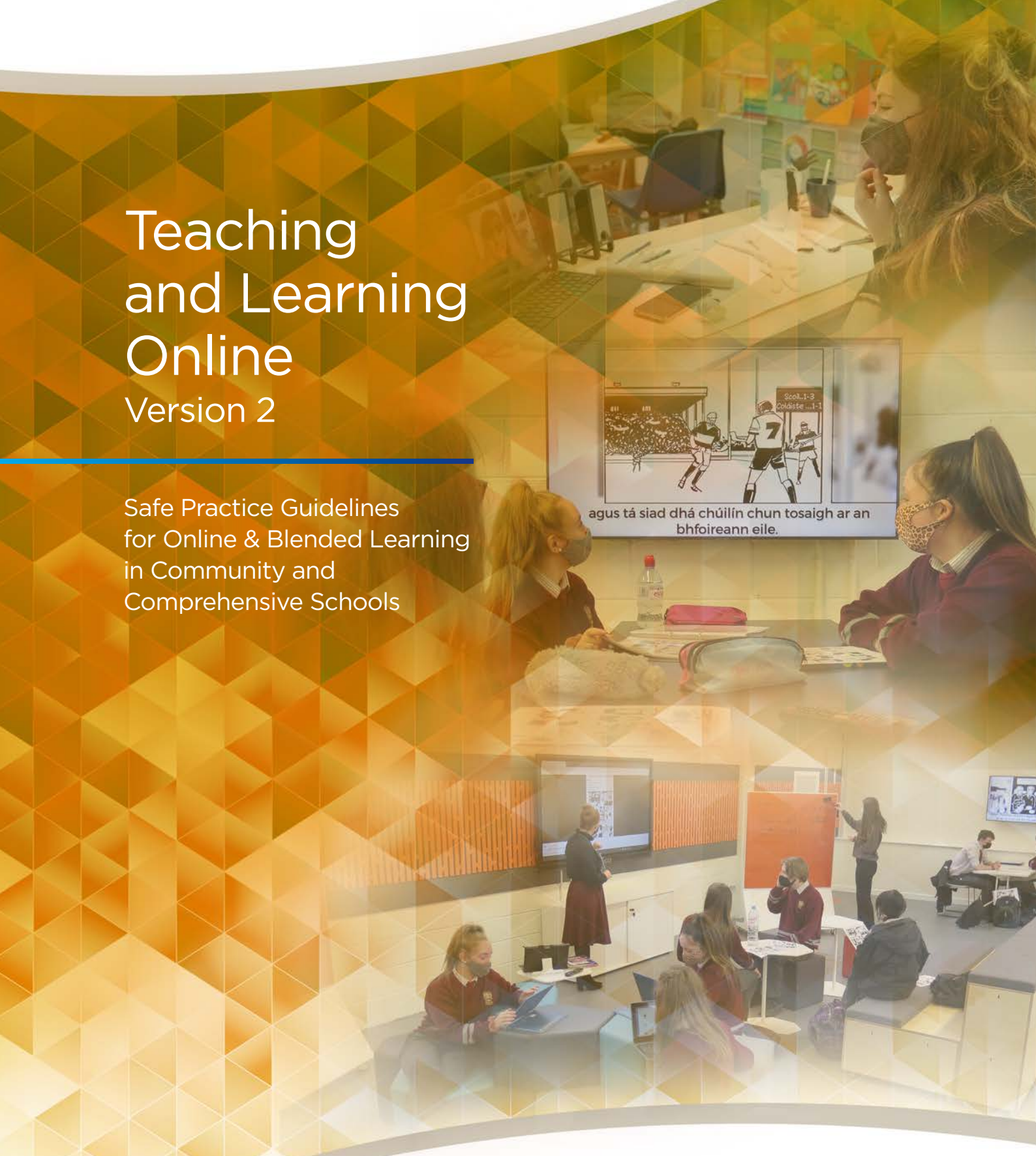
Teaching and Learning Online

Version 2

Safe Practice Guidelines for Online & Blended Learning in Community and Comprehensive Schools



Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha

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Contents

Acknowledgements 2
Introduction 3
Context - ACCS and the wider system 4
The Wider Context – An International Lens 8
First Steps 15
Good Practice in Blended Learning 17
Building A Collaborative Approach 18
Some Guidelines - Practical advice for those new to Online Teaching 23
Platforms used in ACCS schools 27
Platforms used in ACCS schools delivering Further Education Programmes 29
Synchronous Teaching - Tips 32
Promoting Engagement and Effective Feedback Online 39
A Place of Remote Belonging 50
Digital Inclusion - AEN Learners "Reaching out to all Learners" 58
Digital Wellbeing - Safeguarding Children 61
Netiquette and Guidelines 65
GDPR and Data Protection when using Digital Technologies and Working Remotely 67
Universal Design for Learning - Further Education 72
Teaching and Learning Online – Sample Class Plans 74
Useful Readings & Resources 85
Appendices 91

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The document reflects discussions and ongoing collaboration with schools and is greatly enriched by the opinions and voices of our students. A special word of thanks to all students and schools participating in the ACCS/NCCA Student Voice project and particularly to those who shared their experiences of online learning over the past few months. We wish to acknowledge the support of the ACCS ICT subcommittee in assisting and guiding this work. Within the ICT subcommittee membership, we acknowledge the support given by Tom Lonergan and Deirdre Redmond of PDST TIE.

Teaching and Learning Online V2 is based on the first set of guidelines published in August 2020. Much of the material from the original guidelines remains relevant in this updated version. Following the first publication, ACCS established an online forum for Community and Comprehensive schools designed to support collaboration and sharing of different practices in ICT in schools. This platform afforded schools the opportunity to work together and to create a vibrant community of practice across a wide range of schools.

This document represents the growing confidence now evident in our schools in harnessing technology to enhance the learner and teacher experience in the classroom and in the remote learning space. The examples from the schools reveal not only imagination and creativity, but also an awareness of the power and efficacy of both student and teacher and their dual responsibility as agents of change in a world where technology is all around us.

Paul Thornton,
Chairperson of ACCS ICT Subcommittee

John Irwin,
General Secretary, ACCS

Introduction

Covid-19 continues to bring real and significant challenges to our daily lives as we adapt to ongoing public health measures including the closure of all schools in March 2020 and in January 2021. *The requirement to stay at home during periods of lockdown and for physical distancing measures has created additional challenges in terms of wellbeing, restricted access to friends and increased social isolation*. Schools have risen to the challenges, striving to work with students in a fully remote learning environment and upskilling rapidly in digital technologies in response to the current crisis. This emergency response has had varying levels of success for many different reasons depending on different school contexts, equity of access, health concerns and capacity of stakeholders to engage fully.

As we continue to face uncertainty and plan for reopening of schools, we move away from a fully remote learning environment and turn our attention to a blended learning approach.

Blended learning is defined as:
Any time a student learns at least in part at a supervised bricks-and-mortar location away from home and at least in part through online delivery with some element of student control over time, place, path and/or pace: often used synchronously with hybrid learning.
(International Association for K- 12 Online Learning 2011: in Barbour 2013)

In August 2021, while the Covid landscape has changed significantly, we still remain in a place of uncertainty as we plan for reopening of schools. The Guide for the Evaluation of Remote Teaching and Learning published by the Department of Education in June 2021 highlights different contexts where schools may find it is necessary to continue to provide remote teaching and learning to some or all students.

This Framework aims to support Community and Comprehensive Schools as they continue to develop and implement strategies which support the best experience for all students while engaged in learning online. It is designed to promote a school wide response to the challenges in providing remote teaching and learning, providing useful and clear guidance and showcasing examples of best practice from our schools.

School communities have shown an impressive willingness, flexibility and adaptability in their efforts to sustain teaching and learning for all students during lockdown periods. Many have transformed their online performance during the last academic year. School practices are sustained through collaborative engagement with others and access to meaningful supports at school level. Schools are advised, to adopt a school wide approach to the work, one which is coordinated, and which seeks to include all stakeholders. Working in the world of technology presents many wonderful opportunities and many challenges for both learners and teachers. Navigating this vast world safely and securely is critical and Child Protection, Acceptable Use, Data Protection, and other relevant policies in schools will require ongoing review to ensure that all remain safe while engaged in this work.

Schools are advised to

- ✔ ***adopt a consistent approach,***
- ✔ ***work collaboratively,***
- ✔ ***take small incremental steps to build capacity of all stakeholders engaged in blended/hybrid learning at this time.***

Context

ACCS and the wider system

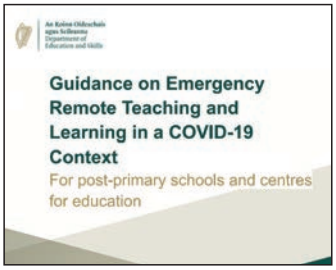
This Framework was produced by the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools to assist our schools in establishing good practice when working in a Blended/Hybrid Learning Environment. It is designed for our post primary schools and our Further Education providers in recognition that much learning and best practice can be shared between both sectors.

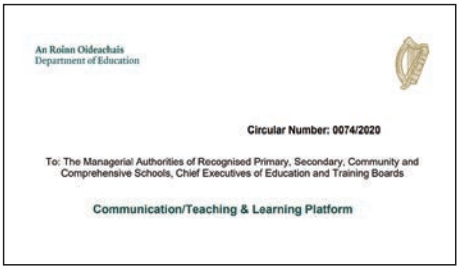
The updated Framework is set firmly in the context of the existing guidelines and frameworks (See Appendix 1) within the system including:

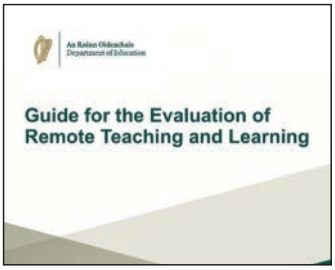
- ✔ ***The ACCS Strategic Plan***
- ✔ ***The Digital Learning Framework for Post Primary Schools***
- ✔ ***The School Self Evaluation Six Step Process***
- ✔ ***Looking at our School 2016 – A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools***
- ✔ ***The SOLAS / ETBI Strategy for Technology Enhanced Learning* in Further Education and Training 2016-2019.*****
- ✔ ***The Department of Education Guidance on Remote Learning in a COVID-19: Context: September –December 2020***
- ✔ ***The Department of Education guidance documents on supporting pupils/students at risk of educational disadvantage and guidance documents on supporting pupils/students with special educational needs.***
- ✔ ***Circular 0074/2020 Arrangements for schools to have in place appropriate contingency measures to ensure that schools are prepared to continue to support teaching and learning in the event of a partial or full closure of schools arising from Public Health advice.***
- ✔ ***The Department of Education Guide for the Evaluation of Remote Teaching and Learning.***

**Technology Enhanced Learning = using Technology to facilitate and support innovative Teaching and Learning Practices.*

***Further Education and Training courses are delivered in over 51 schools in the Community Comprehensive Sector. Further Education and Training programmes include: PLC, BTEI and Self –financing Adult Education Evening Course programmes. The sector has total enrolments in excess of 31,000 learners.*







Department of Education support and guidance materials

Introduction

The public health restrictions which resulted in the closure of schools in March 2020 highlighted the absolute necessity for schools to be agile in providing for continuity of teaching and learning in the future. As a contingency measure for the possibility of any recurrence of partial or full closure of schools, the Department provided a guidance document, agreed with the education partners, to enable post-primary schools to mediate the curriculum in a remote learning environment to all pupils/students. Those guidance materials were issued to schools and centres for education as they were published and are available at: ***Guidance on Remote Learning in a COVID-19: Context:*** *September – December 2020 https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7acad-reopening-our-post-primary-schools/#additional-guidelines-and-procedures*

LINK

The document is complemented by **Circular 0074/2020** which required all schools to put in place appropriate contingency measures to ensure that they are prepared to continue to support teaching and learning in the event of a partial or full closure of schools. *https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/5b11b-arrangements-for-schools-to-have-in-place-appropriate-contingency-measures-to-ensure-that-schools-are-prepared-to-continue-to-support-teaching-and-learning-in-the-event-of-a-partial-or-full-closure-of-schools-arising-from-public-health-advice/*

LINK

It is also complemented by guidance documents on supporting pupils/students at risk of educational disadvantage and guidance documents on supporting pupils/students with special educational needs.

These documents are available at *https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/965639-continuity-of-schooling/#pupils-students-with-special-educational-needs*

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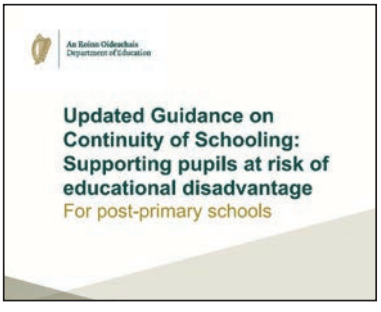
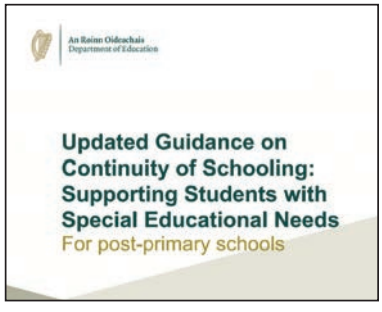
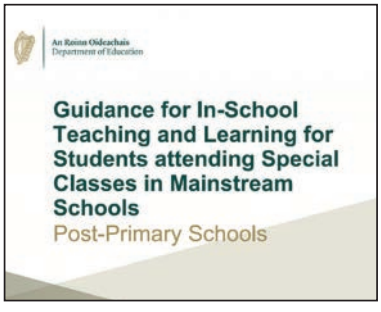






(The following extracts are taken from the Guide for the Evaluation of Remote Teaching and Learning [ERTAL, June 2021])

CONTEXT FOR EVALUATING REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING.
The approaches described in this Guide for the Evaluation of Remote Teaching and Learning (ERTAL) will be used to evaluate and report on the provision of remote teaching and learning in three contexts:

- ✔ ***When schools are providing remote teaching and learning for all students when students may not attend school due to health restrictions***
- ✔ ***When schools are providing remote teaching and learning for particular cohorts of students who are unable to attend school in person due to health restrictions***
- ✔ ***When schools are providing remote teaching and learning for other contingency reasons***

RATIONALE FOR EVALUATING REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING.
When pupils and students learn in a range of contexts – onsite in schools and remotely at home, it is important that we do everything to ensure that teaching and learning are as effective as possible, whether pupils/students are attending school or learning remotely.

The nature of teaching and learning has adapted and changed in significant ways in the recent past. One of the most striking elements of that change is how schools have planned for and become more adept at using technologies and digital learning experiences and devices to plan for and mediate the curriculum in both day-to-day on-site and remote learning contingency contexts.

National and international research during the school closure period last year has highlighted how children and young people are impacted differently when it is necessary for them to learn in a distance learning context.

Working cooperatively with school communities.
The Inspectorate is committed to working collaboratively with schools and education stakeholders more broadly in developing and co-constructing its approaches to evaluation and inspection. It acknowledges that schools are insightful in helping design good evaluation approaches. When questions and challenges about high quality teaching and learning are shared with schools, they invariably help develop better approaches to evaluating practice. Engaging in a collaborative approach to model development also deepens inspectors' understanding of what they are evaluating and how their work is perceived.

Therefore, in developing this model, the Department's Inspectorate has worked collaboratively with schools to develop grounded and practical ways of evaluating the quality of remote education provision. The Inspectorate engaged in two research phases with school communities and trialed the model over two further phases as it sought to understand the experiences of schools in providing remote teaching and learning.

Three of those schools were Community Schools; Kinsale Community School, Moate Community School and Old Bawn Community School. These schools shared their experiences of the ERTAL process and the learning at school community level in April 2021 and the three different presentations can be accessed at the links on the following

Presentation by Kinsale Community School

LINK

Presentation by Moate Community School

LINK

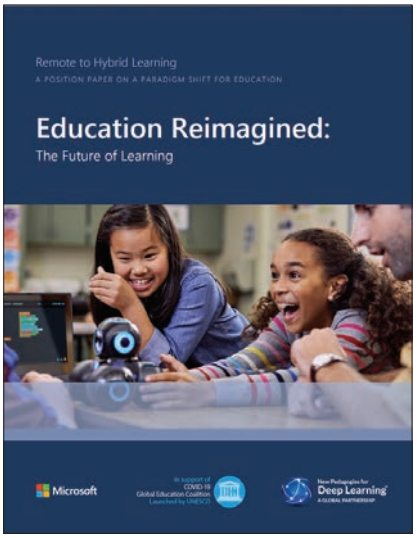
Presentation by Old Bawn Community

LINK

The Wider Context

An International Lens

As referenced in the extract from the DE Guide for the Evaluation of Remote Teaching and Learning much has been learned from both national and international perspectives and research carried out during school closure periods in the recent past.



Authors: Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, Max Drummy, Mag Gardner

Education across the world has undergone a rapid upheaval since March 2020 which has highlighted both challenges and opportunities in relation to remote teaching and learning. We understand that we must take the insights from last few months of remote learning and use them in our quest to keep students engaged in the learning journey. How do we plan for a more sustainable approach which maintains all the learnings and best practices from the early stage of emergency and brings these into the new hybrid models which we see emerging in our education system today?

In this paper the authors explore the possible responses to the disruption which the pandemic has brought to the global education system. They highlight an education system which was already struggling as student engagement decreased and schools failed to reach all learners. They argue that the solution lies before us, and that the disruption has indeed created many opportunities for schools if we only have the courage to take the risk and to build the bridge as we walk along it. This will involve harnessing the best from the traditional practices while introducing new innovative practices and insights from remote learning which will enable new and meaningful hybrid deep learning models.

Phase 1 Disruption Shifting to Remote Learning	Phase 2 Transition to Reopening Schools	Phase 3 Reimagining Learning
Navigate the Zones of Disruption: Unsettled - Learning - Growth	Manage the structures, processes and decisions needed to reopen schools.	Create an agile, innovative and future focused hybrid deep learning system.

As schools reopen in August 2021, even with the high uptake in the vaccination programme, there is still a great deal of uncertainty and the delivery or the potential to deliver education in both physical and remote settings for some and possibly all students at any time remains essential. It is clear that technology is crucial in this delivery and that this continues to pose many issues for our education system. Many schools still struggle with their capacity to deliver quality learning online, to connect equally with all stakeholders and to support students and staff' wellbeing while working remotely.

The more agile schools were, the faster they moved into the second phase described above as the growth phase. School leaders reported on the following learnings, highlighting that they did not want to slip back into the status quo of pre pandemic times.

The hybrid model combines the best of in-school and remote learning, with digital engagement. It is more than a quick fix. It is a way to enhance and accelerate learning by providing student centered approaches to meet diverse learners needs.

- ✔ *Acknowledgement that wellbeing was a critical pre-condition for learning.*
- ✔ *Technology shifted from being a vehicle for delivery/ transmission to a mechanism for collaboration, social connectedness and culture building.*
- ✔ *Self-regulation and learning to learn were key determinants of student motivation, engagement and success.*
- ✔ *Students who found themselves with more choice and voice exceeded expectations finding ways to help themselves and collaborate with others.*
- ✔ *Collaboration among teachers and leaders emerged because the focus was clear.*
- ✔ *In the absence of high stakes testing, systems relied on teacher and leader professional judgements.*

Education Reimagined | The Future of Learning

The authors suggest that school leaders pay attention to four areas:

01 Be mindful of Wellbeing

02 Reflect on Lessons Learned

03 Manage Safety and Operations

04 Lead the Learning Agenda

1. BE MINDFUL OF WELLBEING.

We know that change affects everyone differently. Consider these realities when re-opening schools:

- Each of us has been affected in unknown ways. This self-awareness will come at different times for different people and will manifest itself differently for each of us.
- Assume people are not their best selves right now. Temper your expectations with empathy and patience.
- We won't know what people need, until we ask them. Even then, they may not understand what they need. Know that on size does not fit all.
- The situation will continue to be dynamic and so are the people we serve; their well-being is not in a fixed state.

2. REFLECT ON THE LESSONS LEARNED.

As school communities come back together for a new academic year with Covid response plans and measures still fully in place, it is important that time is spent identifying strengths and challenges if schools are to bridge the gaps and put effective supports in place which serve the teaching and learning agenda that is the core business of schools. A tool for reflection is available to support this reflection process. Questions like, "Who struggled the most?" will identify where supports are required. Considering why certain cohorts of staff and students struggled will begin the process of highlighting deficiencies so that these can be addressed going forward.

3. MANAGE SAFETY AND OPERATIONS. (Covid-19 response plans)

ACCS welcomes the supports offered by the Department of Education for this school year and acknowledges the tremendous effort and the time which has been spent negotiating supports with the management bodies, and the other stakeholders. System leaders and school teams have worked tirelessly to keep schools open and safe, and we are struck by the incredible energy, commitment and flexibility that school communities have exhibited in this regard.

It is expected that schools will continue to operate with the current infection prevention and control measures in place to support their safe operation during Covid-19 when they reopen in August/ September. Schools should therefore continue to operate in line with their Covid-19 response plans and the DE will continue to support schools in terms of the additional resources necessary to provide for these measures. These plans are based on the Government's Work Safely Protocol which reflects the most up to date public health advice for the workplace and sets out the range of measures required to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

4. LEAD THE LEARNING AGENDA. (Think Maslow before Bloom)

Learners will not learn when they are uncomfortable or contribute when they are self-conscious. As we know, "Emotion is the gatekeeper of motivation, cognition and attention." Therefore, establishing an environment that focuses on well-being and belonging for all is job one for teachers. In short, well-being and quality learning are intimately related.

One of the main messages in this paper is that the role of the classroom teacher is crucial in transforming the system. The authors argue that the most sustainable change comes from ground up. Schools which choose to work from an appreciative stance rather than a deficit model and which focus on what students have learned and what they have achieved during the recent past will have greater success moving into the next and third phase which reimagines a new system of learning. Building relationships and placing a renewed focus on the holistic needs of students will require an even greater attention to student voice than ever before.

> *"... students were clear, they did not want to be taught by a 'computer'—they valued the relationship they had with teachers who knew them and how they learn best. Teacher-student relationships remain key to success. Education Reimagined must not be an agenda of students 'learning on their own"; Learning Partnerships and Environments remain essential elements of a future focused learning model...."*
>
> (Education Reimagined | The Future of Learning)

> *"...Students who thrived in the remote environment during the pandemic, demonstrated competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, resilience, independence as learners, self-regulation, cognitive flexibility and perseverance. These are the attributes that are noted as critical for future employability across industries and geographies. Going forward the learning process must foster these competencies through authentic, relevant learning that provides voice, choice and agency to learners. This necessitates a new role for teachers; one in which they are activators of learning; practitioners who can differentiate task, time and space to meet student needs and include them as co-designers of that learning. The challenge is to integrate the best of what we have learned from this remote phase with the new skill set required for the future...."*
>
> (Education Reimagined | The Future of Learning)

> ***Create a Preferred Future: No more random acts of learning.***
> *Disruption has triggered the potential energy for change that has been unactioned in many systems. What is now needed is a model that integrates the best of remote-learning and school-situated learning, a new hybrid model.*
>
> *This hybrid model must embrace digital to amplify, accelerate and connect learners and learning, while intentionally focusing on global competencies as well as academic standards.*
>
> *Deep Learning experiences are those that produce learning that sticks for life. They are both profoundly personalized and student centered and are intrinsically motivating for students as they pursue topics that are of real interest to them, have authentic meaning, and are more rigorous. These learning experiences make students want to persist and to succeed. This combination of autonomy, belonging, and meaningful work inspires students.*
>
> *When students are invited to demonstrate their learning differently, and when learning environments include all students as contributors and change agents, they begin to develop a sense of efficacy. Relationships and engagement—the gatekeepers of learning—are emphasized in this learner-centered model. Voice, choice and agency are central to deep learning.*
>
> (Education Reimagined | The Future of Learning)

They argue that while the gravitational pull of the status quo is strong and pulls away from change, this is no longer an option for schools.

In 2018 before anyone heard of Covid -19, Andreas Schleicher, Director of Skills for OECD in ***World Class: How to Build a 21st-Century School System, Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education***, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264300002-en.concluded:

> "Over the past decade, there has been virtually no improvement in the learning outcomes of students in the Western world, even though expenditures on schooling rose by almost 20% during this period" (p. 11).
>
> LINK

As anxiety and stress increases steadily over the past decade and simultaneously, we see a dramatic loss of interest and engagement in the young people whom we serve as they move through the education system, we are all struck by the need for change. These changes as seen in the recent reform of junior cycle and evident in the many questions posed by stakeholders while engaged in consultations about senior cycle education in Ireland encourage us to reflect on what is worth learning. Ref: ***Learning and the pandemic: What's next?*** By Michael Fullan – https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11125-020-09502-0

LINK

Access a digital copy of the research paper, 'Education Reimagined | The Future of Learning' here.

LINK

Listen to the authors of the research paper, Joanne Quinn and Michael Fullan outlining their views on reimagining the future of education in the context of lessons learned about remote learning during Covid -19 with Mike Tholfsen of Microsoft EDU team. The event is hosted by Barbara Holzapfel, Microsoft.

LINK

In June 2020 ACCS accepted an invitation to participate in the **OECD Education 2030 experimental schools' project**. The OECD hub of experimental schools aims to actively involve cutting-edge schools in the global education policy dialogue. The participating schools are part of a global network of policymakers, education institutions, teachers, students, and social partners that are co-creating a new vision for education. The project identifies the competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) today's students need to thrive in and shape their world towards a better future in 2030 and beyond. One area of focus for the ACCS schools will be on student agency and student voice.

The concept of student agency, as understood in the context of the OECD Learning Compass 2030, is rooted in the principle that students have the ability and the will to positively influence their own lives and the world around them. Student agency is thus defined as the capacity to set a goal, reflect and act responsibly to effect change. It is about acting rather than being acted upon; shaping rather than being shaped; and making responsible decisions and choices rather than accepting those determined by others.

When students are agents in their learning, that is, when they play an active role in deciding what and how they will learn, they tend to show greater motivation to learn and are more likely to define objectives for their learning. **These students are also more likely to have "learned how to learn" – an invaluable skill that they can and will use throughout their lives**.

https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/ **LINK**

While educational improvement is far easier to proclaim than to achieve, there are many successes from which we can learn. This is not about copying prefabricated solutions from other countries; it is about looking seriously and dispassionately at good practice in our own countries and elsewhere to become knowledgeable of what works in which contexts.

But the answers to tomorrow's educational challenges don't all lie in today's school systems, so following the path of today's education leaders is not enough. ***The challenges ahead have also become far too big to be solved by any one country on its own. This is leading educators, researchers and policy makers from around the world to join forces in the search for better answers.***

In a nutshell, the kinds of things that are easy to teach have become easy to digitise and automate. The future is about pairing the artificial intelligence of computers with the cognitive, social and emotional skills, and values of human beings. It will be our imagination, our awareness and our sense of responsibility that will enable us to harness digitalisation to shape the world for the better.

The algorithms behind social media are sorting us into groups of like-minded individuals. They create virtual bubbles that amplify our views and leave us insulated from divergent perspectives; they homogenise opinions while polarising our societies. ***Tomorrow's schools will need to help students think for themselves and join others, with empathy, in work and citizenship. They will need to help students develop a strong sense of right and wrong, a sensitivity to the claims that others make on us, and a grasp of the limits on individual and collective action. At work, at home and in the community, people will need a deep understanding of how others***

live, in different cultures and traditions, and how others think, whether as scientists or artists. *Whatever tasks machines may be taking over from humans at work, the demands on our knowledge and skills to contribute meaningfully to social and civic life will keep rising.*

For those with the right knowledge and skills, digitalisation and globalisation have been liberating and exciting; but for those who are insufficiently prepared, they can mean vulnerable and insecure work, and a life without prospects.

Extract from: ***World Class | Education Through the Eyes of a Scientist***
Schleicher, Andreas (2018), "Education, through the eyes of a scientist", in World Class: How to Build a 21stCentury School System, OECD Publishing, Paris. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264300002-1-en

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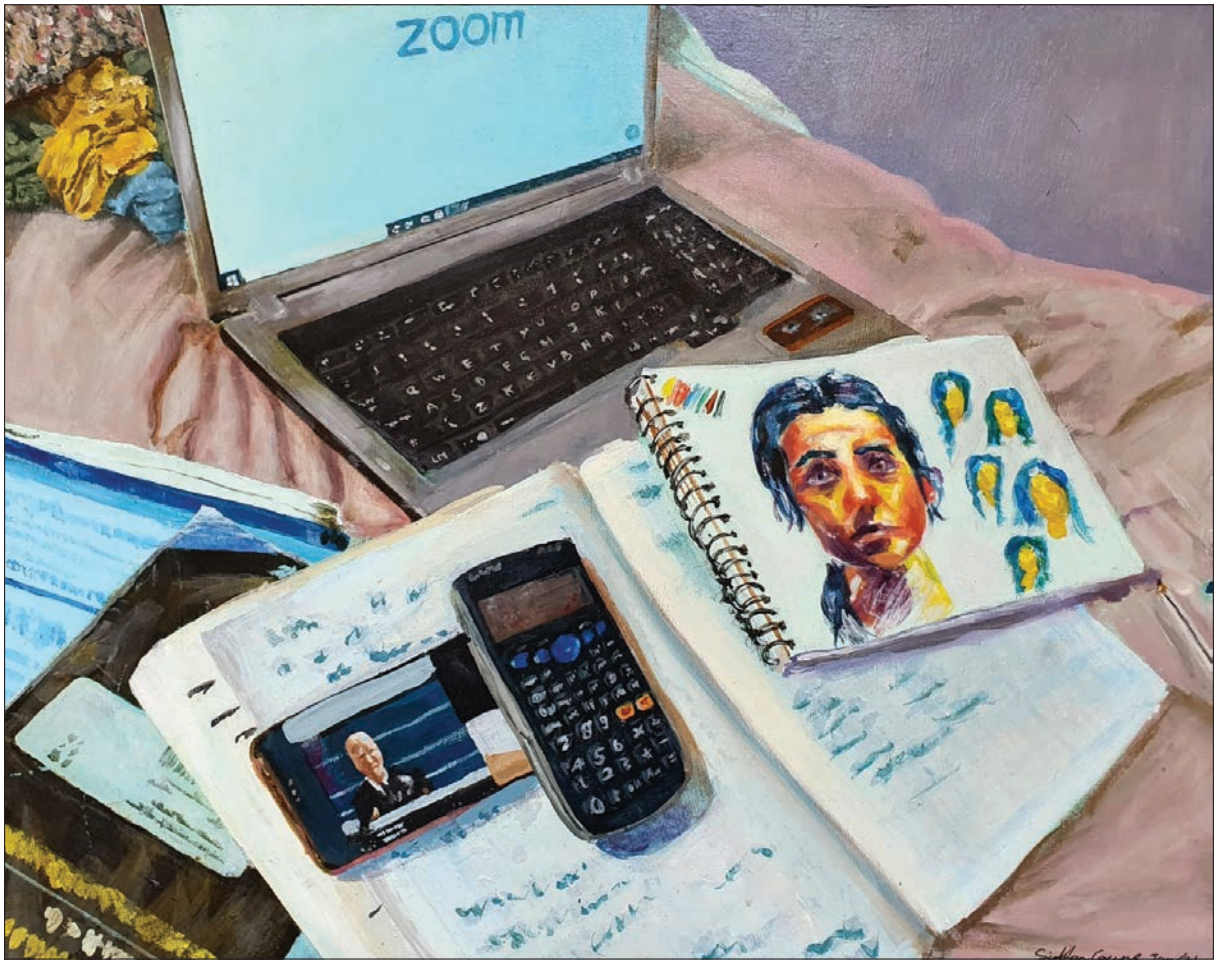


Siobhán Ní Chadhain, Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara, Carna, Co na Gaillimhe

First Steps

What have we learned from our work in school self-evaluation and in our work developing an effective DL Plan at school level which can be applied to the current circumstances and the context of blended learning approaches as necessary / required in Covid 19 /pandemic times?
Most ACCS schools have a Digital Learning Team and a Digital Learning Plan in place and both will need to be reviewed in the context of Covid 19 and the challenges which this has brought schools.
The following steps (if not already in place) might be a useful map for schools.

