**Remote Learning Policy**



**A Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic**

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| **Date Agreed** | **Date approved by Board of Governors** | **Review Date** |
| Oct. 2020  Drafted by M.Tunney, SMT | Nov. 2020 | Oct. 2021 |

**Contents**

* Aims
* Introduction and Context
* Flexibility of Learning
* Managing Expectations
* Roles and Responsibilities
* What will learning look like in St. Patrick’s Primary School?
* Pastoral Care
* Safeguarding
* Data Protection
* Appendix

**Remote Learning** describes any learning where the teacher and the learner are not physically together (DENI Circular 2020/05)

**Aims:**

This Remote Learning Policy aims to:

* Ensure the continued provision of teaching and learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic.
* Ensure consistency in the school’s approach to remote learning.
* Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to remote learning.
* Support the pastoral care and well-being of our pupils, staff and parents.
* Provide appropriate guidelines for data protection.

**Introduction and Context:**

This policy has been informed by the collation of data gathered from a questionnaire distributed to parents seeking their feedback on the school’s approach to Remote Learning during the initial lockdown. Teaching staff also shared their experiences and agreed ‘best practice.’

If St Patrick’s P.S. faces a further period of short or long term closure, staff will continue to provide education and support to our pupils and parents using a combination of remote learning and ‘paper packs’ where possible.

The Remote Learning platforms which will be used across our school community will be **Seesaw** and **Google Classroom (using Chrome), supplemented by the Home Learning section of our school website.** During a period of remote learning, the normal day to day teaching which takes place in a school environment will be tailored and adapted, allowing for replication of classroom activity to the best of our ability. The health and well-being of our pupils and families will be a priority, with the inclusion of activities and communications designed to address these needs.

**Flexibility of Learning:**

We realise that the circumstances that cause our school to close will affect families in a number of ways. In our planning and expectations, we are aware of the challenges and the need for flexibility from all stakeholders:

* Parents may be trying to work from home, so access to technology as a family may be limited.
* Parents may have two or more children trying to access technology and need to prioritise the needs of young people studying towards GCSE/A Level accreditation.
* Parents may not feel confident to support learning at home.
* Parents may not have access to resources such as printers, paper, ink cartridges and stationery.
* Systems may not always function as they should.
* Teachers may be trying to manage their own home situations and the learning of their own children, possibly combined with providing supervision for the children of key workers in school.

An understanding of, and willingness to adapt to these difficulties from all stakeholders will be essential to success.

**Managing Expectations:**

We, in St Patrick’s P.S. believe that it is in the best interests of our children that we continue to provide structured support to the best of our ability through remote learning. Due to the range of factors outlined above which will affect each family’s capacity to engage with remote learning, there will be a degree of flexibility with regard to submission of work and/or feedback. It must be noted however, that the work children engage in during a period of closure will be part of our current planning and so cannot be considered as optional. Children and parents should consider the arrangements as set out in this document as highly recommended.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Teaching staff** will:

* Share teaching and learning activities with the children in their class through ‘paper packs’ and the Seesaw and Google Classroom platforms.
* Continue to plan the teaching content in line with the comprehensive planning already in place throughout the school.
* Understand the fact that learning remotely will be more difficult, so tasks will be set in smaller steps to allow for this.
* Keep in contact with pupils and parents through Seesaw and/or Google Classroom.
* Reply to messages, set work and give feedback on learning during the normal school based hours of 9.00 am – 4.00 pm.
* Make allowances for asynchronous learning, understanding that the circumstances leading to our closure will affect families in a number of ways.
* Provide appropriate teaching videos/clips on see-saw, google classroom, St.Patrick’s You tube channel or constructive links on the internet.
* Ensure that the SMT are made aware of pupils who are not engaging with remote learning.
* Take regular breaks away from the computer or IPad to engage in other professional duties as much as circumstances allow e.g. remote staff meetings, policy development, online training etc.
* If unwell themselves, contact the principal and arrange to be covered by another staff member for the purpose of sharing learning activities. Following up messages on Seesaw or Google Classroom during this time will not be undertaken until the teacher is fit to work.

**Non-teaching staff** will:

* Support the class teacher in the preparation of ‘paper packs’ and learning activities.
* Provide care and supervision for the children of key workers if necessary.
* Engage in remote and/or online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as requested by the Principal.
* Have access to Seesaw and Google Classroom platforms to support learning.
* Directly support assigned pupil/small groups of pupils who may require additional support as requested by the Principal (SEN Classroom Assistants). Ensure all communications are shared with the class teacher or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo).
* Inform the Principal and class teacher if unwell.

