**Planning for Remote Learning in a Covid-19 Context: Autumn/Winter 2020**

**St. Mary’s Junior Boys’ National School, Nenagh.**

**DRAFT for consultation.**

In response to this time of uncertainty regarding school closures, we have formulated this policy to outline how the school will maintain the link between school and home. In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our pupils through various means.

We recognise that online safety is of huge importance and the aim of this document is to help to protect both school staff and pupils, while teaching and learning online.

This policy does not set out to replace our Mobile Phone or Acceptable Usage Policy. Rather, it is proposed as an important addition to the area of learning from a digital platform. The policy presented here should be read also in tandem with our school’s Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying (including Cyber Bullying) Policy.

The primary obligation of all schools is to the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all student learners and that personal and sensitive data is also protected under GDPR legislation. Schools must ensure that learning takes place in an environment that is respectful and fair and meets its statutory duties.

This Policy has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Education and relevant sections of:

(a) The Education Act (1998)

(b) Education (Welfare) Act (2000)

(c) Equal Status Act (2000)

(d) Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

(e) Disability Act (2005)

(f) Children First Act (2017)

(g) GDPR

(h) Data Protection Act (2018)

(i) Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary schools

(j) NEWB Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008).

(k) DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for Primary Schools (May 2020)

(l) DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: *Supporting Primary Pupils at very High Risk to Covid 19* (August 2020)*.*

*(m) DES Guidance on remote Learning in a Covid-19 Context; September – December 2020, for Primary Schools.*

This is a working document. As we continue to explore options available to support distance learning, the document will be updated accordingly.

**Context**Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century. Developments in IT provide us all with great opportunities as learners and teachers. Never before has there been greater scope to learn using technology and it continues to change the learning relationship between teachers and students. Advances in technology mean that assignments can be delivered remotely and that greater access to information on the internet affords the opportunities for real learning to take place under the watchful and professional guidance of the teacher. However, whether a child is being directed remotely or via a traditional classroom environment, it is very important that all partners are aware that once a learning exchange takes place between a student and teacher, whether at home or school, the same statutory rules apply i.e. the school’s Code of Positive Behaviour and all of the school’s policies apply.

We recognise that online collaboration is essential for distance learning and that families are in favour of increased opportunities to maintain the connection between school and home. St Mary’s JBNS uses a variety of child friendly, online tools, which assist in providing more effective teaching and learning, while also enabling greater communication between staff, families and students.

**Guidelines for good online communication in National School:**

1. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
3. It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure that any content submitted to their teacher is appropriate.
4. Staff members will communicate with pupils and their families via Aladdin or School Email or through an established app.
5. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
6. Students and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (Aladdin, Zoom)
7. Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum.
8. For video/Zoom calls, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via the parent/guardian’s email address. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.
9. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
10. St Mary’s JBNS cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.

St. Mary’s Junior Boys’ National School will use various online platforms for communicating and connecting with families/pupils. Our ‘Remote Teaching and Learning Plan’ may include a combination of assigned work, pre-recorded lessons and live sessions (Zoom).

1: **School App (Aladdin Connect)**:

Staff will communicate regularly with parents and pupils via the school App. All families are asked to download the school app and to check it daily for updates and important information. Teachers will post work for pupils on the app.

Each teacher will be assigned a class e-mail address through which he/she will communicate with parents/guardians and vice-versa. Parental queries will be addressed during school hours only and should relate strictly to your child's teaching and learning.

**2. Zoom**

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Teachers may connect with pupils using pre-arranged Zoom Meetings.

**Rules for pupils using online communication methods:**

For submitting learning:

1. Submit work and pictures that are appropriate - have an adult take a look at your work before you send it.
2. Use kind and friendly words.

For video calls/Zoom:

1. Remember to ensure you join each Zoom meeting using your family name.
2. Pictures or recordings of the video call are not allowed.
3. Remember our school rules - they are still in place, even online.
4. Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
5. Join the video with your microphone muted.
6. Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
7. If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words.
8. Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking.
9. Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call.
10. Be on time - set a reminder if it helps.
11. Enjoy! Don’t forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!

**Guidelines for parents and guardians:**

For learning

1. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
2. Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.
3. Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.

