Presentation Secondary School

REMOTE TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

Presentation Secondary Castleisland

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Remote Learning Teaching Policy

Scope of policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and information to students, their parents/guardians, and staff, in relation to the use of technology when learning remotely i.e. from a place other than school and where it is not possible for the teacher to deliver the class within the same location, as would be the case, if the class was taking place in a classroom setting.

While this policy informs best practice for remote learning and the use of online technologies during normal school term, it is devised in response to the Covid-19 emergency and is intended to provide guidance for the conduct of remote teaching and learning during an extended unforeseen school closure.

This policy does not set out to replace our Acceptable Usage Policy but rather intends to be an important addition to the area of learning from a digital platform.

The policy presented here should be read also in conjunction with our school's Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Presentation Secondary School, Castleisland is a school under the patronage of CEIST (Catholic Education Irish School's Trust). As a school under the patronage of CEIST who takes instruction from the Department of Education and Skills, it is of paramount importance that we have policies to ensure that procedures are in place that fulfil our statutory obligations.

The primary obligations that all schools have are to the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning and teaching is safe for all student learners under Child Protection Policy and that their data is also protected under GDPR legislation.

Schools must ensure that learning may be able to take place in an environment that is respectful and fair and meets its statutory duties.

This Policy is prepared, therefore, in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Education & Skills 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 2017

(g) GDPR

(h) Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools

(i) NEWB Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008)

Context

Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move 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 student 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.

This Policy has been developed during the Covid-19 Pandemic, when remote teaching and learning was imposed on the school community. Presentation Secondary School, Castleisland endeavours to communicate to all of our partners that the values that are instilled in all of our policies remain, whatever the format of delivery of lessons. This includes remote learning and teaching or when a student is being taught in an environment that is not within the school building and the teacher may be working remotely and is not present with the student(s).

Guidelines on the appropriate use of Online Platforms for engaging in remote teaching and learning.

Presentation Secondary School supports all students to use the Microsoft Office 365 platform. All students have been given account details. If problems arise with Microsoft Office 365, students should contact the IT coordinator, Ms Leen or info@presentationcastleisland.ie.

Microsoft Teams is a very useful tool for remote teaching and learning. The following applies for all use of this platform.

- Teachers when working remotely will, as far as possible, communicate online during normal working hours. However, everyone's circumstances are different, and we have to be as accommodating to all members of our school community as we can, especially in these uncertain times. Parents/guardians and students need to be aware that teachers may have to send material/ assignments outside of regular school opening hours. This does not mean there is an expectation on the student to begin work at the time it is received.
- Likewise, there is never an expectation on the teacher to correct or comment on work sent via Office365 outside of normal school hours.

- In so far as possible, provision for SEN students, will be made when using Remote Learning and Teaching methodologies

- Students cannot choose to leave a Team once a teacher has created one.

- The material created by the teacher on Teams is the property of the teacher and students do not have permission to share with others outside of the Team unless given permission to do so.

  Recordings should not be made of any online lessons unless given explicit permission from the teacher. In this instance, it is of utmost importance that any such recordings are not shared.

- Teachers will trust students to behave appropriately online, as they would in their own classroom.

- Teachers are the owners/ managers of the Teams they create. Most Teams consist of whole class groups but this may vary.

- A teacher will only correspond and engage with a student who is logged into their Presentation Castleisland Microsoft Office 365 Teams account.

- Social media sites e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, WhatsApp etc, are not permitted for communication with students. Social media and the school app will be used by teachers to demonstrate examples of good work to parents and the wider school community but will not be used for the conduct of teaching and learning.

- Any behaviour or language deemed inappropriate during school applies online and after established school times. The consequences for such behaviour will be the same as if the student was in school as they are involved in prescribed school work, on a school created platform using a school log-in.

- All provisions relating to student data remains the same under GDPR procedures and guidelines. As per all matters pertaining to our school's Code of Behaviour, if a student acts in a fashion that is contrary to the school Code of Behaviour, sanctions will apply.

- Parents / Guardians must inform the school if a student is not in a position to engage in the online teaching and learning as records of engagement are maintained for all subjects.

- Parents / Guardians are expected to monitor their daughter's application to study throughout a school closure period.

Presentation Castleisland supports the learning of all students at this time. For that reason, the following requirements in relation to remote teaching and learning of all students are particularly important:

- **Regular engagement with pupils/students:** Teachers will, as far as possible, engage with students as per the normal school timetable.

  - **A blend of guided and independent learning tasks/experiences:** Teacher-student engagement will involve both direct teaching by the teacher and the assignment of independent learning tasks for completion by the student.

