

*Scoil na Naomh Uilig*  
*Rickardstown, Newbridge, Co. Kildare*



***Remote Teaching and Distance  
Learning Plan***

## **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 pupils through various means. It is important to note that this is a working document. As we continue to explore options available to support distance learning, the document will be updated accordingly.

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 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 the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all pupil 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

## **Context**

Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century. Developments in I.T. 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. our school's Code of Behaviour and all other school 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. Scoil na Naomh Uilig 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.

### **Guidelines for good online communication in Scoil na Naomh Uilig**

1. Staff members will communicate with pupils and families during the hours of 8.50am - 3pm, where possible.
2. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
3. Staff, families and pupils are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
4. 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.
5. Staff members will communicate with pupils and their families via individual staff emails, Aladdin Connect and/ or through Google Classroom.
6. In general, where Google Classroom is set up, this will be the primary communication between the teacher and pupils/parents. Management will communicate via Aladdin Connect Noticeboard.
7. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
8. Pupils and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified e.g. Individual staff emails, Aladdin Connect and Google Classroom. Phone calls may also be used by staff where necessary. If phoning from home, staff will block personal phone numbers.
9. In line with our AUP, parents are responsible for activating a Google Classroom account for their child. Permission also to be given via the permissions section on Aladdin Connect.
10. In the instance that a video 'Google Meet' call may be deemed necessary, parental permission is implied, as the time, date and code to a video call will be communicated via Google Classroom. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.
11. Scoil na Naomh Uilig cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.

Scoil na Naomh Uilig will use various online platforms for communicating and connecting with our pupils and families. Our 'Remote Teaching and Learning Plan' will include a combination of assigned work and pre-recorded mini-lessons. It is envisaged that the main platforms in use will be Google Classroom. However, it is important to note that this list is not exhaustive. Platforms such as Loom, Kahoot, YouTube, Screencastify, Mentimeter, Google Forms, Zoom etc. may also be considered.

### **Media which the school will use**

#### **Aladdin Connect App and Individual Staff Emails through G Suite:**

Staff will communicate with parents/ guardians via both Aladdin Connect and Individual staff emails.

**Aladdin Connect App** - Parents/ Guardians are asked to download Aladdin Connect and to check it regularly for updates and important information. Aladdin Connect will remain a method of circulating routine school and/ or class information.

**Individual Staff Emails through G Suite** – Staff members have been assigned an individual email address through G Suite which will be used to communicate with parents/ guardians and vice-versa.

*It is important to note that all email addresses have been issued through G Suite using the @snu.ie domain. All members of the school community are reminded of their responsibility to interact in an appropriate manner. All email accounts are managed by snu.ie.*

Individual staff emails have been created for the following purposes:

- (a) **To facilitate general school communication/ enquiries:** All general school enquiries should continue to be directed to the main school office at **office@snu.ie**
- (b) **To facilitate individual communication between members of staff and parents/ guardians, should the need arise:** Class/SET/ SEN Teachers will circulate their individual email to parents/ guardians in their class/ groups. Should parents/ guardians need to contact an individual member of staff, they may contact the office directly to make arrangements for a follow up phone call or meeting (physical or virtual, which will be led by the current HSE and/ or DES advice) or address the member of staff through their individual email. Parental queries will be addressed during school hours (8.50 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.) as far as is practicable. Class/ SET/SEN Teachers will use individual discretion when responding outside of school hours, should the need arise.
- (c) **To facilitate remote teaching and learning, should the need arise:** The following procedures will be in place where remote teaching and learning has been recommended. It is important to note that these practices will cover a number of different scenarios.
  - Class/SET/ SEN Teachers will put daily work on Google Classroom to parents/ guardians outlining the work for a particular day which will contain all necessary links etc. Class Teachers will outline work in English, Gaeilge, Maths and one other curricular subject. SET will support the mainstream teachers and specific pupils where appropriate. SEN class teachers will communicate with parents individually to explore the most effective means of support.
  - The daily communication will relate strictly to teaching and learning.
  - From January 18th pupils will be asked to return one piece of work daily on the Google Classroom. To facilitate both individual and class assessment purposes, we would ask parents/ guardians to return only the requested piece of work.
  - Teachers will respond directly to a pupil's work on Google Classroom. The purpose of using Google Classroom for feedback is for teachers to connect directly with pupils and to guide their work in a formative yet age appropriate way. Feedback and correction may be in the form of a visual response, voice comment, text comment or annotation.
  - There may be specific times where our SNAs connect with our pupils with Special Educational Needs. All communication will be agreed with individual parents/ guardians and the focus will be on staying connected with our pupils. The class or SEN class teacher will lead such communication.

