REMOTE LEARNING POLICY & PLAN
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Presentation Secondary School,
Milltown, Co. Kerry

Rationale for Remote Learning Plan

This plan has been developed in line with 'Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 Context' [DES], in order to ensure that the impact on students' learning is minimised if schools are directed to move to remote learning in the interest of public health. This plan and protocols should be read in conjunction with 'Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 Context', available from www.education.ie.

Presentation Secondary School, Milltown will endeavour to ensure that the key elements of remote teaching & learning within 'Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 Context' are implemented should emergency remote learning be required. These are;

<u>**Regular engagement with students**</u>: Teachers should, as far as possible, engage with students as per the normal school timetable. Special education teachers (SETs) should also, as far as possible, continue to engage with students on their caseload as frequently as they would under normal circumstances. The assignment of tasks to be completed is not, of itself, sufficient because students need direct teaching inputs from their teachers in order to feel connected to the school, to stay motivated, and to make progress in their learning.

<u>**A blend of guided and independent learning tasks/experiences**</u>: Teacher student engagement should involve both direct teaching by the teacher and the assignment of independent learning tasks for completion by the students. Teachers should ensure, as far as practicable, that direct instruction is provided for aspects of learning that require it, using a variety of approaches, for example video, audio, presentation software and written instructions. Regular engagement with students when they are out of school will also help them to reintegrate when they return to school.

<u>**Appropriate and engaging learning opportunities**</u>: Teachers should ensure that the chosen learning tasks give students 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 students are doing this work from home.

- **Learning tasks**: The tasks chosen should be specifically aligned to the needs of the student, including students with SEN, and should enable the teacher to monitor progress and give constructive, developmental feedback to support the next stages in their learning.

- **Skills development**: Schools should make local arrangements that seek to ensure that students are given opportunities to develop self-management and organisational skills so they are equipped to engage in remote learning. For students with additional and/or special educational needs who are being supported on their transition back to school, the work being carried out should be continued remotely to ensure progress is not lost and to enable successful reintegration into school after the period of the partial or full closure.

Two-way feedback between home and school: Schools should ensure that two-way feedback between teachers and parents/guardians and between teachers and their students is encouraged and supported. Schools should provide manageable and accessible opportunities for all students to share samples of their work with the subject teachers as frequently as they would if the students were in school. Teachers should ensure that work received is corrected and relevant feedback is provided, as would be the expectation if the school was open. The benefits for students include maintaining their motivation and their engagement with learning as well as providing a connection with the school and their peers.

Remote Learning Protocols – Full School Closure

Should a full school closure on public health grounds be announced our aim is that lessons will be delivered live online through TEAMS/Zoom as per students' regular timetables, as far as is feasibly possible.

This allows teachers to continue to teach lessons as planned as well as answering questions, setting tasks and communicating with students more effectively. Likewise, this approach allows students to ask/answer questions, collaborate with each other and interact with their teachers.

Live lessons will take place though our Office 365 Teams platform or through the school registered Zoom accounts. All other communication between students and teacher will take place via our Office 365/TEAMS platform.

Teachers will communicate details and scheduled times of live lessons to students through their class TEAM which will also be used to control access to each session. For a variety of reasons, it may not be possible for teachers to deliver live sessions for every timetabled lesson.

Security & Behaviour During Remote Learning

Great care is needed to ensure the online security of everyone involved in online learning.

Students, staff and parents should be aware that **all of the school's policies**, notably the **Code of Behaviour, Policy to Counter Bullying Behaviour** and the **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**, apply at all times while engaging in remote and online learning.

Teachers will ensure that they are familiar with the tools and skills required for good online class management in advance of initiating an online class. These include processes such as controlling students microphones and removing students from the lesson.

Users of the school's online platforms must not invite or allow others from outside the organisation into the platforms without prior approval from school management.

Students are advised that best practice when participating requires the following.
- a quiet location,
- proper attire/dress,
- no personal information visible in background (eg. bedrooms or rooms with lots of photos should be avoided)
- respectful interactions and behaviour towards all present at the live session.

