



Pelletstown Educate Together National School

Remote Learning Policy

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on: 25th February 2021

Pelletstown Educate Together National School

Ashtown Road, Rathborne, Dublin 15 D15 W571

Roll No: 20392i

Remote Learning Policy 2021

Introduction:

This Remote Learning Policy outlines the approach taken by Pelletstown ETNS to remote learning during periods of school closure due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Pelletstown ETNS aims to ensure a safe and fair learning experience for students and teachers. This is a working document, as we try out new ways of supporting distance learning, the document will be updated.

This document was ratified in order to formalise the approach taken using online learning platforms. It was devised based on guidelines from the Department of Education, advice from the school Inspector, a review of the level of pupils engagement with various platforms to date, feedback from staff and feedback from parents using a google forms survey.

Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is:

- to outline the approach that will be taken to remote learning
- to specify the online learning platforms that are used for remote learning
- to provide guidance on best practice for remote learning.

Content:

1. Communication

Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families. Staff members can communicate with parents via Class Email accounts and communicate with pupils through SeeSaw or Zoom. Communication using a mobile phone will not be frequent, but in the rare exception where it is necessary, staff members will ensure that their caller ID is private. Staff will communicate with parents during school hours where practicable and will BCC parent email addresses when communicating with the class group for GDPR purposes. Staff members will report any concerns regarding online interactions to school management.

2. Consent

Seesaw: Written parental permission must be obtained before engaging with an online platform such as SeeSaw.

Zoom/Video Calls: For video/Zoom calls, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via the parent/carer's email address. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.

3. Use of Online Platforms

Live online lessons will not be used **as the main format** for teaching and learning for reasons of GDPR, child safeguarding and equality of access. The following outlines the main approaches that the school will take to ensure consistency of teaching and learning during periods of Government-directed school closures.

3.1 Seesaw

As advised in Circular 0074/2020, pre-recorded lessons will be uploaded to SeeSaw so that parents and pupils can access content in their own time.

SeeSaw pre-recorded lessons and tasks are scheduled to become live the day before pupils are to complete the assigned work, to give parents adequate time to prepare if necessary. Daily tasks are assigned for the three core subjects; Maths, English and Gaelge. In addition, weekly choice tasks are assigned for the remaining subjects with a focus on Wellbeing. Lessons for core subjects are titled with the day they are to be completed on e.g. 'Monday – Maths' and choice tasks are titled clearly to show they can complete the task at any time of the week e.g. 'Week 1 PE'. All tasks will be archived by 8.30am on Monday mornings to ensure that assigned work is clear and accessible for pupils.

Websites or apps such as Mangahigh and Epic will be used regularly. Specific websites to access online content will be communicated to parents in advance e.g. FolensOnline, CJFallon, Dabble Doo music etc. Pupils are asked to submit at least one piece of work daily.

Teachers will ensure that pupils can only see their own work and are not permitted to view other pupils' work, with the exception of blog activities and tasks in 3rd and 4th class.

Following a trial period of the seesaw blog feature with 4th class, this will be extended to 3rd class from 1st March. This will be for on activity per week and pupils must follow the guidelines as set out by their teachers in this regard.

Teachers will engage with students daily with regular feedback through short comments, stickers or emojis via SeeSaw. Teachers will provide detailed feedback weekly on one piece of work in the format of 'Two Stars and a Wish' using emojis in a comment via SeeSaw.

Pupils are asked to upload a minimum of 10 completed tasks per fortnight.

3.2 Zoom

The purpose of Zoom calls is as follows:

- (a) First and foremost; to provide an opportunity for a social 'check-in' with pupils/classes during a period of school closure.
- (b) To allow pupils a live opportunity with their class teacher to clarify or ask questions about new concepts or content at the start of each week.

Please note: Zoom will not be used as the primary platform for teaching and learning because Pelletstown ETNS wishes to ensure Equality of Access and participation of all pupils for lessons.

Frequency of Zoom (video calls):

Classes:

From 1st March, all classes will have a weekly Zoom call with their class teacher. This will take place between Monday and Wednesday each week. As a guide, the zoom call will be approx. 40 – 60 mins. This will be dependent on engagement of pupils and content each week.

SET/SNA/EAL:

Pupils who are supported by SET, EAL and SNA staff will have regular zoom calls, proportionate to the level of frequency of support they receive in school.

