

## Remote Learning Policy – Nicker NS

In response to this time of uncertainty regarding Covid-19 school closures, we have formulated this policy to outline how the school will maintain strong, positive links between school and home. In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our pupils through various means. 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 should be read in tandem with the school's Digital Learning Policy, the school's Code of Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Internet Safety Policy.

The primary obligation of all schools is the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all student learners and that personal and sensitive data is also protected under GDPR legislation. Schools must ensure that learning takes place in an environment that is respectful and fair and meets its statutory duties.

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).

This is a working document and this document will be updated regularly as we continue to explore further options available to support distance learning as required.

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 teachers and learners. Never before has there been greater scope to learn using technology. Advances in technology mean that assignments can be delivered remotely and that there is greater access to information on the internet which provides opportunities for real learning to take place under the watchful and professional guidance of the teacher.

However, whether a child is learning remotely or present in the 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 as well as all of the other school's policies.

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.

Nicker NS 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

### **Guidelines for Good Online Communication in Nicker NS**

- Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of any zoom or video calls.
- Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate and respectful manner online.
- 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.
- Staff members will communicate with pupils and their families via Google Meet, Zoom, E mail or through an established app e.g. Seesaw or Studyladder.
- Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
- Students and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (Seesaw, Google Meet).
- Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum.
- For video 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.
- For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
- Nicker NS cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.
- Nicker NS will use various online platforms for communicating and connecting with pupils/families. Our 'Remote Teaching and Learning Plan' will include a combination of assigned work, via e mail; as well as work on Seesaw or Studyladder. Use of Google Classroom/Zoom will be used from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class
- Parental queries will be addressed generally during school hours only (8:30-2:30) and should relate strictly to teaching and learning.

#### **1: Seesaw**

Seesaw Class App is for all pupils from juniors to 3<sup>rd</sup> . Pupils have the option of uploading items to their folder for their teacher to view. This app requires a code which can be accessed

through e mail from the child's teacher. Parental consent is required prior to using this app. Each child will be assigned an individual access code..

## 2: Google Classroom

Google Classroom is an online platform which may be used with senior class pupils and again it enables our pupils to connect to their folder of work and it also allows access to their teacher when required. Our teachers may also provide feedback and communicate with pupils via Google Classroom. Parental consent is required prior to using this app.

## 4. Google Meet/Zoom

Google Meet is a video-conferencing platform which will enable teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Teachers will connect with pupils regularly using pre-arranged Google Meetings or zoom meetings.

Nicker NS uses e mail to complement the above and to further support and enhance teacher/parent communication at all stages during the school year.

## **Rules for Pupils using Online Communication Methods**

For submitting learning:

- Submit work and pictures that are appropriate, having an adult look over the work before submitting is recommended,
- Use of kind and friendly words. (For video calls)
- Remember to ensure you join each meeting using your family name.
- Pictures, screenshots or recordings of the video calls are not allowed.
- Remember: School rules apply online also
- Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
- Join the video with your microphone muted.
- Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
- If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words.
- Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking.
- Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call.
- Be on time – set a reminder if it helps.

## **Guidelines for Parents / Guardians**

- For learning:
- It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
- Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.

- Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.
- For video calls:
  - Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
  - Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
  - 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.
  - Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
  - 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)
  - Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled video, or they may be locked out. Please request to join the call approximately five minutes before the scheduled start time. This will give school staff time to verify your email address.
  - 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.
  - Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
  - 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.

### **Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Students:**

- Check assigned work and complete it to the best of your ability
- Communication will generally take place during normal school hours
- The normal school calendar will apply
- The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:

Code of Behaviour

Anti- Bullying Policy

Internet Policy

- In so far as possible, provision for SEN students will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies – Zoom/what's App/phone calls/hard copy of work left in box outside school door for collection.
- In so far as possible, provision for students at very high-risk to Covid 19 will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

## **Remote Teaching & Learning Protocols for Parents**

Parents / guardians are asked:

- to ensure protocols for pupils are adhered to,
- to check-in on their child's school work on a daily basis and talk to their child about the work being assigned,
- The health and wellbeing of all is paramount. Circumstances may change at any time during Covid 19 for teachers or parents so it is important for both parents and teachers to keep everything in perspective and to be flexible and positive towards one another.
- We encourage a little work every weekday and we ask parents and pupils to do their best at all times to ensure their child can continue to learn and develop academically.

## **Remote Teaching & Learning Protocols for Teachers / SNA's**

- Check uploaded work each day
- In general communication may only take place during normal school hours,
- The normal school calendar will apply,
- The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
  - Child Protection Policy,
  - Data Protection Policy,
  - Teaching and Learning; best practice/high standards are encouraged in so far as is possible during this time.
- Remote Teaching & Learning Provision specifically for the following Covid-19 related scenarios
- 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 who are deemed to be at very high risk to Covid-19 (see HSE Guidelines) where medical certification has been provided to the school.
- 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 via e mail and/or zoom and/or see-saw.

### Covid 19

Children 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 to catch up on their learning on their return to school. They will also be given the option of completing homework which will be sent via e mail from their class teacher daily.

From 29 November 2021, if a parent or guardian receives a positive (detected) PCR COVID-19 test result for their child, please contact the school principal immediately to let them know. The principal will then tell this parent/guardian, that they will be contacting the parents of the other children in their child's pod, to give them details of how they can order free antigen tests for their children using a Freephone number. The principal is requested not to share any personal information relating to any other child with parents. If just one pod is involved, only the children in this pod will be offered antigen tests. If there are two pods with separate confirmed cases of COVID-19, then parents or guardians of children in the whole class will be contacted and provided with the information on how they can request antigen tests.

The children in the pod of the confirmed COVID-19 case can continue to attend school as long as they have no symptoms and they do not have a positive COVID-19 test result (antigen or PCR).

If at any time, your child develops symptoms they should isolate at home and you should book a COVID-19 PCR test for them. Do this even if the antigen test has a negative (not detected) result. If an antigen test is positive, it is important that your child isolates at home and that you book a COVID-19 PCR test online at the HSE test portal.

Please note that the current situation is quite fluid and circumstances may vary throughout the year.

**Summary:**

Parents/guardians, students and teachers are asked to ensure protocols are adhered to at all times.

Parents are encouraged to connect to any of the on-line platforms. If they are experiencing difficulties please contact the school and we will assist you in any way we can and we will also be happy to provide pupils/parents with school laptops/tablet on loan during the school closure. Parents will need to sign for same and to ensure that all equipment is returned safely and in working order.

We thank the school community for adhering to the above guidelines for everyone's safety and welfare.

Our Distance Learning Policy will be subject to regular monitoring and will be reviewed by the staff as required.

It is also subject to change, in light of any guidance or further instruction received from Department of Education and Skills and/or HSE Public Health.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Nicker NS on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2021.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson BoM

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary BoM