

Distance Learning Policy

Ballyfeeney NS

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**Ballyfeeney NS Distance Learning Policy**

**Introduction**

In response to the current Covid pandemic, we have formulated this policy to outline how the school will engage with teaching and learning in the event of a whole or partial school closure.  The primary obligations of all schools are to see to the education of our pupils and the welfare of our school community. Remote learning seeks to continue this even when the pupils and teachers can no longer be present in the school.

This document sets out the policy of the school in respect of use of technology for distance or remote teaching and learning during the current Coronavirus stay at home instruction period, hereafter referred to as “Distance eLearning” –

Staff are aware of the challenges faced by some families in accessing digital technology- in all instances hard copy materials for example worksheets, pupil’s books will be provided. Links provided to websites, apps, video clips etc are envisaged to support the pupils learning at home.

Attention is also drawn to the limited access school staff have to the school building to access photocopiers etc. during this closure and it may not be possible to satisfy requests for extra hardcopy materials.

This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure

* that remote learning is safe for all
* that personal and sensitive data is also protected under GDPR legislation
* that learning takes place in an environment that is respectful and fair and meets its statutory duties.
* that the wellbeing of pupils and staff is protected

 This policy should be read in tandem with our school’s

* Code of Behaviour Policy
* Anti-Bullying Policy
* Acceptable Use Policy
* Data Protection Policy
* Mobile Phone Policy

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

**Guidelines for good online communication**

Teaching and learning relies on co-operation and communication between home and school. This is even more important when it comes to remote teaching and learning.  With that in mind, we would ask everyone involved in the process to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Parental/Guardian consent must be received for students’ details to be added to online learning platforms. Pupils will not have access to these online platforms until consent is received by the school.
2. Staff and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
3. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of interactions between teachers and pupils or work uploaded.
4. 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.
5. Staff members will communicate with pupils via Seesaw
6. When deemed necessary, support may also be offered via telephone. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
7. Support meetings/calls will be for pupils. If parents wish to have meetings via phone call with teachers, they can do so by arrangement via the school email.
8. Ballyfeeney NScannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.

**Media which will be primarily used by the school:**

**E-mail**

All teaching staff have access to school email which may be used to communicate with children and parents/guardians.

In the first instance **all queries should be directed to the pupil’s class teacher.**

The Special Education Teacher (SET) will also communicate with pupils whom she/he is working with.

In all instances school staff will communicate with parents/guardians via the emails provided by parents to the school.

It is the policy of the school that all parent(s)/guardians must provide the school with an up-to-date email address. Staff will not engage with emails from pupil’s personal email addresses. All email communication to school staff must come from a parent(s)/guardian(s) email address.

**Seesaw**

Seesaw is an easy to use online platform which enables pupils to connect to their folder of work and to access their teacher when required. Lessons may be pre -recorded and uploaded on Seesaw. In this way they can be accessed at any time. This will be used in all classes

There may be some additional applications that teachers may use; in this instance the teacher will provide the student with the information required to access the same. Best practice and Department of Education guidance will inform teacher practices in this area.

**eLearning Approach**

eLearning will take what is known as a “blended approach” and some teachers may use different methods more than another teacher.

In all cases the primary aim is to cover the required curriculum areas for a specific subject. The teacher will decide the most effective method to use to achieve this aim. Students should get in touch with their teacher right away if they are having difficulty with any aspect or if they are finding the workload unmanageable. Parents of children who are supported by the SET will also receive additional materials/support from him/her.

**Roles & Responsibilities**

**Pupils**

**For submitting learning:**

* Check in regularly for assigned work/communication or feedback from school staff
* Communication may only take place during normal school hours
* The normal school calendar will apply
* Submit work and pictures that are appropriate
* Submit within the allocated time
* 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.
* The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  1. Code of Behaviour
  2. Anti- Bullying Policy
  3. Acceptable Use Policy
  4. Mobile Phone Policy

**Parents and guardians**

**For learning**

1. We ask parents/guardians to ensure protocols for students are adhered to.
2. Check-in on their child’s school work on a daily basis if necessary and talk to their child about the work being assigned.
3. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
4. Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate. This may not be necessary in all classes.
5. Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.
6. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken/shared of content uploaded to see saw by the class teacher.
7. In general, please remember that our learning platforms/phone calls are to the children. You are encouraged to supervise and are welcome to be in the vicinity but, as in school, the interactions will be between the teacher and the pupil.
8. Parents/Guardians are to communicate through see saw/the email provided by you to the school only. Updated email addresses should be sent to ballyfeeneyns@gmail.com .
9. The use of a pupil’s personal e-mail address is strictly prohibited.
10. All communication must always be civil and respectful towards school staff and fellow students.
11. We are continuing with the work of the school at this time especially in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy so it is important that children keep up.
12. 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 your children to engage with the school.  We provide work and guidance and ask parents and pupils to do their best and that is all.

**Teachers/SNAs**

1. Teachers and SET check uploaded work daily.
2. Communication may only take place during normal school hours unless under exceptional circumstances agreed by all parties.
3. The normal school calendar will apply.
4. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
   1. Child Protection Policy
   2. Data Protection Policy
   3. Anti-Bullying
   4. AUP
5. 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 and support will be provided by the class teacher and the Special Education Teacher on an ongoing basis.
6. SNAs will support the Class Teacher and Special Education Teacher in preparing supplementary materials to help pupils and encourage their participation in remote learning.

This plan has been agreed on by the school staff in conjunction with the BOM

Chairperson of BOM

Principal