



Cameras on for Remote Learning – the Rationale

After several months of remote learning, we've learned that students having cameras on is a crucial part of online learning - teachers and students need to be able to see faces to respond and interact with each other. Remote lessons are not 45 minute lectures, but as close as we can get to interactive learning experiences that involve nodding, thumbs up or down, and particularly the use of mini whiteboards. Because of this, last term we made it compulsory for students to have cameras on, and have seen engagement and the quality of remote learning improve significantly.

In terms of security and cameras within home, only students using their school account @carletonhigh.co.uk, who are registered by the teacher to the class, can access the lesson. It's one of the reasons we chose Google Classroom as our school online vehicle. During the sessions, staff and students can both see all participants. We ask students to be mindful of this when joining the sessions, and to be in an area where others cannot disturb or be subject to recording. All of this means for safeguarding, it's important that we can see who is in the call. We also ask students to not add fancy backgrounds, or point the camera at the ceiling. The sessions are recorded for safeguarding purposes, but these are only accessed and viewed if an issue arises, and never shared with students.

One solution where laptops don't have cameras is that students work online but join the lesson also on their phone. This can be done from the Google Classroom app or by logging in online on phones. We know from our own audits that 99% of students have a phone that will allow this. If cameras cannot or will not be on, then the only other option is for students to access the class materials from the Google Classroom page, although of course these come without the live explanations and demonstrations by teachers. We do not allow students to join live lessons with audio only.

If students have their cameras off, they will be politely reminded to put them on, but then removed or asked to remove themselves from the lesson.