Remote Learning Policy

St Patrick's PS Loughguile

(Reviewed and updated March 2021)

RATIONALE

This policy has been drawn up because of the implications of lockdown on children's education during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 and ongoing school closures and the need to highlight the importance of keeping safe online.

The school's Online Safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy still applies but this policy is an addendum in the present circumstances.

AIMS

- ➢ To provide clarity and consistency around the format, structure and organisation of remote/blended learning in St Patrick's
- ➢ To ensure high quality provision and education for our pupils and guidance for parents
- ➢ To set out clear expectations for governors, staff, pupils and parents
- ➢ To qualify roles and responsibilities
- ➢ To ensure online safety and the safeguarding of our pupils
- ➢ To minimise the disruption to pupils' education and the delivery of the curriculum
- ➢ To provide advice to pupils and parents on the risks associated with using devices connected to the internet
- ➢ To ensure that staff, parent and pupil data remains secure and is not misused
- ➢ To encourage pupils to complete work to the best of their ability under parental supervision
- ➢ To help children remain happy, healthy, safe and supported during periods of remote learning

In St Patrick's, we understand the need to continually deliver high quality education for our pupils, including during periods of school closure. We recognise the importance of maintaining high expectations and ensuring that all pupils have access to the learning resources and support they need to succeed while taking cognisance of their wellbeing. During the times when children are not in school, staff will post regular learning activities as we agree that regular, planned learning reduces the negative impact on children's education.

This Remote Learning Policy has been written as guidance for staff, pupils and parents with particular focus on provision during the pandemic of COVID-19. It sets out the systems and technology the staff will use to keep learning and

teaching available to children and how these can be used effectively and safely, while allowing for the differing needs of families.

We fully understand that home circumstances will differ in terms of numbers of children, quantity of devices, parents' available time to help and the reliability of systems being used. We will be offering a flexible approach in that we will not be providing a full school day of activities but a variety of online and offline learning opportunities in line with the extensive planning and provision that exists within the school.

We will be using Seesaw (FS/KS1) and Google Classroom (KS2) as tools to deliver online learning, where appropriate. We are also conscious of the time spent on devices and of the need to maintain a regular balance between formal learning and the need for regular breaks and exercise.

We are keen to make remote learning an interactive experience through feedback from teachers where appropriate or possible, within normal school hours. Communication between staff, parents and children must always be through authorised school systems and must never be by personal email, text or social media accounts.

Staff should always give careful consideration to the sharing of photographs or videos in regard to all aspects of safeguarding and should adhere to normal school procedures, for example having parental permission for the displaying of these or using first names only alongside group exhibits. When displaying individual photographs there will be no names accompanying or when pupils are named there will be no photographs accompanying.

With the increased use of digital technologies that accompany remote learning, safeguarding implications need careful consideration. Parents are advised to talk to their children about online safety and of the importance of reporting to a trusted adult anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or worried online.

While we do our best to ensure suggested links are appropriate, there may be some advertising or "pop-ups" which appear in home devices that are out of our control, hence the need for parental supervision at all times. Parents and children may raise any concerns with the Principal or Vice Principal at any time via the usual channels.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Inherent in all of this is a need for trust and understanding and so:

TEACHERS

When providing remote or blended learning, teachers should be available during normal school hours. Work and all correspondence will be during working hours and enquiries sent after this will be answered the next day if possible.

If a teacher is unable to work for any reason during this time, for example sick, isolating or caring for a dependent, they should report this using normal absences procedures.

When providing remote learning, teachers are responsible for

- ➢ Planning and uploading lessons and associated activities
- ➢ Providing feedback to pupils on completed learning
- ➢ Keeping communication lines open between pupils and parents
- ➢ Providing advice and guidance to pupils and parents when necessary and appropriate
- ➢ Attending virtual meetings with staff and parents if required

PARENTS

We recognise that during school closures, some parents may be still working themselves or may need to access devices at home in relation to their own working arrangements. Parents need to inform the school of this issue so that other arrangements can be made e.g., lending of device, alternative time frame for submission of work.