4. Responsibilities

Principal Responsibilities:

- Oversee development of Zoom guidelines and circulate to all staff and parents
- Liaise with staff to support development of zoom schedule
- Oversee the allocation of additional staff to classes so that there are at least two staff members present in each meeting for purposes of Child Safeguarding

Teacher Responsibilities:

- Teacher sets up and schedules zoom meeting (including meeting ID and password) using the school Zoom account
- Teacher sends the link of the Zoom meeting to parents no later than the day before the scheduled Zoom check-in
- Teacher adds relevant support teacher as an additional host
- Teacher enables waiting room and lets children in one by one.
- Teacher ensures that children are muted when they first enter the meeting and are then unmuted when they would like to speak.
- Teacher turns off the chat function. Zoom chat will be limited to Host Only, so that if someone's sound/mic isn't working then this can be communicated from/to the host only.
- Remind all participants of these guidelines at start of Zoom meeting
- Teacher allows each child an opportunity to speak at least once if they so wish (e.g. share some news, tell the class about something they are proud of, something they have enjoyed doing or learning about).
- Teachers will schedule meetings for a maximum of one hour and will leave a 5 minute window at the start to allow participants to join and be admitted from the waiting room
- Class teacher and relevant support staff are responsible muting/unmuting arrangements, and for the particular activities for each class level
- Teacher will liaise with the Principal regarding any feedback or concerns arising from the zoom call.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities:

- Parent provides device for their child to access Zoom meeting
- Parent provides consent for their child to participate in the Zoom meeting by accessing it with them
- Parent ensures that no recording device/ or recording feature is present or used. -
- Parents should remind their children of the importance of the school rules before the meeting begins.

- Parents should remain in the same room as the child for the duration of the Zoom meeting, but not on the screen.
- Parent/carer ensures their child's name is written as their screen name so teachers know who can be admitted (only use your child's first name). If the child's name is not written correctly and the teacher is unable to identify them, they may not be granted access to the zoom call.
- Parents should ensure that there are no distracting or inappropriate images in the background
- Parents should ensure that children are dressed appropriately for the call
- Parents should ensure that the camera/mic is turned off if the child needs to leave the meeting or move to another part of the house
- Parents must not share the meeting login details with another person

Pupil Responsibilities:

- Follow the school rules at all times - remember to be respectful, kind and a good listener.
- Enter the meeting with your own name as your screen name.
- No eating/drinking during the call - except a drink of water.
- Raise your (virtual) hand to speak or wait to be called upon by your teacher
- Pupils must not share the meeting login details with another person

5. Recordings

No recording of any type (audio, still image or videographic) on any device is permitted by any participant in Zoom calls.

To do so would breach Data Protection Policies and any such breach may be referred to the Data Commissioner under GDPR regulations.

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 in a meeting being immediately terminated. In this case, the child's parent will receive a report on the incident.

6. Whole School Activities and Weekly Assemblies

Weekly videos will be sent introducing the Assembly theme related to Ethical Education and the Nath na Seachtaine (Irish phrase of the week). Whole school activities for weeks that have a particular focus such as Wellbeing Week, Active Schools week or Maths week will continue to be promoted but separate to normal assigned classwork.

7. Pupils with Special Education Needs and English as an Additional Language learners

Special Education Teachers (SET) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) Teachers will provide differentiated work where applicable for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or pupils with EAL. This differentiated work is to replace classwork and not to overload the pupil with extra tasks, an can be accessed through the child's seesaw profile. If differentiated work is not completed, teachers will not continue to provide further differentiated work. SETs and SNAs will work collaboratively to connect with pupils with Special Educational Needs on the school's Continuum of Support through the use of Zoom check-ins. Siblings will also be invited to join interactions.

8. Emergency/Exceptional provision for Pupils

- In situations where pupils have not engaged with the online learning platforms (at the minimum level outlined above), they may be contacted by their child's teacher or by a member of school management for check-in purposes.
- In situations where families do not have access to the internet, they should contact the school so that alternative learning arrangements can be made (e.g. posting hard copies of the assigned work)
- Information about In-person supplementary programmes will be communicated to the relevant families in line with DES issued guidance. Where possible, tutors will be sought from school staff, in the first instance.

Policy review:

This policy will be subject to regular review in the light of changing guidance from the DES. The review of the policy will be led by the principal.

Ratification, communication and implementation:

This policy was ratified and adopted by the Board of Management of Pelletstown Educate Together National School on 25th February 2021.

This policy will be circulated to all staff following ratification and a copy will be published on the school website. It will also be circulated to the parent body.

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the Principal, and members of teaching and non-teaching staff at Pelletstown ETNS.

Signed: *Eric Young* (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: *Caitiona ní Cheallaigh* (Principal)

Date: 25th February 2021