



Scoil Thomáis, Laurel Lodge, Castleknock, Dublin 15 School Plan for Remote Teaching and Learning – 2020/21



This plan (updated November 2020) is designed to provide guidance for staff, parents and pupils where a partial or full school closure is advised by Public Health HSE because of a case or cases of COVID-19. The plan also addresses how individual pupils or groups of pupils can be supported to continue learning remotely if they have to self-isolate or restrict their movements.

The Department of Education (DES) recognises that there will be situations where individual pupils or groups of pupils, teachers, or possibly entire school communities, are requested by Public Health HSE to self-isolate or restrict their movements because of a case or cases of COVID-19. Decisions around advising pupils, teachers or other school staff to restrict their movements for COVID-19 related reasons are made solely by Public Health HSE. *c/f Public Health Guidance Letter to schools dated 27 August 2020 and Sept 2020 Schools Pathway for COVID-19:*

The Department of Education issued *Guidance on Remote Learning in a COVID-19 Context: September - December 2020 for Primary & Special Schools* sets out how schools should plan for and support pupils' learning in a number of possible scenarios which could occur during the 2020/21 school year. The extent to which these scenarios may occur cannot be predicted, it is possible that individual pupils or groups of pupils and teachers may be advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements on a number of occasions during the school year. This may lead to an accumulation of a significant number of days where pupils learn from home and/or teachers work from home. In such cases the school will make every effort to enable teachers to support the continuation of pupils' learning effectively so far as is possible. The school recognises the significant challenges for pupils with special educational needs and pupils at risk of educational disadvantage. Where pupils are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements, teachers will maintain a focus on supporting pupil wellbeing. The DES previous guidance to schools in relation to supporting continuity of pupils' learning during the March to June 2020 school closure period is also relevant to 2020/21.

The school must also consider the wellbeing of all staff and families during this time. Staff and school families who present as experiencing particularly challenging times will be directed to the support services available at gov.ie/en/campaigns/together/ or to the resources and supports provided by agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) or for school staff the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Service (Spectrum Life helpline 1800 411 057)

SUPPORTING TEACHING AND LEARNING DURING COVID-19 RELATED ABSENCES OR SCHOOL CLOSURES:

In response to the uncertainty of continuing operation of school due to the Covid- 19 pandemic, the teaching staff of Scoil Thomáis formulated this plan to outline how the school will support teaching and learning for our pupils remotely. In the event of a full or partial school closure, the school aims to continue to communicate with all our pupils and their parents in so far as is possible.

Scoil Thomáis has an obligation to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils and staff during the remote teaching and learning process.

- The school recognises that online safety is especially relevant during this time and this plan sets out safeguards to help to ensure the safety and wellbeing of school staff and pupils, while engaged in remote teaching and learning using the school approved online platforms and digital communication formats.
- It is also important that personal and sensitive data of pupils and staff is protected under GDPR legislation. This plan seeks to set in place procedures to ensure that remote teaching and learning takes place in an environment that is respectful and fair and fulfils the statutory duties of the school.
- Please note that this plan does not replace the school policy on Mobile Phones and Acceptable Usage Policy. This plan arises from the need to clearly outline the school's expectations and protocols for remote and online teaching and learning over a digital platform.
- All the provisions of the school's Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy apply in the context of remote learning and all platforms associated with the school's implementation of this.



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This plan has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Education and relevant sections of: The Education Act (1998), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Equal Status Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004), Disability Act (2005), Children First Act (2017), GDPR, Data Protection Act (2018), Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary schools, NEWB Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008).

The plan also informed by the DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for Primary Schools (May 2020), DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: *Supporting Primary Pupils at very High Risk to Covid-19* (August 2020) and DES Circular 74/2020, *Communication/Teaching and Learning Platform*.