Parents are responsible for

- ➢ Making the school aware of any reasons why their child cannot access or complete work
- ➢ Ensuring that their child is aware of and ready to partake in remote learning sessions
- ➢ Supporting their child with online activities if and when required
- ➢ Seeking help and clarification from the school if needed
- ➢ Communicating with staff in a polite and respectful manner
- ➢ Monitoring their child's online engagement and behaviour

Parents should refrain from screenshotting or copying any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform outside the systems being used by the school

PUPILS

Pupils are responsible for their behaviour during remote learning and should display the same etiquette as in the classroom. They are expected to

➢ Complete work within the allocated time frame
➢ Complete work to the best of their ability
➢ Request help or clarification when needed
➢ Feedback to teacher on content and pace of lessons and any other questions asked by teacher
➢ Demonstrate appropriate online behaviour which reflects the school's e-safety policy and other school/classroom rules

Pupils should 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. They must NEVER tamper with any material posted by the teacher, share or adapt it in any way.

ONLINE SAFETY

As staff members may be working from home, they will take appropriate steps to ensure that their own online activity remains secure. This includes having strong, protected passwords, shutting down or locking devices when inactive, sharing devices only with school colleagues, installing antivirus software and keeping up to date with all relevant and current advice.

The following guidance is intended to ensure the safety of all involved and should be followed during online teaching and communication

➢ Teachers and pupils should be fully dressed as if in school and should not be wearing pyjamas or sleep wear during any online session
➢ Settings for online sessions should be as blank and non-personal as possible and should never be from a bedroom
➢ Online sessions should be time limited and only contain succinct, relevant activities

- Links to other appropriate materials may be shared by the teacher e.g., videos or power points but these should be downloaded and available through school learning platforms or Safe You Tube. Teachers will endeavour to ensure that iPads are set for guided access as another safety precaution
- Parents should constantly monitor their child's online activity and reinforce the safety rules as outlined in the school's E-safety policy
- Any disclosure or concern over online learning will be immediately dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy
- Parents should feel welcome to ask for advice and help or to discuss any concerns about their child's wellbeing and safety. Staff will listen to any queries to ensure that parents feel reassured and will ensure that the Principal and a member of the safeguarding team is involved if necessary. This means the best decision can be made to offer support.
- We are aware that some children may experience feelings of loneliness, anxiety, fear or depression and so we will seek to maintain contact with our pupils and plan regular activities for mental health and wellbeing

SAFEGUARDING

Our pupil's health, safety and wellbeing remain our overriding concern.

For children, the need to spend most of their time at home is a challenge and for some, will mean an additional safeguarding risk factor. It is vital that we, as teachers, are sensitive to the physical, mental, social and emotional needs of our children during these exceptional circumstances. It is critically important that children who are or who may be at risk, are identified and an appropriate and sensitive plan put into place in response to these needs.

Our Child Protection Policy remains the same during periods of remote learning but we have amended it to include the following procedures

- Teachers may be contacted via Seesaw or Google Classroom as well as by normal telephone calls to the school during the school day
- The Principal may be contacted by telephone or through school email info@stpatrickspsloughguile.ni.sch.uk
- The designated and deputy designated teachers for Child Protection may be contacted via the school during school hours
- Teachers will provide online learning with strict procedures and protocol in place to minimise risk

- All links to additional online learning will be vetoed by teacher and when necessary Safe You Tube will be used to support an activity
- Any concerns about online learning should be raised with the Principal and a member of the safeguarding team
- In line with guidance from EA and CPSS, teachers may make phone calls to parents, these will be pastoral in nature and a record kept of any issues raised
- Any concerns concerning pupil wellbeing will be shared immediately with the Principal and safeguarding team and the same procedures followed as outlined in the Child Protection Policy.
- Staff members may seek advice from the safeguarding team who in turn may seek advice from the EA Child Protection Service for Schools team or from the Department of Health and Social Care

The following websites provide support in regard to keeping children safe online

- Childline
- UK Safer Internet Centre
- CEOP (to report suspicious activity online)
- Internet Matters
- Net-aware
- Parent Info
- Thinkuknow
- Safer Schools App

Reinforcement of these messages and other relevant information are included in our Child Protection/Online Safety/Acceptable Use of the Internet/Positive Behaviour and GDPR (Data Protection) policies and should be read in conjunction with this.

