Ebrington Primary & Nursery School

Blended/ Remote Learning Policy

October 2020

To be reviewed October 2021

Unless there is a significant change in school

practice or policy.

Blended/Remote/Online Learning Policy

Introduction
Specific Aims

☐ To outline Ebrington Primary School & Nursery Unit's approach for pupils that, from September 2020, will not be attending school as a result of a 'Lockdown', Government Guidance ie. self-isolating, due to continued shielding or in the event of a parental decision that attending would not be in the interests of their child's health and safety/well-being.

☐ To outline Ebrington Primary School & Nursery Unit's expectations for staff who, from September 2020, are not attending school due to self-isolation but that are otherwise fit and healthy and able to continue supporting with the teaching, marking and planning for pupils.

Who is the Policy applicable to?

In line with Government Guidance, the policy is applicable to pupils, staff and families who are affected by 'lockdown,' not attending in the interests of their child's health and safety/well-being or have to shield and/or self-isolate if they display any of the following symptoms:

- A continuous, dry cough;
- A high temperature above 37.8°C
- A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste;
- Have had access to a test and this has returned a positive result for Covid-19;
- A member of staff has been contacted by 'Test and Trace' and told that they must self-isolate for 14 days.
- A child's parent has been contacted by 'Test and Trace' and told their child must self-isolate for 14 days.

Remote learning for pupils who are not able to attend school due to self-isolation or in line with Government Guidelines

Ebrington Primary School & Nursery Unit will provide remote learning for pupils that are not able to attend school in order that that no-one falls too far behind in their learning. The following points provide an outline of the provision that will be made and some guidance given on the role of pupils, teachers and parents.

Ebrington Primary School & Nursery Unit are fully aware that these are exceptional times and would like to make it clear that the completion of work can prove difficult at times and this document seeks to inform and guide families and not impose expectations. Each family is unique and because of this, should approach 'remote/blended learning' in way which suits their individual needs.

Family (Pupil/Parent/Guardian) Role

Where possible, it is beneficial for young people to maintain a regular and familiar routine. Ebrington Primary School & Nursery Unit would recommend that each 'School Day' maintains structure.

For those pupils unable to attend school for the reasons outlined above, each week, work in English, Maths and Topic will be posted regularly. Families should view this together, and then make appropriate plans to complete the work.
Should anything be unclear in the work that is set, parents can communicate with the class teachers via Google Classroom, Seesaw or C2K email and follow the advice/guidance below:

☐ If you need to contact the teacher, it should be made clear which subject the query relates to and concisely what the issue is;

☐ Work that children complete at home should be kept safe, ideally in their home learning folder, and can be brought back to school when safe to do so;

☐ Attempt to make use of the resources shared;

☐ Encourage and support your children's work, including finding an appropriate place to work and, to the best of their ability;

☐ Support pupils with their work by encouraging them to work with good levels of concentration;

☐ Every effort will be made by staff to ensure that work is set promptly on appropriate platforms but the school cannot guarantee that the chosen platforms will work on all devices. If this is the case contact your child's teacher to try and reach a solution;

☐ Should accessing work be an issue, parents should contact school promptly and alternative solutions may be available. These will be discussed on case-by-case basis.

Teacher Expectations

In addition to their work in school, teachers will continue to support children that are unable to attend for the reasons outlined above.

☐ Teachers should plan lessons that are relevant to the curriculum focus for that year group and endeavour to replicate this through tasks for home learners. Pre-recorded videos may include demonstrating a new focus in numeracy;

☐ Any resources used, including websites and worksheets, should, where possible, be shared with home learners. Staff will do this electronically and it will be the responsibility of families to print/use these resources at home if appropriate;

☐ To respond, within reason, promptly to requests for support from families at home. This should be done via Google Classroom, Seesaw or C2K email;

☐ Should a staff member require support with the use of technology, it is their responsibility to seek this support in school from Mrs Kee, ICT Co-Ordinator, or Mrs Butcher, supporting C2K manager who will ensure that support is given promptly.