- **Appropriate and engaging learning opportunities:** Teachers will ensure that the chosen learning tasks give students an opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a clear and concise way.
- **Learning tasks:** The tasks chosen will be specifically aligned to the needs of the students, including students with special educational needs (SEN), and should enable the teacher to monitor progress and give constructive, developmental feedback to support the next stages in their learning.
- **Two-way feedback between home and school:** The school will communicate at regular intervals with parents/guardians. Teachers will provide manageable and accessible opportunities for all students to regularly share samples of their work with the teacher and relevant feedback will be provided.
- **Support for pupils/students with SEN:** Special education teachers (SETs) will continue to engage with students and subject teachers will differentiate teaching and learning in line with their students' needs to minimise disruption to their learning and progression.

Protocols for online/streamed classes for students

The following guidelines apply for all students engaging in online teaching and learning:

- Make sure that you are in a quiet place, so that you can engage fully.
- Have all required materials available before the class starts.
- Log-on at the start of the class; students logging-on late can be a distraction to others.
- If you are unable to attend a class or you will have to leave before the scheduled end of the class, please contact the teacher.
- You should log-on sitting at a desk; remain seated at the screen for the entire class – do not move around.
- Do not have any other apps open, or your phone nearby if using a laptop; they will distract you.
- Follow your teacher's instructions in relation to muting your microphone and turning on or off your video.
- The teacher reserves the right to remove you from an online or streamed class in line with the School's Code of Behaviour.
- As in normal classrooms, students should show respect for teacher and other students in the class at all times.
- Please note suitable attire is expected.
- Contact your subject teacher or Year Head if you have any questions or concerns.

Online engagement – Parent/Guardian information

- Perhaps more so during on-line tuition, the partnership between home and school becomes critical and the support of parents/guardians in establishing good routines and supporting students in engaging in

schoolwork is vital. Parents/guardians are asked to monitor your daughter's application to study throughout a school closure period.

- Engagement between teachers and students will be structured following the school timetable.

- Establishing a routine at home for school work should be done mindful of that timetable.

- In accordance with the DES guidelines on-line engagement will be a blend of teacher guidance and independent learning tasks/experiences. Teachers will decide the best model of engagement and the best mix of teacher direction, teaching and independent learning to suit the subject and the topic that is being covered.

- Pupils are encouraged and expected to engage with their online learning in the same way as they would in their face-to-face teaching.

- Please familiarise yourself with the rules for on-line engagement that have been given to students at all assemblies & above protocols, as this will indicate to you the procedures and practices that you should witness happening with your daughter and what is expected.

- Appropriate attendance records and follow up will be undertaken. Parents/guardians should follow the normal attendance procedures and inform the school through the school app if there is any reason why their daughter cannot take part in their online learning. You can expect to be contacted by teachers or Year Heads to ask your help and support in addressing any lack of engagement by students with the on-line process.

- Where a student has difficulty with computer or online access, we ask that parents/guardians contact us immediately at school so we can advise and engage with you on a solution.

- Regular updates will be posted on our school app which is our main information channel for parents/guardians. Please ensure that you have access to the Presentation Castleisland School app at this time.

- We reiterate that if you have any questions or queries in respect of any aspect of your daughter's learning, please contact us at school.

SEN

According to Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 context, it is crucial that all schools enable teachers to support the continuation of students' learning effectively. This is 'particularly important in the context of students at risk of early school leaving, students with special educational needs and students at risk of educational disadvantage'.

Effective and regular communication between the school and home will be key to ensuring that changing roles, approaches and expectations, which are necessary in the current challenging circumstances, are understood by all concerned.

The following is in place in our school:

The Subject teachers will:

- Engage with students as per the normal school timetable as they would under normal circumstances in as far as possible.
- Continue to differentiate tasks appropriately to match the learning needs of students with SEN.
- Focus on affirming students' efforts, motivating them to continue their efforts and using the outcomes of the discussion to further differentiate their work.
- Consult with colleagues and the SEN team to ensure a coordinated whole-school approach to assigning work to students with SEN.

NB '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.'

Special Education Teachers will:

- Liaise with subject teachers to ensure an appropriate programme of work for students with SEN; the programme should, as far as possible, be personalised to the student's needs.
- Review the student's support plans to identify aspects of the programme that can be worked on in thehome environment.
- Agree the programme of work following consultation with the student's parents and guardians, taking account of their ability to communicate in English or Irish.
- Identify and use technological and resource options available to the SET and the students to support learning.
- Support parents and guardians, where possible and practicable, to use the technology in use by the school to facilitate students' engagement in learning.
- Emphasise opportunities for students to learn in their home environment, including participating in structured activities related to life skills and independent living.

