



GCS Remote Teaching & Learning Plan

January 11th 2021.

GCS remote T&L plan is intended to apply to the current term of the school year 2020-21 if the school remains closed as a result of Covid-19.

Why a remote T&L plan?

*Schools should maintain a sense of normality for students to ensure that they continue to progress in their learning ,despite being outside the classroom.
(DES p.3 April 2020)*

A remote T&L plan will enable us to,

- Stay connected with our students
- Stay connected with our colleagues and the whole school community
- Facilitate teaching & learning
- Continue to prepare our students for inhouse exams
- Continue to prepare our students for state exams
- Keep the structure and routines of a school day
- Provide clarity and support to all our teachers

What will our plan look like ?

The remote Teaching & Learning plan has two components,

- Guidance for Teachers
- Guidance for Parents & Students

What has informed this T&L Plan?

1. Department of Education & Skills Document:

Guidance on Continuity of Schooling document 02.04.20

2. Guidance:

Input from teacher focus group 6th yr year head SMc & GMu

Advice from the Guidance Dept, informed by interactions with students during last school closure.

3. Experience from last school closure:

- Most of our Teachers and students have experience of remote teaching and learning since the previous school closure in March 2020
- We have continued to work online since Sept using a blended learning approach to homework and assignments
- We are using one platform only -MS Teams
- Since Sept Our ICT Co-ordinator has provided weekly tutorials to upskill teachers on MS Teams and Online Learning
- The School website is a one stop shop for resources, tutorials and links to support Remote/ Blended Learning

Guidance for Teachers

Your Wellbeing:

We are creating these structures in the hope that it brings clarity for everybody. Whilst everybody has previous experience of working remotely from the last school closure we do however recognise that everybody is finding being back in this space a challenge. We understand that everybody has very different personal circumstances , so we are asking everyone to do their best and do whatever is feasible in their own home circumstances at this time. Your wellbeing is of the utmost importance to us and if you feel under pressure in these new circumstances please feel free to contact anyone of us directly. We are willing and available to support you in whatever way we can.

Michael Finn mfinn@goreycs.ie mob: 0866012392

Stella Kehoe skehoe@goreycs.ie mob: 0877614469

Linda McEvoy lmcevoy@goreycs.ie mob:0863418666

Rory McCarthy rmccarthy@goreycs.ie mob:0876306531

IT Support:

An important part of teacher wellbeing is being comfortable, feeling competent and being supported in the online space.

Every staff member has access to the IT support of a Digital Leader/Educator. Each pod has a maximum of 10 colleagues per Leader/Educator.

Paul McCloskey (IT. Co-ordinator & Webmaster) along with Wayne Dunne (IT Tech Support) are also available and very willing to support you should you need any IT advice or guidance.

Paul McCloskey pmccloskey@goreycs.ie

Structures for remote T&L:

1. The School timetable:

Teachers should be regularly communicating and engaging with students to ensure continuity of their learning. They should do so on the days that they are normally timetabled for lessons with their students. (DES, p.3)

We will **follow the normal school timetable** .This means that students are expected to be present for learning during the normal school day.

Following the school timetable will avoid overlap and a clash of classes.

How will this work?

There are a range of approaches recommended by the DES *which allow for and take into account the different circumstances of teachers (DES. P.4.)*

Teachers can be available for class during the time of the lesson in a variety of ways,

- Teacher conducts online class
- Teacher is available at class time to answer queries or give feedback
- Teacher posts work /assignments in time for the class each day, students work independently on the work during that time
- Video recordings
- A combination of all of the above

2. The Learning Plan for Remote T&L:

To enable students to plan and organise themselves for their learning, teachers will post,

- **The Weekly Schedule is posted on Teams** at the beginning of each school week.

3. The structure of lessons:

Provision of regular assignments to students that are purposeful , manageable and can be carried out independently (DES, p.3)

DES recommends a balance between,

- Assignment of independent work whether written or practical , by email or through teams.
- Online learning , direct teaching , virtual lessons
- Other tasks in accordance with the learning needs of students
- **At least one timetabled class** per week where teacher has direct contact with students in an online lesson is recommended by DES

Findings from last school closure recommend,

- If not directly teaching on a particular day ,assignments should be posted as early as possible prior to the class.
- *Drip feed work* . Students learn best when given work in small achievable amounts rather than a large bulk.
- If a student misses a lesson they catch up as per a normal school day.

4. Duration of Lessons:

Our lessons are 40 minutes duration unless a double period. Students should be given time to log on at the start of the lesson and log out at the end to enable them to log onto the next timetabled lesson on time.

The DES recommends 20mins direct teaching and the rest student independent work.

Be judicious about the amount of work sent home too much can be as much of a problem as too little. (DES,p.8)

- Sufficient - an appropriate amount of work
- Connected - teacher checks it is understood
- Sustainable- a workload that is achievable alongside work assigned in 8 or 9 other subjects.