We have also produced a revised Code of Safe Practice for Children where both pupils and parents sign an agreement to adhere to rules and procedures for keeping safe online. This is included as an appendix to this policy.

ICT CODE OF SAFE PRACTICE FOR PUPILS – E SAFETY RULES

This code of safe practice has been designed to safeguard children in their use of technologies associated with the internet and digital devices.

We want to ensure that children will act responsibly and stay safe while accessing the internet and other technologies for educational and recreational purposes.

We need to ensure that school ICT systems and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse that could put users and/or systems at risk.

We wish to educate pupils and parents in the importance of e-safety and to provide guidance with regard to online behaviour.

In St Patrick's we have drawn up this contract for acceptable use of ICT for both pupils and parents to sign. The main areas for concern have been identified but this is not a finite or exhaustive list and other implications may arise and will be dealt with immediately.

PUPILS

I understand that I must use the school's ICT provision in a responsible way so that there is no risk to my safety, to the safety of others in the school community or to the systems within the school.

I understand that the school monitors the use of ICT and that this is to keep me safe and to evaluate the impact of ICT on my education.

I understand that I am responsible for my actions both inside and outside school and that the school has a right to take action in both situations if my behaviour online impacts on the school community e.g., cyber-bullying, using images of children or teachers, sharing personal information etc.

I understand that when using the school's ICT systems and equipment and when using my own equipment at home, I will act in a safe and responsible way as I have been taught in school.

I agree to reading these pointers with my parents before we both sign up to following this code of safe practice (KEY STAGE 2)

- ❖ I will obtain permission from or be directed by my teacher in the use of appropriate ICT technology
- ❖ I will log onto the school network and learning platforms using my own user name and password
- ❖ I will only use ICT for directed school purposes
- ❖ I will only use my class e-mail address and only open e-mail attachments from people I know or who my teacher has approved
- ❖ I will not share my ICT passwords
- ❖ I will only open or delete my own files and will make sure that all contact with other people is safe, responsible and polite
- ❖ I will not research, save or send anything unpleasant or nasty and if I accidentally discover anything like this I will tell my teacher immediately
- ❖ I will not share my personal details with anyone online or arrange to meet with someone unless this is part of a school initiated project and a member of school staff is there too
- ❖ I will take responsibility for my behaviour when using ICT because I know these rules are there to keep me and others safe
- ❖ I know that my use of ICT is monitored and that I may be barred from using school resources and my parents contacted if staff are concerned about my e-safety or that of others
- ❖ When using laptops and iPads I will carry these safely and keep foods and drinks away from them
- ❖ I will not change the settings or download anything unless with a teacher's permission
- ❖ I will only access activities that my teacher deems appropriate
- ❖ I will never share images, photographs or movies without my teacher's permission
- ❖ I will always inform an adult if I am upset by anything I see on screen

Signed by pupil _____

Signed by parent/carer _____

I agree to reading these pointers with my parents before we both sign up to following this code of safe practice (FS & KS1)

I will ask an adult when I want to use the computer

I will take care of all equipment and never eat or drink when using it

I will ask for help from an adult when I am not sure what to do or I think I have done something wrong

I will tell an adult if I see something on screen that upsets me

I will never delete or add anything to school equipment as it may result in me not being allowed to use it and my parents notified about any concerns

Signed by pupil _____

Signed by parent/carer _____