For video calls/Zoom

1. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
3. The main purpose of a video call is to engage in online learning activities while maintaining a social connection between the school staff and pupils. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
4. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
5. You will automatically enter a waiting room when the code for a Zoom call has been entered. Please note that school staff will only accept users into video call if you can be identified by the display name on your zoom account. (i.e. Family Name)
6. Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled video, or they may be locked out. Please request to join the Zoom call approximately five minutes before the scheduled start time. This will give school staff time to verify your email address.
7. Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance. For video in particular, show them how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/off.
8. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
9. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.
10. For detailed information on GDPR and Zoom, please visit <https://zoom.us/privacy>

It is important to note that any breach of the above guidelines will result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. A breach may also result in a person being immediately removed from a meeting or a meeting being immediately terminated.

**Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Students:**

* Check assigned work each day
* Communication may only take place during normal school hours
* The normal school calendar will apply
* The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:

- Code of Behaviour

- Anti- Bullying Policy

- Acceptable Use Policy

* Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply, with students expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible in this evolving and unprecedented situation
  + In so far as possible, provision for SEN students will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies
  + In so far as possible, provision for student at very high-risk to Covid 19 will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

**Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Parents**

* We ask parents/guardians to ensure protocols for students are adhered to
* Check-in on their child’s school work on a daily basis and talk to their child about the work being assigned
* The health and wellbeing of all is paramount. Circumstances may change for any of us unexpectedly, teachers or parents, so please keep schooling in perspective and do not allow anything school related to impinge on your child negatively. You are the primary educator of your child and you make those calls. We encourage a little work every week day for routine. We provide work and guidance and ask parents and pupils to do their best and that is all.

**Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers/SNA’s**

* Check uploaded work each week
* Communication should only take place during normal school hours
* The normal school calendar will apply
* The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  + Child Protection Policy
  + Data Protection Policy
* Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply with students expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible.

**Remote Teaching and Learning Provision specifically for the following Covid 19 related scenarios**

1. **Provision for children who are at very high risk to Covid 19:**

The school will engage directly with relevant parents, regarding remote educational provision for children who are deemed to be at **very high risk** to Covid-19 (see HSE Guidelines) where medical certification has been provided to the school.

**B. In the case of all other children who are instructed to self-isolate by their GP or HSE Public Health, educational provision will be provided as follows:**

1. Children who are awaiting Covid 19 test results for themselves or a family member and have been instructed by their GP to isolate at home for a few days. These pupils will be supported to catch up on their learning on their return to school
2. Children isolating at home on instruction from their GP due to a confirmed case within their own family/close contact outside of school (14-day isolation period). Teacher will link in with the pupil via Aladdin.
3. School bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14day isolation period). Teacher will engage with the bubble daily on Aladdin and may communicate via Zoom
4. Whole school closure as instructed by HSE Public Health (duration of closure will be advised by Public Health) -Teachers will engage with pupils, using a blended approach of pre-recorded lessons, Aladdin and Zoom.

**Please note that the current situation is quite fluid and these circumstances may vary throughout the year.**

**Summary:**

→Do what you can, within your circumstances.

→There will be no school work set for planned school closures/holidays. There will be no interaction during these times.

→ Please keep abreast of postings on the school app– it is our main mode of communication going forward.

→We ask parents/guardians, students and teachers to ensure protocols are adhered to at all times.

→If you have yet to connect to any of the on-line platforms/school App, please do so. If you are experiencing difficulties, please email the school and we will assist you in any way that we can and please contact the school with any further queries you may have.

We thank the school community for adhering to the above guidelines for everyone’s safety and welfare.

This plan was ratified by the BOM NS at its meeting on:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson BOM NS)

**\*Recommended Apps**

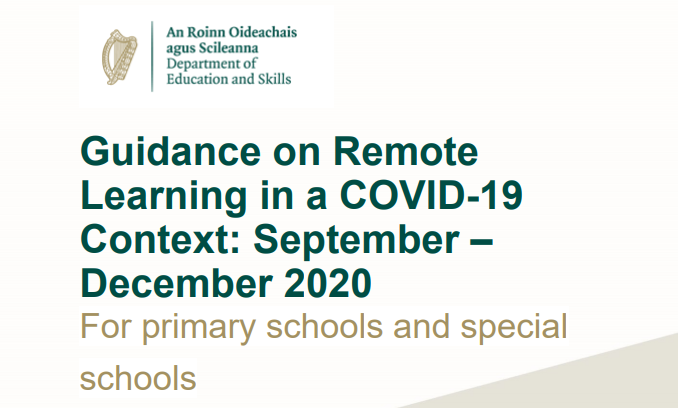
In addition to a pared back plan of work for your child/children, we suggest the following Apps for your child’s use too, if you can access them. If not, do not worry, they are helpful but not essential.

