

St. Columba's College Stranorlar



Remote Learning Policy

February 2021

Remote Learning Policy

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1. Mission Statement and Ethos

St. Columba's College, Stranorlar is a Mercy Catholic Voluntary Secondary School under the Trusteeship of CEIST and is committed to 'The pursuit of excellence in a caring environment.'

Characteristic Spirit and Ethos

Inspired by the vision of Catherine Mc Auley, Mercy education is committed to the holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a process informed by the teachings of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere guided by the core values of CEIST –

Promoting – *Spiritual and Human Development*

We believe a knowledge of, and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ give meaning and purpose to our lives.

Achieving – *Quality in Teaching and Learning*

We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Showing – *Respect for Every Person*

We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person.

Creating Community – Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

Being Just and Responsible – We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships.

2. Aim of Policy

The aim of the Remote Learning Policy is to support the continuity of students' learning during any prolonged school closure period.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the remote learning policy annually. This policy should be read carefully with the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

3. Required features of provision as per Department of Education and Skills Guidance Document

Where it is necessary for a teacher to support students in their learning from home for reasons related to COVID-19 (i.e. based upon medical certification of a COVID-19 diagnosis or because they are restricting their movements), emergency remote teaching and learning will be

encompassed within a teacher's normal, contracted hours. There is no expectation or requirement that teachers will be on call/available outside of those hours or at weekends.

In this context, schools should ensure that emergency remote teaching and learning is characterised by:

- **Regular engagement with students:** 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.
- **A blend of guided and independent learning tasks/experiences:** 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.
- **Appropriate and engaging learning opportunities:** 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 twoway 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.

4. Remote Learning in St. Columba's College

This section covers any aspect of student remote learning as used by the school community. In all cases students must use their gmail (associated with their google classroom account) to log in. Students are not to use any other account under any circumstances for the purposes of remote learning within the school.

The list of applications that will be used for remote learning will primarily be: G Suite for Education, incorporating:

- Gmail (email)
- Google Classroom
- Google Forms
- Google Meet
- Webex
- Zoom

There may be some additional applications that teachers may use, and the teacher will provide the student with the information (through Google Classroom) required to access them.

Remote Learning Approach:

Remote Learning will take what is known as a blended approach and some teachers may use different methods.

In all cases the primary aim is to cover the required curriculum areas for their specific subject. The teacher will decide the most effective method to use to achieve this aim. Students should get in touch with their teacher right away if they are having difficulty with any aspect of their subject or if they are finding the workload unmanageable.

The school will endeavour to adhere to the existing timetable for delivery of live classes, depending on the needs of the students. If parents have any difficulty in contacting teachers or have any other questions or queries please contact the college on 074 9131246 or email at admin@stcolumbasstranorlar.ie. Messages via social media (Facebook/Twitter) will not be responded to.

Responsibilities while Partaking in Distance Learning:

For Staff and Teachers:

- Teachers have overall control of the online interaction of their class
- Disruptive students will be removed in order to allow those who wish to partake a fair chance to do so.
- Uncooperative students may receive a temporary ban from all online classes.
- Teachers will be available at the identified time on their timetable to teach students – this may be via live stream or by e-mail.
- Teachers when working remotely will on most occasions try to communicate online during normal working hours and will endeavour not to communicate with students outside of these hours.
- In so far as possible, provision for SEN students, will be made when using remote learning methodologies.
- Social media sites e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Hangouts, WhatsApp etc., to communicate with students is never permissible.

Responsibilities for Students:

- You are to communicate through your gmail account only. The use of any other account or e-mail address is expressly prohibited
- Check email and google classroom at least once a day
- Communication with teachers may only take place during normal school hours and the normal school calendar will apply
- You must always be civil and respectful to your teachers and fellow students
- You are not to record or forward any content within a live stream group – such as worksheets, exam papers, answers, solutions, videos, notes or links – to anyone else without the permission of the creator of that content
- Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply with students expected to present assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where the situation allows them to do so.
- It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have access to online classes and if not to inform the relevant person in school. **Senior-** Ms White **Junior-** Mr Sweeney
- The school policies are applicable to remote teaching and learning including:
 - The Code of Behaviour Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy

- Acceptable Use Policy
 - Communications Policy
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- The moment a student logs onto a live stream they must abide by the school rules and the rules will be implemented if and when necessary.
 - Students cannot choose to leave a live stream once a teacher has created one.

Responsibilities for Parents:

- You should ensure that your child is checking in regularly for assigned work
- Where live classes are being run you should ensure your child is in an area of the house that is quiet and free from distractions. Please be mindful of Child Protection Guidelines, for example, bedrooms should not be used for live classes.
- Live online classes should be viewed by your child only.

Live Online Classes:

Teachers may deliver some of the course by live stream. This will use varying combinations of audio, video, virtual whiteboards and screencasts.

In the use of live streaming:

- Students must always follow the direction of their teacher just as in the classroom
- All microphones should be on mute when a person is not speaking to avoid distracting background noise being broadcast to everyone.
- A meeting link is intended for the student only. The teacher will decide who should receive the link. Do not forward any link to anyone else.
- Sessions may be recorded, and these recordings may be made available by the teacher to the class to watch back again later. This recording includes any video, screenshares, whiteboards and audio from the class.
- Only the teacher is allowed record a session. No one else is permitted to record.

We would like to avoid the scenario of students being compelled to disable their webcams and/or muting their audio. In order to avoid this scenario, we are using a high trust model. Teachers will trust students to behave appropriately online, as they would in their real classroom.

5. Provision of Mobile Devices (Chromebooks, Laptops, etc.)

In the event of school closure, we will endeavour to distribute all available mobile devices to students who request them on admin@stcolumbasstranorlar.ie. Priority will be given in the following order;

1. Leaving Certificate Students.
2. Senior students/ SEN students in all years.
3. Remaining devices will be distributed to all other years when available and on a basis of earliest request for a mobile device.

All devices will be;

- In working order.
- Include charging device.
- Sanitised and bagged ready for collection.
- Signed out by a **parent/guardian**, who completes the borrowing of mobile device form.

On return of devices they should be;

- In working order.
- Include charging device.
- Sanitised
- Signed in by a **parent/guardian**, on the same borrowing of mobile device form.

Student who receive a mobile device and fail to engage in remote teaching and learning will be asked to return the device which will then be reallocated based on the priority order.

6. Review

The school will monitor and evaluate this policy and all related work and procedures to ensure legal compliance and the maintenance of best practices.

This Remote Learning Policy was formally adopted by the Board of Management on 3rd February 2021.

Signature:
(Chairperson, St. Columba's Board of Management)

Date:

Signature:
(Principal)

Date:

Date for Review: **December 2022**