ST.FELIM'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Remote Teaching and Learning and Communication Plan

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 how the school will communicate with and between staff, with parents and with the Board of Management. In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our school community through various means, in order to maintain positive working relationships and to foster a shared learning environment.

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 replaces the Distance Learning Policy 2020 but does not set out to replace our Mobile Phone or Acceptable Usage Policy. It is an important addition to the area of learning via digital platform. The policy presented here should also be read in tandem with our school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-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) Guidance on Remote Learning in a COVID-*19* Context: September – December 2020
n) Circular 0074/2020: Communication/Teaching & Learning Platform

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 remote learning and that families are in favour of increased opportunities to maintain the connection between school and home. St. Felim's NS uses a variety of child friendly online platforms, 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 St. Felim's N.S.
1. Staff, pupils and their families are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
2. Electronic forms of communication will be for educational and communication purposes only.
3. Staff members can communicate with pupils and their families via Seesaw, Aladdin Connect, emails or any other method which has been approved by the school.
4. Pupils and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school, of which parents have been notified.
5. Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication platform.
6. 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.
7. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls. This is a breach of Data Protection.
8. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure any content which they are submitting to their teacher is appropriate.
9. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
10. St. Felim's N.S. cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are hacked. We will however take prudent steps to ensure that the safety of our pupils is protected at all times.
11. In exceptional circumstances, if staff members need to communicate with parents using a mobile phone, they will ensure that their caller ID is private. Personal mobile details of staff will not be shared with parents directly.

Media which the school may use for communication with the school community

St. Felim's NS will use a variety of online platforms to allow:
- Communication with parents, with and between staff and Board of Management.
- Communication and engagement between teachers and pupils including classroom work assignments and returns, feedback and assessment
- Remote learning in the event of partial or full school closure to facilitate pre-recorded lessons on Seesaw/Youtube and video calls on Zoom.

Communication with and between staff

A variety of methods are used for communication with and between staff, these include: Aladdin, WhatsApp, email, Office 365 and Zoom.

Communication with and between BOM

A variety of methods are used for communication with and between BOM, these include: WhatsApp, email, Office 365 and Zoom.

Communication with Parents and Pupils

Aladdin Connect

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

Email

For the period of a school closure, each teacher will be assigned a class e-mail address through which he/she will communicate with parents/guardians and vice-versa. Parental queries should relate strictly to your child's teaching and learning. They will be addressed during the hours of 8:30am -3:30pm and within 2 working days.

Seesaw

In line with our Digital Learning Plan, we are using Seesaw as a digital learning platform. Seesaw enables our pupils to connect with their teacher and class. It allows them to upload to their personal work area for their teacher to see. Seesaw is used from Junior Infants – Sixth Class and requires a QR code or text code for access. Parental consent is required prior to using this app. Each child will be assigned an individual access code. Unfortunately, single family log in is not facilitated on Seesaw. In the event of a full or partial school closure, some lessons may be pre -recorded and uploaded via Seesaw.

Youtube

Youtube may be used for some pre-recorded lessons when a longer video is required.

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.

Responsibilities for Staff Members for video calls/Zoom

1. Staff members will notify parents/guardians of the date, time and password for a video call via email.
2. Staff members will only admit participants to video calls, if they recognise the email address/username as being connected to a pupil.
3. Staff members will mute all microphones on entry to a video call. Staff members will control everyone's microphone and turn it on when a pupil is invited to speak, allowing them to share their thoughts without distraction or frustration.
4. Staff members will ensure that the chat function is disabled.
5. Staff members will lock the video call shortly after it has started.
6. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls. This is a breach of Data Protection.
7. Staff members reserve the right to remove pupil/s from the video call who are not engaging in a respectful way. They also reserve the right to end the call for all participants.

Responsibilities for Pupils and Parents using Online Communication Methods

Responsibilities of Pupils	Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians
For submitting learning: • Only work assigned by the class teacher and/or SET teacher may be submitted for approval • Submit work and pictures that are appropriate - have an adult take a look at your work before you send it • Use kind and friendly words.	*For learning:* • It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online. • Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate. • Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.
For video calls/Zoom: • Pictures or recordings of the video call are not allowed. • Remember our school rules - they are still in place, even online. • Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call. School uniforms are not required. • Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background but with an adult close by.	*For video calls/Zoom:* • Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls. • Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings. • The main purpose of a video call is to maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils at this difficult time. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.