Please review advice outlined in Guidance on Continuity of Schooling:

Supporting Students With Special Educational Needs for post-primary schools

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/National-Emergencies-Public-Health-Issues/guidance-continuity-of-schooling-supporting-students-with-sen-post-primary.pdf

Wellbeing Support

The school will continue to focus on supporting the wellbeing of all in our school community. The Pastoral Care team, Wellbeing Committee including Year Heads, Religion teachers, Guidance, CSPE, SPHE teachers and PE teachers will engage online in a weekly meeting. They will provide resources, support, and interventions in line with the Continuum of Support framework where differentiated support will be provided in the form of support for all, for some and for few.

We will focus on fostering resilience through promoting.

● A sense of safety

● A sense of calm

● A sense of self-efficacy and community-efficacy

● A sense of Connectedness

● A sense Hope

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/guidance-for-school-staff-on-post-primary-students-returning-to-school.pdf

Other Supports:

• Staff and families who are experiencing particularly challenging times can be directed to the support services available at www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/together/

• Families can be referred to the resources and supports provided by agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and the Tusla Education Support Service (TESS).

• Staff can refer to the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme. Schools may also consult with NEPS in relation to the academic, social and emotional needs of their students.

The National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) has developed a range of resources on wellbeing available at https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/af24b-wellbeing-guidance-documents-for-parents-students-and-schools/

Personal information communicated with staff

How we communicate with our students has changed fundamentally in recent times and the protocols, as set out below, are designed to support you in the event that a student communicates information of a personal nature to you either by email, phone or during a live lessson interaction.

Crisis Intervention protocols

These protocols come into play in the event that a student communicates to a staff member that they are in danger of being harmed or are intent on harming themselves.

- Immediately contact the D.L.P or deputy D.L.P of the school.

- If the contact from the student came via email, do not respond to the email until you have spoken to the D.L.P. If the contact occurs during FaceTime contact, assure the student that you will get help for them and that you will contact them again. The student should be made aware that you will be passing on the information they have disclosed.

- At no time should you tell a student you will not disclose the information they have shared. Listen to the student, be supportive, assure them that you will get help, take notes, but do not probe or investigate the information that has been shared.

- It is essential that you get a contact number for the student at this point as the student may have to be contacted directly. Do not give the student your number but tell them they can email you if necessary.

- You may be asked by the D.L.P. or deputy D.L.P. to make contact with the student but this will be under the direction and guidance of the D.L.P. or deputy D.L.P.

Procedures for one-to-one support remotely

The Guidance Counsellor (GC), the Pastoral Care and Leadership and Management team will meet regularly online to discuss any concerns that have come to their attention in relation to students.

In the case of a student seeking support, we will continue to use the referral systems that already exists; If a teacher becomes aware of a student who needs support, they should pass on such information to the Year-head who will use the existing school structures to liaise with the appropriate people: PC team, Guidance Counsellor, Management, DLP, DDLP etc.

Discussions within school support teams are confidential to the members of that team and pertinent information will be disclosed on a need-to-know basis only.

Support for the students will be provided during the normal school day. The type of support offered will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and ideally parental consent will be obtained before proceeding with online support for the student.

If the support required falls within the professional competencies of the GC, Ms Kennelly will support the student through Teams, providing links to appropriate information/support.. If Ms Kennelly feels the support required falls beyond her professional competencies, she will refer the student, with their parents' consent, to appropriate outside professional agencies.

Informed consent will be sought before engaging with the student in any one-to-one pastoral counselling relationship.

All school records and data pertaining to students and parents/guardians are regarded as highly confidential and will be stored in line with GDPR (2018) procedures.

The Guidance Counsellor is mindful of the Department of Education and Skills Circular 0081/2017 on Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Post Primary Schools and is aware of her role and responsibilities as a mandated person.

Staff are aware of and have discussed referral procedures and protocols that will be followed in the event of a Critical Incident.

General Anxiety or stress related responses

- As teachers we deal with our students' anxiety and stress on a daily basis. If a student expresses feelings of general anxiety and stress, the teacher can engage with the student on Teams to reassure the student.
- However, it is important that the Year Head also be made aware of the students' communication.
- Contact the Year Head who will, in turn, bring the matter to the attention of the Pastoral Care Team and Leadership and Management Team.
- If at any point further communication with the student calls for a crisis intervention, revert to the protocols outline above.

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