### **Google Classroom:**

This app will be used throughout the school and requires a GSuite email address and password for individual use at home (to facilitate Homework and Remote and online learning). Email addresses and a temporary password were circulated to all parents in October via Aladdin Connect along

with an introduction to Google Classroom video link. Parental consent was sought via Aladdin Connect prior to staff using the app with pupils.

In order to facilitate the rollout of Google Classroom, teachers have been exploring the app with their respective classes and groups weekly. If anyone has difficulties with Google Classroom, please contact the class teacher or office@snu.ie

### Google Meet:

Google Meet is a video-conferencing platform which enables people to connect via a live link. This platform has been a beneficial means of communication for our staff. It has also facilitated meetings with some of our parent body to date. It is also used during the school year to facilitate virtual assemblies and allow our pupils and staff to remain connected in a safe way.

The following are the general guidelines for its use:

- Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
- Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
- Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
- **\*\*For Google Meet live calls, parental permission is implied, as times, dates and codes for each video call will be communicated via a notice on Google Classroom or by phone call. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed. No external email address will be allowed to access a Google Meet.**
- Security settings are in place, whereby meetings only activate once a teacher has entered the meeting and they terminate once the teacher closes the meeting. Teachers will also activate host controls so that they must accept all pupils into the meetings one by one.
- Should any staff member have a concern about hacking during a Meet, they should request all the pupils to leave immediately and close the Meet.
- Should a parent/guardian have a concern about hacking during a Meet, they should leave the Meet immediately on behalf of their child.
- Scoil na Naomh Uilig cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are hacked.

#### 1. Mainstream Class meetings

- Two members of staff must always be present on the call. In the event of a member of staff losing connectivity with Meet, the second member of staff will close down the Meet within 5minutes.
- Times, dates and codes for Meets will be circulated via Google Classroom.
- Access to meetings will only be granted to agreed email addresses within the snu.ie domain and as directed by school staff.
- Class Meets will be optional for parents/pupils. They will be mainly for the purpose of checking in with pupils, answering questions related to work/Google Classroom and enabling pupils to link with classmates. New content will not be covered in these live sessions as some pupils may not be able to access them.
- A teacher will remove a student from the Meet if they persist in ignoring the Google Meet guidelines/rules as set out by the teacher.
- Parent/guardian to supervise all calls.

#### 2. SET/SEN teachers for individual or small groups

- One or two members of staff where appropriate. Two members must be present if there is more than one pupil on the call. In the event of a member of staff losing

connectivity with Meet, the second member of staff will close down the Meet within 5minutes.

- Times, dates and codes for Meets will be circulated via Google Classroom, email or phone call.
- Access to meetings will only be granted to agreed email addresses within the snu.ie domain and as directed by school staff
- As these calls are for individual pupils or small groups, communication with a parent/guardian must be organised to talk through the purpose of the Meet. This might range from, but not limited to, simple check-ins or reading/language lessons etc.

### 3. SNAs with individual pupils

- Two members of staff must always be present. In the event of a member of staff losing connectivity with Meet, the second member of staff will close down the Meet within 5minutes.
- Google Meet will be organised by the teacher in communication with the parent/guardian
- Times, dates and codes for Meets will be circulated via Google Classroom, email or phone call.
- Access to meetings will only be granted to agreed email addresses within the snu.ie domain and as directed by school staff
- Parent/guardian to supervise all calls.

Of note: As the roll out of Google Meets becomes a reality for some of our senior classes and pupils in SEN, we recognise that additional online safety measures may be required. Any changes to our Remote Teaching and Distance Learning Plan will be documented through the Amendments Appendix linked to this policy.

### **Guidelines for pupils using online communication**

#### **For submitting learning:**

- Submit work and pictures that are appropriate to Google Classroom, have an adult take a look at your work before you send it.
- Use kind and friendly words.

