



Remote Teaching and Learning Policy

▪ **Introduction**

This policy has been created in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and is intended to provide guidance for the conduct of remote teaching and learning in the event of an unforeseen school closure.

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. This policy should be read in tandem with our school's Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying (including Cyber Bullying) Policy.

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.

▪ 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. St. Michael's National School 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.

▪ Remote Teaching and Learning

Teachers will engage with pupils on a daily basis. This engagement will involve:

- Direct teaching by the teacher through pre-recorded lessons, audio and written instructions.
- The assignment of independent learning tasks for completion by the pupils.

Teachers will arrange one weekly zoom meeting to check in with pupils and promote social interaction.

Special education teachers will continue to engage with the pupils on their caseloads and class teachers will differentiate teaching and learning in line with pupils' needs.

We will ensure that two-way feedback between teachers and parents/guardians and between teachers and their pupils is encouraged and supported.

Teachers will ensure that work received is corrected and relevant feedback is provided.

▪ Guidelines for good online communication in St. Michael's National School

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, Zoom and Aladdin.
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 parent/guardian's 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. St. Michael's National School cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.

▪ Media which the school will use

1. Google Classroom

As a school we have chosen to use Google Classroom as our online Learning Platform. Pupils will be assigned a new account on St. Michael's Google G-Suite system to enable them to access remote learning. Pupils can only send and receive emails to and from other users within the stmichaelsnstrim.ie domain. This restriction has been applied for child safety and security reasons.

2. Zoom

Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable staff and pupils to connect via a live link.

Rules for pupils using Zoom

1. 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.

Guidelines for parents/guardians for 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 meetings.
3. A family member is expected to be close by when a pupil is engaging in a meeting. They should monitor all online interactions from the pupil.
4. 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.
5. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
6. Pupils will be admitted to the Zoom meeting from the meeting room. Please note that school staff will only accept users into video call if he/she can be identified by the family name.
7. Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled zoom call as meetings will be locked five minutes after the scheduled start.
8. Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance.
9. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
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.

3. Aladdin

Aladdin software is used by St. Michael's as our primary administrative system. In conjunction with Google Classroom and Zoom, the school may use this software to communicate with parents/guardians. Work may be emailed through this medium if pupils have difficulty accessing any of the other forms of learning platforms. Aladdin is a secure network and all information stored and processed on this system is in strict compliance with Irish and European data protection laws.

▪ Roles and Responsibilities

Principal and Deputy Principal

- Responsible for the monitoring and quality assurance of the online learning experience.
- Monitoring feedback being provided to pupils from both Class and Special Ed. Teachers.
- Supporting and addressing parent/guardian queries.
- Ensuring a consistent and progressive approach throughout the school.
- Monitoring pupil engagement with remote learning.

Teachers

- Providing a balance of learning experiences – both new learning and consolidation learning opportunities.
- Responsible for all online learning resources provided for students in their class.
- Correcting work and providing regular feedback to pupils on submitted tasks via Google Classroom.
- Use a combination of live and pre-recorded lessons.
- Providing open lines of communication to pupils and parents/guardians during the school's directed hours. (09:20 – 15:00)

Pupils

- Dedicate appropriate time to learning
- Adhere to the school Acceptance Use Policy at all times.
- Act responsibly and with integrity through the schools online learning platforms (including no editing or inappropriate sharing of recorded materials).
- No online recording of live Zoom sessions
- Report any misuse of online platforms to the teacher.
- Be present and punctual to online Zoom meetings as directed.
- When working at home try to choose a quiet space free from distractions where possible.
- Students can only send and receive emails to and from users within the st.michaelsnstrim.ie domain.
- The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Acceptable Use Policy

Parents/Guardians

- Ensuring you monitor your child's online activities .
- Creating a culture in the home where internet activity is discussed and concerns openly shared. In doing so you create the first element of online safety for your child - an adult with whom they can discuss their fears and problems.
- Checking-in on your child's school work on a daily basis and engage in conversations with your child about the work assigned by your child's teacher.
- Ensuring your child submits tasks on time.
- Monitoring time spent engaging in online and offline learning.

▪ **Review**

This policy will be updated regularly as developments in technology continue to impact on education in particular. Review of this policy will involve input from teachers, parents/guardians, pupils and Board of Management.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Signed: Mary Hilliard

Date: 04/02/2020

Chairperson of Board of Management.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Principal.

