



Scoil Mhuire, Maigh Cuilinn Scoil Mhuire. Moycullen CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING 2020/21

Rationale

This Remote Teaching and Learning Plan was drawn up by the Staff of Scoil Mhuire in response to Department of Education and Skills Circular 0074/2020, in which schools were requested to put in place appropriate contingency measures to ensure that they are prepared to continue to support teaching and learning in the event of a partial or full closure of schools arising from Public Health advice.

This Policy has been drafted in line with:

- Department of Education and Skills Circular 0074/2020
- DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for Primary Schools
- DES Guidance Continuity of Schooling for Parents/Guardians of Primary School Pupils
- DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs for Primary Schools
- DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: Supporting pupils at risk of Educational Disadvantage for Primary Schools
- DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: Supporting Primary Pupils at very High Risk to Covid 19

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Acceptable Usage Policy.

Background

The focus of our School Self Evaluation for the 2019/20 school year was the development of the school's Digital Learning Plan, with particular emphasis on the use of SeeSaw as a digital teaching and learning platform, and the use of Book Creator for creation of digital content, to compliment the focus of the previous year's School Self Evaluation, which was the whole-school implementation of the teaching of The Writing Genres.

The school had enlisted the support of PDST Digital Technologies Advisor David Brennan, who helped us to draft our Digital Learning Plan. It was agreed that all classes in the school would begin to familiarise themselves with SeeSaw for in-school teaching and learning, using our inventory of iPads that had been purchased from grant funding received from the Department of Education and Skills in respect of IT.

In tandem with the introduction of SeeSaw, the school had introduced G Suite for Education, and Senior Classes (4th to 6th Classes) had begun to familiarise themselves with Google Classroom.

Thus, when the Government ordered the closure of schools on 12th March 2020 due to the Public Health Emergency posed by COVID-19, our school was in the fortunate position of having a number of Remote Teaching and Learning platforms at our disposal, which were quickly put into use to support children's learning from home.

On our return to school at the start of the 2020/21 school year, we conducted a Parent Survey on their and their children's experiences of Remote Learning from March to June 2020, and set about refining our approach to Remote Teaching and Learning to render it more manageable, more pupil-friendly, parent-friendly and teacher-friendly and to include more real-time engagement between teachers and their Class/SEN Groups.

The following is an outline of our school's revised Remote Teaching and Learning Plan.

Aims and Objectives

This policy seeks to ensure:

- Effective, two-way communication between the school, school staff and parents/guardians
- Continuance of Teaching and Learning via suitable and appropriate digital/online platforms
- Universal pupil engagement with Remote Learning
- Increased real-time engagement between teachers and their classes/groups
- Improved social/emotional support for pupils
- More effective, user-friendly pupil and parent engagement with SeeSaw
- Better quality Remote Teaching through use of instructional video and audio clips
- Use of a variety of content creation apps to produce better quality instructional material
- Daily communication and engagement between teachers and pupils/students (including classroom work assignment and returns, feedback and assessment)
- Coverage to the whole Curriculum, to the greatest extent possible
- Appropriate differentiation of work for pupils of varying abilities
- That pupils are enabled to work independently
- Safe and secure Remote Learning for all pupils
- Compliance with GDPR in terms of protecting personal and sensitive data

Platforms in use by the school for Remote Teaching and Learning

The communication platforms and remote learning platforms in use by the school will be

- Aladdin (Communication)
- Email (Communication)
- Phone (Communication)
- SeeSaw (Teaching and Learning)
- Google Classroom (Teaching and Learning)
- Google Meet (video Conferencing)
- Zoom (Video Conferencing)

Imminent school closure or exclusion of classes or individual pupils

The Principal will convene a Staff Meeting for the purposes of clarifying arrangements to be put in place to commence Remote Teaching and Learning.

The school will contact parents/guardians via Aladdin Noticeboard and email to make them aware of arrangements for the commencement of Remote Teaching and Learning.

The school will secure any outstanding permissions or consents needed for pupils to fully engage with our Distance Teaching and Learning platforms.

The Class Teacher and SEN Teacher, where appropriate, will arrange to have textbooks, copies, work packs, etc. sent home with pupils or collected from the school by parents.

Teachers will ensure that all parents have their school email addresses to facilitate regular and effective two-way communication. Parents will be encouraged to provide feedback to teachers regarding their experience of Remote Learning and any difficulties they may have or support they may require.

Parents will be encouraged to contact the school via email for technical or other support.

In line with their teaching plans, teachers may decide on the type and number of books to be sent home/collected, i.e. not all books/copies need to go home.

