

POLICY ON THE USE OF ICT

FOR

REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING

AT



Tarbert Comprehensive School

Ratified by the Board of Management on: 9/6/20

1. 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 teaching and learning happens remotely i.e. when a student 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).

While this policy informs best practice for remote teaching and 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 this extended unforeseen school closure or any other period of protracted school closure.

This policy does not set out to replace our Social Media & School Email AUP, Mobile Phone Policy or Acceptable Usage Policy, but rather intends to be an important addition to the area of teaching and learning from a digital platform (i.e. remote teaching and learning).

The policy presented here should be read in conjunction with our school's Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying (including Cyber Bullying) Policy.

One of the primary obligations that all schools have is to the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote teaching and learning is safe for all student learners under Child Protection Procedures 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 informed by and compliant with the following legislation:

- (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).

2. Context

Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century. Developments in ICT 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 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, whether at home or at school, the same statutory rules apply i.e. the school's Code of Behaviour and all of the school's policies.

This policy has been developed during the Covid-19 Pandemic, when our entire school community had to transfer the Digital Platforms and ICT Infrastructure we use to enhance, deliver and support our everyday teaching and learning to a fully remote teaching and learning model without prior knowledge and preparation. Tarbert Comprehensive School 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, in our response to the Covid-19 emergency school closure. This includes remote learning or when a student 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).

3. Tarbert Comprehensive School's Guidelines on the appropriate use of Online Platforms for engaging in Remote Teaching and Learning

Section A

Students receive this information as part of their induction process in 1st Year.

- Google Suite for Education contains shareable and collaborative tools such as Google Drive, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Google Mail etc. via the @tarbertcs.ie domain. This will be the typical platform used by teachers to upload work and assignments.
- Students and staff will log in to this platform as per their timetable
- Students and staff will log in to this platform as per their timetable
- Communication should only take place during normal school hours
- The normal school calendar will apply
- The school Code of Behaviour is applicable to remote teaching and learning including
 - Anti- Bullying Policy
 - Acceptable Use Policy
 - Social Media & School Email AUP

This will, in particular, apply to student-to-student communications

- Students with devices are reminded to use their school books (as opposed to searches via the web browser), where possible, to complete assignments (as is the normal expectation)
- Students at Junior Cycle may access digital versions of their textbooks via the Google Drive.
- Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply with students expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where this evolving and unprecedented situation allows you to do so.

Section B

Additional information for the Tarbert Comprehensive School community:

- In Tarbert Comprehensive School all staff and students are encouraged to use the G-Suite Platform. Google for Education is built for learning and designed to be easy to use, flexible and scalable. It is secure by design and advert free. The tools within G Suite for Education provides a rich educational content which we are satisfied will support both classroom based and remote teaching and learning.
- All staff and students have been given account details. If problems arise with these accounts the first point of contact is the school's IT administrator or help@tarbertcs.ie and the query will be resolved or referred to the relevant person.
- Parents and Guardians are requested to make contact with the school through your child's Year Head or via the school office email admin@tarbertcs.ie (marked for the attention of your child's Year Head) if issues regarding WIFI or equipment act as barriers to student assess. The School may make recommendations to assist access.
- Remote contact with the school not only includes aspects of teaching and learning. Other aspects of school contact are also included, such as (but not limited to); Assemblies, career guidance meetings, chaplains chats, guest speakers etc.
- Teachers when working remotely will on most occasions try to communicate 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 of all members of our school community as we can, especially in these uncertain times.

Parents/guardians and students should note 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 outside of normal school hours. Whilst it might suit teachers or students to communicate outside of normal working hours, it is essential that everyone agree that responses or actions outside of normal working hours are not required.

To support this, we urge all members of the school community to use the scheduling functions within G-Suite if working outside normal hours and to turn off notifications outside of their learning/working hours.

- The SEN department and SNA Team will endeavour to support all students with additional needs to access Remote Teaching and Learning. As far as possible, supported by the SNA Team provision for SEN students will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

- No matter what time a student and/ or teacher is online i.e. whether the teacher is online giving a tutorial or not - the moment a student logs on they must abide by the school rules and the rules will be implemented if and when necessary.
 - The material created by the teacher and shared on any G-Suite platform or email is the property of the teacher/school and students do not have permission to share to others outside of the group it was shared with unless given permission to do so.
 - Recordings should not be made of any work by the student or any other person (e.g. video conference, live class, recorded video, PowerPoint with recorded explanations) unless with explicit permission from the teacher. In this instance, it is of utmost importance that any such recordings are **not** shared.
 - Teachers may choose to conduct live classes, in which case Google Meets video conference is the preferred option. 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 will **not** record the class unless with the prior permission of the teacher conducting the live online class. If a recording is made with the permission of the teacher, it **cannot** be shared with anyone outside of the class.
 - A teacher will only correspond and engage with a student who is using a G-Suite "@tarbertcs.ie" domain as this is our schools secure Platform.
 - As per all matters pertaining to our school's Code of Behaviour, if a student acts in a fashion that is contrary to our Code's expectations, they may receive a sanction as outlined in the Code of Behaviour
 - 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 school work, on a school created platform using a school log-in and which has been directed by school personnel.
 - The criteria for mandated Child Protection reporting remains the same as if the child was being taught in school.
 - All provisions relating to the student's data remains the same under GDPR procedures and guidelines.
 - We recognise that teachers and students have a variety of circumstances that they are managing whilst engaging with remote teaching and learning. Acknowledging this, we understand that all students and teachers engage as best they can with all efforts at remote teaching and learning.
4. **Student Etiquette:**
- Our School's Code of Behaviour, School Rules and our ICT Acceptable Use Policy apply to all Remote Learning.

- A high sense of respect is expected from students when engaging in Remote Learning.
- All students participating in online classes are expected to conduct their communications in a respectful manner.
- The use of proper online etiquette is expected at all times.
- Students are encouraged to interact with the platform provided but are asked use common sense in their interactions with one another and between student and teacher.
- Circulating or publishing material recorded without consent for the purpose of humiliating, undermining the reputation of or causing damage to another person, whether considered a “joke” or not, may be considered as a serious breach of discipline. This could result in suspension or expulsion from school depending on the circumstances.
- Inappropriate language or behaviour will result in disciplinary action.
- Remember that Remote Learning is not private. Think about the consequences of anything you might write or post online.
- Above all, be positive in your engagement with Tarbert Comprehensive School Remote Learning.

5. Review of this Policy

The Board of Management will review this policy at regular intervals to ensure that it remains relevant and is consistent with other school policies.

The Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 9th June 2020.

It will be reviewed again in 2023. The Policy may also be reviewed at the request of the Board in the light of legislation or other developments