



## Remote Learning Policy Communication/Teaching & Learning Platform

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 the school and the home. In the event of another partial or full school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our pupils through various means.

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 engaging with remote learning.

This policy does not set out to replace our Mobile Phone or Acceptable Users Policy. Rather, it is proposed as an important addition with a particular focus on the area of remote learning. This policy presented here should be read taking in to consideration our school's Code of Behaviour Policy and our Anti-Bullying Policy.

The primary obligation of all schools is to the safety and welfare of all the learners of the school. This policy, seeks to ensure that the remote learning is safe for all students and that personal and sensitive data is also protected under GDPR legislation. The school must make every attempt to ensure that learning takes place in an environment that is respectful and fair and in compliance with statutory duties.

This policy has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Education and Skills and the 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's First Act (2017)
- (g) GDPR
- (h) Data Protection Act (2018)
- (i) Department of Education & Skills: Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post 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)

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

### **Context**

Teaching and Learning is always evolving. Developments in IT provide us all with great opportunities as learners and teachers. There is considerable 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 Behaviour and all other relevant school policies.

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. Coole NS use a specific child friendly online tool (SeeSaw) and also intend to engage with the mainstream classes via Zoom meetings (1 – 2 weekly) in an effort to facilitate the provision of effective teaching and learning, while also enabling greater communication between staff, families and students. In relation to children with additional needs, Coole NS uses a combination of telephone communication, SeeSaw and Zoom depending on the specific needs of each individual child.

### **Guidelines for good online communication:**

1. Under no circumstances should pictures be taken or online meetings/lessons/sessions be recorded without the consent of all.
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. Staff members will communicate individually with pupils and their families through an established app (e.g. Seesaw - SeeSaw Class or SeeSaw Family). Staff may also communicate through e-mail or via-telephone call from time to time

5. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to maintain a connection students and families.
6. Students and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (Seesaw, Zoom, e-mail & via telephone).
7. Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum.
8. For video/zoom calls, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via e-mail or text message to the parent/guardian's personal phone number or email address provided to the school. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.
9. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
10. Coole NS cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised. Information containing log in details will only be shared by sending a private message.

Online platforms in Coole NS:

Coole NS will use a variety of online platforms for communicating and connecting with families/pupils. Our 'Remote Teaching and Learning Plan' will include a combination of assigned work and some pre-recorded lessons (Seesaw) where applicable. Class teachers will hold 1 - 2 live zoom sessions per week. When necessary, the learning support teachers may hold live zoom sessions in certain circumstances where a child may require additional support. The school will also communicate with parents through the school website, text a parent and also email via Aladdin.

### **1. SeeSaw:**

Relevant staff members will communicate regularly with parents and pupils via the SeeSaw Class App. All families are asked to download the SeeSaw Class and to check it regularly for updates and important information. Teachers will post work for pupils each week on the SeeSaw app. Seesaw Class App is for our pupils to connect to their folder where they will have the option of uploading items to their folder for their teacher to see. This app is used from Junior infants to Sixth Class and requires a QR code/personal login code which can be accessed by parents through receipt of a school email. Parental consent is required prior to using this app. Each child will be assigned an individual access code/personal login code. Some lessons/videos will be pre-recorded and uploaded via Seesaw.

### **2. Zoom:**

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link when necessary. Subject to parental consent; teachers may connect with individual pupils using pre-arranged Zoom Meetings. Zoom will also be used to facilitate engagement between class teacher and the relevant individual class on 1 - 2 occasions per week, staff meetings, parent's association meetings, board of management meetings and any other meetings due to take place within the school community.

### **3. School Website/Blog:**

A wide range of information relating to our school can be accessed on our school website  
<http://coolens.ie/>

#### **4. School e-mail/Aladdin**

Standard correspondence e.g: letters, information notes, useful links, sharing of information are all communicated through e-mail.

#### **5. Text Messaging (Text-a-parent)**

Occasionally, Coole NS will send out short/brief messages via text message through Text-a-Parent.

