



Title: Holy Family SNS Distance Learning Plan 2020/21

Introductory Statement

Holy Family Senior School is a community where pupils, teachers and parents / guardians work together to ensure that all pupils feel happy and valued and are afforded every opportunity to flourish as learners and individuals. This policy was drafted as a collaborative exercise between the Board of Management, staff, parents /guardians and pupils.

Rationale

This policy has been drawn up by the IT Committee in consultation with the whole school community. The policy has been devised during a time of uncertainty regarding school closures, with a view to maintaining the link between school and home. The core of the policy is that in the event of school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with parents, guardians and pupils through a variety of different media and provide for teaching and learning through a variety of platforms. We recognise that online safety is of huge importance and the aim of this document is to help to protect both school staff and pupils, while teaching and learning online. The plan presented here should be read in tandem with our school's Acceptable Usage, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and GDPR Policies.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

Holy Family Senior School aspires to achieve the full potential of each child. It is our intention that the procedures identified in this plan will contribute to best practice in distance learning. An effective distance learning plan identifies the methods of communication to be used and the means by which teaching will be delivered.

Aims

The primary aims of the policy are:

- help to protect both school staff and pupils, while teaching and learning online
- provide guidelines for safe and effective online communication, teaching and learning
- facilitate improved pupil learning

1. Plan Content

2. Methods of Communication

At Holy Family Senior School, we use the following methods of communication:

Aladdin Connect: Principal and Staff will communicate regularly with parents via the Aladdin Connect App. Weekly learning plans and important school notices will be communicated via Aladdin. Parents/guardians are asked to download and log in to the Aladdin Connect App and to check it daily for updates and important information. Regular and ongoing support and help is offered to parents to set up and use this app on their phone by the School Secretary and the Home School Liaison Coordinator teachers.

Email: Staff will use email to communicate with parents/guardians. Each teacher has a dedicated school email address which will be shared with relevant parents/guardians. Teachers may be contacted during school hours via this email address. The school email info@hfss.ie is also in use and messages are responded to by the school secretary and principal.

Seesaw: Seesaw is our main online learning platform. Seesaw is a digital portfolio tool which allows pupils to upload and store their work in an online space and gain feedback from their teacher. It effectively enables teachers to set tasks or assignments and include

instructions or templates for use at home. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and content in connecting with pupils through Seesaw. Each pupil, through their parents, is provided with a unique secure login code. Pre-recorded concepts/topics, tutorials, clips and links to relevant websites may be uploaded to Seesaw based on the requirements of lessons.

Phone Contact: The school mobile number is available to parents and guardians and the principal and school secretary respond to any messages received on it. A dedicated HSCL (Home School Community Liaison) mobile number is also made available to all parents and guardians. The school landline allows parent(s)/guardian(s) to leave messages which are followed up on by the school secretary and principal.

Zoom: Zoom is a video-conferencing platform which enables teachers, staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Teachers will connect with pupils via pre-arranged Zoom meetings by sending a link to parents in advance of the meetings. Please see Zoom guidelines / rules below.

Facebook / Website / Twitter: School news and updates on online resources are also communicated through these platforms.

3. Guidelines for good online communication in Holy Family Senior School

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
3. It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure any content which they are submitting to the teacher is appropriate.
4. Staff members can communicate with pupils and their families via Aladdin, email or through an established app (e.g. Seesaw).
5. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
6. Students and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (eg Seesaw, Zoom, School Facebook, School email, School website, School You Tube Channel)
7. For video/Zoom calls, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via the parent/guardian's Aladdin connect account. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.
8. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
9. Holy Family Senior School cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are hacked.
10. Communication from staff using a mobile phone will be made as necessary. Staff members will ensure that their caller ID is private.

4. Guidelines for staff members using online communication methods

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls without prior permission from parents.
2. Staff members will communicate with pupils and families during the hours of 9.00am – 2.45pm, where possible.
3. Staff members will have high expectations regarding pupil behaviour, with any communication which takes place online.

4. Staff members will seek to become familiar with apps before using them with pupils.
5. Staff members will report any concerns regarding online behaviour or interactions to school management.
6. Staff are encouraged to generate a new meeting ID and password for each Zoom meeting being held. Two staff members will co-host each meeting.
7. Staff members will notify parents/guardians of the date, time and password for a video call via the parents Aladdin account.
8. School staff may refuse entry to any participant whose identity cannot be verified.

5. Rules for pupils using online communication methods:

For submitting learning:

1. Submit work and pictures that are appropriate - have an adult take a look at your work before you send it.
2. Use kind and friendly words.

For video calls/Zoom

1. Remember to ensure you join each Zoom meeting using your full name.
2. Pictures or recordings of the video call are not allowed.
3. Remember our school rules - they are still in place, even online.
4. Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
5. Join the video with your microphone muted.
6. Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
7. If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words.
8. Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking.
9. Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call. Day clothes, not nightwear.
10. Be on time - set a reminder if it helps.
11. Enjoy! Don't forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!

6 Guidelines for parents and guardians:

For learning

1. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
2. Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.
3. Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.

For video calls/Zoom

1. Remember to ensure children join each Zoom meeting using their full name.
2. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
3. Ensure that you have access to Aladdin connect in order to receive invitations for joining apps and meetings. Children must use parents'/guardians' Aladdin zoom link under supervision to connect to event / video call.
4. The main purpose of a video call is to maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
5. While the school believes that participation in these group ZOOM calls will be beneficial to pupil's wellbeing, it is not compulsory for children to join meetings. Parents can opt out and notify the class teacher that they are not sharing the link with their child.
6. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.

7. It is important that appropriate dress is worn and the background is clear of distractions. A wall as background can optimise privacy.
8. You will automatically enter a waiting room when the code for a Zoom call has been entered. Please note that school staff reserve the right to refuse entry to any participant whose identity cannot be verified.
9. Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled video, or they may be locked out. Please request to join the Zoom call approximately five minutes before the scheduled start time.
10. It is important to note that any breach of the above guidelines will result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. A breach may also result in a person being immediately removed from a meeting or a meeting being immediately terminated.

Success Criteria

This policy is considered successful if:

- Clarity is achieved regarding guidelines to be followed during online communication, teaching and learning.
- Pupils gain positive distance learning experiences.
- The link between school and home is maintained through effective communication during periods of distance learning.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Staff have responsibility for following guidelines for safe online communication and teaching.
- Parents/guardians have responsibility for ensuring guidelines for safe online communication and learning are followed at home.
- Pupils are responsible for following the rules set out in this plan for safe online communication and learning.

Timeframe for Implementation

School year 2020/2021

Timeframe for Review

This is a working document and will be reviewed and revised as the need arises.

Responsibility for Review

The review will be conducted by the IT co-ordinator and Principal.

Ratification and Communication

This plan is a working document and has been shared with the BOM, Staff and Parents groups through our various communication platforms. It will be reviewed regularly as needs arise and any changes will be communicated regularly to the school community.

This policy was ratified at a BOM meeting on the 27th January 2021

Chairperson BOM - Joe Carmody