

## Castlederg High School – Remote Learning Policy



**Draft Version**

**January 2021**

### **Overview**

This policy is designed to guide teachers, pupils, parents and other stakeholders as to how learning and teaching may be managed in circumstances where pupils are not in school for 5 days a week and a response to supporting pupil progress in the light of current Coronavirus restrictions.

Pedagogy always needs to be considered before technology when creating online learning experiences. Online learning activities provide opportunities to consolidate and protect learning that has already taken place as well as supporting pupil to pupil collaboration and pupil-centric approaches; it is important to move beyond using digital tools as a means of transmitting information.

The virtual classroom is an extension of the physical classroom and in just the same way there will be rules, routines and certain actions that pupils should follow in order for the blended approach to have a maximum impact. It may be useful to take time with pupils, to share expectations and model positive online behaviour.

This policy should be seen as an additional to the Teaching and Learning Policy and falls under the school's policies on Data Protection, Acceptable Use of the Internet and Safeguarding and the Online Learning Policy.

DE has defined blended learning as: an approach to education whereby schools will combine classroom-based teaching and learning methods within school, with a range of remote learning in order to deliver the NI Curriculum.

### **Principles:**

- A proportion of the school's students should be able to attend at any one time.
- All staff in school have access to equipment that allows them to support remote learning.
- The C2K Schools package includes MS Teams, MS OneNote and Google Classroom (which now incorporates Google Meets. These are our recommended platforms for online learning. There is also Collaborate Ultra)

- The school's staff have some relevant experience of online learning following lockdown and whole school staff training took place in Google Classroom but further CPD will be needed – Google Classroom, Teams etc... Sharing of good practice will form part of any online Dept or staff meetings.
- The needs of those students who cannot attend need to be taken into account.
- The policy must comply with Safeguarding, E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policies.
- Vulnerable students and those without access to devices and/or broadband and/or workspaces must be supported.
- Access to blended learning should be available to students from collaborating schools and collaborating schools and learning partners such as SWRC should include CHS pupils in their blended learning arrangements.

### **1. Online Safety**

As well as complying with the school's policies on Acceptable Use and Online Learning Policy the following principles apply:

- Online teaching should be to a group of students. (no 1-2-1 work). The exceptions to this would be our mentoring programme with a learning mentor, interactions between LSA's and students whom they are supporting and Careers support for Interview preparation. Staff will use the Google Meet Platform to collaborate with pupils.
- Cameras can be disabled if necessary and pupil microphones muted.
- Teachers working at home can disguise or replace the background.
- All contacts should be set up using C2K emails (no private email addresses for either teachers or pupils)
- Teachers should be aware of how to mute the microphones of pupils during an online lesson.
- Entrance to a virtual lesson should be by invitation; if an access code is used, this should be disabled once the whole class is registered.

### **2. Learning to support Curriculum: Combining school based with home based learning**

There will be revised curriculum priorities and adjustments. Content may need to be revised following early review of pace of delivery.

- Revised expectations; there needs to be a focus on key priorities.
- Practical lessons – these will need to be postponed, done as a demonstration or provided as video content. HE practical work may possibly be done at home
- Physical education – this is vital for wellbeing; activities need to respect social distancing and other health regulations and will be included within school if regulations allow.

- Use of ICT to support learning – both learning platforms (e.g. Google Classroom) and online resources (e.g. BBC Bitesize).

### **3. Assessment**

- There should be an agreed schedule of assessment activities – each department to review this for workload and consistency and depts. should agree methods of assessment before formally reporting.
- Teacher should set clear success criteria – what are you looking for in a pupil's work.
- Feedback should be constructive and supportive rather than error correction.
- Adjustments to school assessment policy may be required; this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- Parental engagement – The school will work with parents to share progress and support throughout with regular form teacher contact via telephone.
- Online assessment, such as Quizlet etc.... may be used in place of other forms of assessment and may be repeated in order to help with retrieval practice.
- Online assessment should not lead to an endless feedback loop: resubmission of improved work following teacher feedback is only necessary when specifically required by the teacher. Progress and improvement can be shown in the next assignment. The assessment of online pupil work should not take longer than other assessment methods previously used. If there is increased workload, then departments should review the amount of assessment and adjust it to manage workload, possibly using strategies such as comment banks or rubrics.

### **4. Pastoral Care and Support**

- Form teachers will contact parents and pupils fortnightly to offer pastoral support and help with any additional academic or IT support if required. This will give a vital non digital support and allow for human to human contact so needed for mental health support.
- The school counselling service will be made accessible through the app and facebook and the school office with referrals being made via the usual pastoral route and counselling will be given via telephone support.
- In addition to the Form Tutor's calls, the Head of Year will liaise with form teachers and follow up with additional support for pupils who require it and due to non engagement issues or any other issues they see fit to assist with. The SENCO and the VP will make telephone calls to support vulnerable pupils as and when they see fit. LSA's will contact their pupils at least once a week and will enter the GC of their students to help them support

their work. A hard copy list of email addresses and contact numbers is available from the office and is kept securely in case access to SIMS is not possible.

