Policy on the use of ICT for Remote Teaching & Learning

Mission Statement

St. Conleth's Community College provides a positive learning environment which encourages and enables our students to achieve their academic potential while fostering their personal development.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and information to students and their parents surrounding the use of technology when learning remotely i.e. from a place other than school and where it is not necessary or 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.

This policy does not set out to replace our Mobile Phone or Acceptable Use Policies 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 tandem with our school's Code of Positive Behaviour Policy.St Conleth's Community College is a school under the Patronage of Kildare & Wicklow Education and Training Board. (KWETB).

As a school under the patronage of KWETB and who take instruction from the Department of Education and Science 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 leaners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all student learners under Child Safeguarding 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 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) Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary and
        Post-Primary Schools
    (h) NEWB Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008)
    (i) GDPR

Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century and through IT we are provided with great opportunities as learners and teachers. 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/tutor.

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/tutor, whether at home or school, the same statutory rules apply i.e. the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and all other school policies.

This Policy has been developed to make it very clear to all of our partners that the values that are instilled in all our policies remain, no matter how we change our teaching and learning methodologies. This includes remote learning or when a child is being taught in an environment that is not within the school building and the teacher is working remotely also and is not present with the student(s).

The primary online resource our school is currently using is Moodle. This may change in time but the sentiment and instructions within this policy shall remain valid no matter what platforms we use in the future.

1. If, and when, a teacher decides to work remotely they will on most occasions try to communicate online during normal working hours and will not be communicating with students at night- not unless the teacher has advised all learners in the group/ team that a lesson/ revision will be taking place at a certain time after the usual hours. Therefore, during a normal school day the teacher may put work on the platform for the student to work on that evening- the student can then send the work/ assignment back for the teacher to correct in their own time.
2. Provision for all SEN students, in so far as possible, will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies, whereby, a differentiated approach will be employed, as would be the case if the teacher was in the classroom.
3. No matter what time a student and/ or teacher is online they must abide by the school rules and the rules will be implemented if and when necessary.
4. Students cannot choose to leave a remote teaching group once a teacher has created one.
5. The material created by the teacher is the property of the teacher and students do not have permission to share to others outside of the group unless given permission to do so.
6. Parents and students need to be aware that teachers may have to send material/ assignments at night as they are working during the day. 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 have to correct or comment on work sent outside of normal school hours. Again, the teacher will give and receive work within their own time frames and will communicate this to students.
7. Teachers are the owner/ manager of the groups they create. Most groups will be whole class groups but this may vary. When students are invited onto and

put into a group it is the exact same as being in the classroom and being with a class group. They have a teacher and the school's same rules continue to apply.

8. A teacher will only correspond with a student who is signed up to the correct Platform.

9. The use of social media sites e.g. Facebook, snapchat, WhatsApp etc., to communicate with students is not permitted. Social media may be used by teachers to demonstrate examples of good work to parents and the wider school community. Any such activity will only be on the official school social media accounts.

10. The Principal and/ or Deputy Principals where possible should be included in any 'Chatroom' used. This section should only be used for Educational discourse.

11. It is not permitted for students themselves to create a group within a group created by the teacher.

12. Any behaviour or language deemed inappropriate during school is also inappropriate 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 and which has been directed by school personnel.

13. Any language directed towards a fellow student or teacher that is very aggressive/ threatening or offensive may also be reported to the Guards or TUSLA or both.

14. The criteria for mandated Child Safeguarding reports remains the same as if the student was being taught in school.

15. All provisions relating to the student's Data remains the same under GDPR procedures and guidelines.

16. As per all matters pertaining to our school's Code of Positive Behaviour, if a student acts in a fashion that is contrary to our Code's expectations they may receive a sanction and or Suspension/ Recommendation to the Board of Management for Permanent Exclusion.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 13th May 2020