



Comeragh College Remote Learning (Distance Teaching and Learning) Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is 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.

While this policy informs best practice for remote learning and the use of online technologies during normal school term, it is devised in response to the Covid-19 emergency and is intended to provide guidance for the conduct of remote teaching and learning during an extended unforeseen school closure. This policy will also inform best practice for remote learning and the use of online technologies during the school term in the event of a student being asked to self-isolate due to a covid query.

This policy does not set out to replace our Acceptable Usage Policy but rather intends to be an important addition to the area of learning from a digital platform (Microsoft 365).

The policy presented here should be read also in tandem with our school's Code of Positive Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. Comeragh College is a school under the patronage of Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETB). As a school under the patronage of TETB 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 learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all student learners under Child Protection Policy 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) GDPR
- (h) Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools
- (i) NEWB Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008).

Context

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 learners and teachers. Never before has there been greater scope to learn using technology and it continues to change the learning relationship between teachers and students. 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.

However, whether a child 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, whether at home or school, the same statutory rules apply i.e. the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and all of the school's policies.

This interim Policy has been developed during the Covid-19 Pandemic, when remote teaching and learning was imposed on the school community, without prior knowledge and preparation. Comeragh College endeavours to make it very clear to all of our partners that the values that are instilled in all of our policies remain, no matter how we change our teaching and learning methodologies or the location of that teaching and learning. 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 and is not present with the student(s)

Guidelines on the appropriate use of Online Platforms for engaging in remote teaching and learning

Comeragh College encourages all students to use Microsoft Office 365. All students have been given account details. If problems arise with Microsoft Office 365 they should contact their Student Director by email/ Teams. Microsoft Teams is a very useful tool for remote teaching and learning. The primary online platform our school is currently using is Microsoft Teams.

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

- Microsoft Office365, incorporating:
 - Microsoft Outlook (e-mail)
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Microsoft OneNote
 - Microsoft One Drive
 - Microsoft Forms
 - Microsoft Stream

This may change in time but the sentiment and instructions within this policy shall remain valid no matter what platform we use in the future.

There may be some additional applications that teachers may use and the teacher will provide the student with the information required to access them. These must, in all cases, use the students/staff Microsoft school account to login.

Students/staff must use their school Microsoft account to log in to all platforms. Students/staff are not to use any other account under any circumstances for the purposes of online schooling within the school.

Acceptable Usage -Teams

1. No matter what time a student and/ or teacher is on Teams i.e., whether the teacher is online giving a tutorial or not- the moment a student logs onto Teams they must abide by the school rules and the rules will be implemented if and when necessary.
2. Students cannot choose to leave a Team once a teacher has created one.
3. The material created by the teacher on Teams is the property of the teacher and students do not have permission to share to others outside of the Team unless given permission to do so. Recordings should not be made of any online tutorial.
4. Teachers may choose to conduct live classes. Microsoft Teams conference might be used. We would like to avoid the scenario of students being compelled to disable their webcams and/or muting their audio. In order to avoid this scenario, we are using a high trust model. Teachers will trust students to behave appropriately online, as they would in their real classroom. Students' attire must be suitable. Students are not permitted to record any online classes.
5. Teachers are the owners/ managers of the Teams they create. Student Directors and School Management are also added to all teams. Most Teams will be whole class groups, but this may vary. When students are invited onto and put into a Team 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.
6. Students are not permitted to create Teams. Students are not permitted to have profile pictures on their Microsoft accounts.
7. A teacher will only correspond to a student using the Microsoft 365 Platform.
8. A teacher will only correspond and engage with a student who is using and is logged into their TETB account
9. Social media sites e.g., Facebook, Snapchat, Hangouts, WhatsApp etc, to communicate with students is never permissible and teachers have been advised accordingly. Social media may be used by teachers to demonstrate examples of good work to parents and the wider school community but will not be used for the

conduct of teaching and learning. Any such activity will only be on the official school social media account (Facebook and Twitter). All student names on student work should be redacted.

10. Any behaviour or language deemed inappropriate during school applies 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 schoolwork, on a school created platform using a school log-in and which has been directed by school personnel.
11. Any language directed towards a fellow student or teacher that is very aggressive/ threatening or offensive may also be reported to the Gardaí or TUSLA or both. The criteria for mandated Child Protection reporting remains the same as if the child was being taught in school.
12. All provisions relating to the child's data remains the same under GDPR procedures and guidelines.
13. 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.
14. As far as is practicable, it is expected that all students and teachers will engage as best they can with all efforts at online teaching and learning so as not to be behind when normal school resumes.

Comeragh College Online School:

- ◆ All classes will run as per student/teacher timetable.
- ◆ School starts at 8.50pm and finishes at 3.45pm (Monday to Thursday). School finishes at 1.05pm on Friday.
- ◆ All classes are 40 minutes duration and breaks and lunch are at the following times.
 - 10.50am to 11.05am
 - Seniors 12.25p.m. to 1.05p.m. Juniors 1.05pm to 1.45pm
- ◆ Core and option subject classes run as per school timetable following VShare roll call if the class is "live".
- ◆ PE/SPHE/CSPE/RE classes will form the central part of the curriculum focus on wellbeing where appropriate activities will be set for students following VShare roll calls, if the class is "live".
- ◆ Special Education Needs classes will run as normal following VShare roll call, if the class is "live".
- ◆ Career Guidance teacher can be contacted through agreed protocols.

