



Crecora National School

Communication/Teaching Learning Platform in the context of Remote Teaching and Learning Plan for National School

1. Introduction

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 school and home. In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our school community 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 teaching and learning online.

This policy is proposed as an important addition to the area of learning from a digital platform. The policy presented here should be read also in tandem with our school's Code of Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying (including Cyber Bullying) Policy and Acceptable Usage 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) Circular 74/2020 Communication/Teaching and Learning Platform

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

2. Context

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 Positive Behaviour and all of the school's policies apply.

We recognise that, especially in the context of Covid 19, online collaboration is essential for distance learning and that families are in favour of opportunities to maintain the connection between school and home. Creora National School uses a variety of child friendly, online tools, which assist in providing effective teaching and learning, while also enabling communication between staff, families and students.

3. Guidelines for good online communication in Creora National School

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. Staff members will communicate with parents and guardians via Aladdin or through the *Seesaw* app or via school email.
5. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
6. Staff and pupils will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (*Seesaw*, *Aladdin*). We will also, on occasion, use *Zoom*.
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 the parent/guardian's email address. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed. Children should not have individual email addresses.
9. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.

10. **Creora National School** cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.
11. Our 'Remote Teaching and Learning Plan' will include a combination of assigned work, pre-recorded lessons (Seesaw) and live sessions (Zoom).

4. Media which the school will use

Aladdin School App

Staff will communicate regularly with parents and pupils via the school App Aladdin. All families are asked to download this app and to check it daily for updates and important information. Teachers will post work for pupils on the app.

Parental queries will be addressed as usual to the school office or principal during school hours only (9:15-2.55) .

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 is used throughout the school and requires a code which have been sent through the school email. Parental consent is implied by virtue of 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. Occasionally, you will be directed to longer audio/video links though the Seesaw app.

Zoom

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Teachers will connect with class pods regularly using pre-arranged Zoom meetings during remote learning. Parents have the option of allowing pupils access these sessions or not.

5. 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, if possible.
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.
11. Enjoy! Don't forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!

6. 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 check in with our pupils and 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. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
9. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.
10. 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.

7. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Pupils

1. Check assigned work each day.
2. Communication may only take place during normal school hours
3. The normal school calendar will apply
4. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
 - a. Code of Behaviour
 - b. Anti- Bullying Policy
 - c. Acceptable Use Policy
5. 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 who are usually supported through withdrawal on a group or individual basis 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.

8. 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.

9. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers/SNAs

1. Check uploaded work each day.
2. Communication may only take place during normal school hours
3. The normal school calendar will apply
4. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
 - a. Child Protection Policy
 - b. Data Protection Policy
5. 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.
6. Using Seesaw, there will be a welcome video from Class Teacher uploaded after school starts in the morning. There will be a combination of at least three instructional audio/video clips uploaded for core subjects. Assigned learning activities based on teaching will be explained through Seesaw. Depending on the class, some SETs will take responsibility for some core subjects. Both Class and SE teachers will feedback throughout the school day. On occasion, class Teachers will schedule zoom calls to check in on wellbeing, answering questions etc. You will be notified in advance when that happens. There will be a sign off video from the class teacher each evening after homework.
7. The appendices attached to the Staff version of the policy on Remote Teaching and Learning have detailed instructions and agreed actions and approaches used at various class levels.

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).**

These pupils will be supported to catch up on their learning on their return to school.

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

Class Teachers /SETs will link in with the pupil via See-Saw/ Aladdin and zoom as per bulletin point 6 above.

School bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14day isolation period). Class Teachers /SETs will link in with the pupil via See-Saw/ Aladdin and zoom as per bulletin point 6 above.

4. **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/Aladdin and regular contact on Zoom as per bulletin point 6 above. In addition the Principal will contact parents of three classes per week by phone. She will also post individual messages /video or audio content to the children using Seesaw. The principal will be contactable through Aladdin, email and the school mobile phone during school hours.

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

10. Summary:

1. Do what you can, within your circumstances. Forget about following books and workbooks outside of 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 Aladdin, Zoom, Seesaw during these times
3. Please keep abreast of postings on the Aladdin and Seesaw.
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 **Creora National School** through email on the 3rd December, 2020 and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.