Cameras & Microphones

When students join a virtual lesson their **device cameras** and **microphones** are **off by default** (this setting is controlled by the teacher). However, as the virtual session provides an opportunity for participation, teachers will ask students to switch their camera's on at the start of the lesson. This also enhances accountability of students from an attendance perspective.

Microphones should remain muted until the teacher request students to unmute in order to promote engagement.

Recording

Audio or visual recording/photographing of a live lesson is **NOT permitted** by either the teacher or the students. This is to respect the privacy and personal data of both teachers and students who participate in live lessons.

During the first lesson for each subject, participants will be reminded that **no recording (or screen photograph)** of any part of the video session should be made by **any means**.

The recording and onwards sharing of personal data *(including recordings, screenshots, photographs)* **is unlawful and a contravention of the school's policies.**

Attendance

Teachers understand that some students will not be able to attend all live lessons due to a wide range of reasons beyond their control. If this is the case students should message their teacher through the Office 365/TEAMS platform. Alternatively, parents can email office@presmilltown.ie in relation to attendance or if support with remote learning is required.

Attendance is being recorded at the end of each day for students who log-in to live lessons via TEAMS. Parents can view student attendance via VSware in the normal way.

Parents are advised that VSware attendance rolls are based on those students who log-in to the lesson. In a small number of cases teachers have identified that students have logged-in and have then been away from their computer for a substantial part of the lesson. This is one of the reasons that students should have their cameras on for each lesson. VSware attendance rolls may indicate that students have logged-in to the lesson. However, if the student's camera is not switched on the teacher cannot verify with certainty that the student was actually present at the computer/device for the entire lesson.

Parents of students whose cameras are not working can email office@presmilltown.ie for support and the relevant teachers will be notified.

Communication

Teachers understand that some students will not be able to attend all live lessons due to a wide range of reasons beyond their control. If this is the case students should message their teacher through the Office 365/TEAMS platform. Alternatively, parents can email office@presmilltown.ie in relation to attendance or if support with remote learning is required.

The Pres Milltown Office 365/TEAMS platform is for **communication between students & teachers** regarding their **work, corrections, lessons** and **feedback only**. Communication with teachers via the 365/TEAMS platform should be confined to school days from 9am – 5pm.

Parents who wish to communicate with a teacher or the school office should do so by emailing office@presmilltown.ie. *(Or for remote learning technical support - office365support@presmilltown.ie)*

Training & CPD

Teachers have received training on how to facilitate and management remote classroom such as controlling microphones and removing students from the lesson.

Teachers also have access to the Wriggle Connect teacher support platform which provides training and CPD in remote and digital learning.

Training will be updated as required and regular help-sheets/videos are provided to staff in order to support remote and digital learning.

COVID Related Absences Other Than A Whole-School Closure

Student Self-Isolation/Restricted Movements

In order to minimise the impact on learning for students who have been advised to self-isolate due to COVID-19, schoolwork/assignments will be provided for the duration of their COVID related absence.

Parents are asked to communicate the self-isolation requirement to the school office as soon as they become aware.

Work & assignments will be available via the school office within two school days of the absence being notified to the school. Where feasible, teachers may also wish to share videos, worksheets, feedback, notes etc with students who are self-isolating via phone call or TEAMS in addition to the work/assignments sent home.

Staff Self-Isolation/Restricted Movements

Where subject teachers are required to restrict their movements, 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.

A substitute teacher should be arranged to cover this teacher's teaching responsibilities in the school for this period. 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 students as per Section 12 of Circular 0049/2020.

An Entire Class/Year Group Advised by HSE to Self-isolate or Restrict Movements

In this situation, the subject teachers will provide emergency remote teaching as per timetable to all students in the affected class/year group, using the school's TEAMS platform/Zoom accounts as outlined in previous sections.

The teaching should take place from the school if the teacher is not required to self-isolate or restrict his/her movements.

Some students who are self-isolating or are restricting their movement might not be able to engage with the teaching and learning due to being unwell for a short or extended period of time. Where this occurs, work can be sent home to allow students to work at their own pace. Teachers will support students returning from COVID absence to catch up in the normal way.