1. **Put a Digital Learning Team in Place** which represents a cross section of the school community and can coordinate the process of developing a plan to effectively embed blended or hybrid learning during this time and which will support students and staff in their learning and development of key skills in this area.

2. **Develop a Vision for Digital Learning (Blended Learning)** which provides guidance and CPD for all stakeholders, exploring potential and possibilities for teachers and learners in using technology to support face to face teaching and enabling a review of current practices in the use of digital technology in the real or virtual classroom. Review and update any relevant policies such as the Acceptable Use Policy, the Data Protection Policy and others.

3. **Identify Focus** to establish *how well a school is doing* in delivering a blended curriculum over the past few months. This will require evidence gathering from a range of sources and from the key stakeholders. See stakeholders' survey templates in Appendix 3.

4. **Analyse and Make Judgements** in terms of existing digital infrastructure and practices. *"In so doing the school should determine, affirm and celebrate the strengths they identify in the aspects of practice being evaluated while acknowledging the areas that should be prioritised for improvement."*
   Page 20, Digital Learning Planning GUIDELINES.

5. **Agree and Share a Digital Learning Plan** which is a single document outlining what the school will need to do in order to enhance its DL practices **to meet the current Covid 19 circumstances and challenges**. It will include a summary of strengths and areas requiring improvement, (SMART) targets for improvement and actions required, names of those who will undertake, monitor and review the actions outlined in a given timeframe. It will reference how students, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders will be involved.

6. **Put the plan in action** with all stakeholders who understand their roles and responsibilities in making this plan a success. *"All relevant school personnel should share ownership of the actions to be implemented at individual teacher, class, or whole-school level. These actions should become part of the normal teaching and learning process and, as such, should be capable of being implemented by all teachers.*
   The entire school community has a role and a responsibility to successfully implement the DL Plan. The Digital Strategy notes that ALL teachers should have the requisite knowledge and skills

to integrate digital technologies effectively into their practice. Thus, putting the plan into action is key to ensuring that all teachers are confident in embedding digital learning into their practice. Creating and implementing a successful DL Plan requires a whole school approach, where all staff play their part.

The purpose of monitoring the DL Plan is to maintain control of the plan, to keep it on track and to ensure its successful completion by helping to identify problems early on, so that solutions may be found."

See Appendix 4
Digital Learning Planning Guidelines

7. **Monitor Actions and Evaluate Impact** by regular gathering and use of information at specified intervals to check on the impact of DL practices on student learning and teachers' and students' experiences of the blended approach to teaching and learning brought about by Covid 19.

Shauna Connor, 5th yr, St Louis Community School

Good Practice in Blended Learning

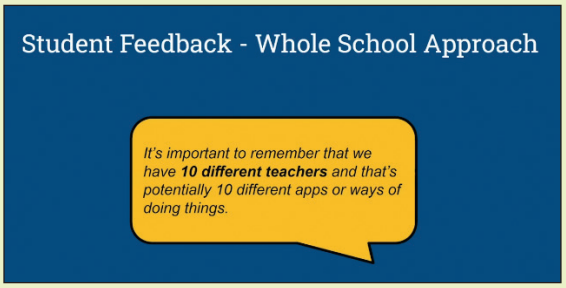
Actions & Responsibilities

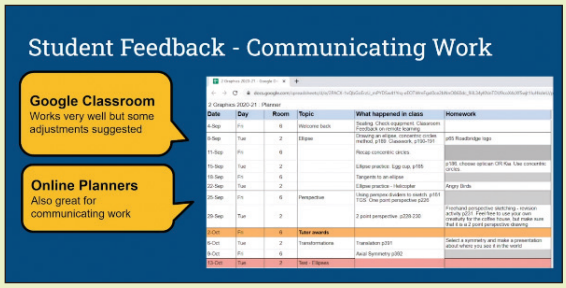
Phase	Action(s)	Responsibility
Planning	Whole School Approach to Online Teaching and Learning / Blended Learning to be implemented from the outset.	Senior Management Digital Learning Team All Staff
	Communication with parents is essential. Choose ONE platform for outgoing information to parents.	Senior Management HSLC
	CPD for staff on the integration of technology in a meaningful way and the pedagogy of online / blended learning.	Senior Management
	Technical Support for staff and students to initially access the platforms. Audit of access to devices among students.	Senior Management
	Teacher Collaboration. Establishing 'Communities of Practice' for subject departments. This means working more closely with subject department colleagues to make sure lessons and materials meet the needs of all students, partnering with others in our subject area to plan instruction, working together on cross-curricular projects, and dividing up the things all students need (like technology instruction) among teachers on a team so students aren't doing the same lessons over and over and our work isn't duplicated.	Senior Management Subject Department Heads
Implementing	Devote the first week of school to building Community and Digital competence among teachers and students. Communicate expectations clearly to all stakeholders.	All Staff Parents
	Staying Connected with colleagues. Staff Meetings, Virtual Coffee Breaks, Weekly meetings of Year heads with the teaching team.	Senior Management All Staff
	Use face to face teaching and synchronous online teaching for active learning and engaging work. Asynchronous learning can be used for reading or self-paced work.	All Staff
Review / Evaluate / Improve	"Review" the blended learning activity at regular intervals. Methods: Early satisfaction survey two weeks into the Blended Learning process to gather satisfaction rates among teachers and students. Review student engagement statistics. Seek feedback from parents. Re-engage with the Whole School Approach to Online Teaching and Learning / Blended Learning plan, identify new strategies from improvement, implement strategies, review / evaluate at regular intervals and adjust the Whole School Approach to Online Teaching and Learning / Blended Learning based on the findings.	Senior Management Digital Learning Team All Staff
Immediate Action Points	Update subject plans to include the use of ICT in Teaching and Learning when schools are operating as 'normal'. This will build and develop knowledge, skills and competence in teachers and students on the use of learning platforms and other education apps when a move to the Online / Blended Learning environment is required.	Senior Management Digital Learning Team All Staff

Building A Collaborative Approach

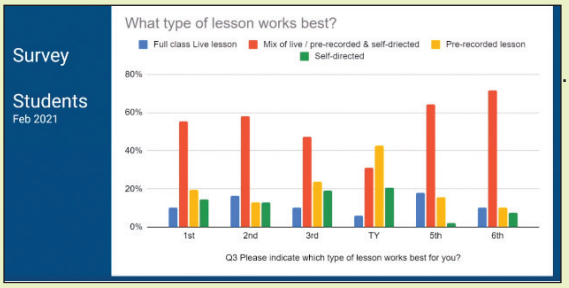
Shared examples of schools building a school wide approach to teaching and learning online.

EXAMPLE 1: St Colmcille's Community School





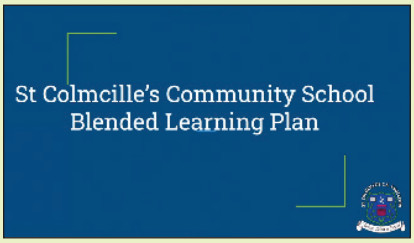
Sharing plans with students online - Google Sheets – school put different templates online for staff to try – all teachers have a planner so you may as well put it online so that students can see it too. This doesn't add any work, it just makes it more accessible to all stakeholders.



...

"even if the videos were great, the students felt a bit short-changed, they missed that connection.... **a random video from their teacher is better than a great video from something online**... and that gave staff a bit of confidence to have a go, even if they were not perfect" ...

Andrew Bates
St Colmcille's Community School.



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EXAMPLE 2: Scoil Phobail Bhéara

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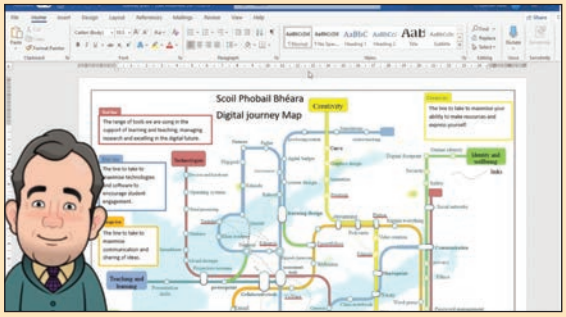
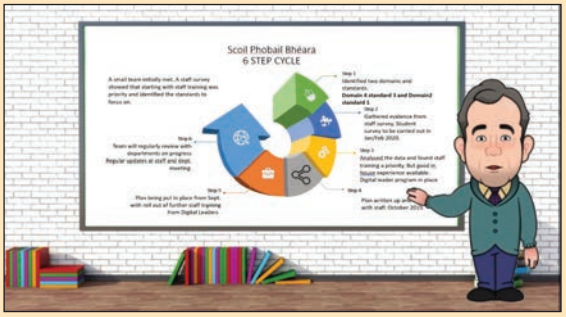
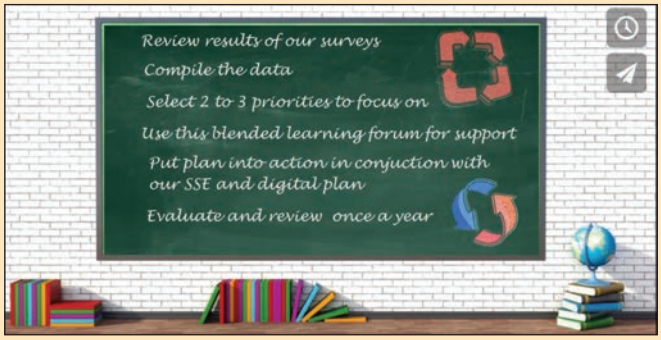
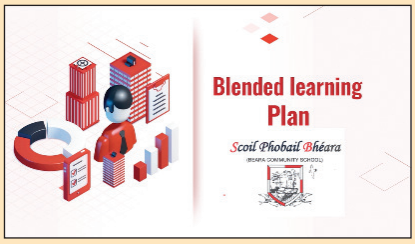






"We used the SSE 6 step process to plan, implement and evaluate our progress. This meant going from identifying our needs and priorities to using data to evaluate our progress. There was good in-house experience available from staff that we could use to support other staff."

Noel O' Sullivan
Scoil Phobail Bhéara



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EXAMPLE 3: St Mark's Community School

How the Google platform has supported Teaching & Learning in St Mark's CS

1. Collaborative Planning

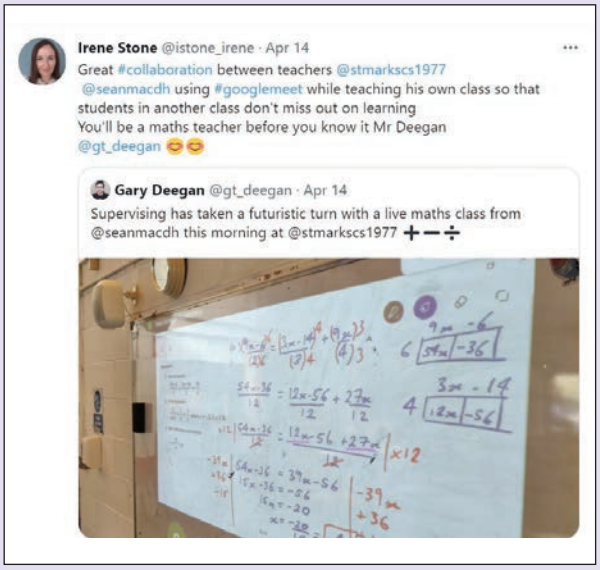
Subject departments have moved from using "static" schemes of work (SOW) to live working documents (using Google Docs). These subject "roadmaps" have a space for reflection through the year.

Theme	Timeframe	Learning Outcomes	Tasks and Activities*	Assessment*	Reflection***
Baking	6 weeks	1.4 Demonstrate culinary and creative skills in relation to the preparation, cooking and presentation of food 1.5 apply safe and hygienic practices in food handling, preparation, storage and serving 1.7 Use available technology for food planning and preparation 1.17 Compare common foods used in food preparation and how they affect the nutrition and sensory qualities of the product 1.18 Evaluate commercial and homemade food products 2.5 Assess the importance of making informed and responsible decisions in everyday life	Pair work- 5 cookery classes designed using the design brief Teacher demonstration on various skills eg. kneading, rubbing etc… Peer learning- verbal evaluations in class Self-evaluation- individual written evaluations to be written into copy/booklet	Verbal feedback throughout cookery classes Teacher demonstrations to students who require additional help with various culinary skills End of module cookery exam	C& A- We both want to change the raspberry buns to scones as the recipe is too complicated for those in 1st year. A- Allow a class beforehand to learn how to line the cake tins as my class found it very difficult.

2. Continuity of Learning (absent colleagues)

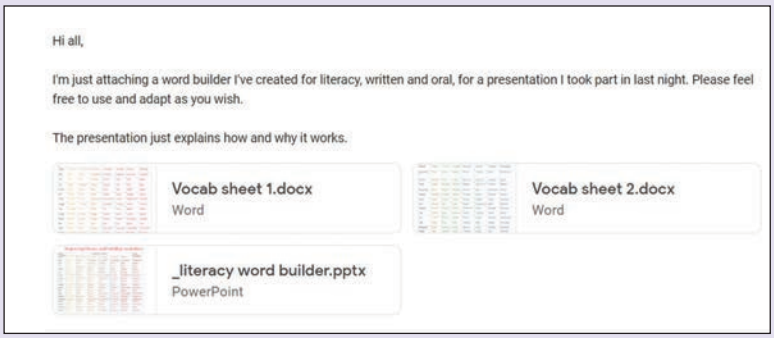
While a colleague was absent last term, two teachers live streamed their own class to the absent colleague's class (2 classes getting taught at the same time).

The supervising teacher of the other class displayed the live Google meet on the whiteboard. This could happen because of the collaborative approach the teachers use when teaching classes in the same setting – working together delivering similar content and using similar methodologies.



3. Google Classroom – for teachers

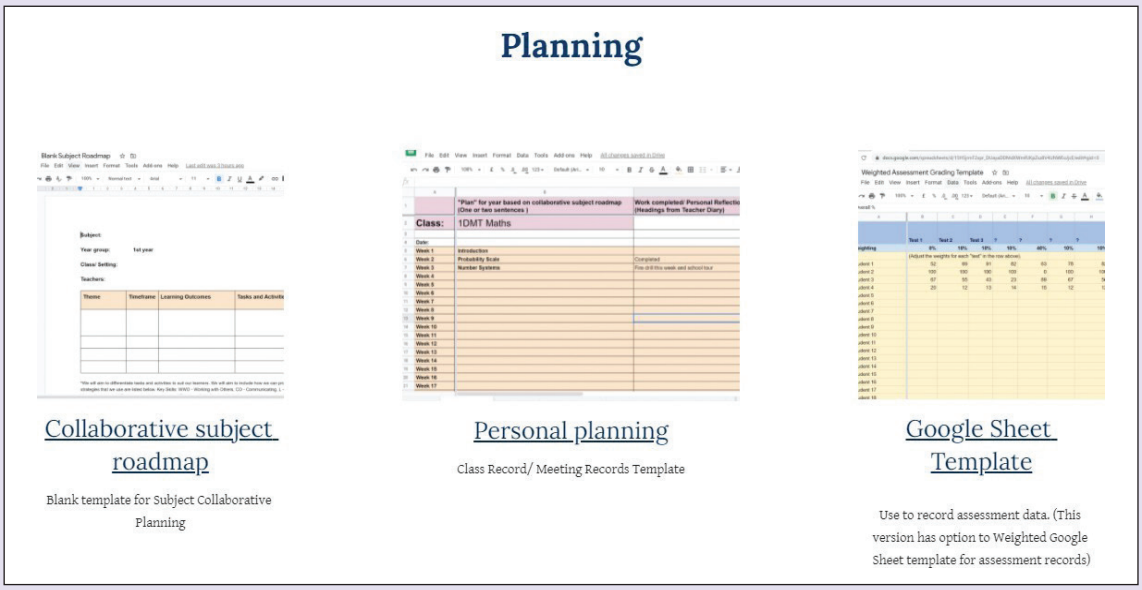
Teachers can connect with colleagues through the "St. Marks CS" teacher group. This was invaluable during times of school closure.



EXAMPLE 3: St Mark's Community School

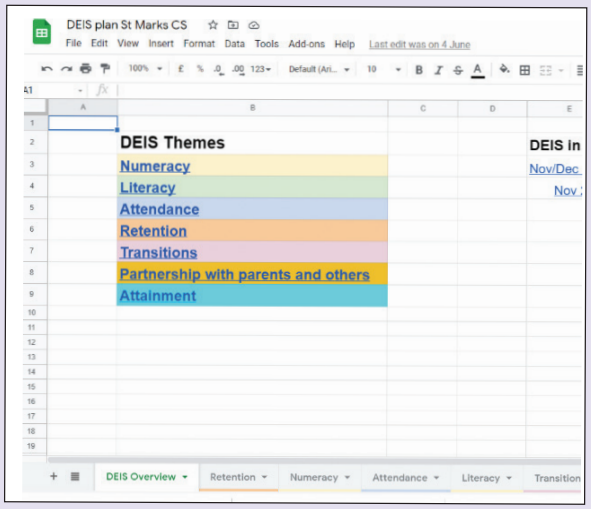
4. St Mark's CS Teacher Space

An internal school "website using Google Sites was created. This provides access to planning document templates, digital help videos, etc. It has replaced the physical teacher journal for many teachers. It can only be accessed through a *stmarkscs* account.

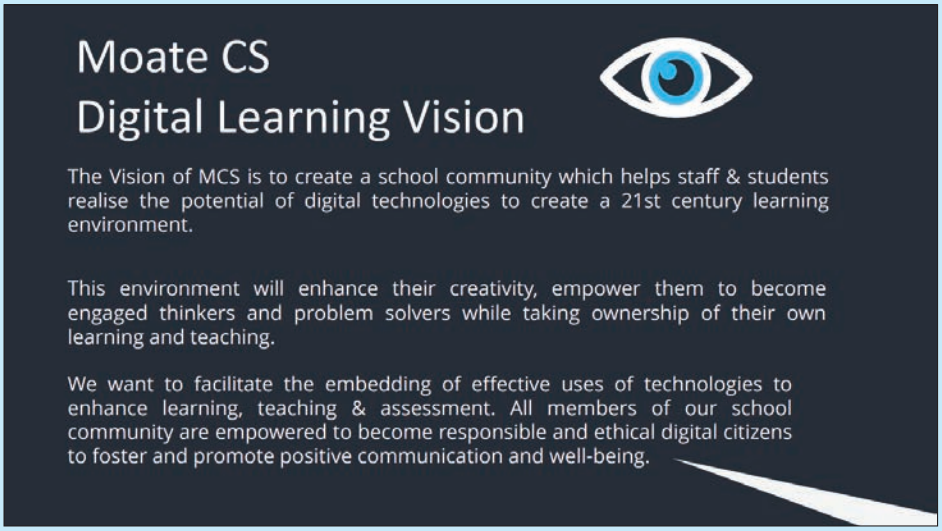


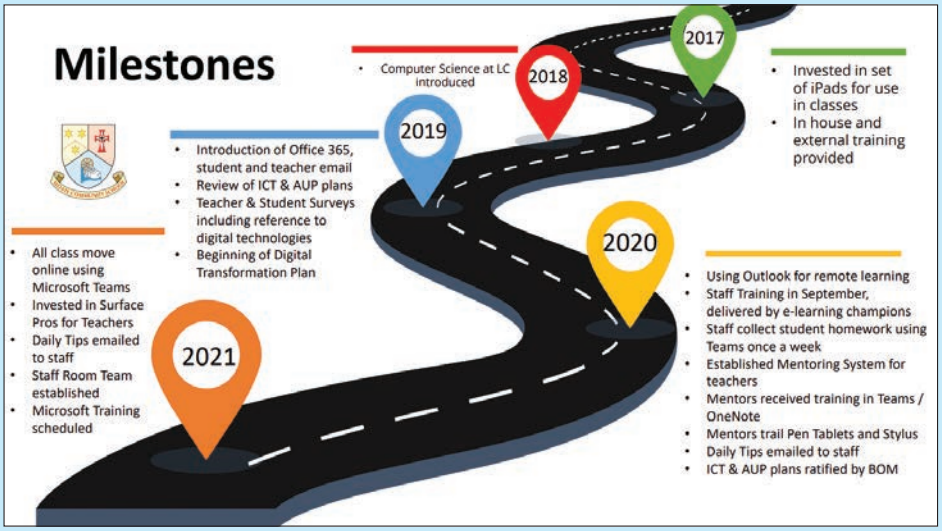
4. School Improvement Planning using Google Sheets

Next year... Looking at making school improvement planning "live" with use of Google spreadsheets e.g. DEIS plan, Digital Learning Plan etc. (*Thanks Philip McGuinness, Crana College, Donegal*)



EXAMPLE 4: Moate Community School





LINK

Some Guidelines

Practical Advice for those new to Online Teaching

Many learners, teachers and students find the thoughts of working online in delivering and accessing curriculum quite daunting. In Community and Comprehensive Schools across the country strong relationships between learners, school and home have been developed and enriched and are recognised as critical to learning experiences and outcomes. There is a concern that the face-to-face relationships and the social element of teaching and learning may be compromised, lessened or indeed lost in the online environment. Many teachers and students fear being left behind in this new and sometimes confusing environment. These concerns are valid and should be acknowledged by all stakeholders involved in developing and implementing the plan for integrating online learning into the current practices in school.

> ***"...The school has been sending out quite a lot of surveys to see if we can improve on anything. There is a very open communication between everyone. If you want to put suggestions into the sixth-year team itself that's fine, you have that freedom to do so..."***
>
> (Student, Old Bawn Community School)

> ***"Students want feedback simply so that they know that what they are doing is right, that they are not doing the work and that it has not been right at all..."***
>
> (Student St Attracta's Community School)

> ***"We adapted the idea that "Less is more". So, our classes end 15 minutes earlier to allow for that time away from the screen for the students." We call them 'Wellness /Screen Breaks'.***

> ***In between classes (online classes) we have a 15-minute break so we can have a bit of time to get some fresh air between our online classes. Go into your garden, walk around a bit because we're trying to emulate that in-school experience where you walk between classes, getting the blood circulation going in your legs and not just sitting in front of a screen..."***
>
> (Student, St Mark's Community School)

The following advice* may be useful to consider when moving online.

*adapted from https://donaldclarkplanb.blogspot.com/2020/03/why-coronavirus-may-just-make-you.html

LINK

1. Be positive and communicate

See this as an opportunity to expand your skills. Model good behaviour online. Keep yourself and your learners positive. Offer reassurance and grasp the opportunities. Communication is critical to successful learning in the classroom and online so communicate with your students and listen to them. They will have ideas and solve problems... Don't rush it with pages of links. Build slowly. Step-by-step - it's a case of less is more.

2. It's been done before

Remember millions of people have learnt and are learning online This means there is a wealth of techniques and technology that have been tried and tested.

3. Only use the technology and platform you know how to use safely. (School authorised platforms)
Your school most likely already has a platform that has loads of functionality which is often underused. Start with what you know and seek to build on this knowledge to enhance the online experience for you and your students. The advantage of working within the school's chosen technologies is that it is the safest and most secure route. This approach promotes easy internal collaboration and sharing of best practice between colleagues.

4. Asynchronous online activities
Asynchronous activities include all activities which are NOT in real time or live face-to-face events. If you don't want to do live classes online, you can always record them using PowerPoint etc. You may already have recorded classes which you and colleagues can share. Keep them short and simple (research has shown that 6 minute chunks is a good limit).
Use email, or other social media platforms to communicate with students. Consider the plethora of online resources such as YouTube videos, podcasts and open source online learning content rather than trying to create all the content yourself.

> *"I know there are some personal reasons as to why some students might not feel comfortable turning on their cameras, but I know for the teachers looking at a blank screen with a name on it doesn't feel the most engaging. That sort of trust that is usually there is a little bit broken, or students are a little bit wary... I suppose the breakout rooms help, but in the main classroom that sort of engagement is gone so that would be one improvement I would like to see when online, improve interaction a bit more..."*
> (Student, St Mark's Community School)

5. Synchronous activities online
Synchronous activities take place in real-time like webinars and live teaching sessions. Make asynchronous your starting point but over time, do include synchronous activities which will enhance engagement for you and your learners. While these do require a more complex set of skills, there are plenty of resources available to help upskill in this area. One of the advantages of synchronous teaching is that you can also link out to other online resources. Remember that you can also take questions and encourage discussion, create groups discussions, breakout groups and so on, with such systems. Your sessions can also be recorded for students to revisit as many times as they wish.
Use of SCREENSHARE to show worked examples is particularly useful.

> *" When we send in our work, after we get an assignment on Google Classroom, and a day or two later the teacher sends it back and explains where you have to do your corrections. I find this approach really helpful especially for some subjects like Music where you can send in your chords and our music teacher will say this is where you can improve and look, this is where you have gone wrong. I think it's really helpful then that it's online because it's still there in a month's time, so if you forget you can go back and look over it again"*
> (Student, Mountmellick Community School)

6. Assessment and Feedback
Start with formative assessment to keep the learning on track. Use the opportunity of working online to develop effective and regular feedback. For example, start every new session with a recap of the last session and end with a recap of what you've just done. Check in regularly with the students in their class groups and individually to enhance engagement.

> ***"Much of the non-verbal feedback that is so important in the classroom, is hindered when using video technology. As with any lesson, students need a clear roadmap to follow, this can be shared verbally or in writing, but it is essential that the students understand the purpose of the lesson. While this is important in all lessons, the limitations of the technology dictate that it is more difficult to identify when students are no longer engaged. This is compounded as, in my experience, they are less likely to ask questions to get themselves back on track if they become distracted.***
> ***I felt that I wasn't as in control while teaching remotely. To mitigate this feeling, I prepared more detailed weekly planning than I would have, had I been in school. I included learning intentions, resources, how check-ins would be done, and assessments (afl and aol) in this planning. I chose to keep it simple, using strategies that both my students and I were familiar with. I had to remember that many of the non-verbal cues, or informal check-ins we use every day were made much more difficult while not in the room. This made getting student feedback more challenging. Where there is access to technology, short polls are a very useful resource for gathering information in relation to understanding, enjoyment or choice of task."***
>
> *(Teacher working remotely while students were in class. St Mark's Community School)*

> ***"Bespoke CPD in the area of ICT and T&L will continue to be one of our whole staff priorities next year."***
>
> *(ACCS Survey June 2020 – See Appendix 2)*

7. Timetable and Pacing

Work within the agreed school wide approach to the timetable in the context of blended learning. Routine is important. Communicate regularly with your students without flooding them with emails and work. Give them time to complete tasks and to generate their own work. Follow up with students who do not meet deadlines as you would when you are in the classroom. Keep up *a measured* momentum. Ensure a healthy balance of online and offline activities for students. There are lots of great opportunities for students to learn on and offline!

> ***"smallish % of students did not engage, and we are currently analysing this - Summer Programme intervention may help. Teachers using live or recorded lessons/ input reported the highest level of success/satisfaction. Their video clips while very time consuming to record are viewed as an excellent resource going forward (ideas for use by SET etc...) "***
>
> (ACCS Survey June 2020 – See Appendix 2)

8. Expectations

Often technology doesn't work in the way we intend. In the face-to-face classroom if something doesn't work, we usually try something else, perhaps something simpler. This approach should be mirrored in the remote classroom. Don't be too ambitious with the tech. There's always an alternative. Keep it simple. Above all, involve the students in the process. Ask them for help. They may just be more online savvy than you think. Set clear expectations for students when engaging in online learning.

9. Support

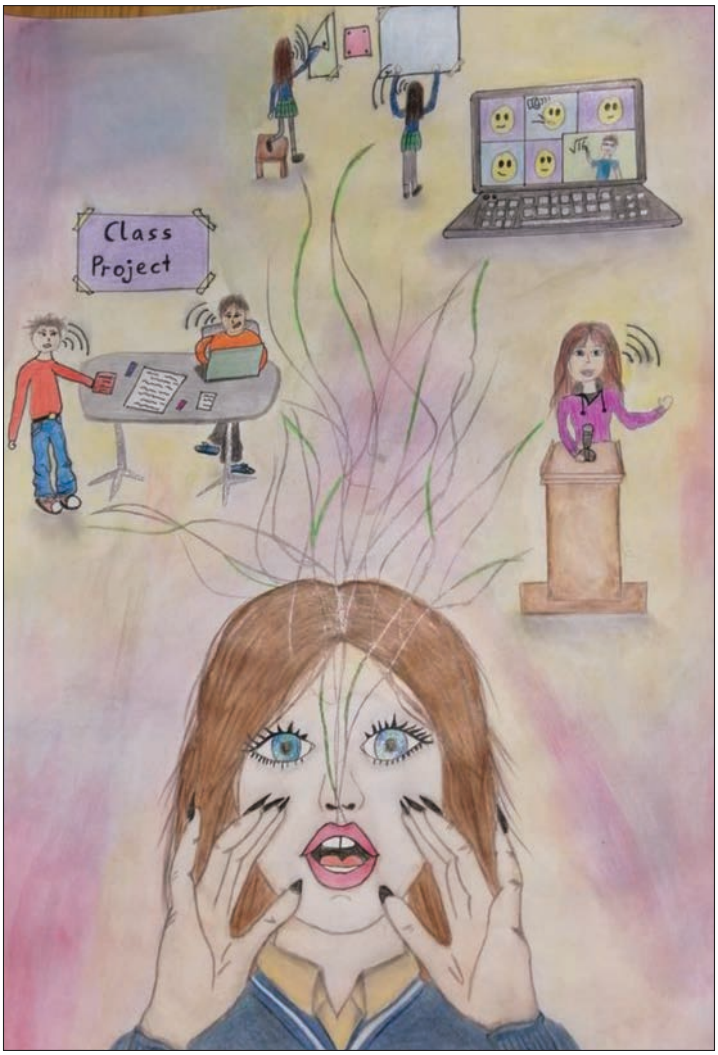
Seek support from your colleagues in school and from other communities of practice supporting the effective use of technology in teaching and learning. Lots of our schools have digital champions who support best practice in school. Ensure students are made aware of what they can do if they encounter something inappropriate or upsetting online.