**Principal and SMT** will:

* Provide the school’s policies and guidance on the use of E-Learning platforms.
* Communicate clearly to all staff, the school’s expectations of teachers, parents and pupils when learning remotely.
* Communicate clearly to all pupils and parents the school’s expectations of their participation in any remote learning.
* Co-ordinate the remote learning approach across the school.
* Monitor the effectiveness of the remote learning activities through contact with staff and parents.
* Oversee the ongoing well-being of our school community.

**Pupils** will:

* Be assured that Health and Well-being is a priority and therefore take regular breaks, get fresh air and exercise and maintain a reasonable balance between online engagement and offline activities.
* Undertake, to the best of their ability, all tasks prepared for remote learning.
* Only send messages and queries that are in relation to tasks set by the teacher, or in response to questions the teacher may ask them directly.
* Only access the material shared by their teacher and ask for parental permission to use technology for anything beyond that.
* Read daily, either independently or with an adult, and, where applicable, engage with Bug Club.
* Consider using the school closure time to learn a new skill, follow their own interests to discover more about the world around us, or just be creative.
* Have fun with learning.

**Parents** will:

* Support their child as best they are able given their own home circumstances, health and work commitments.
* Encourage their child to access and engage with learning posted on Seesaw or Google Classroom by the teacher.
* Refrain from screenshotting or copying any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform outside of Seesaw or Google Classroom.
* Know they can continue to contact their child’s class teacher as normal through Seesaw or Google Classroom if they require support of any kind.
* Check their child’s completed work each day and encourage/praise the progress that is being made.
* Be mindful of the health and well-being of both themselves and their child and encourage their child to take regular breaks, play games, get fresh air and relax.
* Note that if a pupil is off school for non –Covid reasons, no school work will be set by the class teacher. Homework can be requested by the child’s parent via see-saw.

**Governors** will:

* Ensure the continued provision of teaching and learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic.
* Ensure appropriate policies are in place to safeguard pupils and teachers using ICT and Digital Technologies, including online platforms such as Google Classroom for remote learning.
* Continue to support staff and pupil well-being.
* Direct any approaches by parents made to them directly or indirectly to the Principal via email to [coneill951@stpatsps.holywood.ni.sch.uk](mailto:coneill951@stpatsps.holywood.ni.sch.uk)

**What will learning look like in St Patrick’s Primary School?**

St. Patrick’s P.S. will operate the following procedures for Remote Learning Support:

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| **If a pupil is self-isolating** |
| * Parents should contact the Principal to confirm their child’s absence. * Pupils will be given all relevant ‘log in’ details to ensure that all activities are accessible. * Support will be provided individually on a daily basis, in consultation with the pupil’s class teacher. * A home learning ‘paper pack’ will be provided containing resources linked to class work. * Completed work should be uploaded to Seesaw or Google Classroom and will be marked with positive feedback given and areas for development highlighted. * **Step-by-step guides to support parents logging in to C2K My School and Google Classroom will be available in the ‘Parents’ section of the school website.** * Parents should inform the school if there are any technical issues which prevent their children from accessing online learning. |

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| **If a ‘class bubble’ is isolating** |
| * The Principal will notify parents if a ‘class bubble’ needs to isolate as soon as we receive advise from the Public Health Agency (PHA). * Pupils will engage in teaching and learning remotely supported by their class teacher. * Pupils will be given all relevant ‘log in’ details to ensure that all activities are accessible. * A home learning ‘paper pack’ will be provided, if possible, containing resources linked to class work. * Completed work should be uploaded to Seesaw or Google Classroom and will be marked with positive feedback given and areas for development highlighted. * **Step-by-step guides to support parents logging in to C2K My School and Google Classroom will be available in the ‘Parents’ section of the school website.** * Parents should inform the school if there are any technical issues which prevent their children from accessing online learning. |

In the event of a short ‘circuit breaker’ or a further prolonged period of closure, the following will apply:

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| **Further Lockdowns** |
| * Pupils will engage in teaching and learning remotely supported by their class teacher. * Pupils will be given all relevant ‘log in’ details to ensure that all activities are accessible. * ‘Paper packs’ will be provided outlining weekly activities and containing printed learning resources. * Online content – short teaching videos, online clips etc. – will be posted on Seesaw or Google Classroom linked to the learning for each week. * Completed work should be uploaded to Seesaw or Google Classroom and will be marked with positive feedback given and areas for development highlighted. * KS2 teachers will post/send Maths answer sheets for the purpose of self-correcting. * **Step-by-step guides to support parents logging in to C2K My School and Google Classroom will be available in the ‘Parents’ section of the school website.** * Parents should inform the school if there are any technical issues which prevent their children from accessing online learning. * Parents should continue to read to and with their younger children, while ensuring that older children continue to read each day. * Opportunities for learning through play, singing songs and rhymes, counting and availing of opportunities to talk should be maximised with younger children. * Practical activities such as baking, gardening, painting and craftwork could also be undertaken. * Life skills such as making a bed, emptying the dishwasher, setting the table or helping to prepare food should also be encouraged. * Opportunities to spend time outdoors or learn outdoors should be maximised. * In addition, children will also have access to the following online platforms to enhance learning – **Bug Club for reading activities, My Maths app for Mathematics and Numeracy, Purple Mash.** * **The Home Learning tab in the ‘Parents’ section of our school website contains valuable resources/links which can also be utilised during a period of extended closure.** * The school has collaborated with “Fitness Freddy” to develop a series of ‘keep fit’ lessons as well as a number of lessons promoting Health and Well-being. Parents will be sent a link to a private YouTube channel where these resources can be accessed. **\*** |

**NB: Live teaching has not been prescribed by DENI at this time and the majority of respondents to our parental survey indicated that they preferred asynchronous approaches which provided them with greater flexibility and were easier to manage at home. Therefore, this approach will remain prevalent when organising remote learning.**

**Pastoral Care:**

In St. Patrick’s, we are very mindful of the importance of personal interaction and the sense of belonging to the school community. During a period of remote learning, we aim to provide a degree of live interaction between the children and their teachers through scheduled weekly ‘live meets’ using **Google Meet**.

As a school community, we will use this time to maintain a social connection, keep pupils motivated and help them avoid feelings of isolation. We ask our families to ensure that all interactions during ‘live meets’ are conducted in an appropriate and discreet manner and with an awareness that it is a live link with other families present.

In the interests of safeguarding and child protection, we require our staff and families to adhere to the following guidelines:

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| **Staff will:** | **Parents will:** |
| * Hold a current disclosure certificate (Access NI) as required for their role. * Where possible, schedule the ‘live meet’ from school. If this is not possible, staff will ensure that members of their household will not be in the same room or be able to hear any of the call. * Behave in a professional manner throughout the call. * Not contact families using Google Meet outside of pre-arranged meetings. * Stay on the call until all children have ‘logged off.’ | * Ensure an appropriate adult is always nearby during ‘live meets.’ * Ensure their child is fully and appropriately dressed. * Ensure all members of their household are aware the call is taking place and make sure they use appropriate language and behaviour when nearby or in the background. * Ensure their child has ‘logged off’ the call correctly and signed out before turning off any devices. |

**Safeguarding:**

All Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures should be appropriately followed. Any member of staff who becomes aware of any child protection concerns should continue to follow the school’s established safeguarding procedures as set out in our Child Protection Policy.

Concerns about safeguarding – contact Designated Teacher (DT), Mr Sherlock or Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT), Mrs Tunney.

**Data Protection:**

All staff members will:

* Only use their official C2K email account and never use personal messaging systems.
* Take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes:

1. Keeping the device password-protected.
2. Ensuring the device locks if left inactive for a period of time.
3. Not sharing the device among family/friends.
4. Keeping operating systems up to date.

**Appendix:**

Documents consulted in drawing up this policy:

* DE Circular: 2020/05 Guidance for Schools on Supporting Remote Learning to Provide Educational Continuity
* DE Circular: 2020/06 Curriculum Planning 2020/21
* Coronavirus: Northern Ireland Re-opening Schools Guidance, New School Day (DENI) Version 2, August 2020
* Coronavirus: Education Restart – Guidance on Supporting Staff to Return to School (DENI) August 2020
* Undertaking Remote Teaching Safely – NSPCC
* Coronavirus: How do I home school my children? (BBC)
* Feedback from St Patrick’s Lockdown Learning Parental Survey