

St. Mary's College Dundalk



Remote Learning and Teaching Policy.

Ratified by the Board of Management 11th January 2021

Remote Learning and Teaching Policy.

Introduction.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and information to students, their parents/guardians, 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.

This policy outlines procedures in the changing circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is underpinned and supported by two Government / Department of Education and Skills publications (Circular 74/2020 and Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 Context) and outlines the rationale, aims and responsibilities for the relevant stakeholders in the delivery of teaching and learning remotely.

This new policy supports and operates alongside all of our existing policies, which relate to the delivery of learning and teaching in the College. These include but are not limited to; the Code of Behaviour (incl. Covid Addendum), Acceptable Use Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Learning & Teaching Policy and Dignity in the Workplace Policy.

Mission Statement.

St. Mary's College is a Catholic secondary school under the patronage of the Marist Fathers. The primary aim of the College through its spiritual and humanistic endeavours, is to promote and develop a sense of community where those entrusted to its care can be brought to the fullness of their human potential in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel.

The College, through its academic, pastoral and spiritual undertakings strives to provide for the holistic development and welfare of each of the students in its care.

Rationale and Aims.

Regardless of the educational setting, the Management and Staff of St. Mary's College are committed to the provision of excellence in learning and teaching. This expectation applies to lessons delivered in the College, at home or by remote/online means. Through our *Remote Learning and Teaching Policy*, we recognise that the delivery of such excellence is underpinned by the key rationales set out below.

1. **Regular engagement with students:** Teachers should, as far as possible, engage with students as per the normal school timetable. The assignment of tasks to be completed is not, of itself, sufficient because students need direct teaching inputs from their teachers in order to feel connected to the school, to stay motivated, and to make progress in their learning.
2. **A blend of guided and independent learning tasks/experiences:** Teacher-student engagement should involve both live, direct teaching by the teacher via Microsoft Teams and the assignment of independent learning tasks for completion by the students.

Teachers should ensure direct instruction is provided using a variety of approaches for example live lessons, video, audio, presentation software and written instructions etc.

3. **Appropriate and engaging learning opportunities:** Teachers should ensure that the chosen learning tasks enable students to progress in their learning. It may be necessary to adjust the number of tasks usually given in the school setting to take account of the fact that students are doing this work from home.
4. **Learning tasks:** The tasks chosen should be specifically aligned to the needs of the students, including those students with AEN, and should enable the teacher to monitor progress and give constructive, developmental feedback to support the next stages in their learning, again via the Microsoft Office suite of applications.

(adapted from *Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 Context*, DES, 2020).

Aims.

1. The primary aim of the remote teaching and learning approach is to provide a rich and highly effective learning and teaching experience to all students through a blended learning programme.
2. To ensure that every student achieves in relation to their individual potential by delivering the required curriculum for each subject area.
3. To ensure the achievement of students in knowledge, skills and understanding by continually engaged students with their learning in the method(s) most conducive to progressing academically.

Microsoft Teams and eLearning.

St. Mary's College uses the Microsoft digital suite to support remote learning and teaching. Please note, staff and students will utilise the Microsoft Office suite of applications in the majority of circumstances – however, there may be additional applications that teachers may use. In such cases the teacher will provide the student with the information and/or information required to access. Students must in all cases use their Marist email account as the login. Students should contact their teacher via their college Microsoft account (MS Office Suite of applications) should clarification or further information be necessary within a specific subject area. Students or parents should contact the appropriate member of the senior management team in all other circumstances as outlined in the guidelines below.

Guidelines & Responsibilities while Partaking in Remote Learning & Teaching.

Senior Management Team (SMT):

- SMT take overall responsibility for the co-ordination and implementation of remote learning and teaching in the College.
- SMT will be contactable to assist teachers and staff at any time throughout the normal school day.
- Parents must liaise with the SMT where there are issues with their child's ability to engage with online learning. These include:
 - I. Issues with the child's Microsoft Teams account.
 - II. Issues with technology, broadband connectivity, ebooks, access to devices (eg. Chromebooks, tablets, ephones).

- III. Issues with attendance or longer-term absence from online classes.
- SMT will feedback weekly to parents (via Compass / email / telephone calls) on student engagement and will highlight the following:
 - I. Instances of excellent engagement with live lessons and assigned work.
 - II. Patterns of non-engagement with live lessons.
 - III. Patterns of non-engagement with assigned work.
- SMT will deal with reports of student misbehaviour, in consultation with the relevant Year Head.

