



# Remote Teaching and Learning Policy

## Bishop Shanahan National School

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidelines to pupils, their parents, and staff, surrounding the use of technology when teaching and learning remotely. We have formulated this policy to outline how the school will maintain the link between school and home during extended unforeseen school closure. 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 presented here should be read also in tandem with our school's Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying (including Cyber 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) Updated Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs. For mainstream Primary and Special Schools- January 2021

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



## 2. Principles:

- Remote Teaching and Learning is a short-term, emergency measure, and it cannot replace face-to face teaching and learning.
- Our main priority is to connect with pupils, to support their well-being and learning at home for the period of school closure.
- We acknowledge different pupils learning needs, including the limitations of remote learning for supporting pupils with additional needs.
- We acknowledge different home contexts, including the number of, and demand on devices in the current context.
- We use a whole-school approach to our distance learning plan and procedures, review regularly and build on what is working well for our school community (pupils, parents and staff).
- We communicate consistently with parents and encourage regular engagement of pupils via Seesaw and Zoom.

## 3. Context

Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century. Developments in Information Technology 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 distance learning and that families are in favour of increased opportunities to maintain the connection between school and home. Bishop Shanahan NS uses a variety of child friendly, online tools, which assist in providing more effective teaching and learning, while also enabling greater communication between staff, families and students.

## 4. Guidelines for good online communication in Bishop Shanahan NS

1. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.



3. 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.
4. Students and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (Seesaw, Zoom)
5. Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum.
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. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
8. Every effort will be made by the staff to ensure engagement of all pupils with online learning. Where difficulties arise the class teacher, Special Education Teacher or Principal will contact parents via email, text or phone call to support pupil engagement.
9. Bishop Shanahan N.S cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.

Bishop Shanahan NS will use three online platforms for communicating and connecting with families/pupils- E-mail, Seesaw and Zoom.

## 5. Media which the school will use

### E-mail

Each teacher is assigned a class e-mail address through which she will communicate with parents/guardians and vice-versa.

### Seesaw

*Seesaw Class App* is for our pupils to connect to their folder and they then have the option of uploading items to their folder for their teacher to see. This app requires a QR which can be accessed through the school email. 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. Some lessons will be pre -recorded and uploaded via Seesaw.

### Zoom

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Teachers will connect with pupils regularly using pre-arranged Zoom Meetings.

## 6. Rules for pupils using online communication

### For submitting learning:

1. Submit work and pictures that are appropriate - have an adult take a look at your work before you send it.
2. Use kind and friendly words.

### For video calls/Zoom:

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!

## 7. 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 maintain 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. (i.e. 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 in particular, show them how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/off.
8. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.
9. 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.

## 8. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Pupils

1. Check assigned work each day
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 all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible in this evolving and unprecedented situation.
  - a. In so far as possible, provision for SEN students will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.
  - b. In so far as possible, provision for student at very high-risk to Covid 19 will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

## **9. 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 school work on a daily basis 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. You are the primary educator of your child and you make those calls. We encourage a little work every week day for routine. We provide work and guidance and ask parents and pupils to do their best and that is all.

## **10. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers/SNA's**

1. Check uploaded work each week
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 all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible.

## **11. Remote Teaching and Learning for Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) can be particularly vulnerable as they cope with not being at school, with changes in their daily routine, and with not seeing their friends or teachers. Keeping the pupils connected to learning and to the school through engagement with their teachers and special needs assistants is a key objective for us at this time. Mainstream class teachers and special education teachers will work collaboratively to ensure a coordinated approach to assigning work. Special Needs Assistants (SNA's) will continue to play an important role in supporting pupils with complex needs and their families.



1. Mainstream class teachers will continue to differentiate work appropriately to match the learning needs of the pupil.
2. Feedback on pupil's efforts will focus on affirming pupils' efforts and motivating them to continue engaging with teaching and learning.
3. The special education teacher (SET) will liaise closely with mainstream class teacher to devise an appropriate, personalised programme of work for the pupil with SEN
4. The SET will maintain regular contact with the parents and guardians of pupils on their caseload.
5. The SET will communicate and agree a programme of work with the pupil's parents and guardians, taking account of the pupil's capacity to use or engage with online learning platforms.
6. SETs may engage with pupils and their parents and guardians by:
  - Phone
  - Provision of hard copy work packs to parents and guardians
  - E-mail
  - Seesaw
  - Zoom
7. Working under the direction of the class teacher the SNA will
  - Engage with the pupils they usually support in school to provide opportunities for social engagement eg. story reading via Zoom
  - Attend weekly Zoom class meeting with the class teacher, where appropriate

## 12. 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).**

Pupils will receive core class work content via email.

3. **School POD (group of six) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate.**

A teacher will link in with the pupils via See-Saw (not video conferencing).



**4. School bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14day isolation period).**

Teacher will engage with the bubble daily on Seesaw and regularly on Zoom.

**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 and regular contact on Zoom.

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

### 13. Summary:

1. Do what you can, within your circumstances, focusing on the work set by teachers for the moment.
2. There will be no school work set for planned school closures/holidays. There will be no interaction on Zoom or Seesaw during these times
3. Please keep abreast of postings on the school website
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 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 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 Bishop Shanahan NS at its meeting on:

\_\_\_\_\_ and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed: David Spring  
(Chairman, BOM)

Signed: Ann Nolan  
(Principal)

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021

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Date of next review: February 2022