* **Scoilnet.ie https://www.scoilnet.ie/go-to-primary/**
* **Cúla 4:** Excellent for younger pupils for Irish vocab – very child friendly. There are also videos of your children’s favourite cartoons here as Gaeilge which would be useful to watch occasionally to keep up with Irish
* **Doulingo:** most suitable from 2nd class upwards. Excellent app. Tests your child Irish ability level at the start and they work away at their own level for 10mins daily
* **Mathduel:** For tables. Fun and interactive
* **Starfall:** For spellings. Again, very child friendly and useful to keep spellings progressing without feeling like schoolwork
* **Jolly Phonics App:** to keep up phonics learning for infant classes
* **Dolch words Apps:** (there is a wide range available): for the development of sight words
* **Nessy Apps:** for reading for pupils with dyslexia or difficulties
* **PinkFong:** Digital stories for infant classes. Excellent and engaging
* **Khan Academy:** Useful for maths for older pupils especially
* **Kahoot:** for general knowledge and quizzes
* **Toontastic:** probably the best app ever for digital storytelling – pupils can devise their own digital story, picking a range of characters, settings, even musical background. They plan a beginning, middle and end to their story and can record their own voices to tell the story
* **Puppetpals:** similar to toontastic – useful for younger pupils. They can record themselves telling the story also
* **Lightbot** – Coding app – super for all ages.

**Remote Learning in a Covid-19 context in St. Mary’s Junior Boys NS**

**September – December 2020**

**Action Plan / Checklist (based on DES Guidance document – Available** [**HERE**](C://Users/computer/Downloads/90252_070614f4-3dff-4489-8e4d-be8cd625999e.pdf)**)**



