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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. A survey of parents' experience of their child's engagement with remote teaching and learning was conducted in the school in September 2020, the results of which inform this policy,

In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our pupils and their parents/guardians 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 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, Anti-Bullying Policy and Dignity in the Workplace 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) Guidance on Remote Learning in a COVID-19 Context: September – December 2020

n) Communication/Teaching & Learning Platform (October 2020)

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 are always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century. Developments in IT provide us all with great opportunities as learners and teachers. There has never 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 ie. the school's Code of Behaviour and all of the school's policies apply.

Younger pupils are less able to engage independently and SEN pupils will require more individual support. The involvement of parents in supporting their children to manage remote learning is critical and effective engagement to underpin this partnership approach is essential.

Guidelines for Good Online Communication in St John the Baptist JBS

1. 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.
2. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
3. Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
4. Staff members will communicate with pupils and their families via Seesaw Learning Platform and occasionally Zoom.
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 (Seesaw App, Zoom, Aladdin, School email).
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 Seesaw App. 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 John the Baptist JBS cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, should this security be compromised.

St John the Baptist JBS will use online platforms for communicating and connecting with families/pupils. Our 'Remote Teaching and Learning Plan' will include a combination of assigned work, pre-recorded lessons (Seesaw App) and live sessions (Zoom), **as appropriate**.

Media Which the School Will Use

As remote teaching and learning on a national scale is relatively new, there is little definitive evidence that one method is better than another. It is important to note that the method of the delivery is far less important than the quality of that delivery. Therefore St. John the Baptist JBS will use the following platforms, as and when it is deemed appropriate to the specific class context.

Seesaw Learning Platform
Staff will communicate regularly with parents and pupils via Seesaw App. All families are asked to download the Seesaw App and to check it daily for updates and important information. Teachers will post work to the Noticeboard or to specific pupil journals.
 Parents have the option of uploading items to their child's folder for their teacher to see. Some lessons will be pre -recorded and uploaded to the app. Each teacher will be assigned a school e-mail address through which he/she will communicate with parents/guardians and vice-versa.

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link.

Rules for Pupils Using Online Communication
For Submitting Learning:
1. Submit work and pictures that are appropriate
2. Use kind and friendly words.

For Video Calls/Zoom:
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.
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. (ie. 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, 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 Pupils
1. Check assigned work daily if possible.
2. The normal school calendar will apply.
3. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
   a. Code of Behaviour
   b. Anti- Bullying Policy
   c. Acceptable Use Policy.
4. Teaching and learning best practice will continue to apply, with students expected to present assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible in this evolving and unprecedented situation.

Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Parents
1. We ask parents/guardians to ensure protocols for students are adhered to.
2. Check-in on their child's schoolwork daily (if possible) and talk to their child about the work being assigned.
3. 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. We encourage a little work every weekday 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/SNAs
1. Check uploaded work regularly.
2. The normal school calendar will apply.
3. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
   a. Child Protection Policy
   b. Data Protection Policy.
4. Teaching and learning best practice will continue to apply with students expected to present 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

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.

Provision for 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 Seesaw App (not video conferencing).

3. **School Pod (group of six) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate.**
   Teacher will link in with the pupils via Seesaw App (not video conferencing).

4. **School Bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14-day isolation period).**
   Teacher will engage with the bubble daily on Seesaw App and occasionally on Zoom, **if appropriate.**

5. **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, Seesaw App and on Zoom, **if appropriate**.

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

Summary:
1. Do what you can, within your circumstances. Forget about following books and workbooks outside of the work set by teachers for the moment.
2. There will be no schoolwork set for planned school closures/holidays. There will be no interaction on Zoom, Seesaw App or email during these times.
3. Please keep abreast of postings on the Seesaw App– it is our main mode of communication going forward.
4. We ask parents/guardians, students and teachers to ensure protocols are adhered to at all times.
5. If you have yet to connect to Seesaw 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 of St John the Baptist JBS at its meeting on:

_____ and is subject to change, according to guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson BOM)

Recommended Apps

Please see below helpful (but not essential) links to further support your child's learning:

● **_Scoilnet.ie:_** Official education portal of the Department of Education and Skills., Curriculum focused resources and support for primary and post-primary schools.

● **_Schooldays.ie:_** Official education portal of the Department of Education and Skills. Provides a range of resources, worksheets and project information for all subjects.

● **_Seomraranga.com:_** features a range of free activities and resources, such as flashcards, poetry books, and educational bingo games.

● **_Khanacademy.org:_** Courses are broken up into multiple subjects and classes, helping you to create a personalised educational course for your child.

● **_Education.com:_** Education.com's Learning Library contains a plethora of fun worksheets for primary level children, such as word searches, colouring books and writing exercises.

- **Topmarks.co.uk:** Top Marks splits activities into age groups and levels ranging from the 'Teddy Numbers' game that helps toddlers learn to count to two-minute subtraction challenges for older children.

- **Kids.nationalgeographic.com:** Interactive games, videos, and fact sheets about everything from animals to the world's wonders and climate change on National Geographic's dedicated kids' website.

- **Frugalfun4boys.com:** Lego activities and STEM content for fun educational games.

- **Cúla 4**: Excellent for younger pupils for Irish vocabulary – very child friendly.

- **Starfall**: Very child friendly and useful to keep spellings progressing

- **Jolly Phonics App**: To support phonics learning for infant classes.

- **Dolch Words Apps:** (There is a wide range available). For the development of sight words.

- **Pinkfong**: Digital stories for infant classes.
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- **Kahoot**: For general knowledge and quizzes.

- **Puppet Pals**: Similar to **Toontastic** – useful for younger pupils. They can record themselves telling the story also.