Ratified – 4th February 2021   Review Date – February 2023

Appendix 1

Student & Parent Protocols

- All remote learning and live lessons will be via the school's TEAMs platform or our registered school Zoom account.

- The Pres Milltown Office 365/TEAMS platform is for **communication between students & teachers** regarding their **work, corrections, lessons** and **feedback only**. Communication with teachers via the 365/TEAMS platform should be confined to school days from 9am – 5pm.

- Parents who wish to communicate with a teacher or the school office should do so by emailing office@presmilltown.ie. *(Or for remote learning technical support - office365support@presmilltown.ie)*

- All remote learning and live lessons must be conducted within the school's Remote Learning Policy & Plan as well as the Code of Behaviour, Policy to Counter Bullying Behaviour, Acceptable Internet Usage Policy and all other school policies and practices.

- Students are advised that best practice when participating in remote learning requires the following;
    - a quiet location,
    - proper attire/dress,
    - no personal information visible in background *(eg. bedrooms or rooms with lots of photos should be avoided)*
    - respectful interactions and behaviour towards all present at the virtual session.

- As far as is possible lessons will be live in line with the regular timetable. Teachers who are in a position to facilitate live lessons will communicate details to their students through their specific class team. Parents can view their son/daughter's timetable via VSware.

    Please note that for a variety of reasons it is not possible to facilitate live lessons for each timetabled period. Where live lessons are not possible remote learning will take the form of activities, notes and/or recorded lessons.

- Attendance is recorded for each live lesson and can be viewed by parents via VSware in the normal.

    Parents are advised that VSware attendance rolls are based on those students who log-in to the lesson. In a small number of cases teachers have identified that students have logged-in and have then been away from their computer for a substantial part of the lesson. This is one of the reasons that students should have their cameras on for each lesson. VSware attendance rolls may indicate that students have logged-in to the lesson. However, if the student's camera is not switched on the teacher cannot verify with certainty that the student was actually present at the computer/device for the entire lesson.

    Parents of students whose cameras are not working can email office@presmilltown.ie for support and the relevant teachers will be notified.

    Please note that due to the nature of remote learning attendance rolls will be updated on VSware by the end of each school day.

- Students' **device cameras** and **microphones** are **off by default on entering live lesson**. These setting are controlled by the teacher and can be turned on and off as the teacher requires to ensure orderly proceedings.

- Students will be asked to switch their **cameras on** at the start of each live lesson.

  An important part of the virtual live lesson experience relies on the teacher & students being able to see each other. This provides for better engagement and creates opportunities for participation.

  Student cameras being switched on also allows for more accurate recording of attendance and engagement.

- Students' **microphones should remain muted,** other than when a teacher requests for students to unmute to allow for discussion/questions etc.

- **Audio or visual recording** of a live lesson is **NOT permitted** by either the teacher or the students.

- R**ecording (or screen photography)** of any part of the live lesson is **not permitted**. This is to respect the privacy and personal data of all who participate in live lessons. **The recording and onwards sharing of personal data would be unlawful as well as a contravention of the school's policies.**

- **Technology** – Our school and staff will do their very best to ensure remote lessons and learning proceed each day as planned. However, technology can be unpredictable at times. We ask for your patience & understanding in relation to technical difficulties that may occur during remote learning.

  In the same way, we understanding that students may experience technical difficulties at different times. We ask that parents email office@presmilltown.ie if students are experiencing technical difficulties or are facing difficulties accessing remote learning in any way.

- **Break & Lunchtimes** – In order to assist with routine, energy, and wellbeing eat a healthy snack and try to get outside if possible, during the regular break and lunch times. When in school, many of our students walk or play basketball at lunchtime. We encourage them to get outside and get some exercise during lunch break at home during remote learning.

- **Distractions** – We advise students to leave their phones in another room during 'school-time'. If students are using their phone to access remote learning, then all **social media notifications must be switched off** while they are studying/completing work or in a remote lesson.

