



Remote Learning Policy

Scoil Naomh Fionán

Rationale

This document is designed to provide guidance for teachers and parents in situations where a partial or full school closure is advised by Public Health HSE because of a case or cases of COVID-19, or in the case of a local or nationalised lockdown due to Covid-19. It is also intended to advise schools on how individual pupils or groups of pupils who may have to self-isolate or restrict their movements can be supported in continuing their learning remotely. It is intended to update this guidance in December 2020.

This Department guidance sets out how schools should plan for and support pupils' learning in a number of possible scenarios which could occur during the 2020/21 school year. As the extent to which these scenarios may occur cannot be predicted, it is possible that individual pupils or groups of pupils and teachers may find that they are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements on a number of occasions during the school year. This may lead to an accumulation of a significant number of days where pupils learn from home and/or teachers work from home. Therefore, it is crucial that all schools make every effort to enable teachers to support the continuation of pupils' learning effectively during each possible scenario. This is particularly important in the context of pupils at risk of early school leaving, pupils with special educational needs and pupils at risk of educational disadvantage.

Where pupils are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements, teachers should continue to focus on supporting their wellbeing. In addition, schools should consider the wellbeing of all staff and families during this time. Staff and families who are experiencing particularly challenging times can be directed to the support services available at gov.ie/en/campaigns/together/ or to the resources and supports provided by agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) or



the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme. Schools may also consult with NEPS in relation to the academic, social and emotional needs of their pupils.

Planning and organisation considerations

Identify appropriate digital communication platform(s)

All schools should put in place arrangements to facilitate:

- Digital communication with and between staff (**Staff WhatsApp**) and or **Staff email addresses, Shared Google drive and Aladdin Connect**).
- Digital communication between staff and pupils (**SeeSaw** and **Email through Aladdin**)
- Digital communication between schools and parents/guardians, including a designated email address or attended phone number for contact during school closures (**Staff Email Addresses**)
- Remote teaching and learning. (**Will be conducted through SeeSaw**)

Scoil Naomh Fionán has purchased full rights to use SeeSaw at a significant cost to the school and this will be used in the event of a full or partial closure.

Identify and develop the skills set of the teachers and support staff, as needed:

All staff members have been provided with training in regard to the use of SeeSaw. Staff members have also been sent links for training videos on how to use this platform. Teachers and pupils have been using SeeSaw since last November and arrangements are in place to ensure that any necessary professional development will be provided to all staff and or parents to use the platform as outlined above.

Enable pupils to develop the necessary skills set:

Pupils should be given frequent opportunities to use the selected digital platform(s).

In this regard, pupils have been engaging with:

- Accessing and navigating the platform(s)
- Engaging with teaching and learning materials
- Uploading their own work independently.



Support equity of access to digital resources:

Availability of appropriate digital devices and/or internet connection with sufficient bandwidth may be a challenge for some families, including those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, or those who live in geographical areas with poor internet infrastructure. Schools should establish a clear picture of the relevant supports needed by their pupils to engage in remote learning and the steps that can be taken to address any gaps or issues.

In this regard the school will make available a limited number of I-pads and Laptops to families most in need. Any parent that needs access to laptop or an I-pad must contact the school and they must agree to take full responsibility for the device and replace it in the case or any damage being done.

All staff have access to the necessary digital technology to support pupils remote learning as required.

Be ready to share preparation for teaching and learning:

Schools should develop a system to enable all teachers to share their short-term preparation documents, including preparation for pupils with SEN, with substitute teachers and other relevant teachers as required, using a shared online data storage drive.

In this regard all staff have access to Google Drive to archive any resources that can be shared. There is also a facility on SeeSaw to share preparation for teaching and learning. Planning (Long & Short term) is also uploaded onto Google Drive and teachers will continue to use this platform in the event of a full or partial school closure.

Ensure relevant contact details are available:

All teachers have access to the necessary contact details via Aladdin. The chairperson of the Board of Management will also have access to up-to-date contact details for all teachers and staff, in the event that some/all of the school leadership team are unavailable for work.