> ***"Teachers reported pacing and differentiation to be more easily achieved online. Google forms useful for some kinds of assessment. Teachers enjoyed and were surprised by the capacity for and effectiveness of individual feedback online - also to be continued on return."***
>
> *(ACCS Survey June 2020 – See Appendix 2)*

CPD & Resources

Subject Associations, PDST, The Teaching Council and other agencies deliver regular professional development programmes and host webinars to support online and blended delivery.

(See H2 Blended Learning Workshop 2020.)



Snezanna Uzgalova, 2nd yr, St Louis Community School

Platforms used in ACCS schools

(See ACCS Survey – June 2020, Appendix 2)

Visit www.pdst.ie for information on the available platforms for schools and a selection of video tutorials from the PDST Digital Technologies team showing a range of online tools which can be used to support teaching, learning and assessment. These tools have been selected as they can also support distance learning.

Schools are advised not to use unsupported platforms and other resources not designed for educational use which may be unsafe and unsecure. Schools may choose to use social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp to share successes and achievements with the school and wider community. These are designed for social use rather than for teaching and learning. The agreed school platform more than likely has controls to manage activity and will be in compliance with the school's data protection, acceptable use, anti-bullying and other relevant policies.

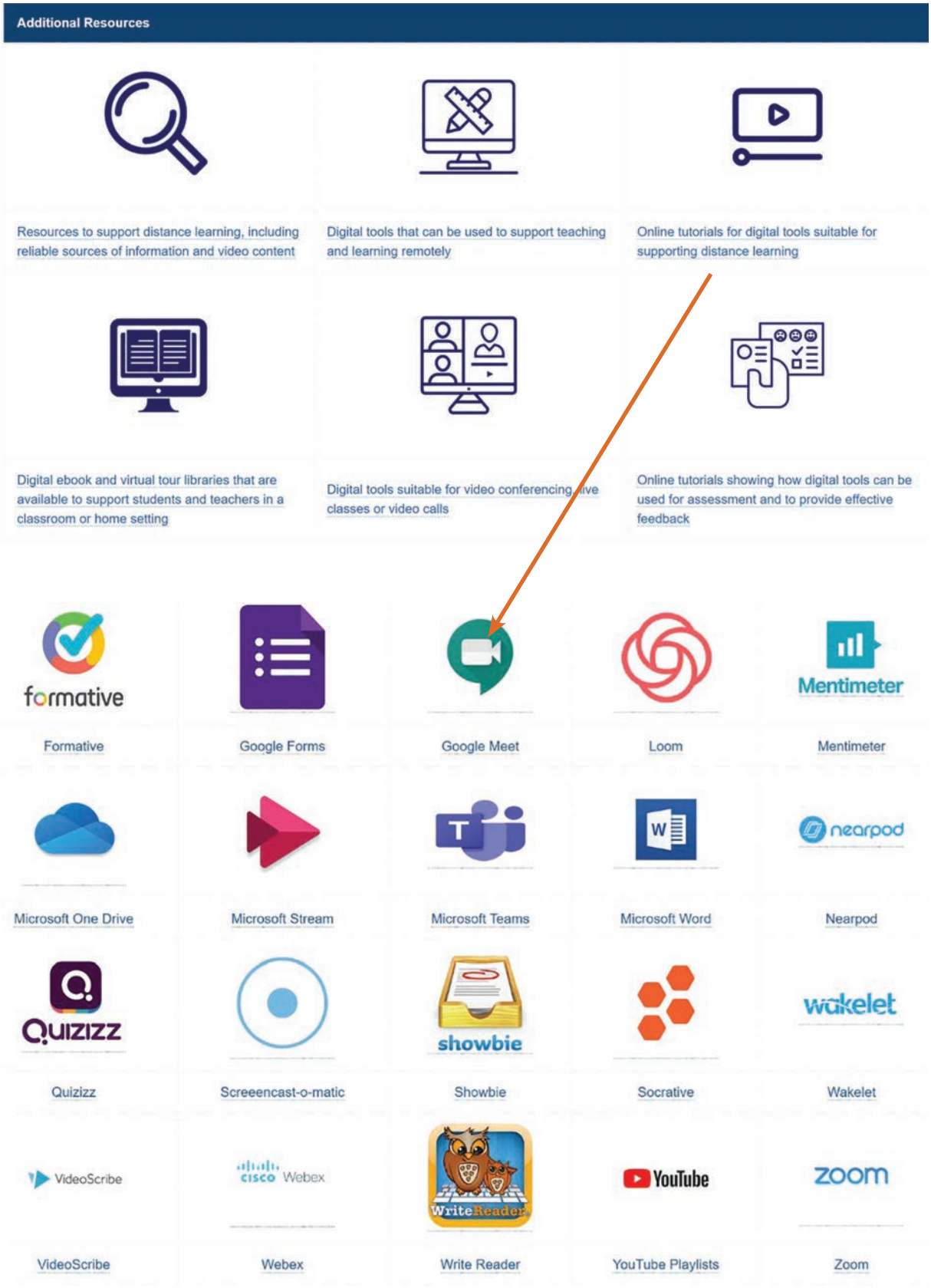
(See links to ACCS Social Media Guidelines 2018 & The Teaching Council Draft Social Media Guidelines 2019)
https://www.accs.ie/s/guidelines-for-social-media-use-in-schools-march-2019.docx

LINK

https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/Website/en/Fitness-to-Teach/Consultation-Draft-Social-Media-Guidelines/Draft-Guidelines-for-Registered-Teachers-Social-Media.pdf

LINK

Access the PDST links below for online tutorials and guidance re. platforms and other apps.

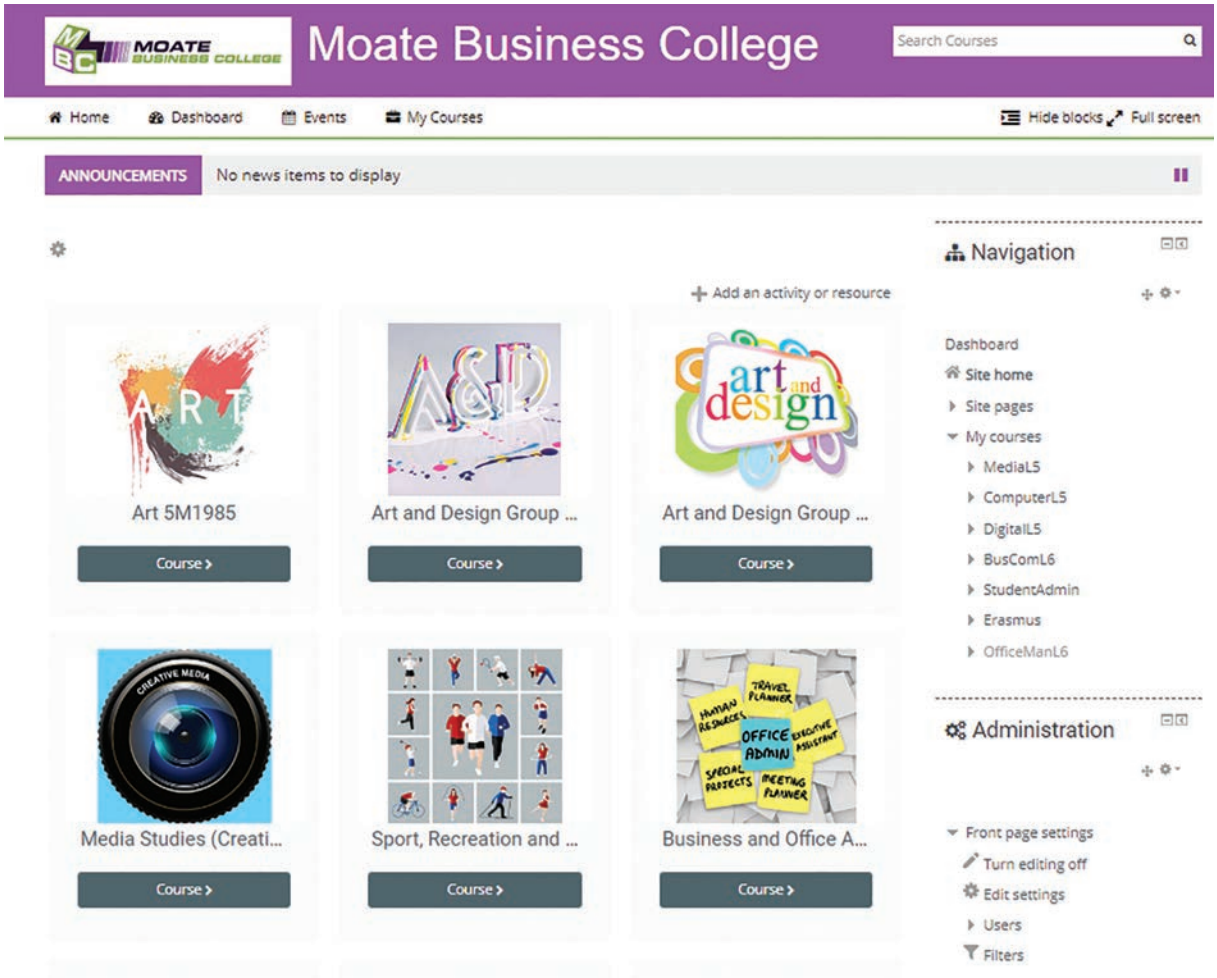


Platforms used in ACCS schools

delivering Further Education Programmes

Moate Business College – Using Moodle VLE

Figure 1 - Moate Business College's Moodle Home Page



The College has been using Moodle for the past 10 years – for the first 7 years we managed, updated and hosted it on our own website.
Three years ago, we migrated it to the SOLAS platform which we find to be an excellent resource.

For the most part, prior to the lockdown, the college had utilised Moodle in the following ways:

1. As a repository, which was divided into classes and where teachers could upload class notes, extra reading, exercises and other resources for students.
2. As a means of communication between teachers and students
3. As a means of submission of assignments by learners.

After the lockdown, teachers began to use more of the interactive elements within Moodle.

These included:

1. **Chats** – Teachers were able to have real-time synchronous text-based discussions with their student groups through the Chats activity. Some teachers set the chat up so that it was repeated every day. Because the chat sessions are saved and made available to everyone in the class, teachers found it to be a very good way of answering questions about assignments etc.

2. **Forums** – This is text based like the Chat session but is different in that it is asynchronous and can last over a period of time. These were set up so that the students could converse with each other about work and also so that the teacher could check in and give their advice if the class found that they were having difficulties on any aspect of the work. We felt that this resource was very beneficial in the way it promoted student-led learning.

3. **Quiz** – Some sections of summative exams contained multiple choice sections. We found that the Quiz activity in Moodle allowed for this section of the exam to be completed in exam-like conditions. It was also a very good revision tool.

4. **Assignments** – The assignment feature in Moodle is very impressive in that it allows the teacher to see exactly who has submitted work. It also flags any learners who is overdue with their submission. It allows for learners to submit drafts and for teachers to provide feedback through digital annotations on work received.

5. **External Tool** – the External Tool activity was used in conjunction with some of the TEL tools provided by SOLAS. Specifically, a number of teachers used the Learnkey resources which they could embed into Moodle. The Learnkey resources provided workbooks, notes, videos and practice assignments on a wide range of subjects and helped the learners when they weren't able to attend online classes.

6. **Files and URL's** – teachers used these resources to upload class notes, website addresses, question sheets etc. These can then be downloaded by students in their own time.
   Along with the tools in Moodle, teachers utilised TEL tools such as **Socrative, Kahoot** and **Quizlet** to create interactive resources for learners. MBC also used Virtual Classroom Technology such as **Microsoft Teams** and **Zoom** to conduct real-time classes with student groups.

Aileen Martin, Moate Business College,
Moodle Administrator

Gorey Community School

PLC Department

Google Suite for Education is used daily in our PLC department. Staff and students receive regular training throughout the year on the use of G Suite for Education. As a result of school closure due to COVID 19 instructional videos and schedules have been prepared to support the delivery of the programmes exclusively online for the foreseeable future.

All modules can be delivered successfully through our online platform. By using a host of apps within G Suite for Education learners can ***receive instruction*** *from tutors, avail of* ***group and individual support****, get* ***feedback*** *on assignments and* ***present completed assignments*** *for assessment.*

Online support is available 24/7 for the learner's G Suite accounts. Two weeks before we were closed the Director of PLC posted a message to the platform encouraging students who were experiencing any problems with their service or accounts to come forward to have the problems resolved.

The Director of PLC manages the G Suite accounts and his contact was circulated to the student's weeks in advance of the closure to provide IT support remotely. The teaching staff has been using G Suite for education for about 4 years and are well trained and practiced in augmenting their delivery through the online platform and classroom-based activities daily.

The transition to exclusively online for a period of time is not seen as a problem. Google Hangouts Meet is a mobile and desktop app that will allow students to interact on group projects remotely and will also allow staff meet to plan programme delivery.

Paul Carter, PLC Co-ordinator, Gorey Community School

Juliana da Silva, 2nd yr, St Louis Community School

Synchronous Teaching

Tips

A good class requires careful planning, and this is no different when online. A live event such as the use of video conferencing is the closest activity to face-to-face teaching and as such is one of the most valuable resources available to schools. It brings learners together in a social and collaborative setting.

Holy Family Community School

Remote Co-Teaching

Remote Co-Teaching took place in several subjects and took the format of two subject specialists co-hosting a live class via Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Teams screen-share facility enabled teachers to deliver and annotate content from whichever medium they chose. It also allowed for recording of the lesson, which could then be distributed to students unable to sign on at that time.

Live lessons allowed for the facilitation of actual 'real-time' engagement between teachers and students. It also allowed for active differentiation and scaffolding, as well as some summative assessment when coupled with Microsoft forms. While proving a highly effective way of teaching remotely, it also provided a gateway for the development of a structured routine for students, presenting opportunities to collaborate and communicate with peers in a structured manner. The feedback from students in relation to the live classes was excellent.

Michael Fiorentini, Holy Family Community School

(Navigating the uncharted territories of remote teaching and learning)

The following tips are designed to support schools in using tools such as MS Teams, Google Hangouts, ZOOM and others.

While live streaming is a great way to communicate, there are lots of things to consider and to manage to ensure a safe, productive learning experience.

Consider the terms of service, age requirements and the functions of the service – for example is there a chat option and can this be moderated?

Familiarise yourself with the functions of the service, most good services allow hosts to manage the permissions of participants for example; disabling user audio and video cameras. Be aware of the privacy settings, who can see the content, who can comment, most services allow you to adjust privacy settings.

Tip: If using conferencing/videos services we recommend using a service that allows teachers to disable student audio and video **www.webwise.ie** LINK

In advance of using video conferencing, schools should set out school wide expectations in relation to using such technology in line with its Acceptable Use, Data Protection and other relevant policies. Face-to-Face time should be put aside to explore/remind people how these technologies can be used to their best advantage in the safest way. (Induction for staff and students)

Consider the following:

- Set **school wide expectations** and general rules when engaging with video conferencing in line with the school's Anti Bullying and Acceptable Use policies and other relevant policies.
- Ensure that learners have and use their own **school email and login credentials.**
- Ensure students know how to **download the relevant app** and that they have done this at the beginning of the year.
- Spend some time to go through **the application's functionality** and how learners can contribute online to the class.
- Classes to be delivered as **synchronous events should be scheduled well in advance across the week** and always within the subject timetable for the relevant class to avoid clashes of these events. All stakeholders understand that these periods are for timetabling synchronous events in that subject with that class and that teacher. Remember the *face-to-face* schedule for the class. As in normal times, everyone works within their own timetables to avoid clashes and frustrations.
- Outline **online etiquette** and expectations of the learners in your first virtual class and periodically revisit the topic – include space for discussion.
- All stakeholders must at all times **respect the privacy of others,** who may be in the homes of students or staff during online classes. Show students how to turn off their camera and microphone and if required how to select a suitable background.

Set **reasonable expectations**. It is important to appreciate the pressures that some learners may encounter when they are trying to learn from home such as inadequate access to technology or have to share a device with other family members etc. If sharing devices the privacy of other device users must be respected and screens or data from the device should never be shared in the virtual classroom.

> ***"... I really like the live classes. I think they give a sense of structure like that for even outside of school that you still feel like you're getting up in the morning, you're going to your class and then you have the work to do after that. You're getting some form of routine..."***
>
> (Student, 5th Year,
> Kinsale Community School)
> *ACCS Student Voice Webinars – June 2020*

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

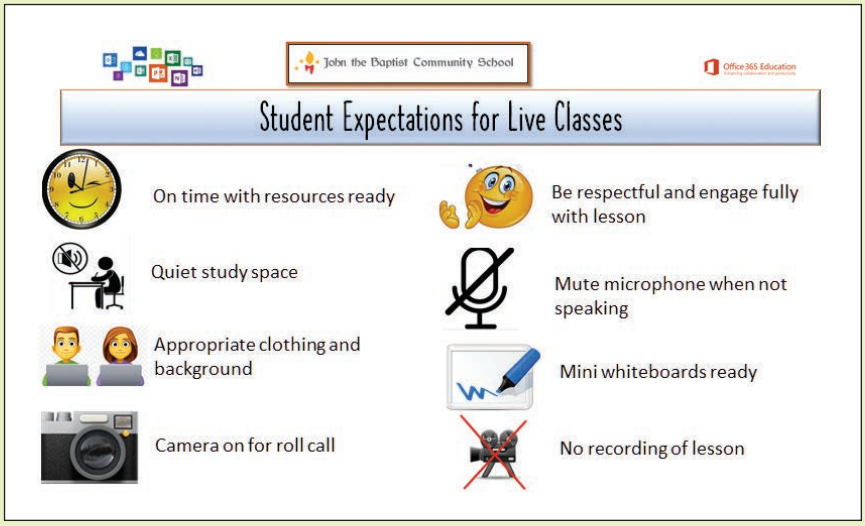
- **Email the invitation link** with clear specific instructions for learners in advance of each class.
- Join your class **a few minutes early** to ensure a proper connection and that you are there well in advance of learners. This will enable the class to start promptly on time.
- Set aside time to ensure that learners are able to **connect** their audio and video.
- Give an **agenda or plan for each class in advance**.
- **Monitor online attendance** and record on the school's online portal.
- If not in school and working remotely, choose an appropriate quiet location, one where you will not be interrupted, and you are comfortable and can present professionally.
- Encourage learners to also find an **appropriate quiet space** in which to participate where they won't be interrupted.
- Consider the **use of headphones** and also ask the learners to use headphones to reduce background noise and ensure clarity of voice .
- Approach the class as you would an offline class. Dress and speak **as if you are face-to-face** with the class while ensuring you're at the appropriate distance from the microphone for the best audio experience .
- Consider **recording** the class. If you are recording, ensure that learners have given fully informed consent before commencing. Inform learners of their right to turn off their camera and/or microphone if they do not want to be recorded. Learners who choose not to be recorded should be encouraged to use the chat functionality to participate.
- **Speak clearly** and take a little bit longer than you normally would, explaining key concepts or ideas. You do not have the same opportunity online to read body language and gauge understanding from facial prompts.
- **Test your content in advance** – Check how it looks on mobile devices (tablets & smartphones). Many of your learners may not be accessing the content on PCs or Laptops.
- When delivering content, **give your learners a moment** to open or take in what you've shared particularly when sharing videos or presentations.
- In general, **screen-sharing** is better than talking heads. Have resources ready to share and use in your lessons.
- **Encourage maximum interaction** and use of the chat function for questions, comments and reactions. Consider setting a target for learners (e. g. – minimum of 2 comments per learner in each lesson).
- Generally, it is best, particularly for larger class groups, to get learners to write their questions in **chat** and you can unmute them to discuss rather than allowing learners to interrupt when they have a question.
- **Involve learners** – In time consider asking them to present and share content or presentations with the class.

Schools set up live classes for Leaving Certificate students where the subject teacher was assisted by a colleague from the Care Team. At the beginning of class, the co-teacher recorded the absences and followed these up in *live time* contacting homes reminding students that they had a class at that time. This initiative carried out over one week, greatly enhanced participation and engagement rates in live classes.

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM: John the Baptist Community School

What we have learnt works for live classes...

Use	Notify	Call	Share	Keep	Schedule	Give	Have
Use Teams	Notify the class of the time and what will be needed– this can be set up in advance, calendar in Teams	Call a roll at start of the class	Share your screen– desktop	Keep the class short- 30 minutes max	Schedule live classes to make them work for you – spread over week etc.	Give the students time and asks for questions throughout, hand up & chat helpful	Have resources open



Effectively blending synchronous and asynchronous activities can support learning:

"....there was an awful lot coming at us... we had a really good zoom timetable that was set up by our school and we had a one hour zoom class at 9.00 and then a one hour zoom class at twenty past ten and we had like 20 minute breaks in between. So what we did in the zoom classes was..., we corrected our work and had more work set for when our next ZOOM class was two days after ... we take the next day and be able to do it then. Zoom classes were really good for that but we had one class where we got a loom video....So a loom video was... the teacher would be in the bottom right corner and we would be able to see his computer screen behind him and his notes and he videoed a 20 minute video and sent it out to us through Edmodo and we were able to watch that video and pause it and take down the notes and then do the tasks that he said... and when we were back in class, ask how to do it... and do it at our own pace. It suited our timetable... we had time to do it...."

(Student, 3rd Year, Mountmellick Community School) *ACCS Student Voice Webinars – June 2020*

OTHER OPTIONS

Record your classes if you do not wish to deliver a live online class.
Teachers can decide to record a class and share it with students if they are not comfortable delivering a live online class. This is also effective in situations where learners are unwell or are struggling with internet access and miss a live streamed class. Record videos instead and send them to your learners so that they can watch in their own time.

> ***"...we would be given some videos, for example in Maths and then we could watch them in our own time and maybe play back again to, yeah, to go back to points we missed which I found really helpful. Like Sophia, I like doing stuff in my own time because at home I have four siblings and that (class) would be ... lunchtime or like around noon, it would be very loud, so I like doing things, my work, without my brothers in the evening..."***
>
> (Student, 6th Year, St Mark's Community School)

> ***"...the teacher did record them so at least if you missed them you could go back and watch them and even if you were present for the live classes, it meant that if you forgot something you could go back and watch it later on."***
>
> (Student, 2nd Year, Old Bawn Community School)
>
> *ACCS Student Voice Webinars – June 2020*

Record Short Presentations
You can now easily record presentations in PowerPoint or simply record your voice using your phone or an online voice recorder (e.g. - https://online-voice-recorder.com). You can then share the presentation or audio file online in teams.

> ***"...Well yeah, we were doing the online classes of course and the teachers would be going over the PowerPoints and I found that very useful like you get a visual of it as well as what they're talking about but also after the class was over they would upload more PowerPoints and slide shows to make you further understand it and also they'd maybe send you a link or to watch YouTube videos to make you revise what you have been taught which I found useful as well..."***
>
> (Student, 5th Year,
> Ashbourne Community School)
>
> *ACCS Student Voice Webinars – June 2020*

Use Short Videos
These can be personal recordings or Video Content sourced online or shared by colleagues. If using content developed by others, you need to ensure that the content is free to use and share (e.g. – Creative Commons content) and use is compliant with copyright legislation. Videos should be short – ideally no more than 5 minutes. Videos longer than 15 minutes can cause issues of slow downloading and learner distraction. If you have more to say, record two or three short videos.

"Personally, I teach Computer Science for Leaving Certificate, I will continue to record and screencast my lessons, or elements of my lessons - as a blended approach.

I found recording difficult pieces of coding into short video clips, and making these available to students, not just during the live lesson, but at any time they needed to revise, made the learning easier and improved the quality of homework. For example, this 2-minute screen cast recording of some HTML code"

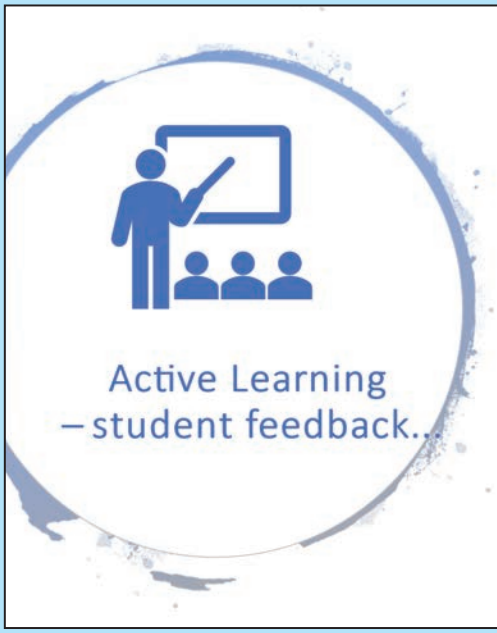
(Teacher, Moate Community School)

Recorded with https://screencast-o-matic.com

OTHER OPTIONS: John the Baptist Community School

What we have learnt works for recordings...

01	02	03	04	05
EASY TO REVIEW, REPLAY, AT OWN PACE – BEST IF CAN BE PAUSED	LOTS OF OPTIONS (ONENOTE/PPT/ TEAMS/GAMEBAR ETC.) – WHATEVER WORKS BEST FOR YOU	IT CAN BE DONE IN SECTIONS/ SLIDES – DOES NOT NEED TO BE FULL RECORDING TOGETHER	IT SHOULD FEEL LIKE A CLASS – PAUSE VIDEO, GIVE TIME TO OPEN PAGES, READ THROUGH SLIDE ETC.	AUDIO FEEDBACK VERY POSITIVE



- active learning methods worked well when they were planned for and thought out
- enjoyed doing them at home and they actually DID do them!
- helped them to learn and retain information, be more engaged as they had to share it with peers on screen or self-assess and use reflection number line
- collaboration

Must be mindful of the particular strategy to ensure it is appropriate for use in such a context.

What to make clear to your class – 5Ws and 1H

Who – your expectations of students (SNA, PME)	**What** – what your remote schedule for the class will look like	**Where** – location classwork & homework will be posted by you
When - Time and day of your live class/recording posted	**Why** - procedure for students to ask a question	**How** – the way you want the student to return work

OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

Scoilnet is the Department of Education and Skills' official online portal for Irish education and contains over 20,000 resources mapped to the Irish curriculum. All students and teachers can access World Book Online, an online encyclopedia through Scoilnet. Teachers can create a free Scoilnet account and upload their resources to share with other teachers and students throughout the country. Teachers now have access to the Irish Newspaper Archive (via a Scoilnet Account sign in).

www.scoilnet.ie

Additional links from PDST Technology in Education to support teachers working from home, including links to **good practice videos that contain activities which can be adapted for online teaching**. Digital learning planning resources are also available, please visit **PDST Technology in Education** for more information.

www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie

There are a variety of short online courses available on **TeacherCPD.ie** which teachers can access to upskill in the area of digital technologies. Please visit TeacherCPD.ie to view the current selection available.

www.teacherCPD.ie

As pupils/students will aalso be engaging in online learning at home throughout this period, we would advise teachers and parents to visit the **Webwise** website to find out more about online safety and relevant considerations. **The parents section** of the website is also particularly useful in highlighting popular apps and their features.

www.webwise.ie

Promoting Engagement and Effective Feedback

when Teaching and Learning Online

EXAMPLE 1: John the Baptist Community School

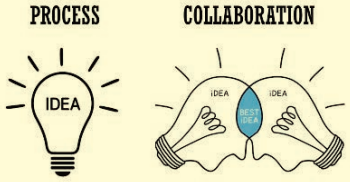
LINK

Keeping students engaged:
Active learning methods online.

- Mini White Boards
- Reflection line
- 3, 2, 1, (things you remember from today's lesson)
- Before & After (Diagram Pairs)
- Give some Tweetback (what I have learned, what I want to know using digital post its
- Collaboration spaces for students and teachers to co- create materials.
- Breakout Rooms
- Secret Answer
- Using the local environment – videos making materials meaningful and relevant.
- Class notebook – audio feedback – a personal emotional experience – students submit thoughts while developing oral communication skills.
- Mentimeter and Woo clap – collecting the key words before la new topic begins.

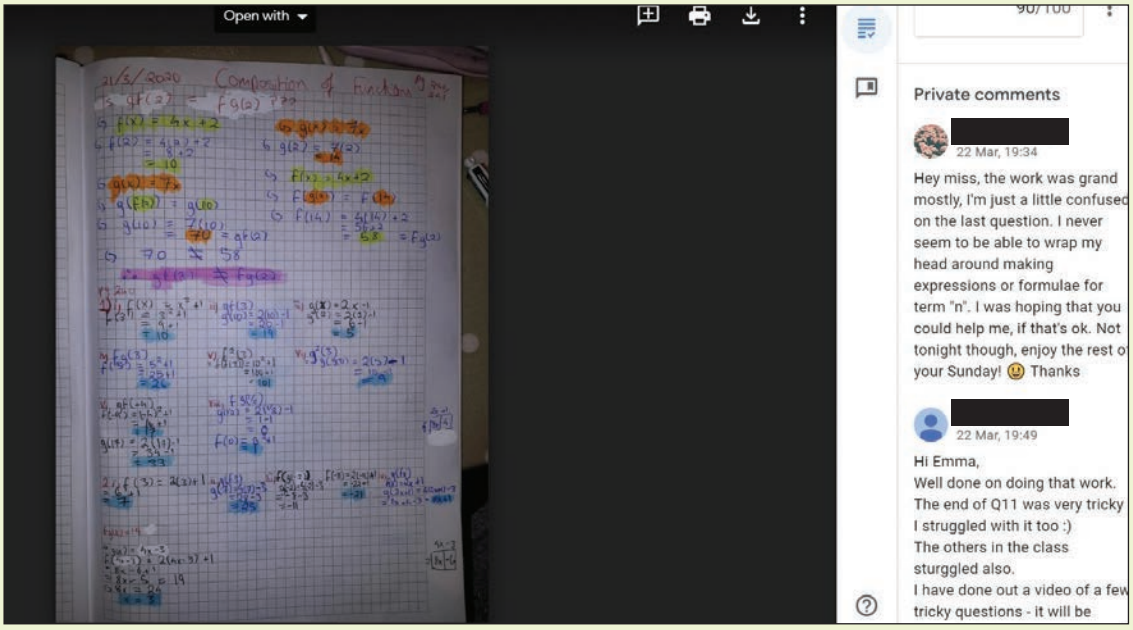
"Our key words when it comes to this process is that it is a process, and we are constantly thinking, trialling, failing, re-trialling, trying again, redefining, and refining the process. What has been the greatest opportunity that has been afforded to us by this process is the opportunity for collaboration... the richness that has come from learning from each other that is at the heart of the ACCS Blended Learning forum."

