Communications / Remote Teaching and Learning Plan

Bansha 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 staff, Board of Management members, parents and students. In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with the aforementioned through various means.

We recognise that online safety is of huge importance and the aim of this document is to help to protect board members, school staff, pupils and parents while communicating, teaching /learning online.

This policy does not set out to replace our Acceptable Use 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 (see school website).

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

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 online collaboration is essential for distance learning and that families are in favour of increased opportunities to maintain the connection between school and home. Bansha 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.

3. Guidelines for good online communication in Bansha 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 email and ClassDojo App.
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 (email/video/ ClassDojo).
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.
9. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
10. **Bansha N.S.** cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.

Bansha N.S. will use the following 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, ClassDojo/email –video /Zoom.

4. Media which the school will use

School App

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

Each teacher will be assigned a class e-mail address through which he/she will communicate with parents/guardians and vice-versa. Parental queries will be addressed during school hours only (9:20am-3.00pm) and should relate strictly to your child's teaching and learning.

See-saw

See – saw 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 from Junior Infants – Sixth Class and requires parents to download app and set up their child/children as user/s on this app. Parental consent is required prior to using this app.

Zoom

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which may be used to enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Board of Management meetings will take place through Zoom if required under Covid-19 guidelines.

Email: banshans@banshaschool.com

Staff may also communicate with parents /children via the parents email address. Email attachments may include video/photos. Board of Management members will be contacted through email regarding Board issues.

Text Message: school mobile number 085-2384968

The school will continue to use telephone text message to communicate with parents, staff and Board members.

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 using parent's platform (link will be sent to parents).
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 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 engage in online learning activities while maintaining 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 week
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 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/SNA's

1. Check uploaded work each week
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.

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).**
   Teacher will link in with the pupil via email/ClassDojo

3. **School POD instructed by HSE Pubic Health to self-isolate.**
   Teacher will link in with the pupils via email/ClassDojo/Zoom

4. **School bubble instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14day isolation period).**
   Teacher will engage with the bubble daily on email/ClassDojo/Zoom

5. **Whole school closure as instructed by HSE Public Health (duration of closure will be advised by Public Health)**
   Teachers/SNAs will engage with pupils, using a blended approach of ClassDojo app/email/ Zoom.

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. 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 Zoom, Seesaw or Google Classroom during these times
3. Please keep abreast of postings on the school email/school app ClassDojo 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. Please connect to the on-line platforms/school App ClassDojo 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 **Bansha National School** at its meeting on:

20-10-21 and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed: Paddy Flanagan Paddy Flanagan, Chairperson BoM

Signed: Georgia Lillis Georgia Lillis, Principal, Bansha N.S.

Recommended Apps

In addition, we suggest the following Apps for your child's use too, if you can access them. If not, do not worry, they are helpful but not essential.

- Cúla 4: Excellent for younger pupils for Irish vocab – very child friendly. There are also videos of your children's favourite cartoons here as Gaeilge which would be useful to watch occasionally to keep up with Irish.
- Doulingo: most suitable from 2nd class upwards. Excellent app. Tests your child Irish ability levelat the start and they work away at their own level for 10mins daily.
- Mathduel: For tables. Fun and interactive.
- Starfall: For spellings. Again, very child friendly and useful to keep spellings progressing without feeling like schoolwork.
- Jolly Phonics App: to keep up phonics learning for infant classes.
- Dolch words Apps (there is a wide range available): for the development of sight words.
- Nessy Apps: for reading for pupils with dyslexia or difficulties.
- PinkFong: Digital stories for infant classes. Excellent and engaging.
- Khan Academy: Useful for maths for older pupils especially.
- Kahoot: for general knowledge and quizzes.
- Toontastic: probably the best app ever for digital storytelling – pupils can devise their own digital story, picking a range of characters, settings, even musical background. They plan a beginning, middle and end to their story and can record their own voices to tell the story.
- Puppetpals: similar to toontastic – useful for younger pupils. They can record themselves telling the story also.
- Lightbot – Coding app – super for all ages.