

Scoil Áine Naofa  
Loreto,  
An Uaimh,  
Co. na Mhí.



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Loreto Primary School  
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## Remote Teaching and Learning Policy

### Introduction

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 and in return how families can maintain meaningful communication with our school staff. In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our pupils through various methods.

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 facilitating 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 Circular 0074/2020 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) Guidance on Remote Learning in a COVID-19 Context: September – December 2020

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

## **1. 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. Anne's Loreto Primary School 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.

## **2. Guidelines for good online communication:**

- a) Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online and adhere to the guidelines and protocols made available to all members of the school community.
- b) Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of WhatsApp video calls/ Zoom calls.
- c) 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.
- d) Staff members will communicate with pupils and their families from a selection of the following platforms: SeeSaw; Aladdin Connect; School mobile WhatsApp; Zoom; our dedicated teacher email accounts; post and phone calls as deemed most appropriate by the teacher in conjunction with the Parent/Guardian. Students and staff will communicate only using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified.
- e) Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
- f) Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum.
- g) Pupils will only be invited to a Zoom Meeting/WhatsApp video call once the circulated guidelines and protocols are accepted by their Parent/Guardian on Aladdin. Once the initial

Zoom permission has been obtained, parental permission is implied for all further Zoom Meetings.

- h) For security reasons, Codes will be provided to families, where applicable.

St. Anne's Loreto Primary School, Navan cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised

### **3. Media which will be primarily used by the school:**

#### **Aladdin Connect**

Staff will communicate regularly with parents and pupils via Aladdin Connect. All families are asked to download the Aladdin Connect App and to check it daily for updates and important information.

#### **Email**

Each teacher will communicate with parents/guardians and pupils via their professional email and vice-versa. Parental queries will be addressed during school hours only (9.15a.m. to 3.00p.m.) and should relate strictly to your child's teaching and learning.

#### **SeeSaw**

SeeSaw is an online platform which enables pupils to connect to their folder of work and to access their teacher when required. Some lessons may be pre-recorded and uploaded on SeeSaw.

#### **Zoom**

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Those teachers using Zoom will connect with pupils using pre-arranged Zoom invitation codes for such meetings.

#### **WhatsApp Video Calls**

In certain circumstances, teachers may make contact with parents/guardians with pupils via the teacher's school mobile number. In addition for those who have difficulty accessing Zoom, WhatsApp video calling may be used via the teacher's school mobile.

### **4. Rules for pupils using online communication:**

#### **Guidelines for submitting remote learning material:**

- i Submit work and pictures that are appropriate – Parents/Guardians should take a look at pupil's work before sending it.
- ii Use kind and friendly words.

#### **Video Call / Zoom Meeting Etiquette for Pupils**

St. Anne's Loreto Primary School would like to introduce you to our Video Call / Zoom Meeting Etiquette. It is understood that there will be Parental supervision during such meetings. In addition no cameras or capturing of images is allowed

To help us get the most benefit we ask that the following etiquette be adhered to:

1. **Dress appropriately** - Regular clothes. No PJs!
2. **Be aware of your surroundings** - Pick a room that is not a bedroom and does not have traffic passing through. Be mindful of noise from other people or pets.
3. **Mute your microphone** when you're not talking, please **put up your hand** if you wish to share your thoughts - Only turn it on if you are asked to speak. Muting your microphone when you're not speaking gives others the ability to contribute and share their thoughts without distraction or frustration.
4. **Leave the keyboard alone** - The sound of your typing is distracting.
5. **Be respectful** - Teachers and pupils are real people who are affected by words you say and write.
6. **Using Chat** - Do not use Chat when the teacher is talking. Be respectful at all times, when using Chat. Remember that you are in a classroom, even if you are not wearing your uniform.
7. **No food / drinks allowed** - We don't want you spilling or dropping crumbs all over your keyboard!
8. **Stay seated and stay present** - Do not leave the room or talk on your phone.
9. **Be patient** - This is new to a lot of people and it may take time to learn.
10. **Enjoy the experience.**

#### **For Video Calls/Zoom Meetings :**

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

#### **5. 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 Meetings**

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. Follow the Zoom invitation link you have been sent to join the meeting via your school network email address. Please note that the link to the meeting will not work unless you are an invited guest to the Zoom meeting by the teacher. Additionally, you will not be granted access to the meeting unless following the link while logged in using your email account.
6. Please ensure your child is on time for the scheduled Zoom meeting. Please login via your email account and follow the Zoom link approximately five minutes before the scheduled meeting time. Please wait for the host to start the meeting.
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.

Any breach of the above guidelines will result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. It may also result in a person being immediately removed from a meeting or a meeting being terminated. A note of such behaviour will be retained on your child's file and revisited and managed on your child's return to school.

#### **6. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Pupils:**

- i Check assigned work each school day
- ii Communication may only take place during normal school hours
- iii The normal school calendar will apply
- iv The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  - Code of Behaviour Policy
  - Anti- Bullying Policy
  - Acceptable Use Policy
- v 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.
- vi Provision for SEN students will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.
- vii Provision for students at very high-risk to Covid 19 will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

#### **7. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Parents:**

- i. We ask parents/guardians to ensure protocols for students are adhered to.
- ii. Check-in on their child's school work on a daily basis and talk to their child about the work being assigned.
- iii. 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.
- iv. We ask Parents/Guardians to communicate with us as we support them in Distance Learning. St. Anne's Loreto Primary School. advocates that communication is a 2-way process and we

welcome this at all times. This shared feedback from all concerned is crucial to achieve the best learning outcomes for the child.