(Rachel Hayes, John the Baptist Community School)

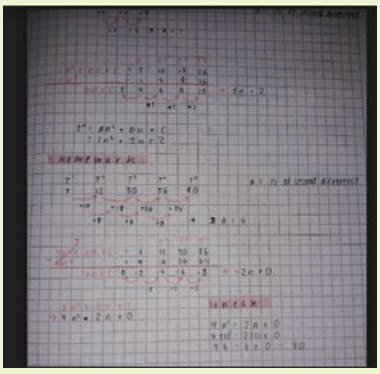


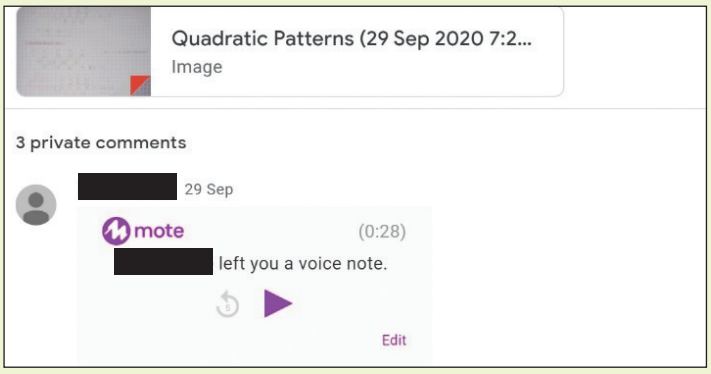
EXAMPLE 2: St Mark's Community School

Use of Google Classroom to give feedback to students.

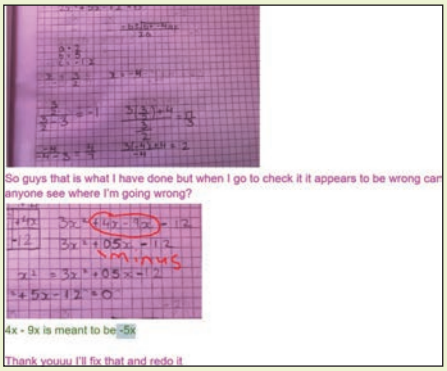


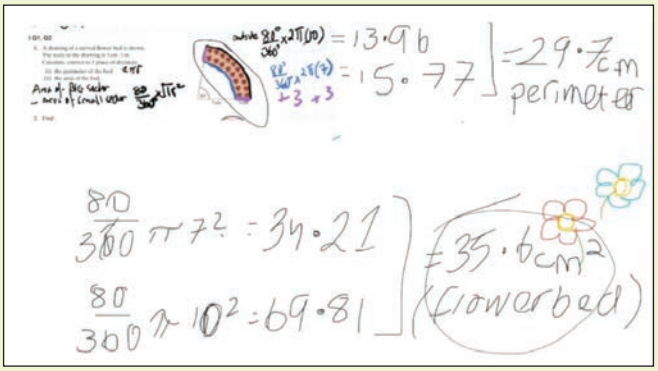
Option to leave audio feedback using Mote.





Student Collaboration





***"Google jamboards** supported collaborative learning during the lockdown when the students were working remotely."*

(Irene Stone, St Mark's Community School)

EXAMPLE 3: Ashbourne Community School

"Which tool/app/strategy can you recommend which enhances the experience for the learner/teacher/those managing the teaching and learning across the school community? These apps have worked well for our school..."

(Ciarán Stewart, Ashbourne Community School)

Insights

Insights in Microsoft Teams uses at-a-glance data views to help you catch up on all your students' Teams activity, from assignment turn-in to engagement in class conversations. With spotlights on important trends in student activity, your Insights dashboard can save you time in planning, giving feedback to students, and providing help where needed.

LINK

The **Breakout Room** is a super function now within Teams now, it allows for more engagement and working with small groups - I've used breakout rooms for 2nd Year English, they worked really well. The entire class can be set up in separate breakout rooms and the teachers move in to help out each individual student.

With up to 50 Breakout Rooms available at a time, classes of any size can utilize this feature—whether you have 20 students or a lecture hall of 200. All the innovative features that make Teams an inclusive, interactive, and intelligent platform are also available in Breakout Rooms.

LINK

Together Mode

Microsoft Teams is one of the front runners in the video conferencing ecosystem. And it is working hard to maintain that status. From bringing a lot of essential features to just as many innovative ones, folks over at Microsoft have been hard at work. One of the latest innovations coming to Microsoft Teams is the 'Together Mode'.

LINK

Attendance Report

Microsoft Teams meeting attendance report. Meeting organizers can view and download a meeting attendance report. Find this report in the Participants pane of the meeting, by clicking the download arrow as shown below. You can download the report as a .CSV file (text format).

LINK

Voice over PowerPoints

Allow students to go back over content as often as they need to. Microsoft PowerPoint has a feature that many average users don't know about, which allows you to add voice-over narration to your slides. For this option, all you'll need is Microsoft PowerPoint, and a computer with microphone.

LINK

EXAMPLE 3: Ashbourne Community School

"Which tool/app/strategy can you recommend which enhances the experience for the learner/teacher/those managing the teaching and learning across the school community? These apps have worked well for our school..."

(Ciarán Stewart, Principal, Ashbourne Community School)

A whiteboard app for students
Click on the link below for the top 9 free online Whiteboard Apps (for real-time online collaboration)

LINK

Nearpod
Use Nearpod even if you don't have 1:1 devices, with 3 ways to deliver your lesson or video: Live Participation, Student Paced, and Front of Class. More accessibility features We've added Microsoft Immersive Reader, audio recordings, and audio responses to help all students access information and show what they know.

LINK

Google Workspace for Education Plus
Encourage active participation with breakout rooms, Q&A, polling, and more in Google Meet. Connect and engage with up to 250 attendees per meeting and 100,000 per in-domain live stream and save recorded meetings directly to Google Drive. Sync Classroom rosters from your Student Information System

LINK

Kami
Kami has a free version, and a paid version for educators. The link below shows how to use Kami with Google Classroom on the free version. The paid version of Kami includes automatic save to Google Drive, assignment creation and a built-in Turn In button so that students always turn in the right file. The free version doesn't include these improvements, but you can still use Kami effectively

LINK

Loom for prerecording lessons
Pre-record your lesson using Loom from Evolve Education. The link below is a short tutorial on how to pre-record lessons, videos and screen capture using Loom.

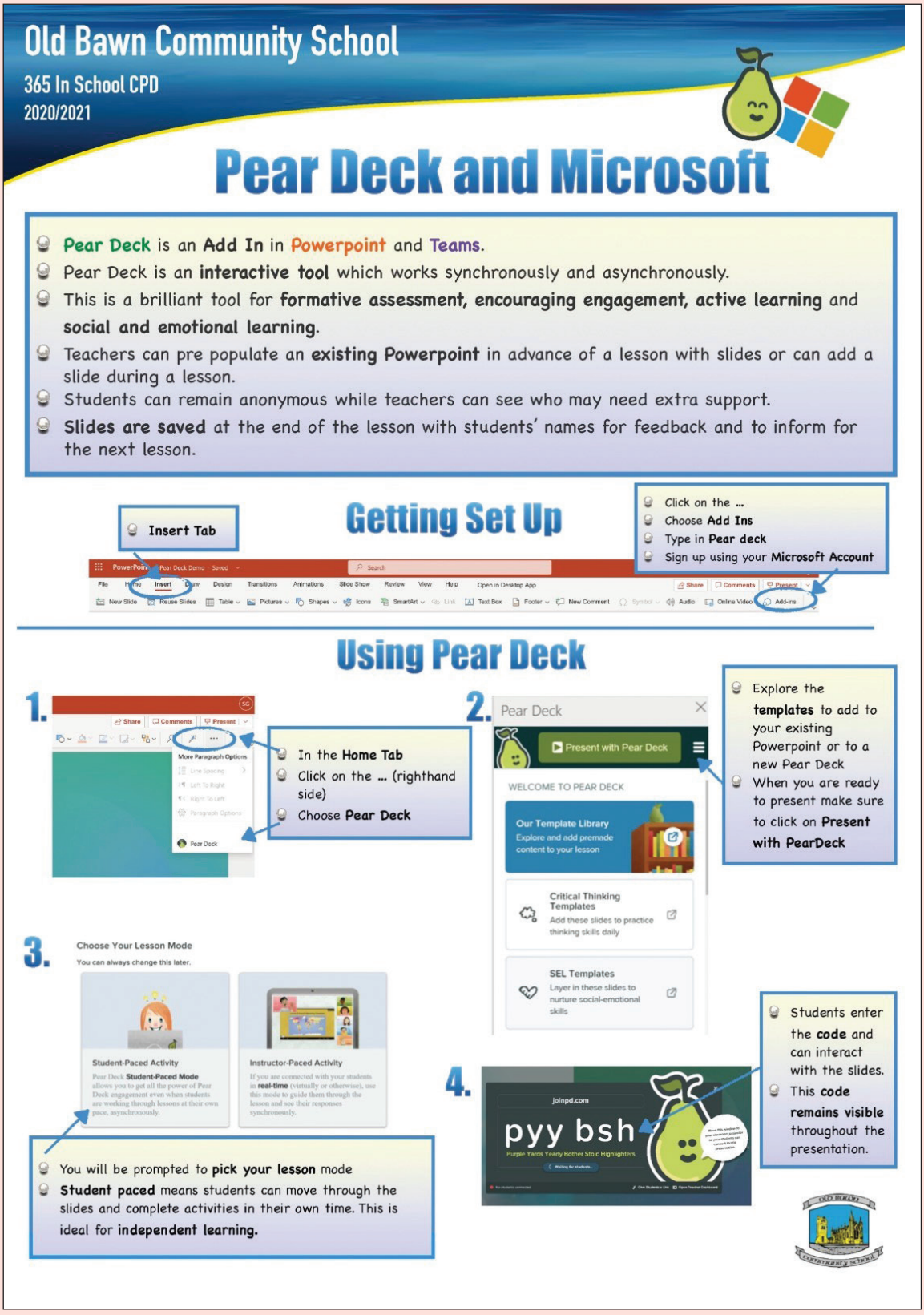
LINK

JamBoard
JamBoard in Google makes classes interactive. Jamboard is one smart display. Quickly pull in images from a Google search, save work to the cloud automatically, use the easy-to-read handwriting and shape recognition tool, and draw with a stylus but erase with your finger – just like a whiteboard.

LINK

Some Maths & practical teachers use **visualisers**, which are great for teachers who are not IT confident.

EXAMPLE 4: Old Bawn Community School



EXAMPLE 5: Old Bawn Community School

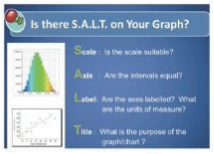
Old Bawn Community School

Technology Enhanced Learning
2020/2020

Rubrics & Student Reflection

- Rubrics are used to give students a concrete set of instructions on what is expected of them in order to achieve a particular score.
- Rubrics can be used to complement success criteria set at the beginning of a lesson or the learning outcomes of an area of learning.
- Students are given the space to reflect on their learning and push themselves to improve on their work with guidance and support from their teacher.
- Using PowerPoint, Word, OneNote or any other format create a **Rubric Sticker**. This sticker can then simply be copied and pasted beside each piece of work.
- ☑ Ideally, and to save time, attach the sticker on the worksheet prior to distribution to students. This gives students very clear success criteria and is also a time saver for teachers.

Example 1 - Graphing



- While this was developed for Science it is relevant to any subject that uses graphs.

Based on a Whole School Focus on consistent and correct graphing techniques.

	Distinction	Merit	Achieved	Partially Achieved	2nd attempt
Scale	Appropriate scale for the data on **both** axis and graph and makes good use of the space available	Scale is appropriate for the data on **both** axes.	Scale is appropriate for data on **one** axis.	Scale is not appropriate for the data.	
Axis	X **and** Y axes have consistent intervals between numbers and are graded appropriately.	X **and** Y axes have consistent intervals between numbers.	X **or** Y axes have consistent intervals between numbers.	Axis does not have consistent intervals between numbers.	
Label	Axis are labelled and correct unit are applied.	Axis are labelled correctly **but** no/ incorrect units are included where relevant.	There is one label provided on x or y axis **or** both axes are labelled but the labels are incorrect.	There are no labels on the x axis or y axis.	
Title	An appropriate title is chosen which detail the context of the question.	An appropriate title is chosen.	An incorrect title is chosen.	No title used for the graph.	

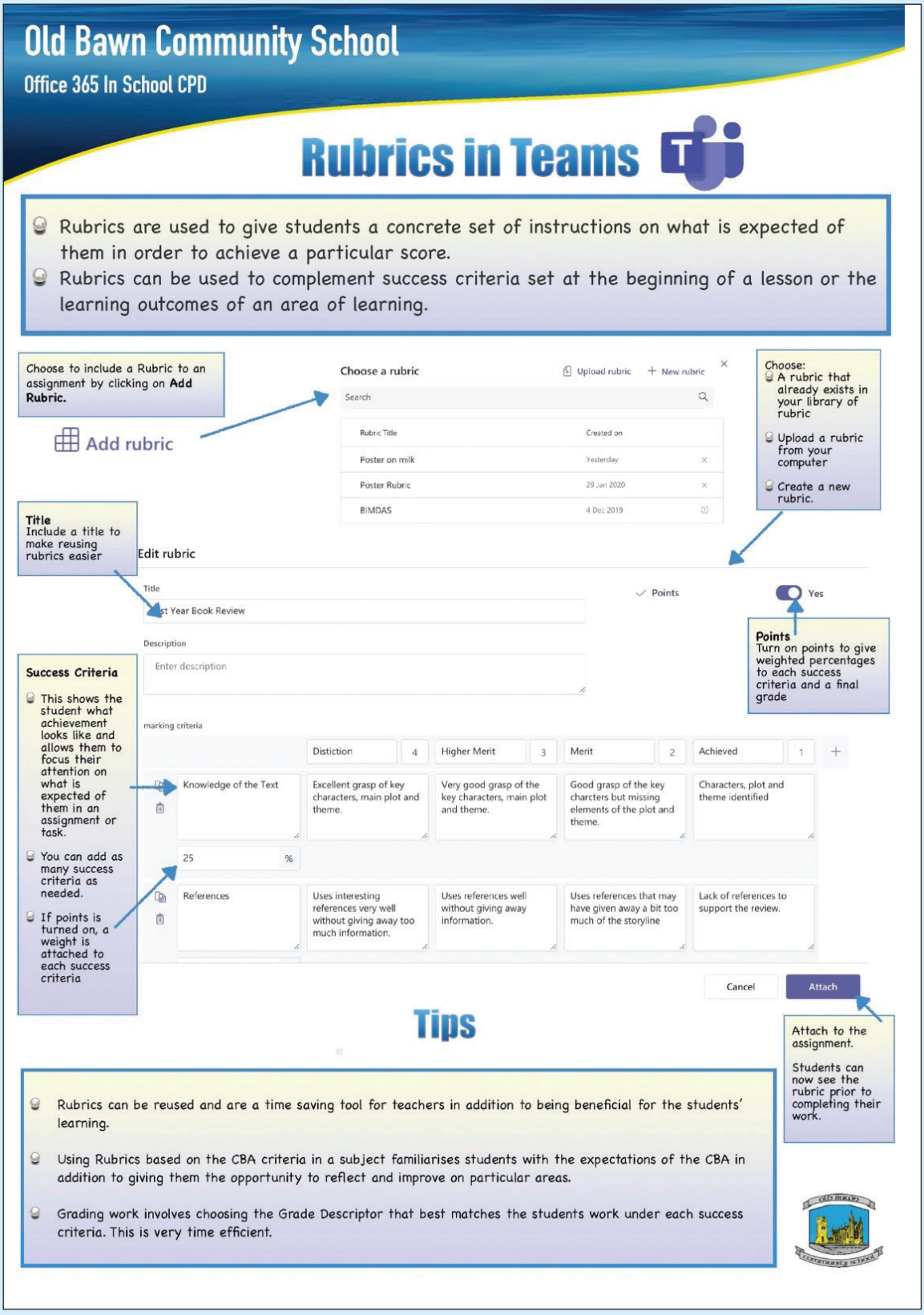
Teacher Feedback

- With the sticker, the teacher highlights or circles the descriptor best suited to the work that has been submitted for each criteria.

Student Reflection

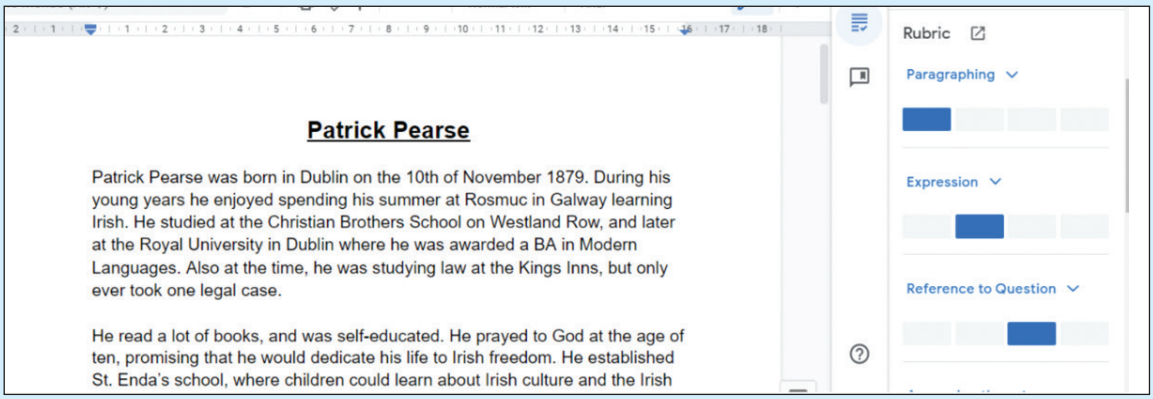
- Students re-do their graph based on the circled/highlighted teacher response.
- The option is there for students to assess themselves by writing in their descriptor or the 2nd attempt can be for the teacher to mark the work as correct.
- The final box can also be used for students to ask for assistance.

EXAMPLE 5: Old Bawn Community School



EXAMPLE 6: Holy Child Community School

Screen shots of Rubrics in Classroom



Patrick Pearse

Patrick Pearse was born in Dublin on the 10th of November 1879. During his young years he enjoyed spending his summer at Rosmuc in Galway learning Irish. He studied at the Christian Brothers School on Westland Row, and later at the Royal University in Dublin where he was awarded a BA in Modern Languages. Also at the time, he was studying law at the Kings Inns, but only ever took one legal case.

He read a lot of books, and was self-educated. He prayed to God at the age of ten, promising that he would dedicate his life to Irish freedom. He established St. Enda's school, where children could learn about Irish culture and the Irish

Leaving Cert History Essay Rubric / Feedback

CATEGORY	*Fair/Weak*	*Good*	*Very Good*	*Excellent*
Paragraphing	One or more of your paragraphs were too long.	One or more paragraphs were way too short.	Not breaking your paragraphs appropriately to maximise marks.	Your essay was consistently well paragraphed.
Expression	Write in plain simple English. Use more full stops.	Watch phrasing - it let you down a few times too many.	Phrasing let you down a few times.	Read very well throughout.
Reference to Question	Poor intro and conclusion. You do not refer to the Question in most paragraphs	Some paragraphs refer to Question but not all. good intro but Need a stronger conclusion to finish	Some paragraphs refer to Question but not all. good conclusion but Need a stronger Introduction	Good intro that sets up essay well. You refer to the question in each paragraph. Very strong conclusion
Answering the set question.	Not learned, so you were unable to focus on set question	Too inclined to write a summary, so you tend to ignore the set question.	Good, but depending too much on Case Study. Bring other content to this essay.	You stick to the main point of the question very well. You recycle the keyword(s) in the question well.
Extra reading / Viewing	Try to include some outside reading eg a quote or some extra info from a website, Youtube clip, podcast etc.			Great to see you included new material outside of class notes.
Time	Answer was too short. You didn't use your time effectively.	Answer was too long. If you go over the recommended 40 minutes, it will hurt you elsewhere in the exam.	A little more of a push with writing and you will do very well.	You managed your time well and wrote the required amount.
Chronology / omissions	Too many bad errors. Revision required.	Chronology was mixed up at times.	Good material, but you had some factual errors or omissions.	Excellent and accurate information throughout your answer.
Understanding	Weak understanding shown of the topic. Get revising.	Only a fair understanding of the material displayed. Get revising.	A good understanding shown throughout.	Excellent understanding shown throughout.

Reflection when working remotely while class is in school with supervising teacher:

The lesson and assignments

As when in class, I identified specific learning intentions for each lesson, however, I found that a focus on fewer more specific learning intentions was even more important from a distance. While teachers can often hold the focus of a class, even when they are unsure of the outcome, this is much more challenging remotely. The trust relationship in class often dictates that students will accept a level of uncertainty, as they trust the teacher. However, this did not translate to remote teaching in my classes. I found that following the delivery of the lesson content, students struggled to complete the accompanying assignment, in a manner that I had not found during in person teaching. This made it easier for students to check out and more difficult for me as the teacher to identify. I found that ensuring that students could see progress throughout was essential. I had to reduce the level of challenge, and use additional scaffolding during tasks. Ensuring I was setting them up for success and getting buy-in through measurable, specific, learning outcomes was essential.

Cultivating class discussion was challenging, and in the absence of this, the resources and exercises needed to be pre-prepared to ensure there wasn't a lull. In this instance I found that written questions on the board often directed student thinking. Although it is worth recognising, that it often led to results that weren't as rich, as what can be generated through class discussions.

Only a minority of students were comfortable contributing when open questions were posed. When students were called upon by name, they were much more likely to contribute. This was particularly true for older, very capable students. These students benefited from the opportunity to discuss responses before being called upon.

As with in person learning, I found short video and audio clips worked well when supported with appropriate tasks but found no need to change the balance of traditional and technology-based tasks during lessons.

Google Classroom was invaluable in collecting homework and assessments. I chose to offer choice in how assignments could be submitted - audio, photograph of handwritten work, typed etc. Students really valued this autonomy as it offered a sense of control in a situation where much of their control of the learning process had been reduced.

Lara Nic Thiarnáin, working remotely while students are in class, St Mark's Community School.

ACCS Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha

Online Parent Teacher Meetings

in Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine, Kenmare

We held our 2nd Year and Leaving Cert Parent teacher meetings online via Teams over the last two weeks. After much debate, we had decided that this would be the best option for the parents and students, giving a similar experience to the traditional meeting. The concept was simple, teachers would make a video call to the student's MS Teams account which the parents would answer, thus solving any GDPR issues.

We started with 100 second years and did the scheduling old-style, on paper: the students got a sheet with a list of their teachers and as they went to their classes, they got appointment times from their respective teachers making sure that they did not duplicate the times.

So, on the day, teachers found a room, laptops and lists were ready and off they went. We set our bell to ring every 5 minutes so once the bell started ringing, they had to finish up the call with the parent and get ready to make the next call. This ensured that parents were free to take the next call. The bell rang at 4:04pm, 4:09pm etc, a signal to be ready for the 4:05, 4:10 appointment etc.

Overall, it went very well, and surveys of staff and parents confirmed this with some good suggestions for improvements. Some issues did arise: teachers who had large classes or two or more classes in that year group had to prioritise the students they gave appointments to or in practice gave appointments on a first come first served basis, which was not ideal. No breaks had been factored in, so the pace was hectic with all appointments being pushed to the beginning of the meeting, in order to finish as early as possible.
For our next Parent Teacher meeting, Leaving Certs and LCA2, we used the online scheduling website, Parent Teacher Meeting Organiser, which has been around a long time for scheduling the traditional face-to-face meetings. This allows parents to prioritise the teachers they wished to meet on-line. This programme then scheduled the appointments for the parents and teachers. A much easier process than the sheets of paper although there is a bit of set-up, checking classes and teachers are correct etc. A ten-minute break was also built in for all teachers.

The feedback again was extremely positive with a lot of parents suggesting online meetings were better, more private, no queueing etc. plus suggestions for longer times and…shorter times!

Overall, this worked very well and gave parents the chance to talk to teachers which we felt was essential in these very strange times. Despite the worry that the technology would let us down or that it would be too intense, the overwhelming feedback was very positive. Using the online scheduling made it fairer and easier to run. Would we think Teams will replace the face-to-face meeting in the future? Probably not but a great leap forward took place in everyone's knowledge of Teams etc.: it just took a crisis to get it done!

Dermot Healy
Principal,
Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine

Some comments from Parents:

"Thought it was great, fast, no queuing for 2 hours, very efficient, well done to all."

"Four minutes was perfect for Second Years, I'd prefer longer if she was in an exam class, especially Leaving Cert."

"Would prefer this for every Parent Teacher meeting in the future. It was engaging, more relaxing. I enjoyed the experience."

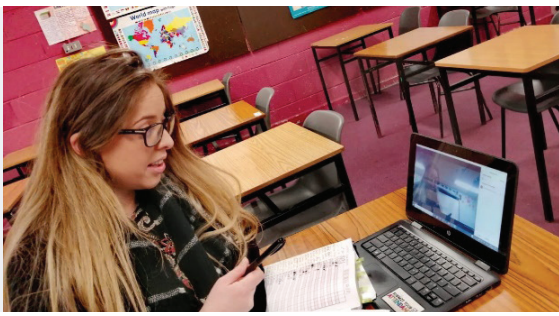
Some comments from Teachers:

"Overall, I felt it went very well. Bell ringing every 5 minutes was of paramount importance."

"It was extremely efficient. The very specific timeframe ensured that both parents and I kept on task and focussed solely on the student - An incredible feat!!! 24 of my 25 parents indicated to me that they were very happy with this method of communication. There wasn't any issue with sound, video or connectivity."

Old Bawn Community School Going Online

Parent Teacher Meetings During Covid Times



As a Microsoft school, and with 1-1 devices in 1st, 2nd and 3rd Year, Old Bawn Community School uses technology as an aid for Teaching and Learning. Our staff are trained in using the Microsoft Office Suite, with Teams and One Note used every day in the classroom. We have had many parent information evenings online which have been really well attended so when we had to make a decision about our parent/student/teacher meetings we knew that our parents and our teachers were well prepared to try them.

We sourced a scheduling package that enabled our parents to indicate the teachers that they wanted to see. This produced a schedule for the parents whereby they had appointments for the teachers. Deputy Principal, Ms. Jennifer Gray set this up for our parents. This meant that parents were not logging on and sitting for long periods of time in waiting rooms, with no knowledge of the number of people waiting.

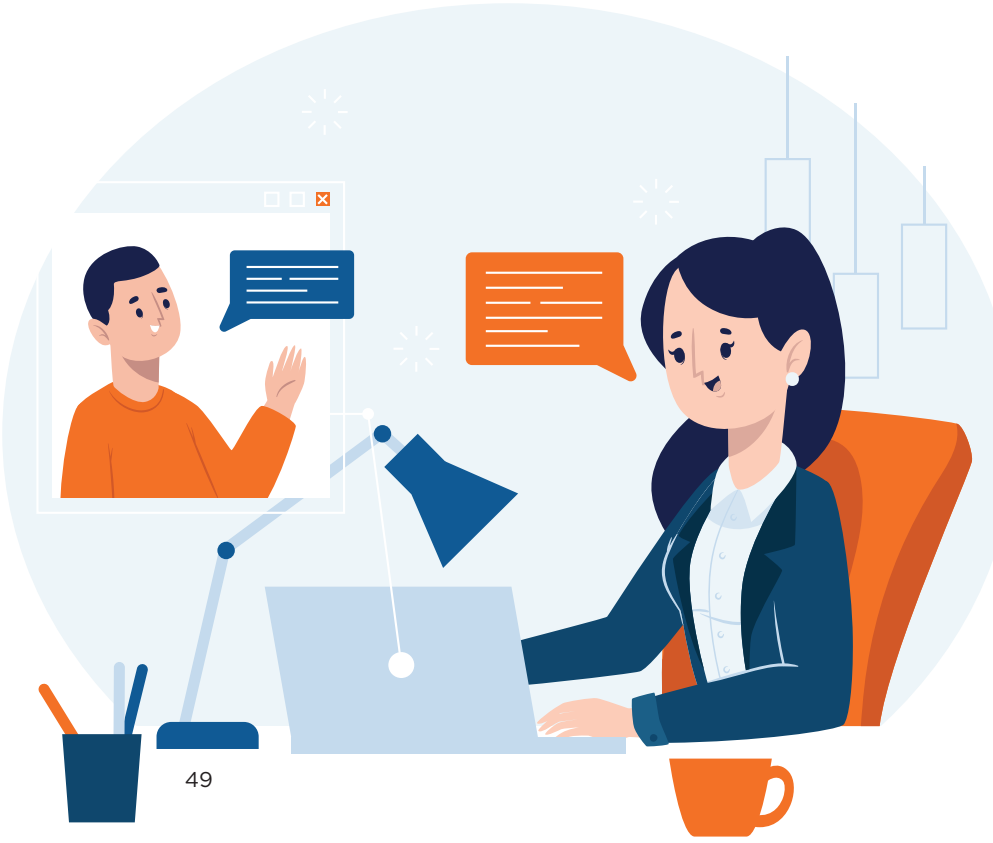
We asked the teachers to schedule their own meetings and they used a shared document to record their log in details. The document was given to the students using Teams and we used our school app to communicate with the parents.

Many teachers reported back on how successful it was. There were a few issues with parents not being able to log in, but the SLT helped any parent who contacted the school looking for help during the meeting. Feedback from parents was extremely positive. They enjoyed not having to leave their homes and still meet with teachers. Some teachers felt the five minutes was a little short for the meeting but with classes of thirty it is very hard to allocate longer times within the time allocated. As we navigate through the year, our mantra in Old Bawn is *"try and do the things we usually do but using the technology we have access to"*. We have challenged ourselves to think differently!

It was a great success and with teamwork anything is possible.

Ursula McCabe
Principal ,
Old Bawn Community School,
Tallaght

> *Feedback from parents was extremely positive. They enjoyed not having to leave their homes and still meet with teachers.*



Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha

A Place of (Remote) Belonging

How educators can create a welcoming classroom community during distance learning

While content is important, there is no doubt that *connection* is key to successful learning. Our students missed school, their friends, their teachers, the classroom and the corridors. They missed the daily routines of school life. For many being at home was isolating and challenging. Our schools came up with many ways to creatively engage with and connect to their students and the wider school community and many of our students recognised and appreciated their efforts. Here are some examples of how schools connected with its most important stakeholders.

While instructional approaches to education are adjusting to remote learning, a sense of belonging and community is still **critical** to ensuring students remain engaged and enthusiastic learners. Students may be accustomed to finding that sense of belonging from interactions with their peers and classmates during transitions or unstructured periods like lunch. As instruction is delivered virtually, they are likely to feel more disconnected, uncertain, or even get distracted in their new learning space.

Aideen Ueno (Teacher), St Louis Community School

Educators should take into account how class time and instruction can address their students' new concerns. Creating a virtual community is just as important for remote learning as it is in a physical classroom.