NOTE: This plan is a working document, the document will be updated accordingly as the school continues to explore options and platforms available to support distance learning,

Context for using ICT and Digital Technology for Remote Teaching and Learning :

- ✓ Teaching and Learning is always evolving, and developments in ICT and Digital technologies provides the school community with new opportunities for teaching and learning.
- ✓ Teachers and parents recognise that online collaboration is essential for online learning and the importance of maintaining the connection between school and home in the learning process is necessary to support pupils in continuing their learning.
- ✓ This plan identifies child friendly, online tools, to assist in providing effective teaching and learning for pupils in the event of school closure or prolonged absences from school, while also enabling communication between school staff, parents and pupils.

Scoil Thomáis' guidelines for safe and supportive online communication:

1. Staff, parents and pupils are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe and respectful manner whilst engaged in online communication including teaching and learning. The taking of screenshots, photographs or recordings of pupil or teacher engagement with any online teaching platforms is strictly forbidden.
2. It is the duty of parents/guardians to ensure that their children are appropriately supervised while they are working online and to ensure that any content submitted to their teacher is appropriate.
3. Staff members will use **Google Classroom in Senior Classes and using Seesaw for Junior Classes** to provide teaching and learning resources with pupils and their parents/guardians. Pupils will be taught the relevant skills to access these platforms in school as necessary.
4. The use of any approved electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes only and to allow for home school communication with pupils and their parents/guardians
5. Pupils and teachers or SNAs must only communicate using digital tools approved by the school.
6. Parents will be notified in advance of the online platforms being used by teacher/SNA and permission will be sought where necessary. (ie Google Classroom, Seesaw, Zoom)
7. Parental permission will be sought before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum.
8. For Video/Zoom calls/Google Meet, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via the parents'/guardians' email addresses.
9. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to parents/guardians only, where applicable.
10. Scoil Thomáis cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised. However school staff will adhere to school protocols when using online video platforms ie - two school staff present, operation of the waiting room etc.



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Scoil Thomáis will use a selection of online platforms for communicating and connecting with parents/pupils. Our 'Remote Teaching and Learning Plan' includes a combination of assigned work, pre-recorded lessons (Seesaw & Google Classroom) and teacher led sessions (ie Zoom) - to be decided by the school

1. **School Website** The school will upload general information which will be available to parents and pupils via the school website. Parents/guardians should check the website regularly for school updates and important information and advice including DES/HSE and Public Health advice.
2. **Aladdin Parent Communication and Teacher Email:** The school uses the Aladdin Pupil Management system for communication with parents and for notifying parents of upcoming events etc. Each teacher is assigned a school e-mail address through which he/she will communicate with parents/guardians and vice-versa. During the operation of remote learning for a class/or classes please note that emails from parents related to your child's teaching and learning. will be responded to during the school hours (9 - 3pm)
3. **Seesaw App:** *Seesaw Class App* is for our pupils to connect to their folder and they then have the option of uploading items to their folder for their teacher to see. This app is used from Junior Infants - 3rd Class and requires a home learning code/QR code which can be accessed through the school email. Parental consent is required prior to using this app. Each child will be assigned an individual access code. A family log in is not facilitated on Seesaw. Lessons may be pre -recorded and uploaded via Seesaw.
4. **Google Classroom:** (also includes Google Meet where appropriate) Google Classroom is an online platform used with 4th , 5th & 6th Class pupils and enables pupils to connect to their folder of work and it also allows access to teacher directed work when required. Teachers may provide feedback and communicate with pupils via Google Classroom. Some lessons may be pre -recorded and uploaded on Google Classroom. Parental consent is required for pupils using this app.
5. **Zoom:** Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Teachers may connect with pupils using pre-arranged Zoom Meetings. Scoil Thomáis has purchased the pro licence version of Zoom for the use by school staff for school purposes.

RULES FOR PUPILS USING ONLINE COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

For submitting learning:

- Submit work and pictures that are appropriate -
- Parents/guardians must approve children's work prior to it being posted to the teacher.
- Use kind and friendly words.

For video calls/Zoom:

1. Remember to ensure you 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.
11. Enjoy! Don't forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!



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GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS ONLINE COMMUNICATION with SCHOOL

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.

Check over the work which pupils send to teacher, ensuring it is appropriate. Remind your child of online safety.