Remote Teaching for Staff who are Self-Isolating

Teaching staff are required to self-isolate if they show symptoms outlined at the start of this policy or they have been told to shield and/or have received a letter to confirm this.

If a member of staff is required to self-isolate, they are expected to:

☐ Follow normal reporting procedure for planned absence;

☐ School will ask staff members to get tested immediately if they show symptoms of COVID-19. Once a staff member is tested, it is expected that they share the result of this test immediately with the Principal or Vice-Principal so that appropriate plans can be made;

Whilst self-isolating, and if able to do so, staff may be given an individual project to work on which is in line with whole school improvement priorities. These projects will be communicated by the Senior Leadership Team and will be allocated on a case-by-case basis. Staff may also be asked to support with the online learning provision for their year group, if appropriate.

Guidance on Using Seesaw/ Google Classroom (GC)– see also Policy on Use of Seesaw/ Google Classroom

This will be the main forum for communication between school and home during the pandemic. Teachers will be expected to post work and or important messages as the need arises.
We don't want Seesaw/ GC to dominate a teacher's daily routine so it is important to set time boundaries when replying to parent queries. The Leadership team recommendations would be as follows:

☐ Ensure each child has at least one parent signed up and is accessing Seesaw/ GC. Send reminder codes, if this fails, let your Key Stage Co-Ordinator/ VP know and they will contact the parent to ascertain the reason. **N.B.** *Please remember some children's parents, due to legal requirements, have permission for both to be included in all correspondences, so ensure both are given the information for signing up to the app;*

☐ Reply between 08:30 - 09:00 each morning (if applicable) and during the allocated 'directed time' periods as per 'Teachers Time Budgets' for each afternoon;
☐ Please switch off after working hours and avoid checking Seesaw/ GC in the evenings and/or weekends;
☐ If a parent sends an aggressive message or a complaint, discuss this with a member of SMT before replying. Advice will be given to make a phone call to the parent to try and resolve the issue promptly;
☐ Decide as a Year Group/Key Stage what is an appropriate amount of items to post each week. We are aware some teachers might use Seesaw to a high level and this is acceptable, but this does not mean everyone has to follow their lead.

Possible Recommendations for What Items to Post

☐ Videos for teaching new Numeracy focus and or phonics (teachers could take turns to produce these videos, if using this method)

☐ Samples of a child's work (Maybe target 3-4 children in your class per week)

☐ Photos of a new class display

☐ Weekly/ Fortnightly Newsletter

☐ Monday Update-work for the week -English, Maths and Topic for pupils self-isolating;

☐ Samples of something a child has done that shows that he/she has, "Gone Above and Beyond,"

Blended Learning Approach

In the event of long term closure, staff at Ebrington Primary School and Nursery Unit will continue to provide education and support to our pupils using Blended/ Remote/ Online learning. In this case, all learning will be conducted using a blend of educational 'Learning Packs' (LP's) of resources and the Google Classroom/Seesaw Class app.

This will ensure that the needs of all pupils are catered for and these platforms will allow staff to keep in daily contact, in a professional and confidential manner with each pupil in their class. Teachers will be able to schedule learning in a manner that does not overwhelm or concern our pupils.

Teaching and learning can be tailored, changed and updated as time progresses, allowing for replication of classroom activity to the best of our ability. In all communications we will adhere to our commitment to maintaining pupil well-being.

Flexibility

We realise that the circumstances that cause our school to close will affect families in a number of ways. In our planning and expectations, we are aware of the need for flexibility from all sides: parents may be trying to work from home and so access to technology as a family may be limited; teachers may be trying to manage their home situation and the learning of their own children; systems may not always function as they should. An understanding of, and willingness to adapt to, these difficulties on all sides is essential for success.

Expectations

In the case of long term closure, we believe that it is in the best interests of our pupils that we continue to provide structured support to the best of our ability. Bearing in mind the need for flexibility, we understand that work may be completed out of sync with when it is shared and as such, no strict short-term deadlines will be set. That said, the work that pupils engage in during a period of closure will be part of our current planning and so cannot be considered as optional. Pupils and parents should consider the arrangements as set out in this document as highly recommended.