Old Bawn Community School

So, what have we noticed in our school? (During school closure – Spring 2020)

- *The rare **online synchronous class** has become common, frequent and numerous. Teachers are talking about teams and differentiated digital strategies, forms and flipgrids, forums and feedback.*
- *The first video meeting of the leadership team has become the at least twice daily **online face-to-face** that is second nature.*
- *The trepidation of calling the **first whole staff meeting** has been replaced with a desire to share, design and deliver meaningful multimedia, information and online collaboration.*
- *Online **subject meetings** are second nature.*
- *A daily **timetabled staff online coffee break** is a necessity rather than a novelty.*
- *An **online timetable** for students works!*
- *The **Care Team** hold their meetings at the same time but from their own homes and discuss innovative ways of how to address the care needs of the school community.*
- *The SEN Teachers and Team have included the **remote nature of learning into their IEPs**.*
- ***AP1s** meet to discuss school strategy, but now in cyberspace.*
- *The Board **oversees and governs through a screen!***
- ***Year teams, and discussions and assemblies** are not only possible online but worthwhile and productive.*
- ***The Student Voice has become louder** and closer as they operate through a medium that is natural and native to them.*
- ***Competitions and extracurricular activities and awards through digital media** are being explored and delivered and enhance the community spirit of the whole school.*

Sarah Gibbons and Kevin Shortall, Deputy Principals, Old Bawn Community School

A series of resources now being used by Harvard instructors contains the following suggestions, which can help educators at every grade level re-establish norms, connections, and a sense of belonging.

Create ways to show caring

- If the class is small enough, greet students by name when they enter the chat room.
- Begin with a check in. Ask students how they are doing or asking them to express their week with a meme or emoji. In larger classes, a chatroom can help enable this check in.
- Build in time for announcements and free time for students to interact with each other, since the virtual format often limits the amount of time students can chat.
- Model vulnerability and share your own uncertainties. Setting an example as the instructor will encourage and signal to students it's OK to do the same.
- Encourage students to respond to each other using the chat feature, which allows them to message one another or the whole group. (But make sure the chat function doesn't get too distracting; consider limiting the time you leave it open.)
- End class with a closing circle. Have students express a takeaway or a question via chat — or a Google doc if time is short.

Establish norms

- Revisit any norms the class may have established at the beginning. What should still hold true in the new format and what may need to change?
- See if the platform allows users to set up profiles. Have students personalize theirs with a picture and pronouns.
- Decide if students should speak up or if they should use the "raise hand" feature or another signal.
- Ask students to set an intention and to be present. Consider whether they should close their other browser windows, move phones, and take notes.

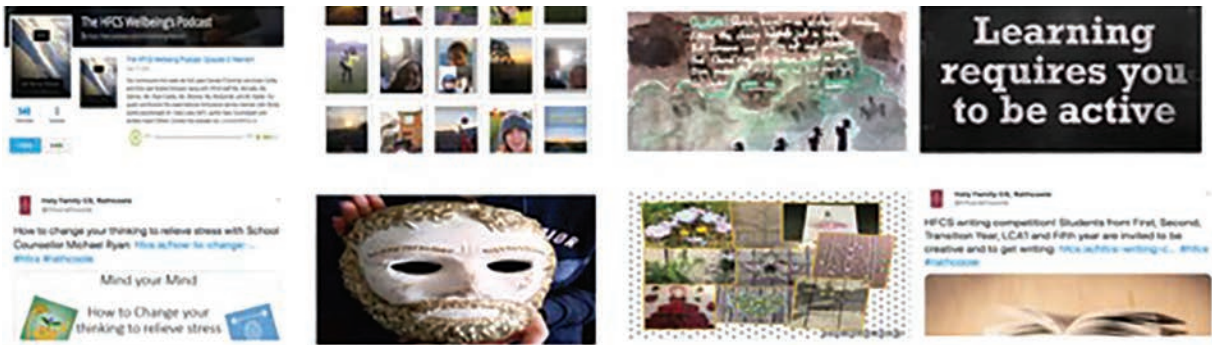
Promote engagement

- Give clear instructions to avoid unnecessary confusion. Post instructions in the chat room so that students can readily access them.
- If students are in a breakout room, circulate through the rooms and check in on how students are progressing.
- Encourage students to come prepared to lead discussions themselves — have them prepare questions or take on a role that helps facilitate the class (recorder, time keeper, reporter).
- Give students stretch breaks for sessions longer than 40 minutes.
- Provide support to make learning accessible for all
- Demo any Zoom features you wish students to use, particularly collaboration tools.
- Consider students accessing the meeting via phone. They do not have access to the chat room or breakout sessions. To help, read questions or comments from the chat room allowed and allow students on the phone to remain in the main conference room and discuss with others there.
- Describe any slides and post them online for students to access before or after the class.
- Refer to speakers by name so that everyone can follow the conversation, regardless of how they are accessing the meeting.

Ref: *Harvard Graduate School of Education. https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/20/04/place-remote-belonging*

Examples of Remote school initiatives:

- A 'Weekly Wellbeing Newsletter' that developed into a 'Weekly Wellbeing Podcast'
- Remote creative writing and art competitions
- A series of study tips released via the schools Twitter account by the Guidance Department.
- A series of videos from our school counsellor to aid stress management during the trying times of Covid 19.
- A 'Remote Sunrise Appeal' in aid of Pieta House.



Holy Family Community School

Finding a new balance:

There is no substitute for the mutualistic environments of our classrooms, and there is no way to remotely emulate the countless opportunities for the social and emotional development that comes from being in school, surrounded by teachers and peers. If anything has come from this period of remote teaching and learning, it has been appreciating that the importance of the relationships established when in school cannot be understated. There must be a balanced approach whereby we can take the lessons learned and skills developed during this period of remote teaching and blend them into our normal practices to reinforce our already strong secondary education and 'future-proof' it.

Michael Fiorentini, Holy Family Community School

(Navigating the uncharted territories of remote teaching and learning)

Building Social And Emotional Connections
Holy Family Community School

Welcoming incoming students... and... saying farewell to our Sixth Years.

1. Use Padlet to help transition from Primary to Secondary school for SEN students. (C. Faust & T. O'Dwyer)

LINK

2. Use of technology to create connections with the 6th year class of 2021 - a mix of soundtracks, audio files and QR codes bring this yearbook to life.

Building Social And Emotional Connections
Holy Family Community School

A SENSE OF BELONGING AND MINDING MY WELLBEING

"Tar éis cúpla seachtaine, thosaigh mé ag éirí brean do scoil ar líne. Bhraith mé uaim mo chairde agus bhí mo theaghlach ag tosú ag cur isteach orm. Bhí sé deacair chun fanacht cruinn ag obair agus thosaíomar ag déanamh scrúdaithe. An rud ba dheacair faoi scoil ar líne, dar liomsa, ná obair bhaile agus staidéar a dhéanamh tar éis lá do ranganna ar líne. Chaith mé an á scoile iomlán i mo sheomra leapa, os comhair ríomhaire, agus ní raibh mórán fuinnimh agus spéise agam níos mó ama a chaitheamh ann chun obair bhaile agus staidéar a dhéanamh ina Ach an rud ba mheasa ná nach aibh mé in ann mo chairde a fheiscint Ní fhaca mé iad le níos mó ná dhá mhí agus bhí áthas an domhain orm dul ar ais ar scoil.

Translation:
After a few weeks I started to get sick of online school. I missed my friends, and my family were starting to annoy me. It was difficult to stay focused working and we started doing exams. The hardest thing about online school, in my opinion, was doing homework and studying after a day of online classes. I spent the whole school day in my bedroom, in front of a computer, and I didn't have much energy or interest to spend more time there to do homework and study afterwards. But the hardest thing of all was that I wasn't able to see my friends. I hadn't seen them in over two months, so I was so happy to go back to school."

(Eva Crowley, Kinsale Community School)

"Even mask breaks were a short enjoyable sociable reminder of what normality could be like."

(Student, Millstreet Community School)

"Setting a schedule and sticking to it worked well for me during the lockdown. Setting a schedule gives a sense of control over your life when you otherwise have none, and sticking to it gives you a sense of pride and productivity. The schedule shouldn't be too heavy, especially not in the beginning, but it also shouldn't be too light. Be honest with how much work you can do, and how much of that can be done well. It also helps managing the workload easier.

Open and easy communication worked really well and helped me feel supported during this scary time. The tip that works for me is to keep in constant contact with my classmates and to establish a space where I can watch the classes quietly and take notes. "

(Student, Kinsale Community School)

"I felt a great sense of community early this year when I and a fellow student as members of the Global Citizenship Education class got to deliver a lesson to the first year CSPE classes on the Global Goals. This continued throughout the remote learning, and we delivered lessons on Fast Fashion via Teams Meetings. These live classes are the next best thing to being in school. Our classmates are always willing to interact, and they feel comfortable with each other. The thing we miss about being in the school building are the many activities we would have taken part in during the Transition year. However, we have gotten the opportunity to do many virtual workshops in various different areas which has been quite valuable."

(Student, Milstreet Community School)

The Importance of the Supervising Teacher.

Having one supervising teacher, who followed my entire timetable was invaluable. This ensured that she was in a position to develop relationships with students and provide support in a way that was impossible for me from a distance. Students had a level of predictability around expectations, which was especially important for the most vulnerable students. It also ensured reliability in being able to connect to the lesson.

I invested time building a good working relationship with this teacher. We spoke regularly and I was able to share an outline of my advance planning and resources with her. During regular telephone check-ins, she shared observations and insights from within the classroom. These observations helped to inform future planning. In turn, I could provide support and guidance in relation to any questions she had.

As an experienced teacher with generally good classroom management, I needed to accept that I would have limited control in some situations, and would be dependent upon the supervising teacher. Decisions around my role and the role of the supervising teacher needed to be made. Teaching and learning responsibilities rested with me, while many of the classroom management decisions, including students leaving the classroom, were made by the supervising teacher, with my support. Initially, students would defer to me on matters which were clearly classroom management, eg use of the toilet. I would in turn defer to the supervising teacher, thus reinforcing their role and ensuring clarity for students. Over time, they understood the role of each teacher. That is not to say that I didn't have a role in classroom management, for instance, there was a day a wasp decided to join a lesson. Luckily, everyone, including the wasp escaped unharmed.

Reflection and Feedback

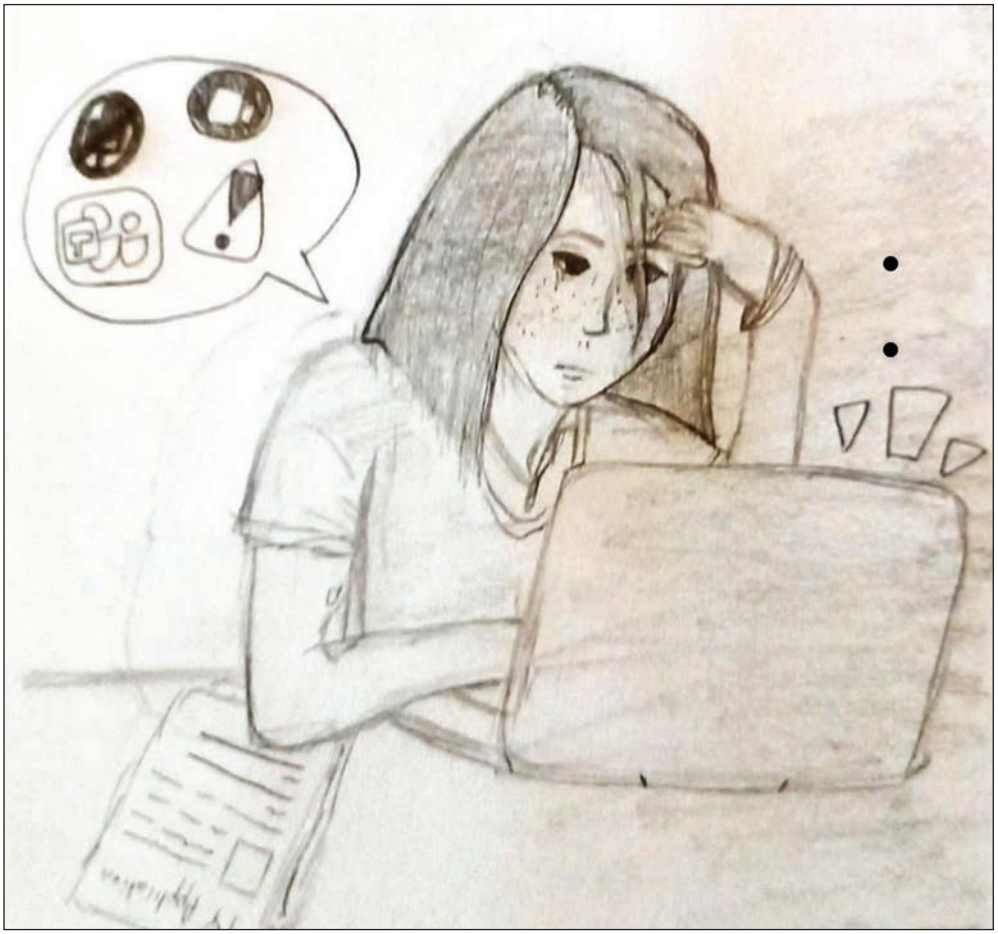
There is an enormous reliance on the technology working effectively; a level of acceptance is required where there are difficulties. I found ensuring the supervising teacher knew what was to be covered, and emailing some alternative work, using textbooks, worksheets, etc. worked well. There was a role for pre-recorded lessons in the case where the technology difficulties were not easily resolved.

During this period, I learned that not all students were comfortable with the remote teaching format. In one instance, I contacted a parent as I was worried that his son was becoming disengaged during lessons. During this conversation, dad told me that the student was very uncomfortable using video technology. During Level Five restrictions, when his grandparents video called, he chose not to engage in the conversation and barely spoke to them. This information allowed me to ask the supervising teacher to work with him for feedback and to ensure that he was keeping up with the required work. By removing this pressure, the student was much more relaxed in class and was more willing to engage in the lesson.

Initially, I had been contacting parents to discuss issues that I would normally resolve directly with the student. Over time, I moved to using email, to contact students when I had small concerns that didn't need parental involvement. This allowed me to have the short chats that we normally have at the beginning or end of a lesson with students, and often resolved issues informally. It also left room for escalation in the case that the issue couldn't be easily resolved.

Much of the enjoyment I get from teaching comes from the relationships that are built with students and with other teachers. At first, I found this was difficult to replicate from afar, which led to a sense of isolation and loss of connection. Building a relationship with the supervising teacher and an increase in email contact with students, offered a huge increase in the level of connection I felt.

Lara Nic Thiarnáin, working remotely while students are in class, St Mark's Community School.



Lauren Burke Flatley, 3rd yr, St Louis Community School

Digital Inclusion

Reaching out to all learners with additional educational needs

ICT has the potential to support inclusion in a number of ways across the system by providing opportunities for students to learn outside the normal school setting or to enable learners with special educational needs to participate more fully in their education.

The Integrated Reform Delivery Plan, Education and Training Sector 2015 (Department of Education and Skills, 2014 states: "We want an Education and Training system that welcomes and meaningfully includes learners with disabilities and special educational needs, learners from disadvantaged communities/ backgrounds and those with language, cultural and social differences.

> *"the educational experience is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcomes for all".*
>
> *The Framework for Junior Cycle*

In adopting ICT for teaching and learning the Department will ensure that information will be accessible to all learners in line with requirements under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

> - *the obligation to 'provide accessible information to persons with disabilities' (Article 4);*
> - *the need for 'the design, development, production and distribution of accessible ICT' (Article 9);*
> - *the right to education 'without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity' for persons with disabilities (Article 24).*
>
> *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.*

ICT has the potential to support learners, whose first language is not English, to enhance their oral and written literacy. In general, there is a recognition that digital technology has the potential to create a more inclusive education system for all learners.

ICT is a principal enabler for children at risk of educational disadvantage, with low levels of achievement in the formal education system. When it is appropriately embedded into an educational setting, ICT can enable students to learn in new and exciting ways, encouraging their engagement and making communication easier. Furthermore, there is evidence to indicate that the creative application of ICT in education can allow students at risk of early school leaving to connect with learning in new ways, resulting in improved motivation, attendance and application across subject areas.

The Strategy recognises that ICT has the potential to enable parents/guardians to become more actively involved in their children's learning by engaging in conversations with teachers and by accessing and commenting on students' work. ICT can also offer new learning possibilities by connecting with other schools.

On Inclusion… Consider the following…

"What do we want students to be able to do when they leave school? *Ultimately, we want our students to be as independent as possible. Students have access to plenty of academic content. More is not necessary. Learning isn't dependent on the individual 'waves' of content delivered to students; it is more about the tide they rise on.*

Affirm students' efforts to engage in 'life' lessons*- chores, baking, cooking, exercising, maintaining hygiene, managing a routine, looking after younger siblings etc. Acknowledging and affirming development of key life skills will support all of us in achieving the ultimate goal for students- inclusion and maximum levels of independence in their communities post school.*

Student engagement with learning is critical but herein lies the challenge, particularly for those unable to access learning for a multitude of reasons. ***Teaching and learning is ALL about the relationship****. This relationship is even more important to the most marginalised in the school community. Staying connected with students is critical. As a school, develop a system to identify students not engaging with online content. Find alternative ways to reach them- phone, letter, free An Post postcard! The SET/ SENCO can have a key role here in mediating learning (academic, social, emotional) for the student and teachers.*

Academic learning is dependent on student's possessing non-academic skills to promote access and engagement*. SETs/SENCOs are well positioned to support the development on non-academic skills such as organisation, study skills, social skills, self-regulation, life skills etc. Working with home and the student to put in place a structure to scaffold academic learning might be a useful exercise.*

A conversation with the student/parent in relation to key priorities for the student and implementing a feasible plan of action with due consideration to the home context may alleviate the sense of disconnection and powerlessness some may be feeling. It will also facilitate the student's voice. If schools are engaging with Student Support Plans, the SSP may be a good starting point.

This article offers a great perspective: https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/a-trauma-informed-approach-to-teaching-through-coronavirus

It may be helpful to school leaders in deciding how to navigate this current situation and prioritise what is important to the school. Do schools have a shared understanding of what the core values are in this changed landscape? It could be used to support leaders to reflect on what is of critical importance right now."

DR. JOHANNA FITZGERALD
Head of Educational Psychology, Inclusive and Special Education
Mary Immaculate College, South Circular Road, Limerick, Ireland, V94 VN26
Tel: +353 61 204517 | www.mic.ul.ie

Some Thoughts and Resources for Supporting Children with Additional Needs during the COVID-19 Closure Period

Children with additional needs are just like any other kids and this period of school closure and uncertainty will raise issues in terms of ***anxiety, routine and learning****. It is a difficult time for kids, parents and teachers as they are all trying to balance various aspects of their lives not to mention managing the emotional turmoil associated with a global shock such as this one.* ***We need to be patient and kind in all of our interactions and engagements with families and colleagues. This is not a time to overload anyone. School work may not be a priority in some homes but it could help to provide routine and structure for children****.*

Most children with additional needs may need to be supported more on an individual level than on a group level, this is where ***student support files*** *can become very useful. Where children are working towards* ***specific targets*** *then work could be designed to support this learning at home.*

We have listed a few links and websites that people find useful. We are sure you have your own favourites and there are many more available but we are conscious here that ***people are under significant time pressure*** *so these are just a few to get you started. Any support you offer kids with additional needs will be welcome and we wish you well with the weeks ahead.*

Good luck to all the teachers, students and parents doing such amazing work under such difficult circumstances.

Kevin Cahill & Dan O'Sullivan, School of Education, University College Cork

See the complete articles and list of useful resources from Johanna (MIC) and Kevin & Dan (UCC) on www.accs.ie in the Covid 19 Resources section "Supporting Students with AEN"
See Appendix 5 for other useful websites.

ucc
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire
University College Cork, Ireland

Digital Wellbeing

Safeguarding Children – a key part of the planning stages of any changes/updates to the learning environment. Ref: www.webwise.ie

- **School Acceptable Use Policy** School leaders and teachers should re-familiarise themselves with their AUP. Updates may need to be made if you are using new learning environments or additional tools to facilitate distance learning. It is a good time to remind staff, parents and students of the AUP any updates.

  For more information on updating your AUP, go to: webwise.ie/aup-2/

  Sample templates are also available at www.accs.ie

- **Child Safeguarding** - Teachers should re-familiarise themselves with child safeguarding policies and statements and follow best-practice.

- **Privacy** - Familiarise yourself with the privacy settings and policy of any new online services. Teachers should also be mindful of their own privacy and boundaries. For example, it is best to avoid giving personal details, personal email or contact numbers. Use school email and school-approved communication services.

- **Age** - It is important to consider the age of the students before introducing new technology or apps for learning. Check age requirements and appropriateness of the platform. GDPR – The **Digital Age of Consent** is 16 years old in Ireland and is designed to protect personal information of children. If new services or platforms are being introduced and students are required to sign-up for that service, use school emails and check that the service is GDPR compliant.

- **Social Media** - Social media has an important role to play during these uncertain times, it is a great way for families to stay in touch and for communities to connect. Communication between schools, teachers and students must be professional and adhere to current policies (for example; AUP, social media policies, etc.) that are in place. Before using a communication tool, check your school policy, age restrictions, terms of service and appropriateness of service.

- **Code of Conduct** - It is a good time for educators to re-familiarise themselves with the teaching Council Code of Conduct: teachingcouncil.ie/Code-of-Professional-Conduct-for-Teachers

- **Professional Conduct** - 3.7 ensure that any communication with pupils/students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as e-mail, texting and social networking sites.

- **Healthy Balance** - If using technology to engage in distance learning, ensure a healthy balance of online and offline activities for students. There are lots of great opportunities for students to learn on and offline.

- **Respect and Safety**
  Staff/students should contact the School Principal/ICT Coordinator/ relevant personnel if the staff member is concerned about any incident or behaviour which they encounter during an on-line class. The normal and agreed referral procedures should be followed in line with the school's Acceptable Use Policy and Code of Behaviour.

- **Resources**
  Be Safe Online - www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/be-safe-online/ is the Government's campaign to highlight ways to help you stay safe online. This webpage provides access to a wide range of online safety resources, to support online safety for all. including www.webwise.ie. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) offers detailed advice for securing virtual meetings: https://www.ncsc.gov.ie/pdfs/WFH-Advisory.pdf)

Access St Mark's Community School's Video Conferencing Student Agreement and the school's video conferencing protocols at the following link. The school's chosen platform is Google.

https://stmarkscs.ie/page/Video-Conferencing/35450/Index.html **LINK**

We started our digital journey in 2016 with 16 teachers as part of our initial digital leaders' team. When the first lockdown happened, we had expanded this initial team to encompass a group of 40 teachers, which led to an environment of peer mentoring and collaboration. By the second lockdown we felt that staff and students were proficient (Virtual Vikings!) with the workings of teaching and learning, assignments and assessment in the Microsoft suite.

An issue of concern for us was managing the virtual learning environment and ensuring that students' permissions were limited to 'participant' control only.
We read the ACCS guidelines in the Teaching and Learning Online booklet, particularly the tips for 'The Virtual Classroom'. Having consulted with staff, our IT coordinator implemented default settings for all classes. We created a virtual lobby for each class, particularly to accommodate teachers who may have back-to-back classes and could not join the class early. This allowed us to establish a commonality of structures and protocols for all classes.

We also managed student permissions and assigned appropriate controls to individual students. In relation to monitoring online attendance, we found the attendance log valuable for monitoring student engagement and participation. It shows the entry and exit timestamp for each student, which ensures a more precise attendance list on the student portal. By implementing these steps, we created a more secure environment for both staff and students and eliminated low level behaviour issues, thereby putting an emphasis back on quality teaching and learning.

Cleona McCann, Keith Kenna & Treana Carey, Digital Strategy Team, Tullow Community School

ST MARK'S COMMUNITY SCHOOL ONLINE LEARNING - GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS - SOME EXAMPLES

- ✔ *We use Google Classroom (GC) as our online learning platform. Our students are familiar and confident with it, so as parents, there is no need to worry about this transition. We will of course continue to offer them any support they need in using the technology during the school closure.*
- ✔ *The online lesson is called a Google Meet (GM). The link for the Google Meet (GM) is permanently available in your son/daughter's Google Classroom (GC). Their teachers have set up a Google Classroom for each subject.*
- ✔ *Students have their Google Classroom (GC) log in details and are familiar with "My Digital Promise" and our video conferencing protocols (available to view here).*

ST MARK'S COMMUNITY SCHOOL TEACHER GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE LEARNING- SOME EXAMPLES

- ✔ *Mix it up! Live teaching, pre-recorded videos, or other materials...*
- ✔ *Students should use their journal to record their learning just like in class. This will help them keep on track. Please remind them.*
- ✔ *Consider using screencast software to record key learning parts of "live" lessons.*

Some Reminders...

As teaching moves online, school leaders and teachers should re-familiarise themselves with their AUP. Updates may need to be made if you are using new learning environments or additional tools to facilitate distance learning. It is a good time to remind staff, parents and students of any AUP updates.

With learning and education continuing online, here is a reminder of some key considerations – now more important than ever – that schools should factor into their plans to ensure a safe learning experience for students and teachers. Along with technical considerations, safeguarding children should form a part of the planning stages of any changes/updates to learning environments.

Webwise.ie
For more information on distance learning safety advice and considerations, go to: webwise.ie/trending/distance-learning-safety-advice-and-considerations/ LINK

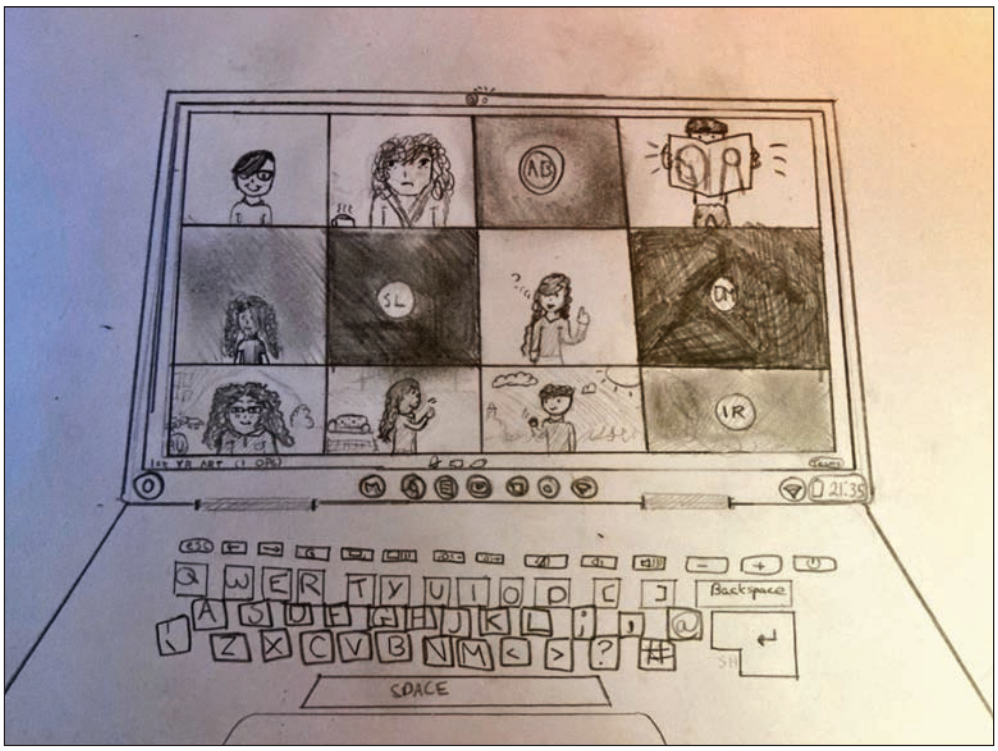
Distance learning safety advice and considerations:
https://www.webwise.ie/trending/distance-learning-safety-advice-and-considerations/ LINK

Distance learning policy considerations:
https://www.webwise.ie/teachers/aup-distance-learning/ LINK

Some Reminders...

Other useful links:

- *PDST Distance Learning Hub: https://www.pdst.ie/DistanceLearning* **LINK**
- *PDST Video Conferencing guidance: https://www.pdst.ie/DistanceLearning/VideoConferencing* **LINK**
- *Covid19 online safety advice for parents: https://www.webwise.ie/parents/covid19-online-safety-advice-for-parents/* **LINK**
- *Using Webwise Resources at home: https://www.webwise.ie/trending/primary-and-post-primary-resources-for-online-wellbeing-and-misinformation/* **LINK**
- *New apps - Webwise have updated our explainer section to include popular apps - Zoom, Houseparty, Discord, Tiktok, etc: https://www.webwise.ie/category/parents/explainers/* **LINK**



Briana Quinn, 2nd yr, St Louis Community School

Netiquette

"the rules of correct or polite behaviour among people using the Internet" (Oxford Learner's Dictionary)

Netiquette Guidelines
Managing expectations is a key part of successful online interactions. Establishing a positive culture of communication online with students is a great way to encourage positive interactions from the beginning.

Here are some guidelines for managing online sessions (including webinars) which should help them to run more smoothly and could be the source of discussion about netiquette and expectations. These have been adapted from Warwick University:

- *Treat all participants with respect. If you would not say something to someone's face, do not say it to them when online.*
- *Respect the privacy of others.*
- *Be careful when using humour or sarcasm as it can easily give offence, especially when you cannot see facial expressions.*
- *Use clear and concise language, English may not be the student's first language.*
- *Keep caps lock use to a minimum as IT CAN MAKE YOU LOOK LIKE YOU ARE SHOUTING.*
- *Use standard fonts and sizes such as Arial 11-14 font size.*
- *Avoid text speak and slang (e.g. LOL or besties).*
- *Only use emoticons when appropriate.*
- *Think about the use of attachments; are the files really relevant and are they suitable for use on any device? PDF's are device neutral if you really need to share something.*
- *Have you considered copyright on any images you share? If in doubt share a link to an image as this puts the copyright onus on the website owner, not you.*
- *Save specialised/private conversations for offline.*
- *Use your camera unless Wi-Fi is poor – (Stop your camera and use audio only to improve the quality)*
- *Use the mute button to eliminate distracting background noise. Don't forget to unmute yourself when it's your turn to talk.*
- *Make use of the chat function to ask and answer questions.*
- *Vary the activities when you are presenting, giving time to Q&A or to take short breaks for questions/class discussions.*

Ref: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/cte/student-partners/academictechnology/academictechnologies/otherat/blackboardcollaborate/netiquette LINK

Check out the **Webwise** top tips for developing Digital Literacy: Communication Skills and for creating your own class "netiquette"
https://www.webwise.ie/teachers/digital-literacy-communication-skills/ LINK

Celbridge Community School

In the following document, Celbridge Community School has set out its rationale, and "compiled a list of guidelines and expectations for members of our school community to support us all to engage in high quality, effective and safe distance learning. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with all our school policies, including Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, ICT Code of Conduct etc. We have also referred to the 'Guidance on Continuity of Schooling' documents (in relation to teaching and learning online, SEN, Guidance Counselling etc.) issued by the Department of Education and Skills."