Collaborate and communicate with parents/guardians:

This document is intended to inform parents/guardians of the approach that will be used for remote teaching and learning should this be required. Good whole school systems for two-way communication with parents/guardians are essential



to ensure that the school is ready to engage in remote teaching and learning in an effective way.

Parents may wish to contact teachers via emailing the principal on scoilrenniesprincipal@gmail.com. The principal will then direct any specific queries to the relevant teachers.

Communication with external agencies:

During partial or full school closures, it is important that schools maintain appropriate contact, relevant to the needs of the pupils affected by the closure, with any necessary external agencies, including the HSE, NEPS, NCSE and Tusla Education Support Service (TESS).

Should a need arise to contact any of the above services the school principal or member of the school leadership team will make the contact.

Ensure relevant policies are up to date:

Schools should review all policies relevant to supporting pupils' remote learning. In this regard, Acceptable Usage Policies may need to be amended. Data Protection and Child Protection policies should also be reviewed and, if necessary, updated to take account of teaching and learning in a remote/distance learning environment.

Personnel to support continuity of schooling

Where pupils and/or teachers are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements, local contextual factors mean that no one-size solution will fit all schools. The class teacher should provide for continuity of schooling to the greatest extent possible for those pupils who are advised to restrict their movements.

However, this may not always be a practical option. Therefore, all teachers are expected to be flexible in their approach to supporting pupils who are asked to restrict their movements. The non- exhaustive list below outlines the variety of



alternative personnel who could be considered when arranging for continuity of schooling.

Special education teacher (SET):

The principle of allocating the greatest level of support to those pupils with the greatest need remains, in line with the Continuum of Support. However, the SET(s) assigned to a pupil/class affected can reassign this time to supporting remote teaching and learning. Alternatively, the SET(s) can reassign time normally allocated for whole-school and classroom support (for all) on the Continuum of Support from his/her normal timetable, by, for example, pausing Guidance on continuity of schooling during periods of partial or full school closures - for primary schools some team-teaching initiatives for the duration of the closure to release time for remote teaching and learning.

Designated teacher from the staff:

A teacher on the staff who has been medically certified as being at very high risk to Covid-19 and is available to work from home can support remote learning for individual pupils or classes, in line with circular 0049/2020.

A teacher from the staff who has been advised to restrict his/her movements:

A teacher on the staff who has been advised to restrict his/her movements but is medically fit for work can support remote learning for individual pupils or classes in line with circular 0049/2020.

Responding to a range of scenarios

The list below outlines a variety of possible scenarios which schools may encounter in the coming weeks and months. Where a partial or full school closure is required, Scoil Naomh Fionán will immediately put in place their plan of action to enable continuity of learning for pupils. It should be noted that in situations where pupils are requested to self-isolate or restrict their movements but the teachers have not been specifically advised to do so, the resources and digital infrastructure in the school building should continue to be used during the school day by these teachers. In all of the scenarios outlined below, the class teacher maintains overall responsibility for:



- Sharing his/her short-term plans with the relevant teacher where necessary to enable the pupil(s) to progress in line with the curriculum and his/her peers insofar as possible
- Providing frequent, constructive feedback to all pupils on their work, in order to maintain a connection with those pupils who are required to self-isolate or restrict their movements and in order to ensure and monitor progress in learning.

In addition, SETs and SNAs will continue to collaborate with the class teacher in order to provide learning support for pupils on their caseload with special educational needs (SEN) who are required to restrict their movements. The school principal will maintain oversight of the procedures put in place to support pupils' learning from home to ensure that the learning experiences provided are appropriate to the pupils' needs.

Scenario 1: An individual pupil from a class is advised to self-isolate or restrict his/her movements.

No other pupils in the school are affected. The class teacher can choose to provide teaching input and learning opportunities to the pupil using the school's chosen digital platform or other agreed method as needed, if he/she feels this is the most appropriate way to address the needs of the pupil.

The class teacher will endeavour to maintain a continuum of learning for the pupil(s) that need to isolate. Arrangements for collection of school books will be put in place whereby pupils are isolating for a considerable period of time (4 or more days).

Scenario 2: The pupils in a number of pods in a classroom are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements.