#### **For Google Meet**

- Pictures or recordings of the video call are not allowed.
- Meeting Codes are not to be shared with others.
- Remember our school rules - they are still in place, even online.
- Meetings will not allow you to join until the teacher has joined.
- Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
- Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
- If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words.
- Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking.
- Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call.
- Be on time - set a reminder if it helps.
- Enjoy! Don't forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!

### **Guidelines for parents and guardians**

#### **For learning:**

- It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
- Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.
- Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.

**For Google Meet:**

- Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
- Meet codes will be made available via Google Classroom, pupils' email addresses or phone calls. Meeting Codes are not to be shared with others.
- Be aware that when participating, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
- Please note that school staff will not accept users outside of the @snu.ie domain. Relevant security settings are enabled.
- Be familiar with the software in advance. For video in particular, know how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/ off.
- Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
- An appropriate background/ room should be chosen for the video call.
- For detailed information on GDPR and Google Meet, please refer to <https://support.google.com/a/answer/9822731>
- 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.

**Guidelines for staff members using online communication methods:**

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Staff members will have high expectations regarding pupil behaviour, with any communication which takes place online.
3. Staff are asked to share the Meet code and a time/date for meetings with relevant pupils/parents via Google Classroom, email or phone call in the case of individual meetings. Google Meet meetings with pupils should only be accessed via the Google Meet app and the use of codes. Do not use links from Google Classroom or scheduled Meets on calendar as relevant security settings do not apply to these.
4. The teachers/SNAs will start the meeting and be the last to leave the online meeting. Maintain a log of calls and a record of attendance as you would do in general practice.
5. On entry to the meeting the staff member will immediately turn off all settings in the host controls.
6. Pupils will be allowed entry one by one and only when using their school email address. Staff members will only admit participants to video conferences within the @snu.ie domain.
7. Staff members will remove any participant not following these rules.
8. Staff members will seek to become familiar with apps before using them with pupils.
9. Staff members will report any concerns regarding online behaviour or interactions to school management.
10. All pupils will be asked to mute on entry
11. Video calls with an individual pupil will only be used in the case of a pupil where this is deemed appropriate and agreed via email or phone call with the parents. All details of such calls will be agreed in advance with parents.

**Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Pupils**

1. Check assigned work daily

2. Return one piece of work daily as requested by teachers
3. Communication is encouraged to take place during normal school hours
4. The normal school calendar will apply
5. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  - Code of Behaviour
  - Anti- Bullying Policy (Including Cyberbullying Policy)
  - Acceptable Usage Policy
6. Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply, with pupils 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 will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.
  - (b) In so far as possible, provision for students at very high-risk to Covid-19 will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

### **Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Parents**

1. We ask parents/ guardians to ensure protocols for pupils are adhered to.
2. Check-in on your child's school work on a daily basis and talk to your child about the work being assigned.
3. The health and wellbeing of all is paramount. Circumstances may change for any of us unexpectedly, pupils/ parents or guardians/ staff, 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.

### **Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for School Staff**

1. Daily communication and work daily with classes.
2. At least one mini video daily, covering a teaching point or concept.
3. Request one specific piece of work to be returned by pupils daily. Responses to this work can be via voice message, email, private comment or annotations/corrections on a document.
4. Communication is encouraged to take place during normal school hours
5. The normal school calendar will apply
6. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  - a. Child Protection Policy
  - b. Data Protection Policy
  - c. Acceptable Use Policy
  - d. Code of Behaviour
7. Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply with pupils expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible.

### **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).**

Teacher/ SEN will link in with the pupil by email and Google Classroom.

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

Teacher/ SEN will link in with the pupils by email and Google Classroom.

- 4. School bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14 day isolation period).**

Teacher will engage with the bubble daily by email and 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 pupils by email and Google Classroom.

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

### **Summary**

1. Do what you can, within your circumstances.
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 Aladdin Connect App and email.
4. We ask parents/ guardians, pupils and staff to ensure protocols are adhered to at all times.
5. If you have yet to connect to the Aladdin Connect 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.
6. A reminder that our school website contains a further list of online resources which may help further exploration of different curricular areas should the need arise - <https://www.snu.ie/useful-websites-for-parents/>. Please note, that this is optional and not essential.

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 Scoil na Naomh Uilig on 28th January 2021 and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/ HSE Public Health.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

BOM Chairperson