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Response/action** |
| Has an appropriate digital communication platform(s) been selected?  Does it support communication with and between staff?  Does it support communication between staff and pupils?  Does it support communication between schools and parents/guardians?  Does the platform support remote teaching and learning? | Yes.  Aladdin Connect – Communicate with parents and pupils.  Microsoft Teams to facilitate communication and planning among teachers.  WhatsApp for staff communication.  Youtube for recorded video.  Zoom or Teams for live video.    Yes |
| Have parents/guardians been notified of contact details during school closures? | Yes.  On website.  [stmarysjuniorboys@gmail.com](mailto:stmarysjuniorboys@gmail.com)  [principalsmjb@gmail.com](mailto:principalsmjb@gmail.com)  [principal@stmarysjuniorboysnenagh.com](mailto:principal@stmarysjuniorboysnenagh.com)  Each teacher has been allocated a school email ending [@stmarysjuniorboysnenagh.com](mailto:principal@stmarysjuniorboysnenagh.com)  School phone 067 32005  School mobile 086 4137755 |
| Have the relevant skill sets of the staff been identified? | Yes |
| Has a plan for appropriate professional development and support been agreed  where necessary? | No .. yes PDST training.  Staff are encouraged to utilise online professional development such as Summer/Evening courses and PDST courses.  Whole staff professional development can be arranges when a need is identified. Staff should inform the Principal or ISM team of this need, |
| Have other relevant staff, for example SNAs, been supported in their relevant  digital skills development, to enable them to carry out their role during remote  teaching and learning? | As above.  Training can be arranged, please request same from the Principal or ISM team. |
| Has a plan for developing pupils skills for remote teaching and learning been  agreed, to enable them to:   * Access and navigate the platform in use? * Engage with teaching and learning materials? * Upload their own work independently (where age-appropriate to do so)? | Yes  Yes  Yes  No (not age appropriate) |
| Has the school ascertained the availability of digital devices and broadband access  in all households? | Yes  In April, parents were asked to contact the school if they required a device or could not access internet.  This should be repeated for the period October to December 2020. |
| Has a plan been put in place to address gaps in the availability of digital devices or  access to broadband? | The school purchased 6 additional Samsung galaxy tablets and rugged covers for distribution to families where necessary.  Further devices can be purchased if required. |
| Has a system for sharing short-term planning and preparation documents,  including plans for pupils with special educational needs, with relevant substitute  and other teachers been established? | Teachers have access to MS Teams and Staff notebook. Short term plans should be added to the Short-term/ Long-term planning tab for the month ahead. The plans can then be accessed/emailed to substitute teachers. This applies to SET also. |
| Is the chairperson of the board of management enabled to access contact details  of staff members and the school inspector in the event that all members of the  leadership team are required to self-isolate? | Yes.  Details emailed to Chairperson. |
| Have parents/guardians been consulted and informed about the platform(s) to be  used during any remote teaching and learning scenarios? | Yes |
| Have procedures for supporting two-way communication and feedback during  remote teaching and learning been established? | Yes  Aladdin connect allows two-way communication and feedback. |
| Have procedures for communicating with external agencies, including the HSE,  NEPS and NCSE where necessary been established? | Yes  Contact details in Covid file in office and online. |
| Have the following policies been reviewed and updated where necessary?   * Acceptable usage policies * Data Protection * Child Safeguarding Statement | No.  Updating of these policies is in progress. |
| Have relevant personnel been identified for each of the possible scenarios outlined  in the guidance document? | See section 3 of DES guidance on remote learning.   * Sharing short-term plans – all teachers. * Frequent constructive feedback to all pupils – all teachers. * Scenario 1 – Individual pupil advised to isolate. Class teacher coordinates in consultation with SET and SNA. * Scenario 2 – Number of pupils self isolating. Class teacher coordinates in consultation with SET and SNA. SET oversees the remote pupils, while class teacher focuses mainly on pupils in classroom. SNA assists the SET in communicating and co-ordinating.   Each SET is allocated to certain class groupings, Juniors, seniors and first.   * Scenario 3 – All pupils in a class out. Class teacher provides remote teaching to all pupils using agreed digital platforms. This should take place from the school if teacher is not required to self isolate. SET from that class group assists the class teacher with identified pupils. * Scenario 4 - A teacher / number of teachers in the school are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements.   Where teachers are required to self-isolate, they will avail of special leave with pay, in line with Circular 0049/2020. These teachers should follow the advice outlined in the Circular in this instance. Any teacher who is medically fit for work but has been advised to restrict his/her movements is available to work remotely. If the teacher’s class group is still attending school a substitute teacher should be arranged to cover this teacher’s teaching responsibilities in the school for this period, but the work assigned to the teacher restricting his/her movements should support the work of the school in developing and delivering its programmes of teaching and learning for pupils as per Section 12 of Circular 0049/2020. If the teacher’s class is also self-isolating or restricting their movements the class teacher(s) will be required to provide remote/distance teaching to all pupils in the class, using the school’s digital platform(s) or other agreed method as needed.  SET will assist class teacher. SNA will communicate with pupils on their caseload or other pupils as directed by the class teacher or substitute.   * Scenario 5 - The school is required to close on foot of public health advice. In this case, all teachers who are medically fit to work, including SETs, are available to work remotely and should provide remote teaching and learning to all pupils in their class or on their caseload. Substitute teachers should be arranged to provide remote teaching for pupils in classes where the teacher has been diagnosed with Covid-19 and is medically unfit to work. Schools should ensure substitute teachers have access to appropriate digital technology. SNA will communicate with pupils on their caseload or other pupils as directed by the class teacher. * Supply Panel Teachers - if available, will assist class teachers and SET as follows;   Niamh- Juniors  Karen – Seniors  Sinead – First Class |
| In the event of a whole-school closure, the following will apply; | Teachers will use the homework feature on Aladdin to send work to pupils.  Teachers will provide feedback on pupils work.  Teachers will provide voice overs/recorded videos to explain a concept.  These will be posted to Aladdin.  SET will assist in above and create appropriate learning opportunities for the pupils on their caseload.  Teachers will be in daily contact with their pupils.  SNA’s will assist the teacher in above and be make regular contact with the pupils on their caseload.  SNA’s will act in consultation with the class teacher.  A weekly Zoom will be organised for each class so pupils can interact directly with the teacher and their classmates.  Teachers should put a ‘virtual background’ in place if they are working from home.  Teachers have the option to ‘live teach’ certain concepts for a certain period each day/week. The school building is the best environment from which to ‘live teach’.  Special classes and early Intervention class – teachers will make every effort to assist pupils with their remote learning in the full knowledge that this may be very difficult due to the complex needs of the pupils.  The Principal will liaise with all staff on a regular basis. |

Resources

See page 14 of [DES Guidance Document](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/183b2-guidance-on-remote-learning-in-a-covid-19-context-september-december-2020/)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/183b2-guidance-on-remote-learning-in-a-covid-19-context-september-december-2020/>

