DISTANCE / REMOTE LEARNING POLICY

Version	v1.0
Date Ratified by Board of Management	1st March 2022

Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the effective and safe use of technology for teaching and learning in the event of:

1. HSE/DES directives for school closure during the current Coronavirus pandemic.
2. Assisting students who may have to withdraw from classes owing to self isolation directives and/or underlying medical conditions.

It is intended to provide guidelines and information to students, their parents, and staff, surrounding 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.

All aspects of the school's Acceptable Use Policy remain in effect during Distance / Remote Learning.

Introduction

Remote/Distance learning is a way of learning remotely without being in regular face-to-face contact with a teacher in the classroom. There are many benefits to teaching and learning in this way, and students and teachers have the tools and expertise to use teleconferencing to sustain learning.

Our school provides Google's Workspace for our students and staff. The school also provides Zoom to staff. It is expected that students and staff will use the platforms in a professional and ethical manner for the purpose of teaching, learning and assessment.

Students and teachers must use their @eccdrive.com account to log in. Students and teachers are not to use any other account under any circumstances.

In the event of a student attempting to use accounts from outside the school's domain, teachers will report this to the Principal or Digital Learning Coordinator and contact will be made with the student in question.

The list of applications that will be used for distance learning will be:

- Gmail
- Google Classroom
- Google Drive
- Google Meet
- Google Docs
- Google Slides

- Google Sites
- Google Forms
- Youtube
- Vimeo
- There may be additional applications that teachers may use e.g. Screencastify, Quizlet, Zoom, Edpuzzle, Kahoot. The teacher will provide students with the information required to access them.

Ennis Community College / Gaelcholáiste an Chláir may adopt an asynchronous model of distance / remote learning, in line with best practice. This involves a mixture of the following:

- Assignments, notes & revision materials and communication through Google Classroom and / or Gmail.
- Assignments and communication through Gmail.
- Recorded lessons with onscreen videos and/or presentations using Screencastify or Google Meet.
- Live classes through Google Meet.

Teachers are encouraged to not depend solely on one type of model but adopt a mixed approach with class groups. 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 contact teachers immediately via email within the designated times outlined in this policy if they are having difficulty with the technology or if they are finding the workload unmanageable. The school office, management, IT Coordinator & HSCL officer will facilitate communication, help and advice.

Responsibilities While Partaking in Distance Learning:

Students:

1. You are to communicate and work through your @eccdrive.ie account only.
2. You must be polite and respectful to your teachers and fellow students. Online Classroom Etiquette information is available to students in their school journal and / or the Student Hub.
3. You must have your Google Classroom notifications turned on.
4. You must engage daily with the distance/ remote learning process and communicate regularly with your teachers.
5. You must endeavor to carry out any work assigned to you to the best of your ability.

6. You must endeavor to meet any deadlines set for you by your teachers.
7. Teachers will have their notifications turned off outside of school hours. Students will endeavour to message teachers and submit work during school hours. However, if this is not possible, students should not expect feedback from teachers until the following school day and should use the 'schedule send' facility.

In the case of live classes on Google Meet:

1. You must log in on time and be prepared for class. This means being dressed appropriately and settled at a workspace without distraction or other persons present and with a neutral background.
2. You cannot join a Google Meet until the teacher is present. You must leave the class once directed by your teacher.
3. The Google Meet link sent to you by your teacher, or accessed through Google Classroom, is only intended for you. Do not forward this link to anyone else.
4. You must actively engage in the class. Teachers may request feedback from students through the use of the chat box facility and/or verbally.
5. Students are not to turn on their microphone unless requested to do so by your teacher. This is to avoid distracting background noises.
6. The use of mobile phones to cause disturbance or to record the class during a Google Meet is strictly prohibited. The use of a screen record function on any device is also strictly forbidden.
7. Disruptive students can and will be muted and removed from a class. This will then lead to a discipline sanction (see Code of Behaviour.)