#### **Rules for pupils using online communication methods:**

For submitting learning and completed tasks/activities on SeeSaw:

Submit work and pictures that are appropriate — have an adult observe the content before you send/post it. Use kind and friendly words.

Rules for children attending a Zoom Meeting for School Assembly in a remote setting (at home):

- If possible, set up the device in a quiet space to minimise distractions in the background
- Parent will oversee their child joining the meeting using Meeting ID and Password (provided immediately before the meeting)
- The host will turn off cameras of attendees
- The host will turn off/mute microphones of attendees
- Children will be permitted to use the ‘chat’ forum in an appropriate manner

Rules for children using Zoom in a remote setting (the home)

Should cameras not be in use:

- Set up the device in a quiet space with no distractions in the background
- The host (Teacher) will turn all attendees’ (students) cameras off
- The host (Teacher) may request or decide to turn off/mute microphones of attendees (students)

Should cameras be in use:

- Join the class with your microphone muted
- Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class
- Kind words to be spoken at all times
- Speak in your normal speaking voice. No shouting.
- Listen to others when they are speaking.

Guidelines for Parents and Guardians:

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.

**For video calls/ Zoom in a remote setting (at home):**

- In any case where a zoom meeting is pre-scheduled, the login details will be sent n more than an hour prior to commencement of meeting. This is purely to reduce the likelihood of the sharing of login details with any person outside of the invited attendees
- We recommend that login details should not be shared on any other social media platform
- Under no circumstances should pictures be taken.
- Under no circumstances should any zoom meetings be recorded without prior consent from all participants.
- Ensure that the school has the correct email address/mobile phone contact number for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
- The main purpose of a zoom video call is:
  - (i) to engage in whole school assembly and maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils at whole school level
  - (ii) to facilitate the class teacher and pupils of an individual class to interact, communicate and maintain a connection on a weekly basis.
- Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience
- Be aware that when participating in group calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
- 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).
- 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.
- Should the host lose internet connection during a Zoom session, we recommend that the parent who is supervising ensures that their child leaves the meeting immediately
- Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.

### Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Students:

- Communication may only take place during normal school hours or at the recommended times specified by the relevant teacher
- 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 is possible, provision for SEN students will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies. In so far as is possible, provision for a student at very high risk to Covid 19 will be made using Remote Learning methodologies.

### **Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Parents:**

We ask parents/guardians to ensure the following protocols are adhered to:

- Check in on their child's school work on a regular basis and talk to their child about the work being assigned.
- Communication may only take place during normal school hours.
- 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 impact negatively on your child. You are the primary educator of your child and you make those calls. We encourage engagement every weekday for routine. We provide work and guidance and ask parents and pupils to do their best considering your own personal circumstances.

### **Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers:**

- Check uploaded work each week and provide feedback.
- 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:

- Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection 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. 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) or children who are members of a household with another family member who is deemed to be at very high risk to Covid

19, 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 few days: These pupils will be supported to catch up on their learning on their return to school. Work may be assigned to pupils who are not presenting with symptoms with parental consent at this time (case by case basis).
- 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 will link in with the pupil and assign tasks/activities/work via Seesaw.
- Individual class (entire class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14 day isolation period): Teacher will link in with the class and assign tasks/activities/work via Seesaw. Teacher will also engage with class via 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 prerecorded lessons (where appropriate), assigned tasks on Seesaw and, Zoom meetings with the individual class.

### **Summary**

- Do what you can, considering your own personal circumstances.
- Focus on the work set by teachers for the moment.
- There will be no school work set for planned school closures/holidays.
- There will be no interaction on SeeSaw or Zoom during these times.
- We ask parents/guardians, students and teachers to ensure protocols are adhered to at all times.

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 Coole NS on\_\_\_\_\_. This policy may be amended at any time in accordance with guidance or instruction received from the Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson BOM Coole NS)