Some of the pods in the classroom are deemed to be unaffected and can continue to attend school. The class teacher continues to teach pupils who are in attendance as normal. He/she can provide opportunities for all pupils to work together collaboratively insofar as possible, for example, on project work and other areas of learning, using digital technologies. A teacher from the list of personnel outlined in Section 2.2 is assigned the responsibility of providing remote teaching and learning for the pupils at home in line with local arrangements at school level.



Teachers will arrange, where possible, for school books to be collected for the pupils in the affected pod or pods in the case of a prolonged absence from school so that a continuum of learning may take place.

Scenario 3: All pupils in one or more classes are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements.

The class teacher(s) will be required to provide remote/distance teaching to all pupils in the class, using SeeSaw. This can take place from the school if the teacher is not required to self-isolate or restrict his/her movements.

Scenario 4: A teacher / number of teachers in the school are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements.

Where teachers are required to self-isolate, they will avail of special leave with pay, in line with Circular 0049/2020. These teachers should follow the advice outlined in the Circular in this instance. Any teacher who is medically fit for work but has been advised to restrict his/her movements is available to work remotely. If the teacher's class group is still attending school a substitute teacher will be arranged to cover this teacher's teaching responsibilities in the school for this period, but the work assigned to the teacher restricting his/her movements should support the work of the school in developing and delivering its programmes of teaching and learning for pupils as per Section 12 of Circular 0049/2020. If the teacher's class is also self-isolating or restricting their movements the class teacher(s) will provide remote/distance teaching to all pupils in the class, using the school's digital platform(s) or other agreed method as needed.

Scenario 5: The school is required to close on foot of public health advice.

In this case, all teachers who are medically fit to work, including SETs, are available to work remotely and will provide remote teaching and learning via SeeSaw to all pupils in their class or on their caseload. Substitute teachers will be arranged to provide remote teaching for pupils in classes where the teacher has been diagnosed with Covid-19 and is medically unfit to work. Schools should ensure substitute teachers have access to appropriate digital technology at the discretion of school management.

Full school closure



In the event of a full school closure the following procedures will be in place:

- Teachers will provide remote teaching and learning via See Saw to all class pupils
- SEN teachers will continue to provide remote teaching and learning via SeeSaw and or email to pupils on their caseload
- Class teachers will be contactable during school hours via SeeSaw
- Class teachers will be in contact with their class on a daily basis via SeeSaw. Remote learning time-table will be posted every Friday and activities will be scheduled accordingly.
- Pupils will upload their completed work via SeeSaw and class teachers will provide feedback on pupils work.
- Teachers may upload videos of themselves teaching a certain topic or topics via SeeSaw
- Teachers/SNAs may wish to have zoom meetings where possible/practical to keep in touch with their pupils in the case of a prolonged school closure.

Required features of provision

Regular engagement with pupils:

The teacher(s) assigned responsibility for supporting pupils learning remotely will communicate with pupils on a daily basis using SeeSaw and a weekly email, while taking into account that some pupils may not be in a position to engage with remote teaching and learning each day.

A blend of guided and independent learning tasks/experiences:

Teacher-pupil engagement will involve both direct teaching by the teacher and the assignment of independent learning tasks for completion by the pupils. Teachers will ensure, as far as practicable, that direct instruction is provided for aspects of learning that require it, using a variety of approaches including pre-recorded video, audio, presentation software and written instructions. Regular engagement with pupils when they are out of school will also help them to reintegrate when they return to school



Appropriate and engaging learning opportunities:

Teachers will ensure that the chosen learning tasks give pupils an opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a clear and concise way. It may be necessary to adjust the number of tasks usually given in the school setting to take account of the fact that pupils are doing this work from home.

Two-way feedback between home and school:

Scoil Naomh Fionán will ensure that two way feedback between teachers and parents/guardians and between teachers and pupils is encouraged and supported. Scoil Naomh Fionán will provide manageable and accessible opportunities for all pupils to regularly share samples of their work with the class teacher throughout each week. Teachers will ensure that work received is corrected and relevant feedback is provided.

Chairperson _____ Board _____ of
Management: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____