Teachers must ensure that pupils have all the books and materials they will need to cover the curriculum.

Through the Class Teacher, the school will identify pupils in need of devices to use for Remote Learning. The school, insofar as possible, will make iPads available for pupils to borrow, from its inventory of same.

Remote Learning

EMAIL

Teachers will send a brief outline of work they will be covering with their classes/groups via SeeSaw and email on a weekly basis, i.e. on Sunday evenings.

SEESAW/GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Teachers will send individual Home Learning Codes to parents via email.

Instructional material and work to be done on SeeSaw/Google Classroom will be scheduled by teachers to go live the evening before, to give parents a chance to review and prepare and to print out worksheets, etc.

In acknowledgement of the demand for more audio-visual teacher engagement on SeeSaw/Google Classroom, teachers will upload an increased number of tutorial videos and audio clips that can be accessed repeatedly by pupils, such as how-to video clips in Maths, audio clips of English and Irish reading, etc.

Teachers will use a variety of content creation applications to produce instructional material, e.g. Loom, Screencastify, Adobe.

Content created by the teacher and posted on Seesaw or Zoom is the property of the teacher. Pupils and parents/guardian may not share this content with third parties without the consent of the teacher.

Teachers will provide regular, appropriate feedback to pupils on work they have submitted.

Teachers will assess the progress of their pupils regularly.

Parents/guardians should supervise pupils while they are working online and review their work to ensure that any content submitted to their teacher is appropriate.

ZOOM/GOOGLE MEET

Zoom/Google Meet sessions may take the form of Whole Class Meetings, Group Meetings or Individual Pupil-Teacher/SNA meetings.

Regarding SNAs engagement with SEN pupils via Zoom, this will be organised by the SEN teacher, in consultation with the pupil's parents and according to their wishes.

Class Teachers and SEN Teachers will hold Zoom/Google Meet sessions with their classes on a twice weekly basis. Increased real-time interaction between teachers and pupils was highlighted as "very important" by the vast majority of parents in our survey.

The initial main focus of these sessions will be social and emotional support for children who are separated from their teacher and classmates. The usefulness of Zoom as a teaching tool is in direct proportion to the age of the children involved in terms of content delivery and concept development and reinforcement, but it is important that children would have the chance to engage with their teacher(s) and each other, a number of times each week.

Consent requests will be sent to parents/guardians via Aladdin Connect for their children to participate in Zoom sessions.

A re-useable link to Zoom Meetings will be sent to parents/guardians via Aladdin Noticeboard/email.

Teachers will adhere to the school's Zoom timetable, which will mean that no two children in the same family will have Zoom sessions at the same time. Teachers are free to host additional Zoom sessions with their classes/groups, providing these do not clash with Zoom sessions that other teachers have scheduled for those pupils or their siblings.

The school's Zoom Meeting Code of Conduct will be sent to all parents via email. By engaging with Zoom sessions, all parents and children are expected to comply with this Code of Conduct, which is as follows:

ZOOM CODE OF CONDUCT

- Parents must provide the school with consent for their child(ren) to engage in Zoom sessions via Aladdin Permissions in Aladdin Connect.
- In the case of one-to-one Pupil-Teacher/SNA Zoom sessions, the child's parent/guardian must be present with (beside) the child for the duration. Under no circumstances will teachers or SNAs engage in one-to-one Zoom sessions without a parent being present at all times.
- In the case of whole class or group Zoom sessions, a parent/guardian must be nearby (within earshot and visual range) to supervise. The parent must be aware of what is taking place.
- The pupil must not engage in Zoom sessions from his/her bedroom. The child should take part from a communal room such as sitting room or kitchen.
- The pupil must be fully dressed.
- The pupil must present ready and prepared for work.
- Taking photos or video/audio recordings of Zoom sessions, by any means, is strictly prohibited. Any evidence of violation of same will be treated with the utmost seriousness and reported to the relevant authorities.
- "Chatting" during Zoom sessions is not allowed. The teacher should ensure that the chat function is disabled prior to the meeting.

- Staff members, families and pupils are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner while engaged in Zoom sessions. Any unruly, disruptive behaviour or use of foul language will result in ejection from the session. The offending person will not be re-admitted nor will he/she longer be admitted to subsequent Zoom meetings.
- Scoil Mhuire cannot accept responsibility for the absolute security of Zoom, in the unlikely event that it is compromised.