- **Illness** - Your teachers fully appreciate that many homes may experience **illness** during a public health closure so please just do as much work as you can given your individual situation at home.

  Please let the school office know in the usual ways (school app or email) if a student cannot engage in remote learning due to illness.

  Please bear in mind that teachers may also be dealing with illness within their families during public health closures so we ask for your **patience** & **understanding**.

The school appreciates your support to ensure that best learning outcomes are achieved while also respecting privacy and confidentiality.

__Access to Remote Learning/Technical Support__
If students are having difficulties in accessing remote learning in any way, please email
office365support@presmilltown.ie as soon as possible.

Staff Protocols

- All remote learning and live lessons must be conducted within the school's Remote Learning Policy & Plan.

- Where public health advice permits, the school building will be open for teachers who need/want to teach remotely on-site. Staff should inform the Principal/Deputy Principal if they require on-site access for remote teaching in order that a room can be assigned, and on-site accountability maintained.

- Engagement with students should be live and at the designated timetabled time as far as feasibly possible. (ie. 9am, 10am, 11.20am etc) - *During remote learning all students follow the regular class times, including 1st, TY & 5th Years.*

- Teachers should record attendance as each student enters the lesson, in order to have an attendance roll to input to VSware. Attendance rolls should be completed on VSware by the end of each school day.

- Full one-hour remote lessons can be very challenging for students and teachers. It is envisaged that each live lesson would be between **35 – 45 minutes** long.

  Please note that this does not mean that you cannot continue the lesson for longer if it is going particularly well. However, each lesson must **finish** a **minimum** of **5 minutes** before the next is due to start in order to allow students and teachers time to log-out of one class group and into the next.

- A mix of teacher talk/explanation along with allowing students to individually complete short tasks, read texts and partake in discussion as part of the remote session is effective in breaking up the lesson.

  For example, if the teacher has read a passage to the class or shown a video clip, students might then answer questions 1 – 5 in their copies for 5 minutes and then the teacher can lead a discussion based on the answers.

- All remote live lessons must be through the school's **TEAMs** platform or through the teacher's **registered school Zoom account**. Zoom can be used for live lessons; however, teachers should be aware that Zoom meeting log-in details can potentially be shared with others. Therefore, it is important to verify that only the students in your class group are present at your Zoom lesson. Please ensure students have their camera switched on in order to verify this. Using TEAMs mitigates against this as only the students on your class list can enter the lesson.

- Staff are advised to NOT **open** emails/messages from students after 5pm. In many cases these emails are simply about work, but they may also be in relation to more concerning issues which we are not in a position to address at that time.

- Students' **device cameras** and **microphones** are **off by default on entering the session**. These setting are controlled by the teacher and can be turned on and off as the teacher requires to ensure orderly proceedings.

- Teachers should ask students to turn their cameras on when the lesson commences.

  An important part of the virtual live lesson experience relies on the teacher & students being able to see each other. This provides for better engagement and creates opportunities for participation.

  Student cameras being switched on also allows for more accurate recording of attendance and engagement.

  Where **Zoom** is being used it is even more important that students switch their **cameras on** in order to verify the identity of students using the link.

- Students' **microphones should remain muted,** other than when a teacher requests for students to unmute to allow for discussion/questions etc.

- Students are advised that best practice when participating requires the following.
    - a quiet location,
    - proper attire/dress,
    - no personal information visible in background *(eg. bedrooms or rooms with lots of photos should be avoided)*
    - respectful interactions and behaviour towards all present at the virtual session.

- **Audio or visual recording** of a live lesson is **NOT permitted** by either the teacher or the students. This is to respect the personal data of all, both teachers and students, who participate in each virtual live session.

- Participants should be reminded that **no recording (or screen photograph)** of any part of the video session should be made by **any means**. **The recording and onwards sharing of personal data would be unlawful as well as a contravention of the school's policies.**

The school appreciates your support to ensure that best learning outcomes are achieved while also respecting privacy and confidentiality. The Principal and Deputy Principal are available to support any staff members facing difficulties or challenges in relation to remote learning.