

# Bennettsbridge N.S.

## Remote Teaching and Learning Plan

### 1. Introduction

In response to this time of uncertainty regarding school closures, we have formulated this policy to outline how the school will maintain communication links between school and home.

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 does not set out to replace our Mobile Phone or Acceptable Usage Policy. Rather, it 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 and Anti-Bullying (including Cyber Bullying) Policy.

The primary obligation of all schools is to safeguard 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 & Learning Platform (Nov 2020)

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

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. Bennettsbridge NS uses a variety of child friendly, online tools, which assist in providing more effective teaching and learning, while also enabling greater communication between staff, families and students.

We acknowledge different learning needs including the limitations of distance learning for supporting pupils with varying needs. We acknowledge different home contexts including the availability and demands on IT devices.

### Preparations for Online Learning

October 2020

- a. Bennettsbridge N.S.'s G Suite account was set up. Each teacher and child were assigned school email address and passwords linked to the school's account. Each class teacher set up their Google Classroom and each child in their class was linked to it. Google Classrooms were also set up for some SE groups .
- b. A specific Gmail address, [setbennettsbridgens@gmail.com](mailto:setbennettsbridgens@gmail.com) was set up for Special Education.
- c. Bennettsbridge N.S.'s Zoom for Education was set up.
- d. The school's Acceptable Usage Policy was revised and ratified by the school's Board of Management in October 2020.
- e. Parental consent to engage with the internet as outlined in the Acceptable Usage Policy was sought via the Aladdin Connect's Permission section. By consenting to this policy, permission to access the school's suite of online platforms is assumed.

## 3. Guidelines for good online communication in Bennettsbridge N.S.

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 pupils and their families via Google Classroom, Aladdin & Zoom for Education
5. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
6. Students and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified.
7. For video/Zoom calls, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via the child's Goggle Classroom email address. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.
8. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
9. Bennettsbridge N.S. cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.
10. Bennettsbridge N.S. will use online platforms for communicating and connecting with families/pupils. Our 'Remote Teaching and Learning Plan' will include a combination of assigned work, pre-recorded lessons and live sessions (Zoom) when appropriate.

## 4. Media which the school will use for Communication

### School App

The Principal and Staff will communicate regularly with parents and pupils via Aladdin Connect. All families are asked to download the Aladdin Connect App and to check it daily for updates and important information.

### Google Classroom

Google Classroom is an online platform used with all classes and some Special Education groups. The Principal is linked to every classroom. Special Education Teachers are linked to the classrooms of their students. Special Needs Assistants are linked to the classrooms of their assigned students. Google Classroom enables pupils to connect to their folder of work daily. Class teachers provide feedback and communicate with pupils via Google Classroom. Children and parents are encouraged to use this platform to message their teacher regarding the work in hand. Some lessons will be pre-recorded and uploaded on Google Classroom. Parental permission is assumed in the signing of the school's Acceptable Usage Policy in October 2020.

### Email

Parental queries relating to your child's learning can be emailed to [bennettsbridgens@gmail.com](mailto:bennettsbridgens@gmail.com) and will be responded to as quickly as possible. Special Education teachers have their own dedicated email address at [setbennettsbridgens@gmail.com](mailto:setbennettsbridgens@gmail.com) Parents of children attending Special Education will be contacted by parents regularly through this email.

### Phone

Staff Members may connect with parents by phone for check-ins, answer queries and for scheduled parent/teacher meetings.

### Zoom

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link or recorded link as deemed appropriate.

## 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. Written work should be presented neatly
3. 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.
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 - set a reminder if it helps.
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 Phone Calls / Video Calls / Zoom

1. Ensure that phone calls are conducted in a private setting to ensure confidentiality.
2. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of phone calls or video calls
3. Ensure an adult is in close proximity for all Zoom calls. We understand that this may be difficult due to other family commitments. Please contact the class teacher if this is an ongoing issue for your child.
4. An adult must be beside child for an individual zoom call.
5. An invitation to a Zoom call will be made via a link on your child's Google Classroom page.
6. The main purpose of a video call is to maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils and to engage in online learning activities when appropriate. Encourage pupils to listen, engage and enjoy the experience.
7. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.

8. You will automatically enter a waiting room when joining a Zoom. 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)
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
12. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.
13. 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 for your child. 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 daily. Use the 'Mark as Done' button when work has been completed.
2. The normal school calendar will apply
3. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  - a. Code of Behaviour
  - b. Anti- Bullying Policy
  - c. Acceptable Use Policy
  - d. Data Protection
4. 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
  - a. In so far as possible, provision for SEN students 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 provide work and guidance and ask that pupils do their best.

## **9. Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers/SNA's**

Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply.

1. Check uploaded work daily .
2. Feedback on work to be given regularly as deemed appropriate
3. The normal school calendar will apply
4. Two staff members will be present on all zoom calls.
5. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  - a. Child Protection Policy
  - b. Data Protection Policy
  - c. Acceptable Use Policy

## 10. 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).**

Class Teacher or Special Education Teacher will link in with the pupil via Aladdin / Google Classroom.
3. **School POD (small group) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate.**

Teacher will link in with the pupils via Aladdin / Google Classroom.
4. **School bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14day isolation period).**

Teacher will engage with the bubble daily using a blended approach of offline and online activities on Aladdin / Google Classroom.
5. **Whole school closure as instructed by HSE Public Health (duration of closure will be advised by Public Health)**

Teachers will engage with pupil using the communication platform as outlined in this plan.

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

## 11. Summary

1. Do what you can, within your circumstances. Please contact the school for support if needed.

2. There will be no school work set for planned school closures/holidays. There will be no interaction on Google Classroom during these times
3. Please keep abreast of postings on the school app– it is our main mode of communication going forward.
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 **Benettsbridge N.S.** at its meeting on: \_\_\_\_\_

It is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

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

(Chairperson BOM Bennettsbridge N.S.)