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5de4ebae5719bc363911df16/t/5eb152ce0a8f9e414b932ff6/1588679377990/CCS+Distance+Learning+Guidelines+17+April+V3+copy.pdf

LINK

Malahide Community School

Malahide Community School sets out its protocol in the context of its Code of Behaviour reminding students, parents, and guardians that the code applies when engaging with Remote Learning. We summarise this as follows:

- *Respect Yourself*
- *Respect Others*
- *Respect Your Environment*

See the full Remote Learning Protocol below which was ratified by the Board of Management in March 2020.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5de4ebae5719bc363911df16/t/5eb154e047d954454251aec8/1588679905579/Malahide+CS+Remote+Learning+Protocol+for+Students+Parents+Guardians+update+1.pdf

LINK

GDPR and Data Protection

when using Digital Technologies

DEVICES

- Take extra care that devices, such as USBs, phones, laptops, or tablets, are not lost or misplaced.
- Make sure that any device has the necessary updates, such as operating system updates (like iOS or android) and software/antivirus updates.
- Ensure your computer, laptop, or device, is used in a safe location, for example where you can keep sight of it and minimise who else can view the screen, particularly if working with sensitive personal data.
- Lock your device if you do have to leave it unattended for any reason.
- Make sure your devices are turned off, locked, or stored carefully when not in use.
- Use effective access controls (such as multi-factor authentication and strong passwords) and, where available, encryption to restrict access to the device, and to reduce the risk if a device is stolen or misplaced. See "Physical Security" below for some more tips.
- When a device is lost or stolen, you should take steps immediately to ensure a remote memory wipe, where possible.

EMAILS

- Use school email accounts rather than personal ones for work-related emails involving personal data. If you must use personal email, make sure contents and attachments are encrypted and avoid using personal or confidential data in subject lines.
- Be careful that the email address is accurate as email can often accidently go to the wrong person. Before sending an email, ensure you are sending it to the correct recipient, particularly for emails involving large amounts of personal data or sensitive personal data.
- To avoid data breaches, extra security precautions need to be taken in relation to the content of emails. Be careful what you are disclosing in emails and to whom they are being sent.

Some tips for students emailing teachers

1. *Do not **'reply all'** to an email sent to a class or year group - just reply to the teacher.*
2. *Include a clear, direct subject line so the receiver knows what the email is about.*
3. *Explain the reason for your email, e.g. work attached, or question you want to ask.*
4. *When you are attaching work, please mention what is attached. Do not just attach documents or images of work with no subject to the email or information - always explain what is attached. Please name the document you are sharing clearly rather than calling it e.g. Document1.*
5. *Remember to be polite in any emails you send on your school email please.*
6. *Start the email with Dear Ms/Mr ..... or Hi Ms/Mr.....*
7. *Close the email politely and include your name, class and year group.*
8. *Where possible, keep the sending of emails to during the school hours from Monday to Friday.*

Caroline Mathews, TY Coordinator, Ashbourne CS

Remember that your email could be forwarded to someone else in the future, so be aware of the content and whether there is an expectation of confidentiality.
- Use the bcc field instead of the cc field when sending an email to a group of people who may not know each other or may not want their email addresses to be shared.

ONLINE FILE SHARING:

Online file-sharing services may not be secure enough for sensitive and confidential communications. All large files or data sets should be sent using applications that provide a number of security features, including:

1. Encryption,
2. Link-expiry settings,
3. Number of allowed downloads,
4. Password protection.

Cloud and Network Access

- Where possible only use the school's trusted networks or cloud services and complying with any school rules and procedures about cloud or network access, login and, data sharing.
- If you are working without cloud or network access, ensure any locally stored data is adequately backed up in a secure manner.

ONLINE EDUCATIONAL PLATFORMS (e.g. Microsoft Office, Google Classroom)

- Choose platforms (online teaching tools used to support blended learning) which are specifically designed for educational use. These platforms are much more likely to comply with best practice in teaching and learning. Platforms with controls to manage activity are safer and more likely to be safe and secure and comply with GDPR requirements. Manage access and activity on the platform. Access to platforms should preferably be by *'Invitation only'* using learner school credentials (where possible). Ideally access should also be password protected and posts to the platform should be moderated/ approved by you prior to posting. Platforms with safe practice functionality such as profanity filters are preferable.

DOWNLOADING APPLICATIONS

- School staff need to satisfy themselves on their GDPR obligations in the use of all products, in the normal manner. We would caution against use of apps that have not been assessed as GDPR compliant. Before using any teaching resource, you should carefully read the privacy statement/settings and satisfy yourself that usage of the resource/ platform conforms to the school's AUP and to Teaching Council draft social media guidelines (2019).

PAPER RECORDS

- It's important to remember that data protection applies to not only electronically stored or processed data, but also personal data in manual form (such as paper records) where it is, or is intended to be, part of filing system.
- Where you are working remotely with paper records, take steps to ensure the security and confidentiality of these records, such as keeping them locked in a filing cabinet or drawer when not in use, disposing of them securely (e.g. shredding) when no longer needed, and making sure they are not left somewhere where they could be misplaced or stolen.
- If you're dealing with records that contain special categories of personal data (e.g. health data) you should take extra care to ensure their security and confidentiality, and only remove such records from a secure location where it is strictly necessary to carry out your work.

- Where possible, you should keep a written record of which records and files have been taken home, in order to maintain good data access and governance practices.

CYBERSECURITY

The National Centre for Cyber Security (NCCS) reports that it has observed an increase in phishing and malware campaigns exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools are also reminded that it can be appropriate to seek Gardai advice4 in these circumstances.

Email is the primary channel for cyber-attacks. A typical phishing email contains a lure to induce the recipient to activate the "payload" (usually by clicking on an attachment or a link). This usually links to malware or sites designed to install ransomware, steal credentials or banking details, or enable further remote access by the attackers. Phishing emails can be convincing to even seasoned IT users and emails related to COVID-19 often try to create a sense of urgency to rush people into making a mistake.

Phishing* emails might be targeted at staff or at other recipients such as parents. For example, in the UK, the Department for Education has recently highlighted a scam email asking parents of children eligible for free school meals for their bank details, so that their child could still receive meals during school closures.

When it comes to prevention there are many sources of advice available. For schools, as data controllers, it is important to keep a close eye on the advice published by the Data Protection Commission for example, ***Staying Safe Online during a Pandemic***.

It is also recommended that you request your school's IT support provider to review other relevant DPC advice with a view to ensuring that the school's practices are aligned as closely as possible with appropriate standards. See for example, ***DPC guidance on data security for data controllers***.

Ransomware and Phishing* attacks

But first, what is Ransomware and what is Phishing?
Phishing *is the fraudulent practice of sending emails purporting to be from reputable companies in order to induce individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers.*

Ransomware *is a type of malicious software designed to block access to a computer system until a sum of money is paid. The software is usually introduced into a system using Phishing techniques.*

Ransomware and Phishing attacks are currently at a very high level and organisations and companies in Ireland are being targeted by what are reported to be organised criminal gangs. There are a number of steps schools can take to protect against such attacks which are listed below.

There are several factors that might make you the target of a ransomware attack.

- The device used is no longer state-of-the-art.
- The device has outdated software.
- Browsers and/or operating systems are no longer patched.
- No proper backup plan exists.
- Insufficient attention has been paid to cybersecurity, and a concrete plan is not in place.

HOW TO PREVENT A RANSOMWARE ATTACK/INFECTION

Never click on unsafe links: Avoid clicking on links in spam messages or on unknown websites. If you click on malicious links, an automatic download could be started, which could lead to your computer being infected.

Avoid disclosing personal information: If you receive a call, text message, or email from an untrusted source requesting personal information, do not reply. Cybercriminals who are planning a ransomware attack might try to collect personal information in advance, which is then used to tailor phishing messages specifically to you. If in any doubt as to whether the message is legitimate, contact the sender directly.

Do not open suspicious email attachments: Ransomware can also find its way to your device through email attachments. Avoid opening any dubious-looking attachments. To make sure the email is trustworthy, pay close attention to the sender and check that the address is correct. Never open attachments that prompt you to run macros to view them. If the attachment is infected, opening it will run a malicious macro that gives malware control of your computer.

Never use unknown USB sticks: Never connect USB sticks or other storage media to your computer if you do not know where they came from. Cybercriminals may have infected the storage medium and placed it in a public place to entice somebody into using it.

Keep your programs and operating system up to date: Regularly updating programs and operating systems helps to protect you from malware. When performing updates, make sure you benefit from the latest security patches. This makes it harder for cybercriminals to exploit vulnerabilities in your programs.

Use only known download sources: To minimize the risk of downloading ransomware, never download software or media files from unknown sites. Rely on verified and trustworthy sites for downloads. Websites of this kind can be recognized by the trust seals. Make sure that the browser address bar of the page you are visiting uses “https” instead of “http”. A shield or lock symbol in the address bar can also indicate that the page is secure. Also exercise caution when downloading anything to your mobile device. You can trust the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store, depending on your device.

Use VPN services on public Wi-Fi networks: Conscientious use of public Wi-Fi networks is a sensible protective measure against ransomware. When using a public Wi-Fi network, your computer is more vulnerable to attacks. To stay protected, avoid using public Wi-Fi for sensitive transactions or use a secure VPN service.

Be aware of your surroundings when in public: No matter how well you know the place you are in, never leave your devices unattended when in public. Your phone’s lockscreen or laptop’s password present only minor challenges to the determined hacker. If possible, utilise biometric protections like fingerprint recognition. If your device is stolen contact the Gardaí and your IT administrator immediately.

Never leave passwords lying around: You should never keep passwords written down. However, in the real world, people do, so to minimize the risk of this, lock all passwords away in a lockable drawer

when not present in the office. Don't leave them lying around on desks or on post-it notes stuck to the side of your monitor/ tower/phone. But it would be much better to commit them to memory and safely destroy the paper they were written on. A secure way to manage your passwords is through free password manager software such as ***www.lastpass.com***

LINK

GENERAL ADVICE AND SECURITY

- **General:** You need to be realistic about what can be achieved with technology given people's existing capabilities and skills.
- **Fraud / phishing:** Attempts are unfortunately on the increase. Phishing is the fraudulent practice of sending emails purporting to be from reputable companies in order to induce individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers.
- **Physical security:** Even when working from home, PCs and laptops should ideally have two step password protection (encryption). This means that you would have to enter a (different) password at two different stages when logging in to your device. It is an added layer of security that makes it more difficult for unauthorised access.
- **Privacy:** Individuals are potentially more vulnerable to having their privacy rights exploited when their image and voice is being beamed remotely over the web. *Students must be reminded that the use of mobile phones or other devices to photograph or record staff or other students for the purposes of publication elsewhere is strictly prohibited and in breach of those individuals' basic human right to privacy.*

Schools should also communicate with parents/guardians that they need to satisfy themselves that they are comfortable with their child's use of distant learning platforms from a privacy perspective. Parents should be aware that their child is in video communication with their teachers and SNAs and ensure they are comfortable with how these communications are being conducted.

Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha

Universal Design for Learning

(Further Education)

SOLAS have launched the ambitious new strategy for Ireland's Further Education and Training Sector: 'Future FET: Transforming Learning', The National Further education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020 – 2024.

One of the key priorities outlined in the Strategy is: Fostering Inclusion through consistent learner supports by adopting a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach.

UDL Explained

Providing a fully inclusive learning environment is complex in creating a culture of engagement and inclusion that works for all students requires a shift in thinking and a change of behaviour at an institutional level. In this ever changing and increasingly diverse further and higher education landscape, **Universal Design for Learning** (UDL) provides an effective framework to improve the learning experience of all students within the mainstream teaching environment.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn, including students with Disabilities. UDL aims to improve the educational experience of all students by introducing more flexible methods of teaching, assessment and service provision to cater for the diversity of learners in our classrooms. This approach is underpinned by research in the field of neuroscience and is designed to improve the learning experience and outcomes for all students. (source AHEAD 2020).

The UDL guidelines provided by US organisation CAST are based on the idea that there is no such thing as a 'typical' or 'average' student, that all students learn differently and that to successfully teach for all students, we have to introduce greater flexibility into teaching and learning practice. They say that educators should follow 3 core principles when designing learning experiences, building in:

Multiple Means of Engagement

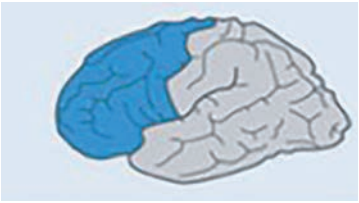
Stimulate motivation and sustained enthusiasm for learning by promoting various ways of engaging with material.

Multiple Means of Representation

Present information and content in a variety of ways to support understanding by students with different learning styles/abilities.

Multiple Means of Action/Expression

Offer options for students to demonstrate their learning in various ways (e.g. allow choice of assessment type)

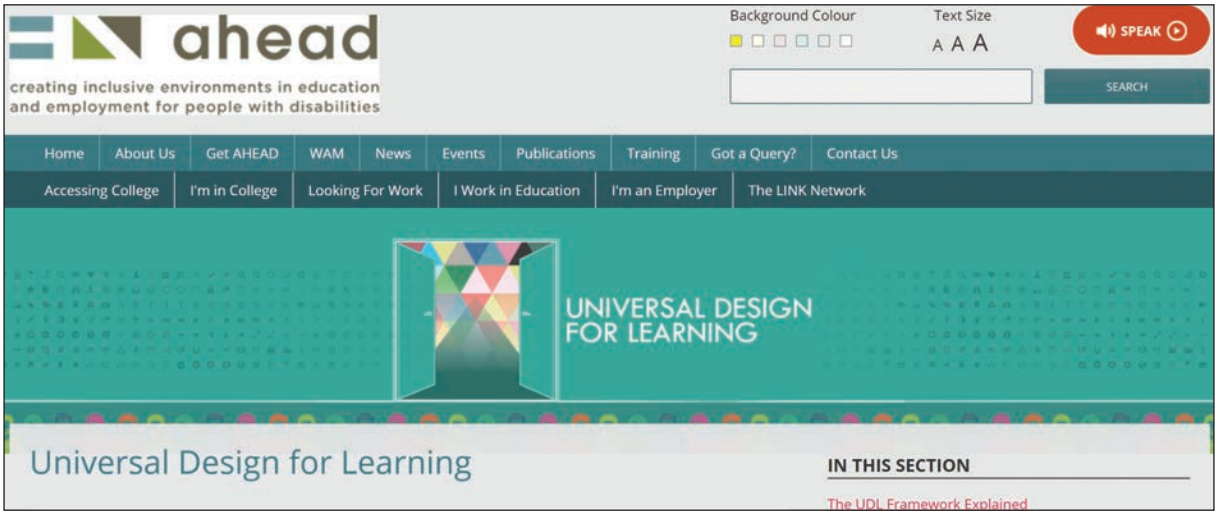


UDL and Technology
Accessible / Assistive technologies can help students with disabilities to unlock their full potential by addressing their diversity of needs.

Technology advances have had a revolutionary impact on UDL by enabling universal access to learning content. When learning materials are presented through digital platforms, they can adapt uniquely to all learners and their needs and preferences. Learners can use screen readers, translate text, and adjust content to their individual needs. They can use video submissions or dictation for assignments.

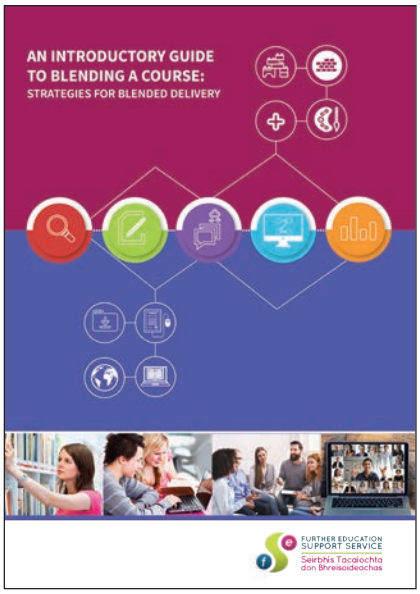
Simply using technology is not however a guarantee of inclusion. Sometimes technology can create new barriers for learners especially those who are vulnerable in a traditional learning situation, such as learners with disabilities.

Learn more about UDL
Further information on UDL can be sourced at: https://www.ahead.ie/udl **LINK**



Blended Learning in Further Education
FESS has developed a handbook to support those delivering FET programmes who have been tasked with converting a fully face-to-face course to one with an online/remote element (i.e. the blended element) for learners. Blended learning is a mode of delivery allowing learners to complete their course of study by a combination of in centre face-to-face, work based and online learning. This handbook focuses primarily on the online element of the blended learning activity.

For further information, please visit: https://www.fess.ie/images/stories/Blended_Learning/BlendedLearningHandbook2020.pdf **LINK**



ACCS TeachNimble Blended Learning For Teachers

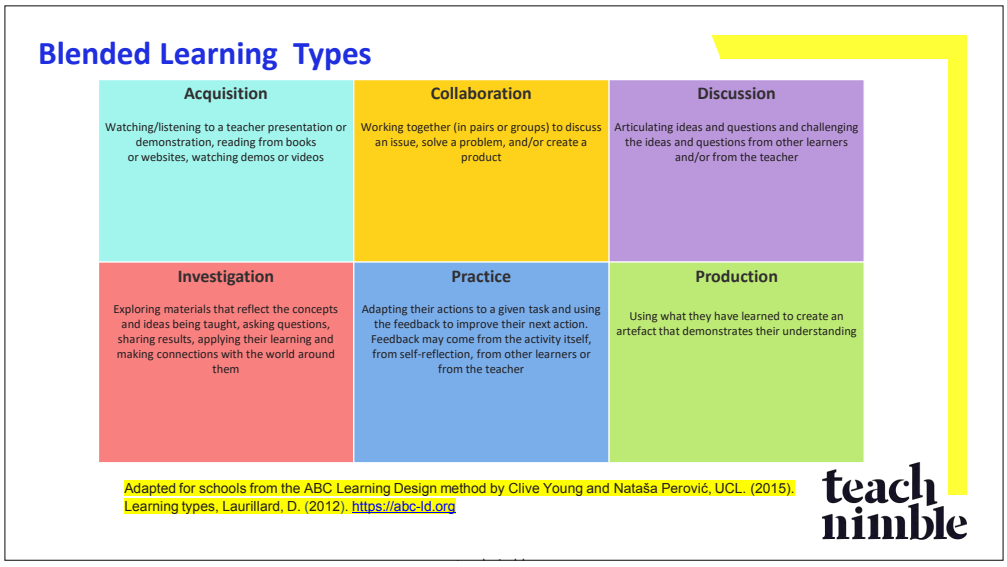
ACCS partnered with H2 Learning to offer their TeachNimble Workshop to all ACCS schools. Link to TeachNimble power point attached here. LINK

H2 Learning developed an online blended programme, TeachNimble, that consisted of two pre-recorded online modules and a live workshop to help schools plan for blended learning.

Designing and creating good learning experiences

TeachNimble empowers educators across all levels of education and training, from early childhood to adult learning, to design engaging learning experiences for their learners using the digital technologies that are appropriate for their context. The approach is constantly evolving and is being informed by research and new developments in the fields of online and blended learning. Blended Learning is understood as a hybrid approach that combines learning in school with distance learning, including online learning.
https://teachnimble.net/

Blended Learning Types – Adapted from the ABC Learning Design Method



These six learning types are interconnected and are labels/approaches to assist teachers to plan learning experiences. Subject department teachers could work together to consider how they might incorporate each learning type while *in school – face to face* or/& when *live online* or/& for *student self-directed learning* opportunities.

Planning for Blended Learning

Schools will choose a blend that suits their own context. The blend is made up of:

- In School
- Live on-line
- Self-directed Learning

A Typical Blend

teach nimble

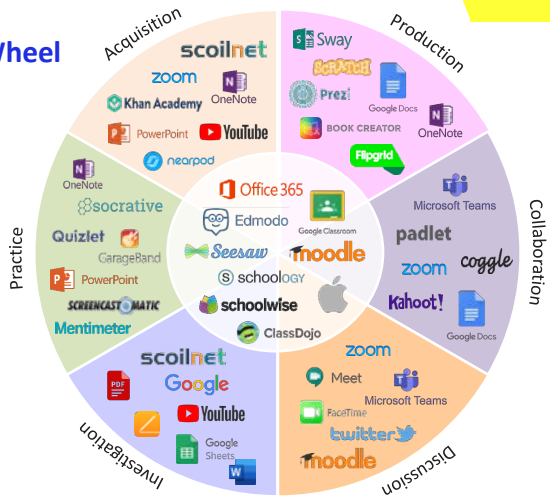
Teacher Learning Activity

Teachers can use the online 'Thinking Tool' available at: *https://flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/abc/toolkit.html* to consider and reflect on teaching and learning strategies used in face-to-face, online delivery or self-directed learning and what mix the teacher would like to use in the future.

LINK

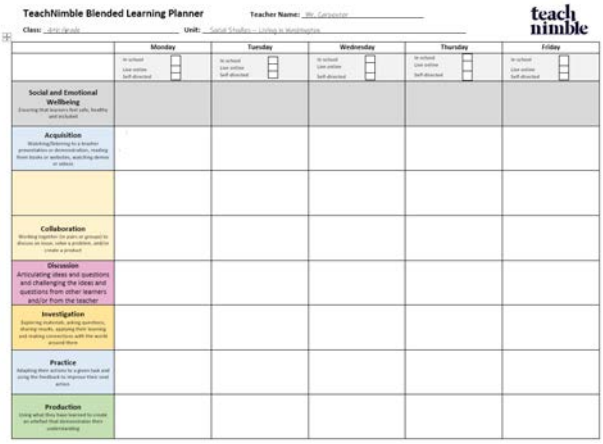
TeachNimble Blended Learning Resources

TeachNimble Technology Wheel



teach nimble

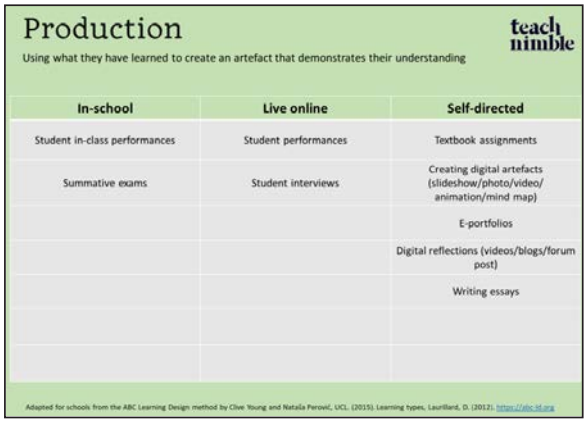
The TeachNimble Blended Learning Planner

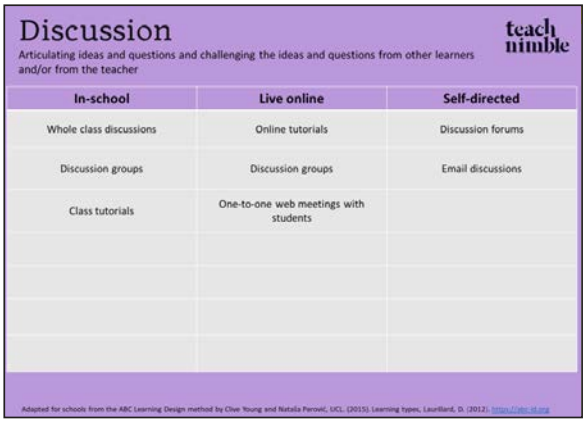


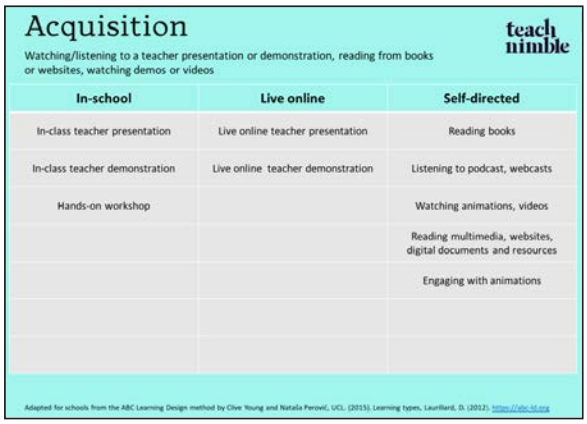
teachnimble.eu

teach nimble

TeachNimble Blended Learning Resources







Teaching and Learning Online

Sample Class Plans

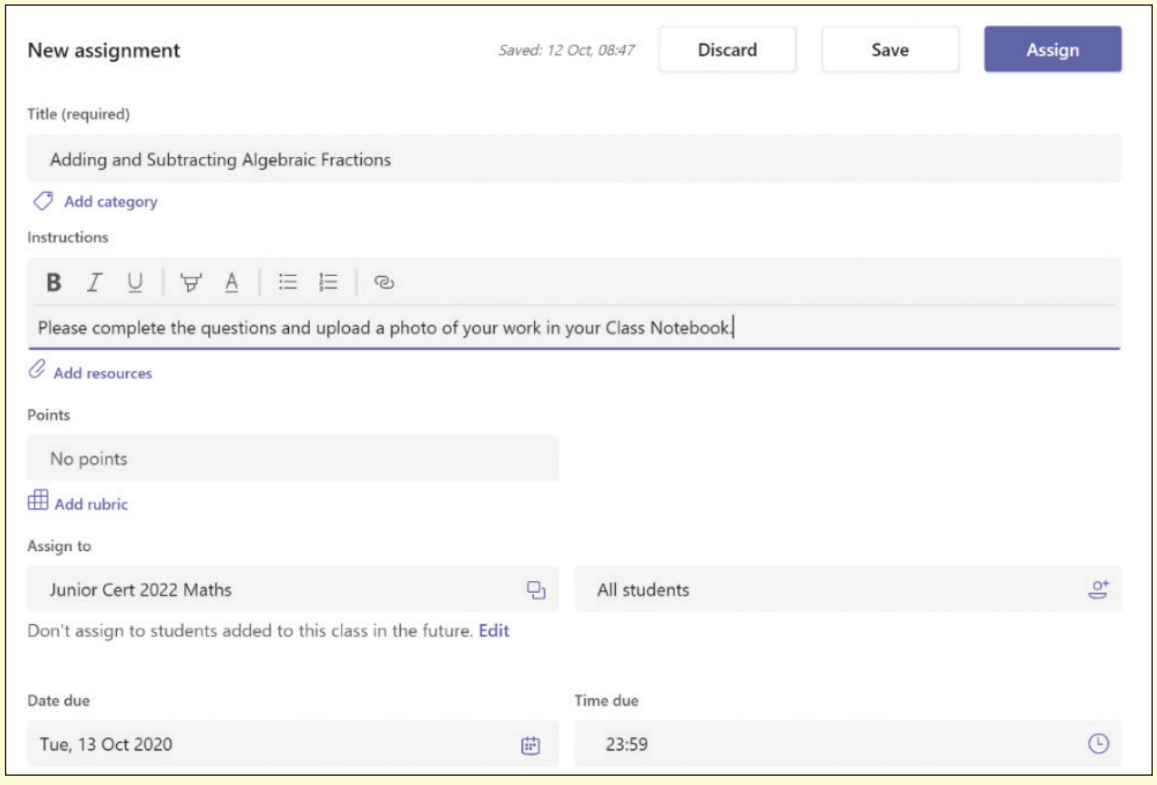
EXAMPLE 1: Ashbourne Community School

MATHS

Topic: Introduction to Algebraic Fractions – Group: 2nd Year Higher Level

Before Event:

- Teacher has Teams and Class Notebook set up and students are familiar with both platforms.
- Teacher schedules a meeting on Teams.
- Teacher sets Assignment on Teams and Adds Resource from Class Notebook. The Assignment then appears in every student Class Notebook. The Assignment is 3 examples for the students to complete.

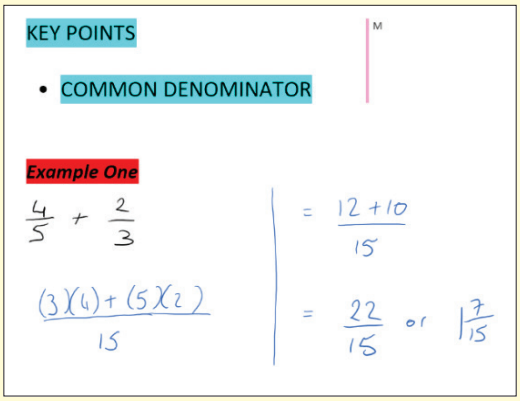


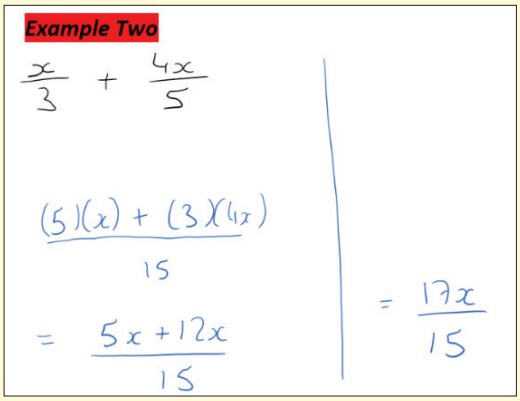
The Assignment is 3 examples for the students to complete:

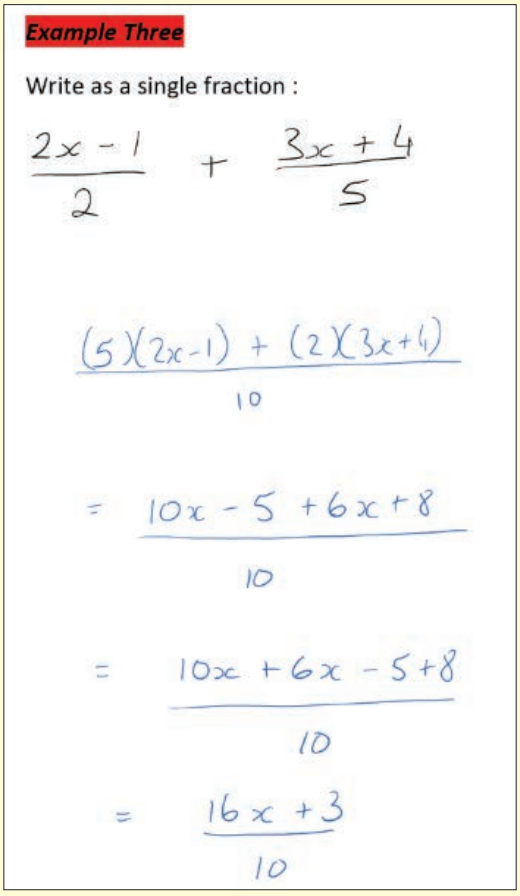
$\frac{x}{20} - \frac{3x}{5}$ $\frac{7x-1}{3} + \frac{2x+8}{5}$ $\frac{9x-2}{4} - \frac{x-3}{2}$

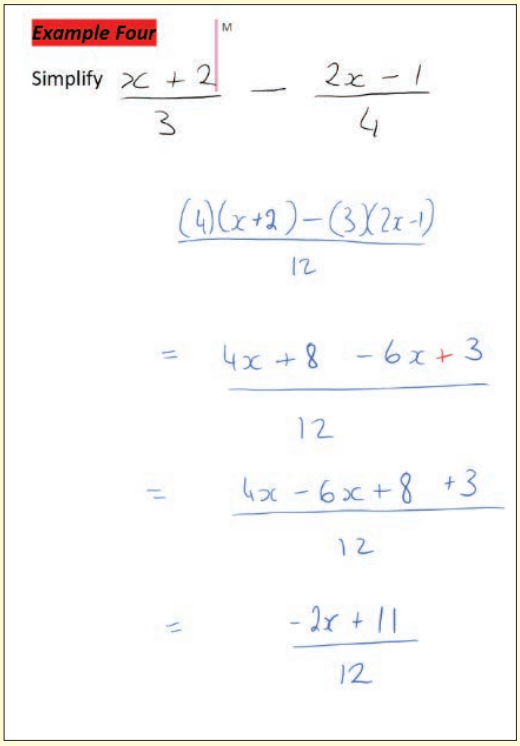
EXAMPLE 1: Ashbourne Community School

Students access their Class Notebook and take down key points and 4 examples before the class:









EXAMPLE 1: Ashbourne Community School

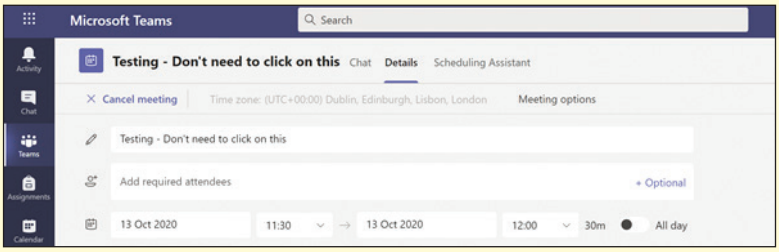
Lesson Learning Event:

- Students get a notification to remind them of meeting or they can go into the Teams and click on Join.
- Teacher starts meeting.
- Teacher explains to students to mute their mics.
- If they wish to ask a question, they can use the chat function or the hands up function and the teacher can invite them to turn on their mic and ask their question.
- Teacher shares screen with students so they can see examples from Class Notebook as the teacher goes through them.
- Teacher goes through the examples step by step.
- Teacher asks students questions individually to check on engagement and understanding.
- At the end of the examples, teacher invites any further questions or observations.
- Teacher asks students to practice examples for the remainder of the class.
- Teacher remains online to answer any questions. Students may ask questions using the mic or the chat function.