5. Equality and Inclusion: the school is committed to provide a quality blended learning experience to all. Access to devices can be facilitated using school assets, subject to a user agreement. Teachers and tutors should liaise with the ICT Co-ordinator Mrs Beatty to make sure no pupil is hindered from accessing lessons. LSA support for pupils on the SEN register will continue during online learning.

6. Mental Health Awareness - Digital detox days – The school will provide digital detox days to allow pupils to get a break away from computer screens from time to time to promote mental health, avoid overuse of screens and promote other learning activities at home.

## **5. Practical Guidance**

- Remote Learning Web Page – A specific Remote Learning page is dedicated on the website to give instant access to help, support and guidance regarding all aspects of Remote Learning, who to contact, how, when and where. Tips and help will be given regularly via Facebook and the school app to support pupils and parents.
- Work booklets can be prepared if departments feel this is necessary and given to pupils whilst they are in school. If attendance is not possible, methods for distributing these will be put in place if required.
- Livestreaming for a whole class should only be used when this is the most effective way of delivering a lesson and may consist of audio only or video and audio. Livestreaming is at the discretion of the teacher – if a more effective way of delivering the class is possible, then it should be used.
- Livestreaming from within class – when some pupils are in school and others are at home – is at the discretion of the teacher. It is a useful way of maintaining progress. Teachers do need to be aware of the needs of pupils who are shielding due to long-term health issues – they should be able to access the materials and tuition.
- Uploading classroom materials to an online platform is a matter of ‘dragging and dropping’ files into your chosen platform, there is no expectation that new materials should be produced specifically for blended learning.
- Hard copy material can be scanned on any of the school’s copiers and is then emailed a PDF to the teacher’s C2K email, where it can be moved to an online classroom via drag and drop.
- Work that is submitted online can be marked without the quarantining required for paper based work, allowing feedback to be given more quickly. Comment banks, rubrics and voice feedback using mote can speed this process even further. We want to encourage a move away from hard copy work as the digital learning does provide a richer learning experience and more scope for feedback.

## **6. Pupil Behaviour and Engagement**

The school expects that students will:

- Use remote learning resources such as textbooks, work booklets and online resources to develop their knowledge and understanding;
- Engage with teachers and classmates during online lessons, by joining at the correct time, having resources to hand, asking and answering questions and completing work for uploading as far as is possible.
- Feedback - Teachers will do all they can to get back to pupils as soon as is possible however pupils and parents must recognise that teachers are working with approx.150 – 200 pupils and they may not always be able to respond instantly.
- Comply with the school's code of conduct for behaviour in the same manner as if in class.
- While it is not expected that students will wear uniform whilst at home for remote learning, they should be appropriately attired for school work.
- Follow good online etiquette: use headphones for audio, use the 'Hands-Up' function to alert your teacher to a question or issue and keep your microphone muted until called into the lesson by your teacher.
- Behaviour in an online environment is subject to the same standards required in school.
- Teachers have the power to control students' inputs to the lesson; e.g. by muting a microphone or removing a pupil from the online class. Behaviour that leads to this will be regarded as a serious breach of the code of conduct and sanctions may be applied.
- Use the learning platform (i.e; Google Classroom) to communicate with their teachers during their timetabled lessons and not at other times or via other means such as email.

## **7. Parental Involvement:**

Parents play a key role in the success of blended learning; it is important that students working remotely are supported in the following ways:

- supporting a school routine if live-streamed classes are being used. If this is not possible due to issues such internet bandwidth or use of devices by others working at home, making sure that devices/internet are available at another time and contacting school for support with this if needed.
- making sure the child can access online resources, using a PC. laptop or smartphone and wi-fi and letting the school if there are issues so that school can support and help with any issues.
- If possible, providing a secure, private space for the child to work; it would be inappropriate for a parent to observe or attempt to participate in an online lesson

- Using the school app to keep up-to-date with any important messages or information from school.
- If parents have any queries or concerns they can contact the school by email or by calling the school office and ask to speak to the form teacher of the pupil, who will endeavour to respond to the request as quickly as possible.

### **Important Notes for Parents and Pupils:**

Online lessons are provided only on the strict condition that no part of them is recorded as video, audio or still images. Any breaches of this will be regarded as serious incidents and will be subject to the school's disciplinary policy.

### **8. Staff CPD**

- Teachers and non- teaching staff will be given an opportunity to tailor the CPD to their needs.
- C2K and EA support will be used to deliver CPD as required.
- Sharing good practice will be an essential part of CPD.
- Staff will be given regular opportunities to express additional CPD needs and to get support if needed.

S J Wilson

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To be reviewed March 2021