

RATHFARNHAM



**EDUCATE TOGETHER
NATIONAL SCHOOL**

Weekly Update

8th January 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy New Year! I hoped you managed to have a good break in spite of the very difficult circumstances in which we all find ourselves.

I imagine that for most of you and your children, a return to remote learning is very disappointing and my colleagues and I are so sorry that we will not be welcoming your children back to RETNS on Monday. However, the reason for the closure is clear. It will enable us to reduce our contacts at this critical period and I know that we will, as a school community, work together to achieve this.

I would like to draw your attention to some changes to remote learning during this period of lockdown as opposed to how we operated from March to June. All our changes are based on feedback from children, parents and guardians, and staff.

Our aim is to maintain a level of connectedness for children during this period of school closure, while ensuring that they continue to learn. We aim to provide an engaging learning programme that is based on what would be covered if we were in school. However, your children's wellbeing remains key so time for family and outdoor activities should be prioritised.

I have attached the remote learning plan and a report on the survey we asked parents to complete in September. Please pay particular attention to the protocols and guidelines for good online communication. The main request from children and parents and guardians was to increase live contact with children's teachers and classmates and this is what we plan to do. Each class will have two zoom sessions per day, each lasting 30 minutes. These will comprise both discrete lessons and check-ins. This will begin on Monday when teachers will talk to the children about how the day will operate over the next few weeks.

Whole School remote learning online sessions

Time	Class
9.00	5 th and 6 th
9.30	4 th
10.00	Junior Infants, 2 nd , 3 rd
10.30	Senior Infants
11.00	1 st
12.00	Junior Infants, 2 nd , 3 rd
12.30	Senior Infants
13.00	5 th and 6 th
13.30	4 th
14.00	1 st

We understand that there are certain constraints and limits to working from home, such as the availability of technology (although our plan is based on children having to share a device with siblings), parental working arrangements and zoom fatigue. We have taken these into consideration in drawing up this plan.

Email

School communication and important information will be sent to parents/guardians by email.

The class email account may be used to communicate with the teacher directly during this period of school closure.

Seesaw

Teachers will upload class work on Seesaw. The week's work will, from next week, be uploaded on a Friday afternoon. Work can then be uploaded at home for the teacher to see. Seesaw and live zoom sessions will replace the daily email from the teacher sent in the previous lockdown period.

Zoom

Zoom will enable staff and pupils to connect via a live link. Teachers will connect with pupils twice a day using pre-arranged Zoom Meetings. (There will only be one session on Fridays to facilitate assembly – more to follow)

It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure that any content uploaded to Seesaw is appropriate and relevant.

While we expect that all children will engage in online sessions and distance learning, we appreciate that every family situation is unique.

If it is not possible for your child to attend the zoom session due to childcare issues or illness, please email your child's teacher.

If you have difficulties due to technology issues, please contact your child's teachers so that together, we can find a solution.

Our support teachers will be working closely with class teachers to get our new system up and running. For those whose children receive regular support teaching, support teachers will be in touch soon but we will give children some time to settle into this new routine first.

Since September, it has become clear to us that while learning at home suited some children well, others lost out and greater engagement was identified as a clear need. While our plan is based on what children, staff and parents and guardians suggested would be of most benefit to our children, it will, of course, be subject to review based on actual practice. Our hope is that the changes we have made will help children to feel connected to school while continuing their learning at home.

Hopefully, this period will be of limited duration and that we will soon be able to reopen safely

Le dea-ghuí

Maeve

[RETNS Remote Teaching and Learning Plan December 2020](#)

[Summary Report Distance Learning Homework Survey - October 2020](#)