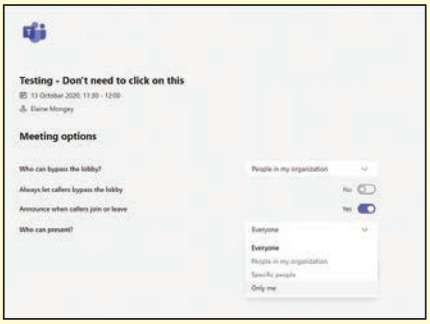
After Event

- Students complete Assignment in their copies.
- Students take a photo of their work and upload it to their Class Notebook.
- Teacher corrects the work and gives feedback.
- This can be done using a stylus or using audio recordings.

A tip for scheduling meetings to ensure that only you can present. If you don't do this, students can "accidentally" start teaching the lesson!
When you have scheduled your meeting click on the meeting again and this box will pop up (the option doesn't seem to appear when you are creating the meeting):



When you click on "meeting options" this box appears:



EXAMPLE 2: Old Bawn Community School

Old Bawn Community School

Technology Enhanced Learning
2020/2021

Remote Lesson Microsoft 365

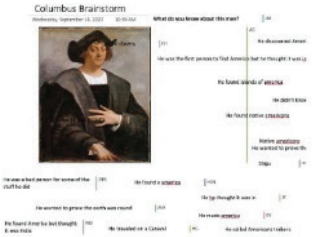
- Teacher is working from home.
- Students Logged into **Teams** but only the supervising teacher joined the meeting in the classroom to avoid feedback.

Team Teaching

- Supervising teacher **assisted students** and got involved in the lesson with **zero background** in the subject.
- The remote teacher asked students to quiz the supervising teacher as the final activity.

KWL

- Using the **collaboration space** in OneNote, students started by brainstorming on the topic and discussed the points shared.



Mid Point Check In

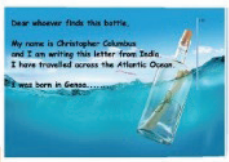
- Using a **Quiz** in Forms, students did a mid point check in on a **self correcting assessment** and the remote teacher was able to re address some common mistakes.

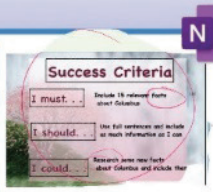
Content Delivery

- The Remote Teacher delivered a **Live Powerpoint** and showed a YouTube clip.

Differentiated Homework

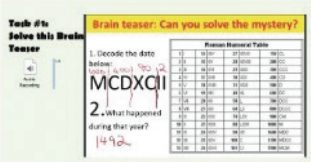
- Homework is a Onenote Page attached as an **Assignment** in Teams. Students given clear success criteria using **I must, I should, I could.**

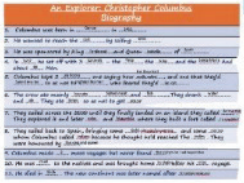




Active Learning

- Students engaged in solving a problem and filling in the blanks using **Student** OneNote **notebooks.** This was supported with an audio recording by the teacher
- Remote teacher used **Review Student** work to **live correct** and give student feedback.

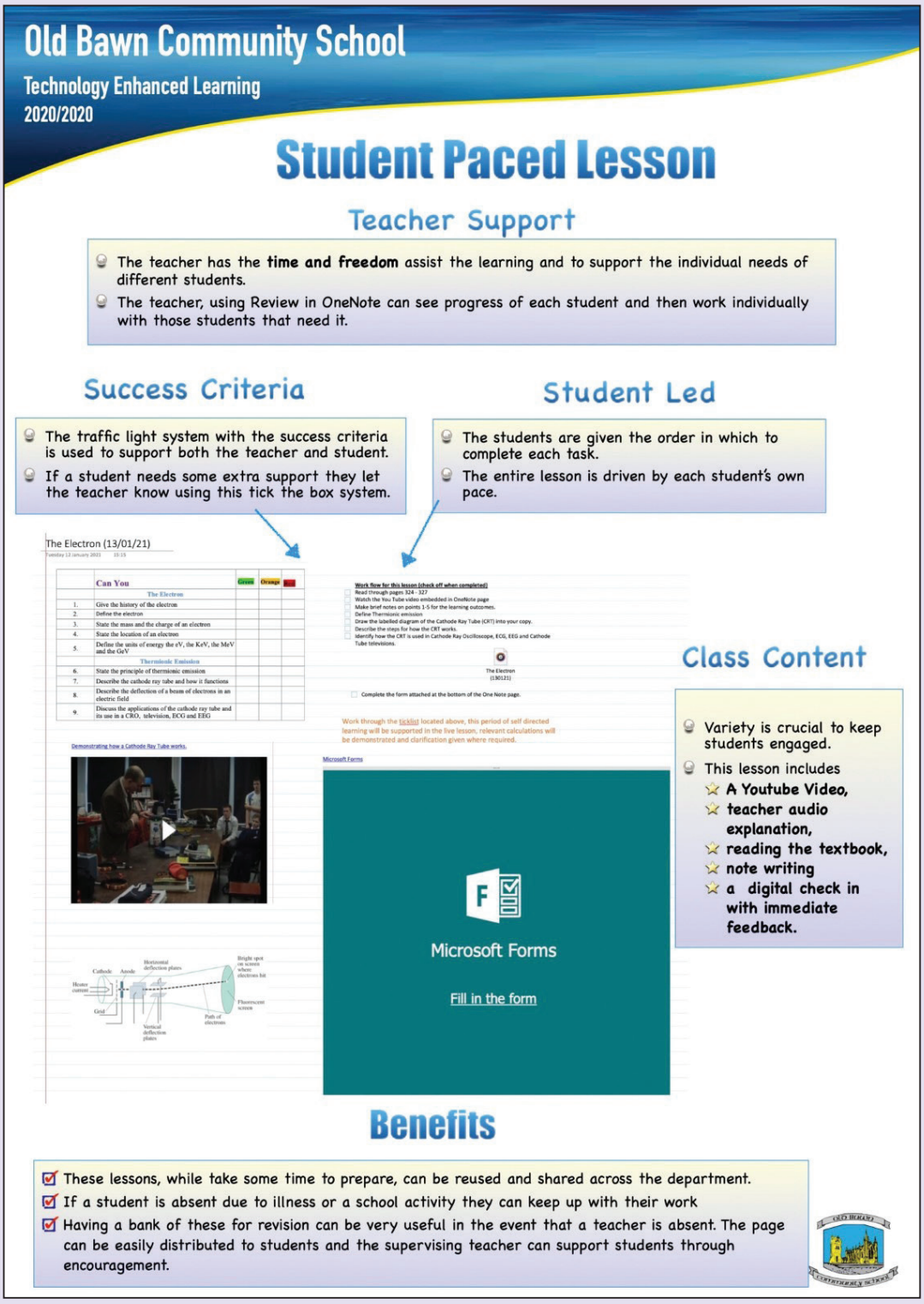




Student Feedback

- Reported that it was "cool" and when asked if they learned as much as they would with the teacher there they agreed. Students also enjoyed the variety.

EXAMPLE 2: Old Bawn Community School



EXAMPLE 3: Ashbourne Community School

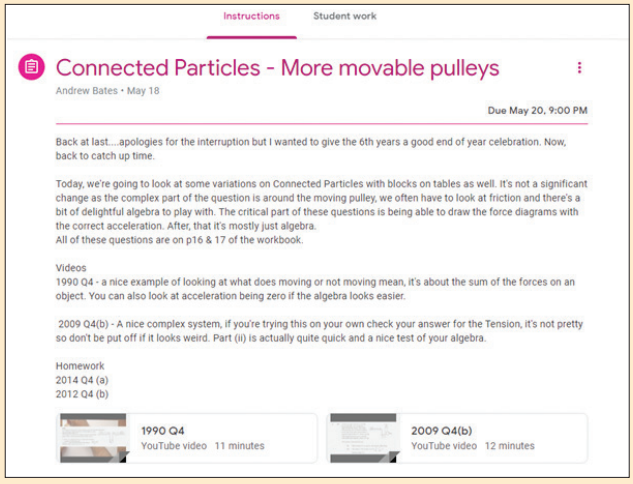
BLENDED LEARNING EXAMPLE – APPLIED MATHS

Blended Learning Example – Group: 5th Year Applied Maths

1: Assignment created in Google Classroom

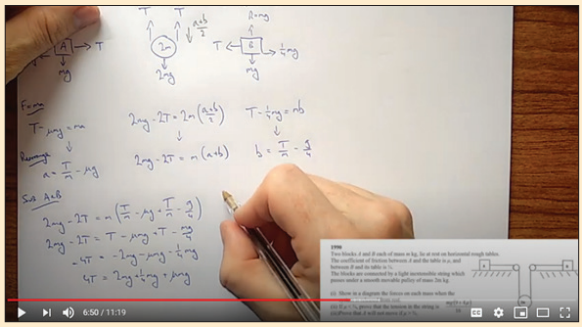
Due dates assigned for the day before the next class to help students manage their workload. Assignment consists:

- of an explanation of how the work connects to what we have done
- 2 videos of worked examples.
- 2 practice questions for student to do on their own.



2: Videos

Videos were created on a phone suspended above the desk to capture the teacher's hand writing and then uploaded to youTube



3: Questions from Students

Students can communicate with the teacher using the private comments section, they can also upload their work as a photo along the way to help make it clear what they are trying to do

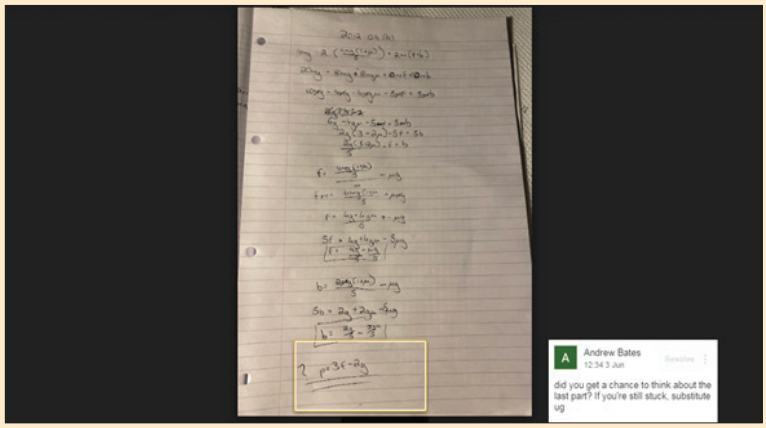
EXAMPLE 3: Ashbourne Community School

4: Student Submission
Students took photographs of their work and submitted on Classroom

Note: we have since moved to using Adobe Scan to create a single file rather than multiple photos, this makes marking much easier.

5: Teacher Feedback
Teacher feedback can then be provided in the private comments and/or on t
heir work.

Note: this comment box feature is not great on the student end as they have to open the file in Drive and turn on comments each time. We have since moved to Stylus Pens which are a massive improvement.

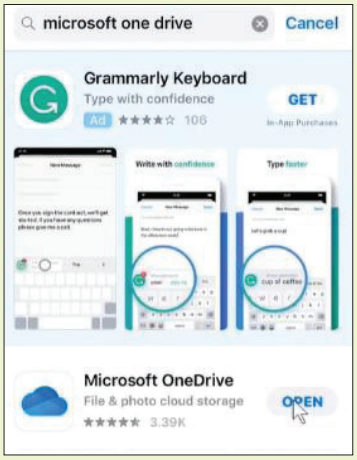


EXAMPLE 4: Ballyhaunis Community School

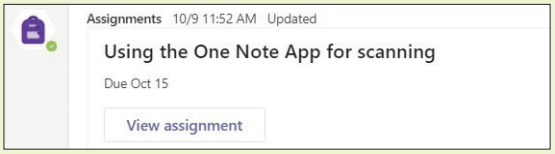
OFFICE 365 PLATFORM
ICT Skills for school in early stages of 365 deployment.
Group: 2nd Year Higher Level • Length of class: 40 mins
Topic: Using the One Drive Mobile App to produce multipage pdfs for use across all subject areas

Resources
- MS Teams
- One Note Classroom Notebook
- One Drive App for IOS or Android
- Casting and Screen recording software
- WebCam

Before the lesson
- Students are familiar with MS Teams
- Students have a created a folder and subfolder structure including a Homework Scans folder for each subject area in One Drive
- Teacher to upload step by step videos for downloading, installing, and creating pdf's using the OneDrive app.
- Students asked to download appropriate app.
- Any students working remotely can email any query or post in Teams.



Assignment 1
- Teacher creates an assignment requiring students to scan a multi-page document and link it to the Homework Section of the ICT One Note Classroom Notebook.
- Students attempt assignment prior to class and turn in.
- Teacher reviews assignment and gives assistance where necessary via email.



Face to Face Lesson
- Teacher reviews the assignment step by step and resolves any issues such as orientation of scan/cropping.
- Students work on second scanning assignment to guarantee understanding and complete in class.
- Teacher provides individual assistance where necessary.
- Class recorded using a webcam and made available via a link on Teams for viewing by students working remotely.

EXAMPLE 5: Gort Community School

Gort Community School

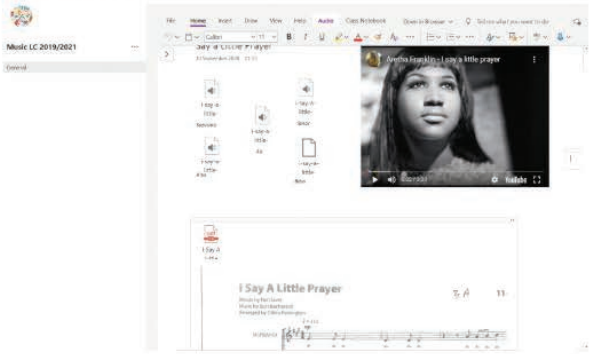
Blended Learning Example

Leaving Cert Music

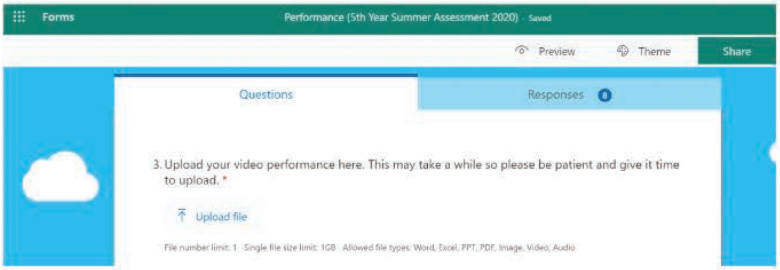
Practical, Listening and Composition

Practical:

1. For group singing the students learn their individual parts at home. Teacher recordings of each part, accompaniment and sheet music can be put on the same page in their Class Notebook. Links to a performance on YouTube can also be added on that page:



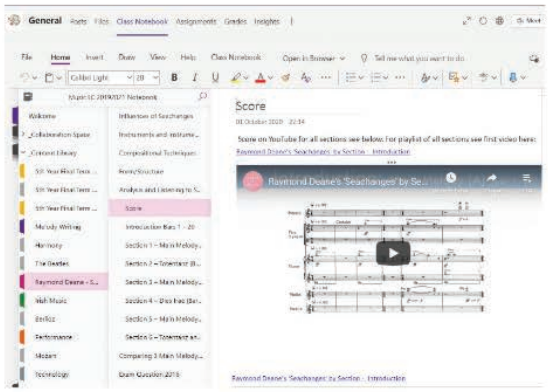
2. Students perform the song in a group in class. They discuss and refine the performance.
3. A link to the recorded parts and accompaniment using www.soundtrap.com is put in an Assignment. Students mute their line and video themselves singing their line along with the other lines. There is a Forms link in the Assignment that allows the students to upload large files like videos which go directly into an Apps folder in teachers' OneDrive. The Form includes self-evaluation questions for the students to answer. The Form can be used for students to send any practical work to the teacher for feedback:



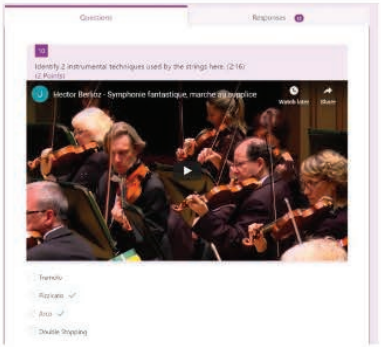
EXAMPLE 5: Gort Community School

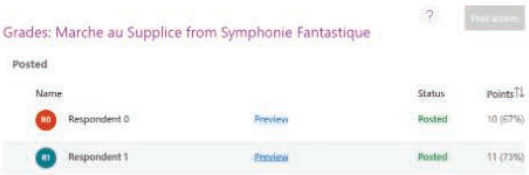
Listening:

1. Class Notebook can be utilised very well for Set Works study and Irish music as YouTube videos, audio, scores, notes, PowerPoint presentation, questions, solutions, Quizlet links and feedback can all be stored in the one place. Students study these at home and class time is used for discussion and more focused listening:



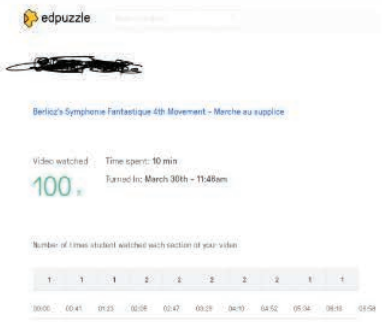
2. Listening questions are set for homework from workbook and exam papers. Suggested solutions are shared with students on Class Notebook. For extended response answers teacher can set Assignment and give feedback. Class time can also be spent listening to student responses. This class can be recorded and put up on Class Notebook for students to review afterwards.
3. Forms can be utilised for assessment as YouTube clips of the relevant listening can be added. Students can instantly see their results if there are multiple choice option. They can get teacher feedback also and the teacher can see grades easily:

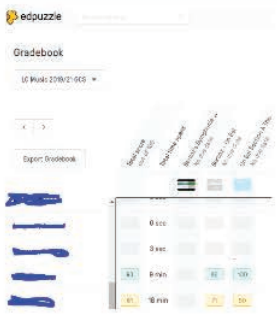




4. Another excellent resource for listening to YouTube videos and checking student understanding is Edpuzzle as it allows the teacher to see how long the student spent watching the video as well as what questions caused difficulty. The link for the assessment can be pasted into an Assignment or into the students' Class Notebook:

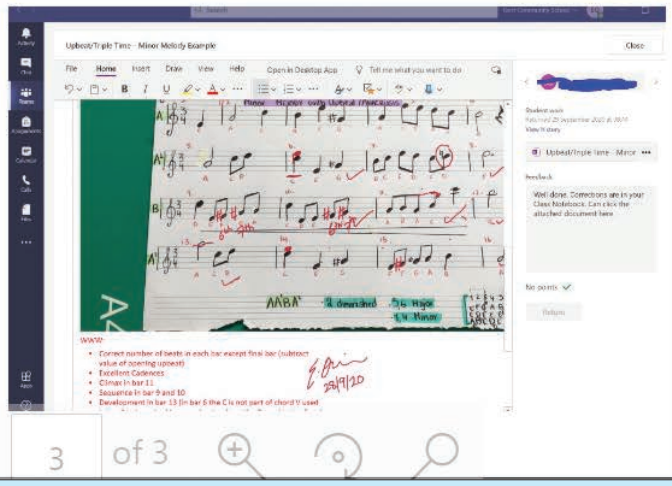
EXAMPLE 5: Gort Community School





Composing:

1. Students can watch video PowerPoints with teacher modelling the steps involved in composition questions and suggested solutions.
2. Students can submit work online using music technology software like MuseScore or www.flat.io and hear their compositions.
3. Students can submit paper questions through Assignments linked to their Homework Section of Class Notebook. These can be annotated using a stylus pen by teacher. Teacher can play students melodies and chord questions and make an Audio recording directly onto the students' homework. Feedback can be given aurally in this way instead of written feedback at times.
4. In class, teacher can efficiently display all students' composition work if submitted through Assignments. Teacher can annotate on the students work live in class with Surface device and stylus pen and play melodies for students to provide basis for discussion and elaboration on individual feedback.
5. Composition assessment needs to be done on paper but students can take a photo of tests and upload directly onto their Class Notebook or through a link to the page set in Assignments for teacher to correct instantly.



Useful Readings & Resources

1. **Teaching and Learning During School Closures: Lessons Learned. Irish Second-Level Teacher Perspectives**
   Ann Devitt, Aibhin Bray, Joanne Banks, Eilís Ní Chorcora, Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, July, 2020.

   This report provides an analysis of teaching and learning during school closures from the perspective of a representative sample of teachers working in second level schools. Given their centrality in engaging and providing continuity of learning for students, it is essential for policy development that the perspectives of teachers are captured, and their experiences of online teaching understood.

   Teaching-and-Learning-during-COVID-shutdown-Post-Primary-Teacher-Perspectives-Report_July_USE_web.pdf (PDF)
   http://www.tara.tcd.ie/handle/2262/92883

   LINK

2. **Education Reimagined: The Future of Learning**
   The fallout from COVID-19, continuing advances in digital technology, and intensifying pent-up demand for student centered learning have combined to present an unprecedented opportunity to transform education across whole systems. We have been impressed by the tireless action to address the emergency needs of students and families. We are deeply encouraged by the growing desire to seize the opportunity to focus on the deep purpose of education through the twin pillars of well-being and learning. Learning for all will spark a new interest and commitment to equity, where diverse students will be drawn to Global Competencies (such as our 6Cs), learning more about their worlds as they commit to building a better future for themselves and humanity. This powerful shift to a learner-centred system will be amplified by technology and driven by education that is steeped in purpose and meaning. We are excited to join Microsoft to help accelerate this development.

   Michael Fullan and Joanne Quinn, Global Directors, New Pedagogies for Deep Learning
   https://edudownloads.azureedge.net/msdownloads/Microsoft-EducationReimagined-Paper.pdf

   LINK

   www.npdl.global (access selection of webinars with Michael Fullan incl. Nuanced Leadership in a Time of Change 1st June 2020).

   LINK

3. **Blended learning in school education – guidelines for the start of the academic year 2020/21**
   The purpose of these guidelines is to be a practical reference to:
   - explore the pedagogical opportunities and challenges of a blended learning model and to identify key considerations that can help with reflection and strategic planning.
   - specifically support planning for the start of the next academic year; however, they may also inspire lasting positive change for inclusive and innovative school education.
   - guide policy makers in considering the system as a whole but will also be useful to regional and local authorities, school leaders, and other stakeholders in their own contexts.
   - complement existing guidelines by national authorities and international

organisations2 on school reopening and on distance learning and support new national guidelines that will enable all learners to benefit from combining in-school and distance learning.

- a broad perspective by considering: school leadership; legislation to support decision making; the management of in-school and distance learning environments for all learners; the teacher's role, competences, and working conditions; learner assessment; the well-being of staff and pupils; collaboration and school community; and quality assurance.

https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/Blended%20learning%20in%20school%20education_European%20Commission_June%202020.pdf

LINK

4. 9 Ways Online Teaching should be different from Face-to-Face July 5, 2020 Jennifer Gonzalez

1. The first weeks of school should be devoted to community building and digital competency.
2. Communication with parents needs to be more thorough, streamlined and predictable.
3. Community and connection need to be a priority for teachers too...

An interview with Melanie Kitchen, a Coordinator of Instructional Technology and Staff Development serving 19 school districts in Western New York state.

https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/9-ways-online-teaching/

LINK

5. A checklist for an education response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

This report aims at supporting education decision making to develop and implement effective education responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The report explains why the necessary social isolation measures will disrupt school-based education for several months in most countries around the world. Absent an intentional and effective strategy to protect opportunity to learn during this period, this disruption will cause severe learning losses for students. The report proposes that leaders of education systems and organisations develop plans for the continuation of education through alternate modalities, during the period of necessary social isolation. It offers a framework of areas to be covered by such plans. Based on a rapid assessment of education needs and emerging responses in ninety-eight countries, the report identifies the most salient needs that should be addressed in these plans, as well as the areas likely to face more implementation challenges. It also examines the education responses of various countries to the crisis. Based on an analysis of data from the most recent administration of the PISA survey, the report also describes the challenges facing various education systems to depend on online education as an alternative modality.

https://globaled.gse.harvard.edu/files/geii/files/framework_guide_v1_002.pdf

LINK

6. Visible Learning Effect Sizes when Schools are Closed: What Matters and What Does Not

Professor Hattie was the adviser for the New Zealand Qualifications Authority that oversaw school examinations after the devastating Christchurch earthquakes of 2011. Schools were closed for weeks and most students did not have the opportunity for online learning or discussion with teachers. But results did not suffer and high school students did not drop out. "The

students' performance actually went up in the final exams," Professor Hattie said. He said the difference was teachers focused on "what has to be learned" instead of getting through a lot of curriculum.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-04-17/will-missing-school-due-to-covid-19-matter-for-school-students/12154266

LINK

7. **Blended Learning: A Guide for Teachers and Resources to Flip Your Classroom (Study.com)**
Today's educators know that technology has had a profound impact on how teaching and learning work. One of the phenomena that has come to play an increasingly important role in education is blended learning. However, what is blended learning, actually? The idea of **blended learning** is that some students can benefit from doing part of their learning in a digital environment, and part of it face to face. The **benefits of blended learning** include the fact that many students can learn best independently, on their own timeframe, and via interface with digital technology. At the same time, learning done in this virtual way is often best consolidated by in-person interactions. In many ways, blended learning combines the best of both worlds.

https://study.com/teach/blended-learning.html

LINK

A flipped classroom consists of students completing direct instruction, such as viewing a lecture online, prior to the in-class discussion of the material. The intent is for students to see the material beforehand, also known as first-exposure learning, so they can learn the concepts at their own pace. By doing so, students are better able to focus on participating in class and receive feedback on their efforts during the lesson — not just after.
Teachers that utilize a flipped classroom model are better able to help their students engage **in active learning.** Students become much more involved during the lesson discussion with the flipped classroom style of instruction by engaging in debates, small group discussions, or in-depth investigations. In essence, a flipped class switches the activities traditionally done in class with those completed after class.

https://study.com/teach/flipped-classroom.html

LINK

8. **Irish Medium e-Hub Pilot Project, May 2018 (DES and H2 Learning)**
In seeking to address this challenge, the Policy identified the potential for the establishment of a pilot Irish-medium e-learning hub to extend the range of subject choices through Irish available to students in small post-primary Gaeltacht schools and Units (Aonaid). Other countries have experienced similar challenges in offering an expanded range of subjects to students and the Department recognises the importance of learning from these experiences to inform the creation of an e-Hub Pilot Project for post-primary schools in the Gaeltacht. This International Review Report examines the provision of supplementary online distance education in a number of countries. The report highlights examples of good practice that provides guidance on how best to extend the range of subject choices at post-primary school level.

https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Policy-on-Gaeltacht-Education-2017-2022/irish-medium-e-hub-pilot-project-international-review-and-advisory-report.pdf

LINK

9. The 6 Learning Types

ABC is based on the pedagogic theory of Professor Diana Laurillard's Conversational Framework. The six learning types have proved to be a very effective method to helping teachers describe and discuss the student learning process. Students and non-teaching staff also find the learning types intuitive and easy to use and can produce innovative and creative storyboards with no prior experience of learning design. In this six minute video Diana Laurillard introduces the six learning types used in the ABC Learning Design workshop.

https://abc-ld.org/6-learning-types/

LINK

10. Building Community in Your Online Course

The Harvard Graduate School of Education have created a number of resources and advice sheets to assist teachers transitioning to online / blended learning.

https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/72996/pages/build-community-in-your-online-course#section10

LINK

11. Moving Lectures and Assessment Online

Advice about online teaching for September, including guides to teaching and assessment, a simple guide for students about online exams, and some advice on creating rubrics from Damian T Gordon, Computer Science Lecturer, and Educational & Disability advocate at DIT.

http://www.damiantgordon.com/MovingOnline.html

LINK

12. Covid-19: How Trinity's researchers in the School of Education are responding

The Covid-19 crisis is one of the greatest challenges we have faced in recent times. Experts around the world have rallied to the cause, working to find treatments, helping to inform policy, providing expert commentary in the media, donating equipment and expertise as well as lab space, or returning to work as frontline healthcare workers. Students and staff from School of Education adapted super-quick to re-invent their studies and roles to a more positive approach in dealing with the pandemic.

https://www.tcd.ie/Education/research/covid-19/

LINK

13. NCSE

For overall planning of SEN provision at school level the NCSE has a range of support resources which can be accessed on the website via:

- >ncse.ie>resources>NCSE Support Service Toolkit to Support the New Special Education Teacher (SET) Allocation Model.

