).
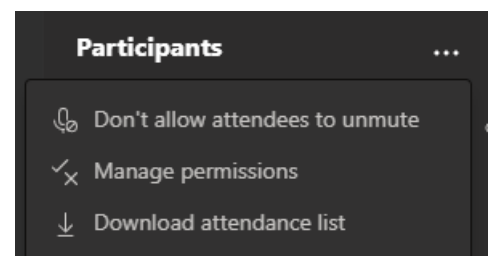
Managing behaviour

It is possible for individual teachers to 'Force Mute' pupils' audio, but not control their cameras. Similarly, use of the messaging function cannot be restricted at an individual level (it's either on for all or off for all in that Teams Channel). A further nuance of the way messaging works is that even if a pupil has been removed from the lesson by the teacher, they can still access the messaging function (and continue to misbehave using it). Pupils can be removed from a lesson by a teacher and cannot re-enter if meeting options are correctly set as above.

The Participants sidebar gives access to some controls

Right clicking on the name of any pupil will allow teachers to remove them from the meeting

The three dots icon reveals additional controls for use mid-lesson

There are some technical steps that can help manage negative behaviours. A pupil can be removed from a specific class by an IT admin, whilst retaining the right to attend other classes. Another approach widely used is a 'No Camera' profile, which can be applied to pupils who repeatedly misuse this function. The ultimate technical sanction for a persistently misbehaving pupil is to remove their Teams licence so that they can continue to work (using Word, Outlook, etc) but cannot access Teams lessons.

All instances of misbehaviour using the functions of Teams should be dealt with as per the school's Acceptable Usage and Behaviour policies and the table below suggests some common approaches to camera management:

If	Action
You want to record a portion of the lesson	Ask the pupils to turn their cameras off
A student does not turn their camera on	Ask pastoral staff to investigate
A student does not unmute, even when asked, but asks questions by text	Ask pastoral staff to investigate; are there issues at home?
A student does not unmute, even when asked, and does not interact by text	Ask behaviour team to investigate; likely they are off task
A student will not behave when their camera is on	Remove them from the lesson and report to behaviour team
A student repeatedly misbehaves on camera	Apply 'no camera' technical policy in line with behaviour policy
When allowed to unmute, a student misbehaves	Remove them from the lesson and report
A persistently disruptive student tries to re-join the lesson	Do not admit them from the lobby. Report to the behaviour team
A student posts inappropriate comments into the chat	Apply moderator settings to the chat; this will stop all students from commenting.
Any student behaviour raises safeguarding concerns	Report this to your DSL

Safeguarding and Privacy checklist

- The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has identified any children who should not be asked to turn on their cameras in lessons. This is likely to be done in conjunction with child's allocated worker and involve an individual risk assessment. If deemed necessary, a 'no camera' policy can be applied.
- The DSL and Behaviour Leads have identified any children who should not be permitted to turn on cameras due to concerns around negative behaviours. Teaching staff have been notified and a 'no cameras' policy applied, where appropriate.
- Blurred backgrounds are enforced where the pupils' hardware allows for this.
- For privacy (and safeguarding in some cases) cameras are turned off when a teacher is recording elements of the lesson which will later be shared with the pupils/ made otherwise available.
- Pupils and staff have been reminded about appropriate dress codes when participating in remote lessons.
- Pupils have been reminded that at no point should they enter or make use of toilets or bathrooms while in a live lesson, even if they are not using the camera or are muted. If they need to go to the toilet, they should leave the device in a separate room.
- Staff are clear on the process for raising any concerns they have - initially with the pupil (or parent if a young pupil) and escalating to pastoral staff or DSL where appropriate.
- Parents understand the importance of being available and 'passively supervising' their primary age child in online lessons, although they need not be in the room the whole time. Younger children will benefit from direct parental support.
- Parents are aware of why having cameras on is important to the learning of their child and why the school is encouraging it.