For Video Calls/Zoom:

1. Under no circumstances should screenshots, photographs or recordings be taken of Zoom/video calls.
2. Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
3. The main purpose of a video call is to maintain a social connection between the school and pupils. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
4. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
5. You will automatically enter a waiting room when the code for a Zoom call has been entered. Please note that school staff will only accept users into video call if you can be identified by the display name on your zoom account. (i.e. Family Name)
6. Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled video, or they may be locked out. Please request to join the Zoom call approximately five minutes before the scheduled start time. This will give school staff time to verify your email address.
7. Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance. For video in particular, show them how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/off.
8. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
9. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.
10. For detailed information on GDPR and Zoom, please visit <https://zoom.us/privacy>

Please be aware that breaches of the above guidelines may result in a discontinuation of this mode of communication. A breach may also necessitate the removal of a pupil/parent from a meeting or the meeting being terminated.

REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROTOCOLS FOR PUPILS:

- Check assigned work regularly
- Communication may only take place during normal school hours during school calendar days
- The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
Code of Behaviour, Anti- Bullying Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Data Protection Policy, Child Safeguarding Policy

Best Practice in Teaching and Learning will continue to apply, with pupils expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible in this evolving and unprecedented situation,

REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROTOCOLS FOR PARENTS:

- Check-in on their child's school work daily and talk to their child about the work being assigned
- Please ensure that only teacher assigned work from books and workbooks is completed
- Pupils are expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible.
- The school will provide school work and guidance and seek that parents and pupils do their best taking into account the unique circumstances in each home and family.

REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROTOCOLS FOR TEACHERS/SNA'S

- Check uploaded work regularly **during normal school hours**
- Communication may only take place during normal school hours and during the school calendar days.
- The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning: Child Protection Policy, Acceptable Usage Policy, Data Protection Policy, Code of Behaviour etc.



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REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROVISION SPECIFICALLY FOR THE FOLLOWING COVID-19 RELATED SCENARIOS:

A. Provision for children who are at very high risk to Covid-19:

The school will engage directly with relevant parents, regarding remote educational provision for children deemed to be at **very high risk** to Covid-19 (see HSE Guidelines) where medical certification has been provided to the school.

B. In the case of all other children who are instructed to self-isolate by their GP or HSE Public Health, educational provision will be provided as follows:

1. Pupils who are awaiting Covid-19 test results for themselves or a family member and have been instructed by their GP to isolate at home for a few days. These pupils will be supported by their teacher/SEN teacher to catch up on their learning on their return to school
2. Pupils isolating at home on instruction from their GP due to a confirmed case within their own family/close contact outside of school (14 day isolation period). Class Teacher or SEN teacher may link in with the pupil via SeeSaw/ Google Classroom.
3. School POD (class group) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate. Teachers will link in with the pupils via SeeSaw/ Google Classroom.
4. School BUBBLE (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14 day isolation period). Teacher will engage with the bubble daily on Seesaw/Google Classroom
5. Whole school closure as instructed by HSE Public Health (duration of closure will be advised by Public Health) Teachers will engage with pupils, using a blended approach of pre-recorded lessons, Seesaw/Google Classroom and planned contact via Zoom.

Please note that all of the above provisions are subject to change as deemed necessary by the school. The Principal and Deputy Principal coordinate teaching and learning plans at class levels and provide support for teachers and SNAs during remote learning time.

Summary of Specific Class Level Remote Teaching and Learning Platforms - 2020/21			
Junior Infants	Seesaw	Senior Infants	Seesaw
1 st Classes	Seesaw	2 nd Classes	Seesaw
3 rd Classes	Seesaw	4 th Classes	Google Classroom
5 th Classes	Google Classroom	6 th Classes	Google Classroom

The plan is subject to change, to take account further guidance or instruction from the Department of Education and Skills/HSE/ Public Health.

This school plan for remote teaching and learning was ratified by the BOM at its meeting on 1st December 2020. It will be reviewed and updated as necessary following implementation and feedback.