Staff and Teachers:

- Teachers have overall responsibility and control of the online interaction with their classes.
- Teachers will be available through the Teams platform at the arranged times identified on their timetable.
- In recognising that direct interaction with students is key to progressing learning, teachers will partake in an agreed number of live lessons each week.
- The first 30 minutes of a 'live' lesson will be conducted live online via Teams. At the end of the 30 minutes, students will be given independent work to complete autonomously.
- Issues of misbehaviour will be recorded on Compass Chronicle and will be dealt with by the SMT. Teachers have the right to remove disruptive students from lessons in order to allow those who wish to partake a fair chance to do so.
- Teachers will give feedback to students on assigned work as appropriate.
- Teachers will complete student online engagement forms once a week for SMT to follow-up with parents.

Students:

- Students are guided by the College Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and other policies relevant to learning and teaching. All are available on the College website.
- Students are to communicate through their @maristdundalk.ie account only.
- To respect the learning, and to increase motivation and engagement, students are to:
 - I. Present for online lessons appropriately dressed and in a suitable location (or use of appropriate virtual background).
 - II. Turn on cameras when instructed to do so by the teacher.
 - III. Mute mics until requested by the teacher.
 - IV. Have appropriate materials (copies, books, pens etc.) ready in advance of the lesson.
 - V. Participate and engage positively in the lesson.
 - VI. Record homework or assigned learning in the student journal.
 - VII. Upload assigned work in the correct format and manner. Work which is uploaded incorrectly will **not** be assessed by teachers.
- Students should always be respectful to teachers and fellow students. Issues of misbehaviour will be treated as a breach of the Code of Behaviour and will be dealt

with accordingly. Disruptive behaviour / inappropriate use of the platform may result in a temporary ban from all online access.

- Students may not contact school teachers outside of the school day. Teachers may not be contacted before 8.30am in the morning and after 5.00pm each evening, or at weekends (without agreement with teacher).
- Students should not engage in communications with any account other than an @maristdundalk.ie account and report any such activity to your teacher or year-head's @maristdundalk.ie e-mail account.
- Students are not to record or forward any content within a Teams group – such as worksheets, exam papers, answers, solutions, videos, notes or links – to anyone else without the permission of the creator of that content.
- Students understand that all your online activity is available for record. This includes anything you send or say via the Microsoft platform, e-mail, Teams, and OneNote, and whether you are checking regularly for assigned work.
- Microsoft 365 is a professional platform and is to be used by the student to support their learning and teaching only.

Parents:

- It is essential that parents work in partnership with the College and take an active responsibility in their child's learning.
- Parents must ensure their child is available for learning and teaching during the regular school day. (**NB:** Some live classes will commence at 8.50am, therefore your child needs to be prepared from **8.50am – 3.50pm** daily).
- Where live classes are being held, you should ensure your child is in an area of the house that is quiet and free from distractions. Please be mindful of Child Protection Guidelines, for example, bedrooms (unless it has a study table/chair) are not appropriate locations and should not be used for live classes.
- Live online classes should be viewed by your child only.
- Parents must check their child's progress each day and be aware of their timetable of live classes.
- Parents are asked to ensure work is completed to the best of their child's ability and uploaded properly.

Data Privacy Statement

Our Remote Learning and Teaching Policy operates in addition to other learning and teaching policies mentioned above. In relation to the student's Microsoft Teams account:

We retain:

- Login activity; the date and time of if/when a student views any assignments set for them and when they submit any work for same; any live class recordings which may be undertaken by the teacher.

We retain it:

- To assist us in making sure students are engaging in learning; to assist us in generating appropriate and relevant feedback to parents on progress; to provide

revision materials by means of replaying topics covered in a live class; to provide a record of activity in the event of a disciplinary or other issue arising during a live class.

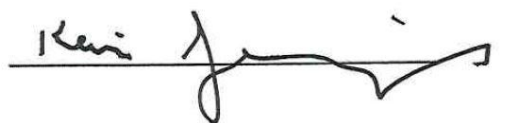
We retain it in:

- All records are kept within the College's own systems, which requires a valid @maristdundalk.ie login to access, which in the case of Office365, is in Ireland.

We retain it until:

- The end of each exam session; and/or not beyond the students exit from the College.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin', written over a horizontal line.

Chairperson, Board of Management, St. Mary's College.

Date: 11th January 2021.