• Try to test out your camera and audio before you start. Try to have all of your head showing especially your mouth, this ensures everyone can see who is talking. • Check that your microphone is muted when you join the video. • Raise your hand when you wish to speak, just like you would do in class. • If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words. • Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking. • Non-verbal cues can be used to communicate. e.g. thumbs up, thumbs down. • Eliminate distractions and focus on the video call. If you are using your phone/tablet or laptop to attend the video call, close all other apps and mute notifications. • Please do not eat during video calls. • Try your best to stay seated and stay present during the video call. Do not leave the room or talk to others not participating in the video call. • Be on time - set a reminder if it helps. • Be patient! Video calls are new to most of us and we are all learning. • Enjoy! Don't forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!	• Should you as a parent/guardian wish to speak to the teacher or the Principal, this should be arranged privately via email. • When your child is participating in group video calls, an adult should be present in the background. • Please be mindful that when a video call is active, anything going on in the background may be seen and/or heard. • 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. • Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled video call, 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 who is entering the meeting. • 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, should they be asked to do so. • Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately. • An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call. • For detailed information on GDPR and Zoom, please visit https://zoom.us/privacy

Sanctions

It is important to note that staff reserve the right to remove pupils from the video call who are not engaging in a respectful way. They also reserve the right to end the call for all participants. Should this occur, parents/guardians will be informed.

Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers/SNA's

Protocols for Teachers	Protocols for SNAs
- Communication should only take place during normal school hours in as far as practicable - Daily interaction is required between teachers and pupils to include classroom work assignment and returns, feedback and assessment. - The normal school calendar will apply - The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:<ol type="a"> - Child Safeguarding Statement - Data Protection Policy - Acceptable Use Policy - Code of Behaviour - 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.	- Communication should only take place during normal school hours in as far as practicable - Weekly interaction is required between SNAs and pupils following direction by the class teacher - The normal school calendar will apply - The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:<ol type="a"> - Child Safeguarding Statement - Data Protection Policy - Acceptable Use Policy - Code of Behaviour

Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Pupils and Parents

Protocols for Pupils	Protocols for Parents
- Engage fully with the work assigned - Complete assigned work as directed - 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	- We ask parents/guardians to ensure protocols for pupils are adhered to. - Check-in on your child's school work on a daily basis and ensure it is completed - 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. - We provide daily activities and ask parents and pupils to engage with the work as best they can.

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

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:

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 number of days.	These pupils will be supported to catch up on their learning on their return to school. Homework set on Seesaw must be completed.
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 (supported by SET if required) will link in with the pupil via Seesaw (not video conferencing).
School POD (group of six) instructed by HSE Pubic Health to self-isolate.	Teacher (supported by SET if required) will link in with the pupils via Seesaw (not video conferencing)
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 and weekly on Zoom.
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 and weekly contact on Zoom.

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

Remote Teaching and Learning Provision specifically for families with limited or no internet access or devices.

A parental survey to ascertain what gaps are in our school community was conducted. Those identified as having a need will be facilitated as follows:

Families with limited or no devices	A school device will be supplied to the families. A loan arrangement must be signed by the parent/guardian.
Families with limited internet access	Access to internet will be reviewed regularly. If a problem is identified alternate arrangements will be put in place on case by case basis
Families with no internet or device	Specific arrangements will be put in place for these families on a case by case basis. These may include but are not limited to: posting activity packs, phone calls etc.

Support Structures

The following websites are a selection of websites that offer support and advice in the area of Internet Safety and remote teaching and learning:
- NCTE - http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/
- Webwise - http://www.webwise.ie/
- Make IT Secure - http://makeitsecure.
- Safe Internet - http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/
- PDST Blended Learning - https://www.pdst.ie/blendedlearning

Summary
- Engaging with the work is mandatory, unless it cannot be completed for health reasons.
- Forget about following books and workbooks outside of the work set by teachers.
- There will be no school work set or interaction on Seesaw or Zoom for planned school closures/holidays.
- Please keep abreast of postings on the Aladdin Connect App– it is our main mode of communication with parents.
- 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.

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

Implementation and Review

1. Roles and Responsibilities
It will be the responsibility of the staff and pupils and parents to implement the policy. Parents and the Board of management will support the plan.

2. Time Frame and Review
It is subject to change and will be reviewed as often as required, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Ratification
This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on **3/11/2020**

Signed: _____   Signed: _____
         Gerry Sheanon (Chairperson B.O.M.)   Cathriona Molloy (Principal.)

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

<u>Recommended Apps</u>

In the event of a full or partial school closure, 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 vocabulary – 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.
- Duolingo: 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: a good app for digital storytelling – pupils can devise their own digital story, picking a range of characters, settings, even musical backgrounds. Children can 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.