Teachers:

1. Teachers have overall control of the online interaction of their class. Teachers have the facility to turn off a student's camera and/or microphone as well as removing a disruptive student from a Meet.
2. Teachers are to communicate and work through their @eccdrive.com account only.
3. Teachers will be available according to their timetable, insofar as practicable. Google Meets should be scheduled according to the timetabled class.
4. Teachers will explore, train and support each other in the various models and apps available for distance learning. They will endeavour to use a mixture of apps and platforms to achieve an asynchronous model.
5. Teachers will endeavour to set relevant, achievable and regular work for students.
6. Teachers will turn off their notifications outside of school hours.
7. Teachers will not communicate with students outside of school hours unless the teacher deems such communication absolutely necessary.

8. Teachers will report any student not engaging in the Distance / Remote Learning process to the school. The school office, management and the HSCL officer will facilitate communication with the students and parents/guardians.
9. The criteria for mandated Child Protection reporting remains the same as if the child was being taught in school.

In the case of live classes on Google Meet:

1. Teachers will organise and inform students in reasonable time of the date and time of the live class.
2. Teachers will only share the link with the relevant students.
3. Teachers may or may not have their camera turned on, at least at the beginning of the class. If the teacher wishes to continue to have the camera turned on, even for a short length of time, a neutral background is recommended in the interests of privacy. Having the camera turned on, for any length of time, is entirely at the discretion of the teacher.
4. Disruptive students are to be muted/ removed from the class. This will then lead to a discipline report.
5. Teachers will be the last one in the Google Meet. They will always end the session. Students must not be allowed to continue the meeting after the class is over.

Parents:

1. You should ensure that your son/daughter has their ECCdrive notifications turned on during the relevant times of between 08:50 and 17:00 and that they are checking regularly for assigned work.
2. Where Google Meet classes are being run, you should ensure your son/daughter is appropriately dressed and has a quiet space to work, free from distractions.
3. Google Meet classes should be viewed by your son/daughter only.
4. Any communication or queries you may have should be directed to the school office at 065 6829432 or info@enniscc.ie.

Students and Staff should never:

1. Post, stream or transmit any content, including live video, that violates this Policy or the schools Acceptable Usage Policy in such a way that is offensive to students, staff or others.
2. Do anything illegal, facilitate any illegal activity, or promote violence.
3. Do anything that threatens, exploits or otherwise harms children, fellow students or staff.

4. Engage in any activity that is harmful, obscene, or indecent. This includes offensive gestures, displays of nudity, violence, pornography, sexually explicit material, or criminal activity.
5. Engage in any activity that is fraudulent, false, or misleading.
6. Engage in any activity that is defamatory, harassing, threatening or abusive.
7. Store or transmit any data or material that is fraudulent, unlawful, harassing, libelous, threatening, obscene, indecent or otherwise inappropriate.
8. Send unauthorized messages or irrelevant material.
9. Misrepresent a user's identity or affiliation with any entity or organization, or impersonate any other person.
10. Harvest, collect, or gather user data without consent.
11. Violate or infringe any intellectual property or proprietary rights of others, including copyrights.
12. Violate the privacy of others or distribute confidential or personal information of others.
13. Engage in any activity that is harmful or disruptive to the operation of on-line classes. This includes transmitting viruses, malware or other malicious or destructive code or using tools that mask IP address location or to otherwise circumventing restrictions on use due to regulations or account closures.

If school authorities are made aware of any abuse or infringement on these rules, the school will investigate the issue and take immediate, appropriate action where warranted in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Resources:

- www.enniscommunitycollege.com
- www.gaelcholaisteanchlair.com
- The Schools Student Hub
- Teacher Centre - Google for Education
- PDST - Technology in Education website
- www.teachercpd.ie
- www.scoilnet.ie
- www.webwise.ie

This Distance Learning Policy operates in tandem with the Acceptable Use Policy, the Code of Behaviour and all data protection laws which the school is bound by.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____ Date: _____