Homework, assignments and deadlines should reflect **what is normally given during a regular class period.**

Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's progress, their application to work and to oversee work assigned by checking into Teams.

5. Feedback:

Teacher feedback is very important to ensure continuity and progression in learning, to affirm students work and stay motivated and focused while working from home,(DES p.8)

Teachers can ensure this by,

- Responding regularly to students with helpful feedback on work submitted
- Being flexible and agreeing reasonable timelines for return of work that is manageable for both teachers and students

Feedback through for eg,

- Assignments corrected on Teams
- Video conferencing
- Recorded video or audio feedback

6. Curricular Wellbeing:

Physical exercise and activity are vital to promote the physical and emotional wellbeing of students . Feedback from the last school closure indicated students missed school and missed being connected to their peers and teachers.

The Wellbeing Coordinator has provided useful guidance and resources to promote the wellbeing of students along with the SPHE,PE & CSPE Subject Depts.

7. Leaving Certificate:

Guidance counsellors are in direct and regular contact with their sixth year students. They will give guidance on how to go forward with their weekly routine in order to keep a steady pace and make consistent progress with their studies until school reopens.

8. Concern for wellbeing of student:

If you have any concerns re. wellbeing or academic progress of any of your students please inform the relevant Guidance Counsellor.

9. Student engagement:

All students are expected to engage with online classes .If any student is not engaging please continue to contact Michael. Every student identified will be contacted.

Collegiality & Collaboration:

Collaboration was indicated in the feedback from the last period of remote learning as a support to lighten the load for everybody .

Working within a Subject Dept keeps colleagues connected and provides a network of support ,advice and sharing of good practice for this new way of teaching.

Subject Dept online meetings can be conducted on MS Teams at a time suitable to the Department.

Parent & Student Guidance:

Students and parents in the Remote Teaching & Learning Plan will be advised that:

- Students are expected to follow the **regular school timetable** to give a structure to their day.
- The work being done currently will not be repeated at a later date.
- Students must follow the **Student Online Protocols** already distributed and included in this document below.
- Students are expected to respect their teachers and peers when learning online or risk being removed from Teams and online learning.
- As in regular class time, students are expected to catch up in the event of their absence from online work.

Teacher online teaching Protocols:

Are included in this document below:

TEACHERS



Teacher protocol for online teaching

- All student/teacher contact should be through MS Teams.
- Use Calendar in MS Teams to schedule your class.
- Only schedule classes according to your teaching timetable as per VS Ware.
- All classes do not necessarily need to be live streamed; some can be self-directed learning from students, assignments, quizzes, evaluation feedback, recordings, PowerPoints, essays, gathering of resource materials (Blended Learning). **However please schedule all work on 'Assignments' (not live) and 'Calendar' (live)**
- Teachers need to schedule a minimum of one live streamed class per week to stay connected with students.
- Classes should be 30 minutes for a single class and 60 minutes for a double class.
- Students and teachers should use the 'blur background setting' if available when live streaming. (please note the 'Blur Background' option is only available on compatible devices)
- Student attending online live classes through MS Teams are expected to dress appropriately.
- If streaming within the classroom, please ensure the webcam is facing you the teacher or the Whiteboard and not the students in the classroom.
- Homework will continue as is through MS Teams Assignments and or Class Notebook.
- Any misbehaviour should be referred to Year Head team through VS Ware.
- If you have any difficulties with MS Teams, contact your 'Digital Leader/Educator' through your MS Teams Pod. If your 'Digital Leader/Educator' is unavailable, then contact Paul McCloskey.

Reminder

- Students and their parents /guardians have been informed that communication with teachers through MS Teams is during business hours only from 8.30 am-5.00 pm, Monday to Friday, students are not permitted to contact teachers outside of that time, with the exception of uploading homework.
- Teachers are not expected to communicate with students after school hours.
- If you do not wish to receive communications from students, it is advisable to disable notifications on your phone after close of business.
- Students and their parents/guardians have also been informed that respectful behaviour is expected of all students whether that is within the classroom or the online space. Sanctions will apply.
- School management, coordinators, year heads, teachers will not contact members of the school community outside of business hours, 8.30 am - 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday, unless it is deemed an exceptional circumstance.
- Teachers replying to group emails please reply by clicking on the **single** arrow on the right-hand side **not the double** arrow.



Resources

For guides and tutorials on using Teams and online learning check out GCS Website

<https://www.goreycs.ie/virtualclassteams.html>

There are considerable subject online resources on GCS Website (Please forward any additional resources you are willing to share onto me, as this page is ongoing)

<https://www.goreycs.ie/onlineresource.html>

Paul McCloskey

GCS – ICT Coordinator & Webmaster