Support for Children at Very High Risk to COVID-19

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

In the case of pupils who cannot attend school due to the risk posed to their health due to COVID-19, the pupil's Class Teacher and, where applicable the pupil's SEN Teacher, will maintain regular contact with the pupil's parents/guardians with a view to supporting the pupil's learning.

In so far as possible, provision for students at very high-risk to COVID-19 will be made when using Remote Learning platforms.

The Class Teacher should send a weekly email to the parent/guardian, with a brief outline of the work to be covered during the week.

The Class Teacher and, where applicable the pupil's SEN Teacher, will post a certain amount of work on SeeSaw and will provide feedback on same.

Support for pupils awaiting COVID-19 test results isolating at home for a number of days.

These pupils will be supported via email by the Class Teacher.

Support for pupils self-isolating at home due to a confirmed case within their family/close contact for 14 days

These pupils will be supported via email by the Class Teacher. The Class Teacher and, where applicable, the pupil's SEN Teacher, will post a certain amount of work on SeeSaw and will provide feedback on same.

Whole class excluded from school by the HSE for 14 days

The Class Teacher will send a weekly email to the parent/guardian, with a brief outline of the work to be covered during the week. The Class Teacher and, where applicable, the pupil's SEN Teacher will engage with the class daily through a combination of Seesaw and Zoom (each class group twice a week).

Support for Children with SEN during a period of school closure

The SEN Teacher assigned to each particular class level is to be set up as a co-teacher on SeeSaw by the Class Teacher.

The SEN Teacher will collaborate with the Class Teacher regarding provision of lessons and work. This may involve the SEN Teacher taking responsibility for supporting pupils in the completion of differentiated work in Literacy and Numeracy.

SEN Teachers will provide instructional video/audio clips on SeeSaw and will provide regular feedback to pupils.

SEN Teachers will collaborate with Class Teachers with a view to participating in Class Zoom Sessions. SEN Teachers will be sent by Class Teachers into a Breakout Room to engage with pupils on their SEN/LS caseloads. Parents to be made by the SEN Teacher aware that this will be happening and that **ONLY GROUPS, NEVER SINGLE CHILDREN** will be taken into the Breakout Room.

SEN Teachers will host additional SEN Zoom sessions each week. SEN teachers will make contact with parents regarding these additional SEN Zoom Sessions. Parental permission is to be sought by the SEN Teacher to combine SEN/LS groups from different classes (of the same class level) with a view to reducing the number of Zoom Sessions involved, if necessary.

Feedback will be sought from parents Parent's decision regarding their child's engagement with SEN Zoom sessions. The SEN Teacher should make it clear to parents that they will not admit pupils to a Zoom session if only one child out of a group turns up to join the call.

SEN Teachers will contact Parents of pupils with SNA access to discuss suitable times for Zoom Sessions/Support Calls with SNAs. Parent must be present for the duration of all Zooms/Calls.

SEN Teachers may participate with SNAs in Zoom Sessions and/or support calls. This to be done with due regard to the wishes of the parents.

SEN Teachers wishing to send work packs to pupils should email them to the school. Materials will be printed and sent to pupils by post with a SAE to facilitate return. It may also be possible for children to post completed exercises on SeeSaw.

Engagement with Remote Learning

Engagement with remote learning via SeeSaw and Google Classroom was very positive during the initial school closure from March to June. Our school closed at a time when a significant portion of the curriculum had been covered.

As remote teaching and learning cannot hope to adequately replace in-school teaching and learning, pupils returned to school already well behind where they would usually be in September.

Class exclusions and whole-school closures are very disruptive to pupil's learning. The only way to mitigate this disruption is for pupils, parents and teachers to make the best possible use of the teaching and learning platforms at our disposal and to engage as fully and constructively as possible.

Failure by pupils to engage meaningfully with our digital platforms would be very unfortunate, as pupils already disadvantaged up from the last school closure would be placed at **a serious educational disadvantage** on their return to school. For this reason, we are fully prepared to do whatever we can and must do to ensure that all are able to engage fully in remote learning on this occasion.

Teachers will contact parents via email and phonecall with a view to supporting those who are not managing to regularly engage. Technical support, textbooks and devices are available from the school.

Contacting Teachers and the School during a period of school closure

The school office will be manned from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Email will be monitored from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily.

Parents/guardians who need to collect need to collect textbooks or devices from the school, should call and/or email the school and arrangements will be made to facilitate safe collection of same.

Parents/guardians should ensure that they have their child's teacher(s)' school email address.

Parents should email teachers, in the first instance, regarding any queries, difficulties or requirements.

Parents/guardians should check their email and log in to Aladdin Connect regularly so as not to miss important messages from the school.