#### **8. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers/SNA's:**

- i. Check uploaded work daily (between 09:15am and 3pm) in so far as is possible. If the volume of returned work is such that teachers time expires, he/she will check the remaining work in due course.
- ii. Communication may only take place during normal school hours or as an exception to this where an arrangement has been agreed.
- iii. The normal school calendar will apply
- iv. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  - a. Child Protection Policy
  - b. Data Protection Policy
- v. 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. Relevant feedback will be provided by the class teacher and the Special Education Teacher on an ongoing basis.
- vi. If assignments are late being presented or not returned the responsibility lies with the child's Parents/Guardians to promptly explain the reason for this to the class teacher.
- vii. Staff will retain records of pupil engagement during this remote learning phase. In the event of non-engagement any messages from the parents/guardians to explain the related context will be noted. In addition, efforts made by staff to respectfully communicate with families displaying non-engagement will also be noted. This record is to display that staff have tried their best to ascertain if issues are presenting to compromise the child/family engagement with the staff and to remediate these. It is the continued aim of the staff and Board of Management of St. Anne's Loreto P.S. to offer every support possible to every pupil in our care.

#### **9. Remote Teaching and Learning Provision specifically for the following Covid 19 related scenarios:**

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

- i. 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. Provision for all other children who are instructed to self-isolate or restrict their movements by their GP or HSE Public Health, educational provision will be provided as follows:**

- i **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. If a staff member feels a particular child might be in need of additional support for a particular reason, an arrangement specific to that child may be put in place.
- ii **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).**

The pupil is expected to engage with Distance Learning and follow activities from their teacher, complete and submit all assignments given to the class. Throughout the isolation period, a teacher will link in with the pupil via SeeSaw, email and/or by phone to update the child, offer motivation and social interaction and give feedback on work submitted.

Arrangements can be made for books required at home to be collected from the school.

If the pupil isolating is receiving learning support, the Special Education Teacher will assign and correct work sent electronically in collaboration with the class teacher. The SET will link in with the pupil via SeeSaw, email and/or by phone. The SET may need to reduce time allocated to the affected child's class to facilitate such measures.

Children receiving SNA support will be offered regular contact from their SNA who will provide assistance and encouragement and offer further social contact with the school.

**3. a) School POD (\*\*group of no more than six pupils) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate. Teacher in school.**

As above (#2)

**b) School POD (\*\*group of no more than six pupils) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate/ teacher isolating.**

Where the teacher is self-isolating also, they will prepare the work for the pod. They will check in with the pod on a daily basis to offer social contact and motivation. A substitute teacher will teach the remaining pod groups within the class.

**c) Where the teacher is on sick leave**

The Special Education Team will provide the instructional activities for the POD from their time allocated to the class in question.

**4. School bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14 day isolation period).**

The class teacher will be required to provide remote/distance teaching to all the pupils in the class using the school's digital platforms or other agreed methods as needed.

Children receiving SNA support will be offered regular contact from their SNA who will provide encouragement and assistance and offer further social contact with the school.

**5. Whole school closure as instructed by HSE Public Health (duration of closure will be advised by Public Health)**

Teachers will engage regularly with the pupils, using a blended approach of the schools digital platforms.

Where pupils are in receipt of learning support, the Special Education Teacher will assign and correct work sent electronically in collaboration with the class teacher. The SET will link in with the pupil/s via SeeSaw, email and/or by phone.

Children receiving SNA support will be offered regular contact from their SNA who will provide assistance and encouragement and offer further social contact with the school.

**6. A teacher / number of teachers in the school are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements**

If the teacher's class group is still attending school, a substitute teacher will be sought to cover that teacher's teaching responsibilities in the school for the period in question. The teacher restricting their movements will 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

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

**Summary for Parents/Guardians:**

- a. Please keep abreast of postings on the Aladdin Connect school app – it is our main mode of communication going forward.
- b. Please also communicate electronically with school staff in return. This regular two way communication is currently welcomed given the absence of face-to-face opportunities to liaise.
- c. Be guided by the work set by your child's teacher/s. Families are only expected to do what they can, given their particular set of circumstances. We place great value on talking to your child and reading for them and with them. In addition please encourage your child to read independently from a range of genres that appeal to them (see our recommended Apps below for ideas).
- d. There will be no school work set for planned school closures/holidays. No interaction on the school's digital platforms will occur during these times except for a message from the Principal if required. These breaks are designed for all concerned to focus primarily on other priorities and recharge / refresh for the next school period.
- e. We ask parents/guardians, students and teachers to ensure protocols are adhered to at all times.
- f. If your contact details change, please inform us as a matter of urgency and amend these on your Aladdin Connect App.
- g. If you have yet to connect to any of the on-line platforms/ Aladdin Connect School App, please do so as a matter of urgency. If you are experiencing difficulties please email the school and we will assist you in any way that we can. Please contact the school on 0469023039 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 Board Of Management of **St. Anne's Loreto Primary School** on:

11<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed: *Máire O'Donoghue* Date: 11/02/2021.

**Chairperson BOM St. Anne's Loreto Primary School**

Signed: *Clodhna O'Brá.* Date: 11/02/2021

**Principal St. Anne's Loreto Primary School**



## **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.

- 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.
- BorrowBox – Meath County Council Library Services