- ◆ School management will endeavour to provide substitute teachers for classes where regular subject teacher is unavailable under normal workplace practices

Teachers:

1. It is important to note that students will not have online classes throughout each school day – a blend of face-to-face teaching; setting of learning activities & tasks; pre-recorded sessions; PowerPoint presentations and student independent work (e.g., project work) will be used. This will vary from year to year and from subject to subject.
2. All teachers will use the Microsoft Teams/ONE NOTE platform to issue assignments and collect assignment
3. Teachers will teach online remotely from the school or other location dependent on government and public health guidelines
4. All teachers' online classes will run through Microsoft Teams
5. All teachers must ensure all students are members of their Microsoft class teams
6. SNA's may link with students to revise content being taught by class teacher
7. All teachers will take VSware roll calls for all "live" classes
8. Teachers when working remotely will on most occasions try to communicate online during normal working hours and will endeavour not to communicate with students outside of these hours. However, everyone's circumstance is different, and we have to be as accommodating to all members of our school community as we can, especially in these uncertain times. Parents and students need to be aware that teachers may have to send material/ assignments outside of regular school opening hours. 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 on Teams outside of normal school hours. Whilst it might suit teachers or students to communicate outside of normal working hours, it is essential that everyone agrees that responses or actions outside of normal working hours are not required. We would urge all members of the school community to turn off notifications outside of their learning/working hours.
9. It may be helpful for teachers to schedule classes on the Team calendar to match normal timetable.
10. In the first class the teacher will arrange to discuss the plan for online lessons- format etc. requirements for classes etc.

Students:

1. Students must switch cameras on (no profile pictures, student live picture as you be in regular class) and must be dressed appropriately to attend online classes. Please allow teachers directions throughout the lesson in relation to the use of the camera. This is essential to create the best possible online social environment for learning to take place. Students are to choose a blank background profile which is provided in the Team chat feature for all calls.
2. Students may not record or screenshot virtual lessons. This is to respect the privacy and personal data of all- students and teachers. The recording and onward sharing of personal data is unlawful.
3. All online communication should be respectful to everyone
4. Students must ensure that their electronic devices are set up to access Comeragh College online school as instructed by school. (Outlook, Teams, One Note)
5. Students must follow teacher instructions during online classes as they would in regular classes. Please adhere to guidelines around muting microphones and protocols for asking and answering questions. (online hands)
6. Student's must submit assignments through the correct medium to be corrected by teachers. (summative and formative)
7. Inappropriate behaviour during the online school day will result in student being blocked from school eLearning platforms. This will be recorded as a suspension.
8. Teachers when working remotely will on most occasions try to communicate online during normal working hours and will endeavour not to communicate with students outside of these hours. However, everyone's circumstance is different, and we have to be as accommodating to all members of our school community as we can, especially in these uncertain times. Parents and students need to be aware that teachers may have to send material/ assignments outside of regular school opening hours. This does not mean there is an expectation on the student to begin work at the time it is received.
9. Likewise, there is never an expectation on the teacher to have to correct or comment on work sent on Teams outside of normal school hours. Whilst it might suit teachers or students to communicate outside of normal working hours, it is essential that everyone agrees that responses or actions outside of normal working hours are not required. We would urge all members of the school community to turn off notifications outside of their learning/working hours.
10. Students must have access to all textbooks and other materials which may be required by the class teacher.

11. Attendance- Parents must email the school at if a student is unable to attend online classes. ccattendance@comeraghcollege.ie Please use your own personal email to contact the school and not your son/daughter's school account.

Parents:

1. Please try ensuring that for online "live" classes your son/daughter is in an area of the house that is quiet and free from distractions
2. It is important to note that students will not have online classes throughout each school day – a blend of face-to-face teaching; setting of learning activities & tasks; pre-recorded sessions; PowerPoint presentations and student independent work (e.g., project work) will be used. This will vary from year to year and from subject to subject. Please ensure that your son/daughter is dressed appropriately for their "live" online classes
3. Please ensure that your son/daughter switches on device cameras so that teacher can see their faces for their online class. This creates a much better social environment for learning to take place online. Blank background profile can be used.
4. Live online classes should be viewed by your son/daughter only as required under GDPR guidelines.
5. In so far as possible, provision for SEN students, will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.
6. Ideally, your son/daughter should have access to a tablet or laptop to support online learning while mobile phones can be used to submit school assignments through OneNote.
7. School has limited number of laptops that it may be able to provide to families. Please contact the school - comeraghdevices@comeraghcollege.ie
8. Please contact your son/daughters' Director if you have broadband issues and if your son/daughter is unable to attend Comeragh College online school
9. Parents must email the school at ccattendance@comeraghcollege.ie if a student is unable to attend online classes.
10. Assemblies will be held Online with each year group.

Please understand that school staff must adhere to all child protection guidelines while teaching online.

11. Please do not communicate with teachers outside of school hours.
12. Issues relating to teaching and learning concerns online should be referred to school principal- email klangton@tipperaryetb.ie
13. Please use your own personal email to contact the school and not your son/daughter's school account.
14. Teachers when working remotely will on most occasions try to communicate online during normal working hours and will endeavour not to communicate with students outside of these hours. However, everyone's circumstance is different, and we have to be as

accommodating to all members of our school community as we can, especially in these uncertain times. Parents and students need to be aware that teachers may have to send material/ assignments outside of regular school opening hours. This does not mean there is an expectation on the student to begin work at the time it is received.

15. Student Director's contacts

Year 1 – Ms Grainne Larkin email address – glarkin@tipperaryetb.ie

Year 2 – Ms Rebecca Hallahan email address – rhallahan@tipperaryetb.ie

Year 3 – Ms Katherine Cahill email address – kcahill@tipperaryetb.ie

TY - Mr Donal Breen email address – dbreen@tipperaryetb.ie

LCA 1/Year 5 – Mr Martin Lanigan email address – mlanigan@tipperaryetb.ie

Year 6 – Ms Eimir Blackmore email address – eblackmore@tipperaryetb.ie