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Remote Teaching Policy

This policy was drafted in May 2020 in response to the closure of the school due to the Covid-19 emergency. It was revised in September 2020.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and information to students, their parents, and staff, surrounding the use of technology when learning remotely i.e. from a place other than school and where it is not possible for the teacher to deliver the class within the same location, as would be the case, if the class was taking place in a classroom setting.

This policy is also intended to provide guidance for the conduct of remote teaching and learning during an extended unforeseen school closure or to support educational provision during regular school circumstances.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Child Safety Statement, Anti Bullying Policy, Data Protection Policy and Internet Acceptable User Policy. All documents can be accessed in the downloads section of the school website www.coilldubhns.ie

The primary obligations that all schools have are to the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all student learners under Child Protection Policy and that their data is protected under GDPR legislation. Schools must ensure that learning may be able to take place in an environment that is respectful and fair and meets its statutory duties. This Policy is prepared, therefore, 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 2017
- (g) GDPR
- (h) Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary and PostPrimary schools

(i) NEWB/TUSLA Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008).

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 Behaviour and all of the school's policies

Coill Dubh N.S. endeavours to make it very clear to all of our partners that the values that are instilled in all of our policies remain, no matter how we change our teaching and learning methodologies or the location of that teaching and learning. This includes remote learning or when a child is being taught in an environment that is not within the school building and the teacher is working remotely and is not present with the student(s).

Guidelines on the appropriate use of Online Platforms for engaging in remote teaching and learning

1. Coill Dubh N.S. encourages all students to use the remote learning platforms established by their class teachers (Google Classroom, SeeSaw, Class Dojo).
2. All students will be supported to join these platforms. If problems arise parents should contact their class teacher by email using the details provided on the school website www.coilldubhns.ie
3. Teachers when working remotely will on most occasions try to communicate online during normal working hours and will endeavour not to communicate with students outside of these hours. However, everyone's circumstance is different and we have to be as accommodating to all members of our school community as we can, especially in these uncertain times.
4. Parents and students need to be aware that teachers may have to send material/ assignments outside of regular school opening hours. This does not mean there is an expectation on the student to begin work at the time it is received. Likewise, there is never an expectation on the teacher to have to correct or comment on work sent to the learning platforms outside of normal school hours. Whilst it might suit teachers or students to communicate outside of normal working hours, it is essential that everyone agree that responses or actions outside of normal working hours are not required. We would urge all members of the school community to turn off notifications outside of their learning/working hours.
5. In so far as possible, provision for SEN students, will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

6. Any behaviour deemed inappropriate during school applies online and after established school times. School Policies are effective during school related activities such as Video Conferences. In particular, students should pay attention to the following policies which apply during school related Videoconferences;
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Internet Acceptable Use Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
7. The criteria for mandated Child Protection reporting remains the same as if the child was being taught in school.
8. All provisions relating to the child's data remains the same under GDPR procedures and guidelines.
9. All student names on student work should be redacted unless consent has been provided by parents to do otherwise in advance.
10. It is expected that all students and teachers will engage as best they can with all efforts at online teaching and learning so as not to be behind when normal school resumes
11. Teachers regularly assign activities for children on these platforms and monitor them to correct, assess and respond to children's work and communications.
12. As all these platforms have in app communication tools and are regularly monitored. These, along with email are the preferred parent teacher, teacher student communication methods. The use of **social media** applications (e.g Whatsapp; Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram) for student-teacher communication is **strictly prohibited** from the date of this circular.
13. Outside of enforced school/class closures communication with parents should take place via the school office.

Video Conferencing

Video Conferencing is a system that enables people in various different places to have a meeting by seeing and hearing each other on a screen. Video Conferences can be joined using a Smartphone, tablet or a Computer. Coill Dubh N.S. maintains a Pro Zoom account to facilitate video conferencing.

Video Conferencing lessons led by teachers may take place during periods of school closure. It is one tool that teachers may use to support the continuity of learning for our students and to enable teachers and students to have more face to face communication and engagement during a closure.

Teachers may direct SNAs to contact and support the children and parents with whom they work via meetings scheduled between teachers and parents for this purpose.

In order to ensure that these video conferencing lessons happen in an effective, appropriate and productive manner, we are putting in place the following procedures. We expect full cooperation of all students with these procedures and ask parents to support the school with this, in the best interests of students.

- Appropriate clothing should be worn during the lessons - items of clothing such as pyjamas are not appropriate.
- Students should be prepared for the lesson - this means having pens, books, copies or any items required before the lesson begins. Teachers will advise students in advance what they need to bring.
- Students should sit at a desk/table/counter - top or a similar solid work surface during the lesson - not on beds, floors, couches etc.
- The Video Conference will take place during school hours. Each Video Conference will be a maximum of one hour in duration but may take less time.
- Students should not leave the Video Conference until it has officially ended. Students should not move around the room or make distracting noises that interrupts the lesson for themselves and/or other students. Students should mute their microphones unless they need to communicate or are asked to communicate during the video conference.
- Recording during Video Conference Lessons is strictly prohibited and this prohibition includes capturing still images, video recording and audio recording.
- An individual teacher or SNA may record her/himself [not students] and provide parents and students with a copy of that recording for use in education/learning only.
- Polite, patient and respectful behaviour is expected during the lessons – between students and between students and teachers.
- Students should let other household members know before they connect to a Video Conference as they will need some quiet for a period of time.
- We love them, but pets can be a distraction if brought to a Video Conference, so students should leave them to enjoy other pet activities while they are at a Video Conference.
- The Use of Headphones and a separate Microphone will assist in the quality of sound (this could be as simple as a pair of earphones that come with a smartphone that has a built in microphone) - but please note - this is not a requirement for joining a Video Conference.

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

06 October 2020