Blended/Remote Learning Start Date

These measures will come into practice on the first day that schools are advised to close by the Department of Education or the Education Minister.

Teaching staff will:

☐ Prepare educational 'Learning Packs', as required, of resources to meet the needs of each class for certain lessons/ topics;

☐ Share additional teaching and learning activities with their class through Google Classroom/Seesaw;

☐ Continue providing work and support in line with current, extensive planning that is already in place throughout the school;

☐ Give credence to the fact that learning remotely will be more difficult, so tasks will be shortened and supported in smaller steps to allow for this;

☐ Keep in contact with pupils through Google Classroom/Seesaw only;

☐ Be recommended to reply to messages, set work and give feedback on activities during normal teaching hours: 09:00 until 16:00;

☐ Make allowances for asynchronous learning and will not set short-term deadlines for completion of activities, understanding that the circumstances leading to our closure will affect families in a number of ways;

☐ Take regular breaks away from the computer or iPad to engage in other professional duties as much as circumstances allow;

☐ Inform the Principal/Vice-Principal (if unwell) and ensure cover by another staff member for sharing of activities and keeping in touch with parents.

Non-Teaching Staff will:

☐ Support the class teacher in preparation of support packs/activities (LP's);

☐ Inform the Principal/Vice-Principal (if unwell);

☐ Only communicate with pupils by sending a message to the class teacher who will in turn forward the message via Google Classroom/Seesaw.

If there is a requirement for school to open to facilitate supervised learning for the pupils of key worker parents or of vulnerable pupils, then non-teaching staff may be redeployed to support the work of the class teacher and assist in this supervised learning of these pupils within the school setting.

Pupils will:

☐ Be assured that well-being is at the forefront of our thoughts and they should take regular breaks, get fresh air, exercise and maintain a reasonable balance between online engagement and offline activities;

☐ Undertake the tasks prepared in their educational 'Learning Packs';

☐ Potentially work a day behind what has been shared through Google Classroom/Seesaw app, if it is only possible to access technology at certain times of the day eg. evenings. Learning can be downloaded and completed the following day;

☐ Only send messages and queries that are in relation to tasks set by the teacher or in response to questions the teacher may ask them directly;

☐ Only access the material shared by their teacher and will ask for parental permission to use technology for anything beyond that;

☐ Read daily, either independently or with an adult;

☐ Consider using the school closure time to learn a new skill, follow their own interests to discover more about the world around us or be creative.

Parents will:

☐ Support their child's learning to the best of their ability;

☐ Ensure their child completes the core tasks set in any 'Learning Pack' of resources;

☐ Encourage their child to access and engage with Google Classroom/Seesaw posts from their teacher;

☐ Not screenshot or copy any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform outside of Google Classroom/Seesaw;

☐ Know they can continue to contact their class teacher as normal through the Google Classroom/Seesaw App or C2K email if they require support of any kind;

☐ Check their child's completed work each day and encourage the progress that is being made;

☐ Be mindful of mental well-being of both themselves and their child and encourage their child to take regular breaks, play games, get fresh air and relax.

This policy is written in line with the following:

Ebrington Primary School & Nursery Unit Policies on:
☐ Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy;
☐ E-safety Policy;
☐ Child Protection Policy;
☐ Pastoral Care Policy;
☐ Seesaw Policy;
☐ Google Classroom Policy

Other References:
☐ Education Authority: Safeguarding Children Guidance for Schools and EOTAS Centres During COVID-19 Arrangements;
☐ DE Circular 2020-5-Guidance for Schools on Supporting Remote Learning;
☐ ETI - Safeguarding Remote & Blended Learning Challenges & Approaches -June 2020;
☐ ETI Primary - Remote & Blended Learning Challenges & Approaches -June 2020;
☐ Stranmillis College Report – Home Schooling in N. Ireland;
☐ The Continuity of Learning Project – Supporting Learning. Moving to Blended Learning in the Primary School – Guidance for Primary School Leaders & Practitioners.

Signed: _____ (Principal) Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors) Date: _____