LINK

Other planning documents include:

- 6 Principles to guide the implementation process (Post-Primary Guidelines,p.5)

LINK

- Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports (Post-Primary Guidelines, p.22)

LINK

- School provision plan for pupils with special educational needs (Post-Primary Guidelines, Appendix 2, p.35-36)

LINK

For Teacher CPD go to:

- Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support (Post-Primary Guidelines, p.9-10)

LINK

- Self-Reflective Questionnaire (Post-Primary Guidelines, Appendix 6, p.43-48)
  LINK
- Parental Involvement School Reflection (Post-Primary Guidelines, Appendix 7, p.49
  LINK
- CPD and In-School support-links>Professional Development

  For access to a wide range of SEN supports and resources across the curriculum, go to:
- CPD and In-School Support>Curriculum Accsess Tool - Worksheets/exemplers for all subjects
- CPD and In-School support >Resources - Language and Literacy, Numeracy

  The NCSE/SESS provide CPD on leading SEN within the school and on leading Team Teaching.

  www.ncse.ie
  LINK

14. NEPS – National Educational Psychological Services

For access to the full range of NEPS supports see: www.education.ie/neps>resources and publications

This area includes access to information in relation to the Continuum of Support and Student Support Teams:

- Continuum of Support (Guidelines for Teachers)
  LINK
- Continuum of Support (Resource Pack for Teachers)
  LINK

  A guide to establishing a team or reviewing an existing team
  LINK

  www.education.ie/neps
  LINK

15. National Centre Guidance Education (NCGE)

Support Information for Guidance Counsellors in Schools

https://www.ncge.ie/sites/default/files/schoolguideance/docs/NCGE%20Support%20Information%20for%20Guidance%20Counsellors%20in%20Schools%20%28COVID%20%E2%80%93%2019%20School%20Closures%202020%29.pdf
LINK

16. Monaghan Education Centre

Supporting Schools with Learners at Very High Risk of COVID-19 (Webinar)

17. PDST Technology in Education

Earlier this year PDST Technology in Education launched a new online course aimed at teachers who are teaching online or remotely at the moment: 'Teaching Online for Primary and Post Primary Teachers'.

The course focuses on how to get started teaching online, finding suitable online resources and how to use them (including Scoilnet, Webwise and World Book online), communicating with students and creating your own content. The course includes:

- lessons on False Information (particularly relevant at the moment) from Webwise
- useful features of World Book Online, such as the ability to translate all content to Gaeilge and other languages.

- how to create a Scoilnet Learning Path
- how to use Scoilnet to find resources
- creating audio presentations, videos, screencasts
- digital copyright
- where to find information on school Learning Management Systems and much more
- ideas on activities that can be mediated in an online setting, what works well and tips on how to overcome challenges

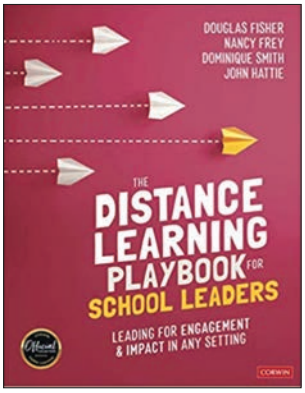
https://teachercpd.ie/mod/page/view.php?id=11798

LINK

18. The Distance Learning Playbook for School Leaders

Leading for Engagement and Impact in Any Setting 1st Edition by Douglas Fischer, Nancy Frey, Dominique B. Smith and John Hattie.

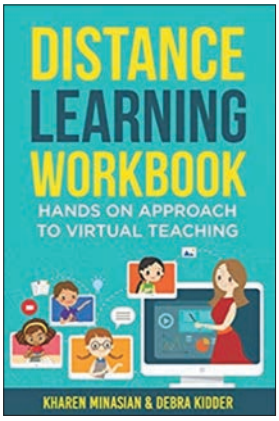
The essential hands-on guide to leading school and school systems from a distance and delivering on the promise of equitable, quality learning experiences for students.



19. Distance Learning Workbook Hands on Approach To Virtual Teaching

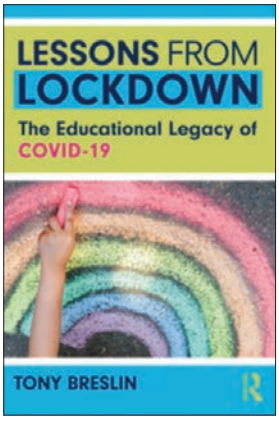
Kharen Minasian and Debra Kidder

Hands on, ready-to-go lesson plans, ideas, tips, and the yearlong building blocks you can use TODAY!



20. Lessons from Lockdown

Lessons from Lockdown explores the impact of COVID-19 on our schooling systems, on the young people and families that they serve and on all who work in – and with – our schools and asks what the long-term ramifications of the pandemic might be for the pedagogy and purpose of formal education. Drawing on the voices of more than a hundred pupils, parents and professionals, it reveals how teachers and learners are adapting practice in areas such as curriculum modelling, parental engagement, assessment and evaluation and blended and online learning. In this timely new book, Tony Breslin draws on his experience as a teacher, researcher, examiner, school governor and policy influencer to assess what the educational legacy of COVID-19 could be, and the potential that it offers for reframing how we 'do' schooling.



Appendix 1

Context: ACCS and the wider system

1. **The Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS) Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020** clearly identifies three key strategies for development. The plan which was reviewed in December 2019 sets out two objectives in Strategy 1: **Shaping the Future by Influencing and Managing Change**
   a. Support Boards of Management to manage change.
   b. Continue to support progress and influence developments within the education sector.

   In achieving these objectives, ACCS identifies a number of actions and tasks. It seeks to keep Boards of Management well informed about the changes which are happening in the education system and it fosters networking and sharing of ideas and issues amongst member schools.
   This Framework is developed by the ACCS Executive ICT subcommittee in this context and includes guidelines, templates and examples of best practice from member schools. The ACCS acknowledges the support given by Tom Lonergan and Deirdre Redmond of PDST TIE who are members of the ICT Subcommittee and the external expertise of Michael Hallissy of H2 Learning in compiling this report.
   (Ref: www.accs.ie publications)

2. The ***Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020 Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Assessment Competency Framework for the Irish context*** and the development and implementation by each school of the ***Digital Learning Framework*** which meets its needs and priorities provides both clarity for teachers in terms of how they can effectively embed digital technologies into their practice and guides school leaders in creating a shared vision for how technology can best meet the needs of all learners.

*"The **Digital Learning Framework for Post Primary Schools** supports and complements the **School Self Evaluation process** in relation to embedding digital technologies into teaching and learning. Its structure is directly aligned to the domains and standards **of Looking at our School 2016 – A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools** and, as a result, articulates effective and highly effective practice for the use of digital technologies in the same two key dimensions, Teaching and Learning and Leadership and Management. These are the two key areas of the work of a school that directly impacts on students' learning outcomes and experiences."*

Page 2, Digital Learning Framework for Post Primary Schools

Ref: https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Information-Communications-Technology-ICT-in-Schools/digital-learning-framework-post-primary.pdf

3. School Self Evaluation Six Step Process

Figure 2: The Digital Learning Planning Cycle

The Framework is accompanied by digital learning planning guidelines – a resource designed to support schools in **the embedding of digital technologies in teaching and learning and in the development of a Digital Learning Plan**. The DL Planning Cycle consists of six steps and these are identical to the process used by schools when engaging with the SSE process.

Ref: https://www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/en/Planning/Digital-Learning-Framework-and-Planning-Resources-Post-Primary/

4. Looking at our School 2016 – A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools

The structure of the Digital Learning Framework for Post Primary Schools is directly aligned to the domains and standards of Looking at our School 2016 – A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools and, as a result, articulates effective and highly effective practice for the use of digital technologies in the same two key dimensions, Teaching and Learning and Leadership and Management.

These are the two key areas of the work of a school that directly impacts on students' learning outcomes and experiences. These two dimensions are divided into the same four domains which represent the distinct, although interrelated, aspects of each dimension. Standards are then provided for each of the domains. The Standards are stated as the behaviours and attributes characteristic of practices in an effective, well-functioning school and are mirrored to the 32 Standards contained in the Looking at Our School 2016 – A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools.

Ref: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/Looking-at-Our-School-2016-A-Quality-Framework-for-Post-Primary-schools.pdf

The Digital Learning Planning Guidelines (DL Planning Guidelines) provide guidance on how the DL Framework can support the creation of a Digital Learning Plan (DL Plan) for each school. Schools are expected to prepare and implement a Digital Learning Plan (formally e-Learning Plan) as part of the Whole School Plan. The guidelines can also be used to support subject department and individual teacher planning and to promote digital learning at programme and cross-curricular levels. The ultimate goal for the DL Planning Guidelines is to guide schools in embedding digital technologies into all areas of school activity.

Page 1, Digital Learning Planning GUIDELINES

Ref: https://www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/en/Planning/Digital-Learning-Planning-Guidelines.pdf

5. Strategy for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in Further Education and Training 2016-2019
(Technology Enhanced Learning = using Technology to facilitate and support innovative Teaching and Learning Practices).
Ref: http://www1.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/ TEL_ Strategy.pdf

The Strategy identifies three themes:

a. Building on existing capacity and good practice

- Develop an Action Plan for TEL to include:
  - Infrastructure, including ICT
  - Pedagogy and ongoing CPD
  - Content creation, (access and sharing)
  - Organisational structures and practice

b. Expanding Access

- Develop and implement guidelines for technology enhanced learning

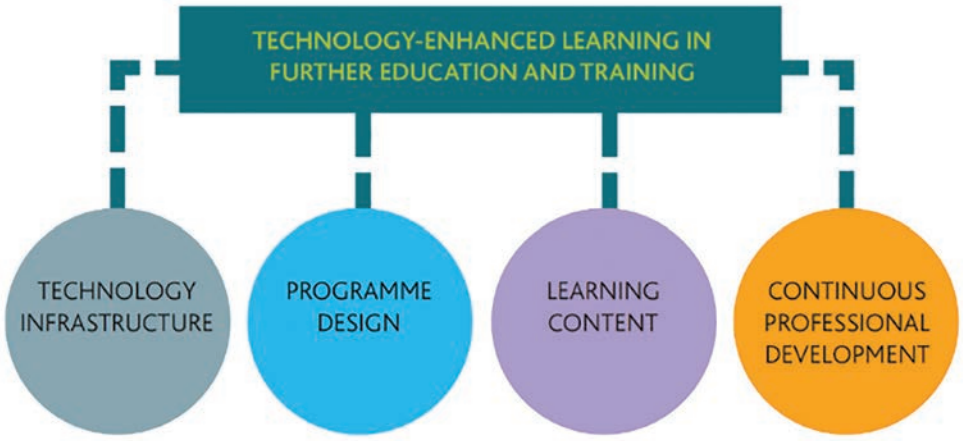
c. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

- Use technology to enhance communities of learning and practice (COP) among teachers and learners.
- Share good models of practice on technology enhanced learning regionally, nationally
- Monitor and evaluate progress locally and nationally to learn from what works and continuously improve policy and practice.

Clodagh Carroll, 1st yr, St Louis Community School

Technology Enhanced Learning in Further Education and Training 2016-2019

THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING



I. **Technology infrastructure** – broadband and wireless internet and network access; virtual learning environments; collaborative online communities of learning and practice, internal content management systems.

II. **Programme design** – building innovative approaches such as the flipped classroom; 'bring your own device'; blended learning; social media; interactive, individualised learning plans; feedback mechanisms and assessments into FET programmes as appropriate.

III. **Learning content** – eBooks; video; virtual animations; simulations and eLearning resources supporting the course learning outcomes as appropriate for the subject area or client group across the full spectrum of FET provision.

IV. **Continuous professional development** building expertise and confidence in using technology to teach and to enhance learning for existing staff and as part of initial teacher training.

Technology enhances learning by enabling:

- *24/7 access to learning resources and assessment instruments*
- *learning content sharing and co-authoring*
- *greater choice over the time, pace and place of study*
- *increased access through variety in modes of delivery: online and combinations of blended learning,*
- *including various mixes of work-based, online, and centre-based learning*
- *opportunities for reflection and planning and increased personalisation of learning*
- *rapid feedback on formative assessments*
- *more active learning by means of interactive technologies and multimedia resources*
- *participation in communities of knowledge, inquiry and learning*
- *learning by discovery in virtual environments*
- *development of skills for living and working in a digital age.*

Appendix 2

ACCS Survey: Digital Technologies in Community and Comprehensive SchoolsJune 2020

1. Schools – (96 Responses - All C & C schools responded to the ACCS Microsoft Forms survey in June 2020).

2. Does the school have a Digital Learning Plan which has been developed/updated in the last 3 years?

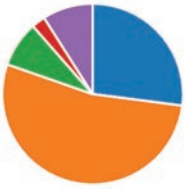
- Yes 91
- No 5

3. Does the school have a Digital Learning Team which supports work and planning in this area?

- Yes 88
- No 6

4. Which of the following Digital Teaching & Learning Platforms are being used by your school?

- Google for Education (G Suite).. 33
- Microsoft Education 65
- Edmodo 10
- Apple (Schoology) 3
- Other 11



Other platforms in use in schools include Zoom, Nearpod, Edpuzzle, Schoolwise and Padlet. While only one school noted that teachers use different platforms and it is their intention to agree on one for all going forward in August 2020, it is evident that a number of schools have more than one platform in use.

5. Do all students have a school email account?

- Yes 93
- No 2

6. Do all staff have a school email account?

- Yes 96
- No 0

7. Do staff have access to their own school device for their work other than PCs in classrooms, staff workrooms etc.?

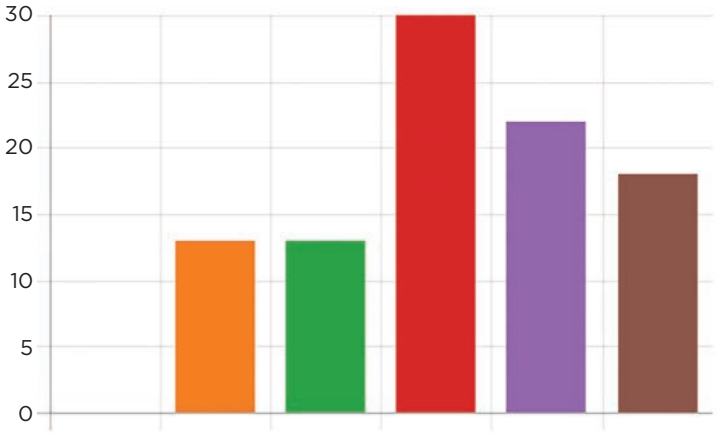
- Yes 39
- No 29
- Less than half of the staff 20
- More than half of the staff 8

8. Do students have their own school device? (not BYOD system)

- Yes 6
- No 87
- Students in Junior Cycle only ..3

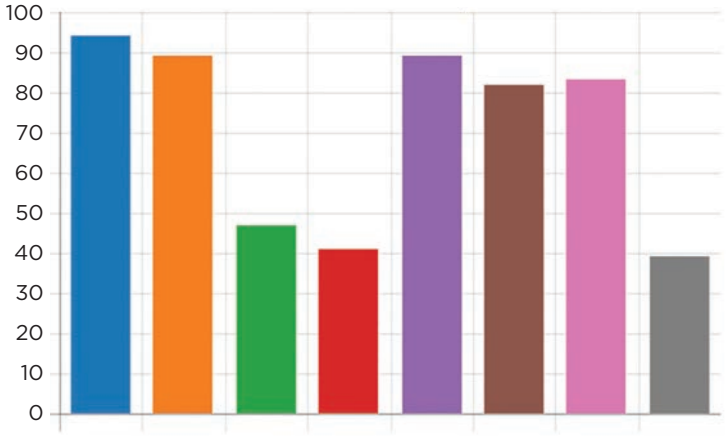
9. During school closure (March - June 2020) how many teachers delivered online classes with their students?

- None 0
- 1-25% 13
- 26-50% 13
- 51-75% 30
- 76-90% 22
- 91-100% 18



10. During school closure, which year groups/students were invited to participate in live classes?

- 6th Years 94
- 5th Years 89
- TY 47
- LCA 41
- 3rd Years 89
- 2nd Years 82
- 1st Years 83
- AEN Groups/1:1 39



11. Comments/Observations from Schools
See all comments – ACCS Survey – June 2020 in Appendix 2.

Synchronous and asynchronous activities

1. *"We developed a system that enabled all classes to have 3-4 live classes each day. Work was uploaded to MS Teams for days that there were not live classes in a subject. Teachers used a mix of methods to complement the live classes including pre-recorded voice messages, voice over recordings on PowerPoint and videos."*

The importance of social interaction

1. *"Students benefited socially from the live lessons (Google Meet). They loved to see each other and their teacher. Reluctance of many students to speak noticeable - circle time for greetings at the start of lesson/meet helped."*
2. *"Overall, we found that students, especially 6th Years craved the structure of a digital timetable and we received very positive feedback once this was in place for senior students as it provided focus and clarity during a very difficult time."*

Staff Confidence/Efficacy/Skill & CPD

1. *"There is a realisation among staff (from staff feedback) that "every teacher is a teacher of digital skills" and a commitment to this on return to school."*
2. *"Teachers enjoyed and were surprised by the capacity for and effectiveness of individual feedback online - also to be continued on return."*

Engagement

1. *"As expected, some students engaged better with online learning than others for a variety of reasons. SEN students need to be in school if at all possible."*
2. *"Many students did not want to be seen or heard in their home due to challenging family circumstances, poverty etc..."*

Appendix 3

ACCS Survey June 2020 – Digital Technologies in Community and Comprehensive Schools

Synchronous and asynchronous activities

- All 3rd and 6th Year students had live Zoom classes from 9am Monday to 3pm on Friday. Some teachers did live classes with all of their year groups while others used Google classroom / Edmodo / Loom etc... as an alternative.
- We introduced MS Office 365 two years ago and this proved *a godsend* during the lockdown as it provided a structure and enabled teams/ classes which had already been established to function.
- We used a combination of live classes, pre-recorded voice overs and assignments.
- Home Economics teachers reported much higher quality research among 5th years during closure.
- Students only received their emails the week of lockdown. All students were sent work every day. A handful of teachers delivered online classes.
- Not all teachers engaged in live classes. Teachers developed their skills as we went along. Many are at different stages. Many have progressed to video tutorials which suited students as they could watch these when they wanted or could repeatedly watch it if needed.
- We developed a system that enabled all classes to have 3-4 live classes each day. Work was uploaded to MS Teams for days that there were not live classes in a subject. Teachers used a mix of methods to compliment the live classes including pre-recorded voice messages, voice over recordings on PowerPoint and videos.
- The most difficult aspect for me as principal was to ensure consistency with all staff and students. As I indicated earlier, almost half the staff engaged with online classes and students enjoyed this and engaged with it. Parents were also very appreciative of this
- The answer to Q.11 reflects invitations to participate in live classes to some extent.
- Q 11: Not all the groups marked had live classes from all subjects. We don't have LCA this year. TY had input but not live classes.

The importance of social interaction

- School initially prioritised 6th & 3rd Years but then rolled it out to everyone. Pupil feedback clearly reports that pupils want the interpersonal engagement with the teacher and need help and encouragement to sustain engagement.
- Students benefited socially from the live lessons (Google Meet). They loved to see each other and their teacher. Reluctance of many students to speak noticeable - circle time for greetings at the start of lesson/meet helped.
- Overall, we found that students, especially 6th Years craved the structure of a digital timetable and we received very positive feedback once this was in place for senior students as it provided focus and clarity during a very difficult time
- Students liked attending classes online and liked the interaction with both their teachers and fellow classmates.
- Subject Departments reported much increased levels of collaboration and trust. I noticed that teams who meet

regularly are used to assigning roles. E.g. the Care Team adapted quickly and worked very effectively online.

Staff Confidence/Efficacy/ Skill & CPD

- There is a realisation among staff (from staff feedback) that "every teacher is a teacher of digital skills" and a commitment to this on return to school.
- Teachers maintained an online record of content, methodologies and student engagement.
- Teachers reported pacing and differentiation to be more easily achieved online. Google forms useful for some kinds of assessment.
- Teachers enjoyed and were surprised by the capacity for and effectiveness of individual feedback online - also to be continued on return.
- Difficult for bigger departments to discuss ideas and make decisions during VC e.g deciding on modes of assessment. Need for very structured agenda for online meetings and a capable moderator.
- Not all staff partook in live classes. In school we have mobile computer on wheels that we use to distribute chrome books.
- The level of support provided by our teaching staff was superb during the closure, but I don't think that effort is sustainable long term. Many of our teachers were working anywhere between 3-6 hours preparing classes after a full day's online teaching.
- There was a clear demand for live classes from students (probably for a variety of reasons!) some teachers rose to the challenge and delivered daily live classes, but others were reluctant to hear the demands being made.
- Some teachers were more expert than others.
- It very much depended on the individual teacher and his/her confidence and competence in delivering online classes.
- Only some teachers were comfortable delivering live classes. It depended on the teacher comfort level. Most of our classes were delivered on Google Suite.
- Different teachers are at different stages with the technology. We found that teachers were just getting used to delivering online classes when the summer break arrived but nearly all teachers gave the live lessons a go! We had great feedback from the parents and students...thankfully!
- Most teachers/students have improved on their ICT skills.
- Some teachers asked students to engage in Google Meets and on the Zoom platform.
- Guidelines around 1:1 online interaction - live calls are difficult as those involved in such calls are the most vulnerable; many teachers involved in SEN/Resource were nervous/reluctant to get involved in such situations.
- From the start two APs worked with me to lead T and L. Teachers said that they found having *a go to person* very supportive and helped alleviate the high levels of stress and frustration.
- Challenging task but I have to thank the teaching staff for the great effort they made to continue the teaching and learning.
- We are at the decision stage regarding purchase of teacher devices - now identified as a priority.

Engagement

- As was the case worldwide, exceptional engagement from unexpected groups of students (we are breaking this down).
- Evidence of lack of engagement/poor engagement not due to lack of device.
- As expected, some students engaged better with online learning than others for a variety of reasons. SEN students need to be in school if at all possible.
- There was very poor engagement throughout lockdown. Teachers rang

families weekly to encourage engagement.
- Many students did not want to be seen or heard in their home due to challenging family circumstances, poverty etc
- There were some periods where we had average 90% attendance during closure but in general it would have averaged at 70%.
- A smallish % of students did not engage, and we are currently analysing this - Summer Programme intervention may help. Teachers using live or recorded lessons/input reported the highest level of success/satisfaction. Their video clips while very time consuming to record are viewed as an excellent resource going forward (ideas for use by SET etc).
- Engagement ranged from 10 - 90% for different classes
- It was extremely difficult to get students to engage. While live classes were offered to all year groups, it would have been by certain teachers/certain subjects. So, while all above were ticked, it is a very small number who actually engaged.
- We were concerned about engagement with online T. & L. which was between 60 & 70% in most classes, believing that poor internet coverage and lack of access to a proper device may have inhibited students. However, when it came to the online end of year assessments, we had 96% participation and submission from all year groups. We will push harder for engagement from all in August/September.
- Career Guidance included above (Q11), too.
- Lack of engagement from 5th Year students in particular was a big issue. I didn't survey staff for exact results - online delivery I am taking as live or video not posting work on Google classroom and is somewhere between 75 - 90%.
- Attendance for online classes could vary greatly.
- Very difficult getting students to engage. At one stage teachers turning up for live classes and nobody there!
- In spite of extensive interventions, 10% of our student cohort did not engage in remote teaching and learning.

Devices/Wi-Fi/Digital Divide
- Staff access to technology/devices was an issue for some. School provided staff with a loan of chromebooks for the duration of school closure.
- There is the issue of digital divide. Students that don't have good broadband need some help, some hubs they could work from etc.
- Our school has conducted surveys with parents and students re online learning and teaching during the school closure. Two key issues emerged: a high number of students accessing schoolwork via mobile phone (28%); a high number of students do not have unlimited data (35%).
- For many of our students they had to share a device or use their phones.
- Teachers varied on the level of online classes taught. This was because of level of ICT knowledge and/or Broadband issues. As a school in a rural area, broadband is the biggest issue.
- Majority of students had no Wi-Fi.
- Students lack of devices and teachers lack of training was a huge obstacle.
- There were problems with broadband that would not be able to facilitate a live Zoom call.
- The school organised to deliver devices to students during school closure.
- All staff will have own device from next September.
- We did give out some devices to students where there was increased demand on the household, and this again was appreciated by parents/ guardians. Access to devices

and suitable broadband was the biggest obstacle to successful online teaching and learning for both staff and students.
- Another issue seems to be Wi-Fi/ broadband for a limited number of staff and a larger number of students. The digital divide continues to be an issue for us.
- Depending on a phone was a very difficult experience for many pupils. All pupils need to get consistent instruction on how to manage remote T & L and need access to reliable devices.
- The issues with lack of technology at home, no space etc. have all been acknowledged. Unbelievably there needs to be time spent on addressing the reality that some failed to engage because they were too embarrassed to "be seen" by peers/teachers.
- Connectivity in rural areas was our biggest issue re ICT during school closures.
- Access to technology an issue with many students. 1st, 2nd and 6th were the best engaged groups. (The 6th Years, because of their particular priorities. The 1st and 2nd Years because we have had a First Year 365 programmes in place for incoming 1st Year students for the past two years).
- Wi-Fi proved to be a serious problem with both teachers and students reporting poor coverage.
- Broadband connectivity in rural areas remains a stumbling block for delivery of online. Poor broadband in many areas for both students and teachers. 15% of students do not have access to a laptop.
- Limits to mobile data on students' phones was also an issue.
- Our online learning worked well as we were ready to go with iPads. Rural broadband is an issue.
- Both staff and students had issues with connectivity and poor internet coverage, some more than others, in some instances, making it impossible for them to engage.
- During closure students without easy access to a device (laptop, desktop, tablet) were given the loan of a school device. We received donations of 10 devices from TCD Access Programme (with 55 to follow) and 10 from Dennis O'Brien - *Communicorp* is our School Business partner. We are in the process of buying 3 trolleys of Chrome Books which can be lent out if necessary. We are also buying a trolley of staff devices.
- Many students sharing devices at home. A large number of students using their phone so some of the interface on MS Teams app didn't show or feature. This led to confusion. Many teachers in rural areas with poor Wi-Fi and being unfairly compared to other staff members who had time/excellent Wi-Fi/resources/ict capabilities, etc.
- Very hard to know exactly how many teachers gave online classes. All teachers were involved in online learning but not necessarily live. One of the biggest difficulties we experienced with online learning was broadband in the homes, in particular upload speeds.
- Many students would only have use of mobile phone. The school distributed around 30 Laptops which are now returned.
- Poor Internet / Broadband in the West of Ireland makes online teaching extremely difficult.
- The internet connection is so bad this evening I'm even having difficulty submitting this form.
- Broadband coverage is also an issue - often for the teacher for live classes.

Additional Supports
- DPs checked and made supportive calls to teachers (assigned by subject department) in the early weeks.
- For staff meetings and student assemblies we found the use of a teacher not directly involved / contributing to act as MC really helpful.

They know the agenda and can focus on maintaining flow and also deal with technical issues.
- Year heads made tremendous efforts to encourage parents and students to stay engaged.
- SNA emails circulated for support during closure.
- AEN had contact home via phone but not live classes.
- We also used the online fora for pastoral meetings.
- The use of emails to connect with all stakeholders through WebEx was also incredibly useful and we would like to thank ACCS for facilitating this partnership as it really was appreciated by all staff and management.

Looking ahead
- We are working on a requirement of, at a minimum, one live session in perhaps every 4 hours of timetable subject.
- We need to work with students' skills uploading work and need to upskill students on digital etiquette.
- The forced closure was done without much time to plan. If it were to happen again, we would definitely need a clear plan on how we are going to disseminate work and receive it back as well as clear guidelines on live classes.
- Delighted that there is going to be a uniform approach as at the moment it's very difficult to plan for September.
- Intend to provide a school device to all staff for the next academic year. DEIS students received a device from the school.
- Teachers will be upskilled further in use of Microsoft teams when we come back in August.
- We just about had time to train staff as we moved to Microsoft in the Summer of 2019. We didn't have the time to train students, so this is a priority for the new school year. Staff have indicated that they want to continue to upskill in the use of the Microsoft 365 Suite whatever the circumstances of next academic year.
- As a team we will have to continue to develop the ICT skills of our teachers.
- I would advise looking at the Schoolwise App as we found it excellent.
- *"Blended learning/teaching"* will be impossible to deliver equitably.... if social distancing is still in place it will be impossible to ensure. Qualified H&S experts (not HSA forms) need to be hired to support school Principals.
- The biggest challenge moving forward is going to be bringing the other staff (teachers who didn't engage with online classes) on board. Training and resources are key, and this is the area that I plan to focus on prior to returning in September.
- Bespoke CPD in the area of ICT and teaching and learning will be one of our whole staff priorities next year. Any guidance suggestions are very welcome.
- I would envisage that the return to school with *blended learning* as a focus needs to be carefully considered to ensure full engagement by students with a need for investment to improve infrastructure within the education system being a priority. The broadband lines within school currently 100MB lines should be upgraded to 1000MB lines immediately through the NCTE to cater for the increased data flow that will be required, otherwise this has the potential to cause significant difficulties to the effective functioning of blended learning platforms and staff engagement in this form of teaching and learning.
- We would encourage ACCS to work on behalf of these students with the DES re accessing unlimited data and the provision of suitable devices.
- ACCS were brilliant on the help they offered schools.

Appendix 4

Gathering Evidence using survey tools

John the Baptist Community School

Teachers
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=JxdCUOu4zEyrH3URytgRE_SraQicMIdDteY88PV2mBFUMTBITlBaMVNOT1dQQUxW

LINK

Students
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=JxdCUOu4zEyrH3URytgRE5zEPKI3nYZIrt9BI2Pk93lUNjQwTklNQ1hQUjRQVktITDlNMVVDQjE2TC4u&sharetoken=vX1p3FvhnYoVpylxgMMi

LINK

Parents/Guardians
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=JxdCUOu4zEyrH3URytgRE5zEPKI3nYZIrt9BI2Pk93lUNzBURjFCNjlIS1dVUlEyR005MEJBTVVPQi4u&sharetoken=y1RpwRCNS0UBSUBJ3IP9

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Gort Community School

Students
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=6uZNx-JPQEOwf2wygKv6sGtuvqdavARGuM5dKDxfeBhUNjhNQTdKOTZPN1JYRkdCUFg2TTJIS0FLQi4u&sharetoken=ekSPKTqv1VAtiwKS7X0z

LINK

Teachers
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=6uZNx-JPQEOwf2wygKv6sFSElKjloHVPsrSmEhEcA_xUNUFOTkk2SVU2UEtOT1pBQUdaQlJIT1RKRi4u&sharetoken=P74Pk1mvgYp2elMme5nv

LINK

Parents/Guardians
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LINK

Devices/Wi-Fi/Digital Divide

1. *"Our school has conducted surveys with parents and students re online learning and teaching during the school closure. Two key issues emerged: a high number of students accessing schoolwork via mobile phone (28%); a high number of students do not have unlimited data (35%)."*
2. *"The issues with lack of technology at home, no space etc… have all been acknowledged. Unbelievably there needs to be time spent on addressing the reality that some failed to engage because they were too embarrassed to "be seen" by peers/ teachers."*

Additional Supports

1. *"DPs checked and made supportive calls to teachers (assigned by subject department) in the early weeks."*
2. *"For staff meetings and student assemblies we found the use of a teacher not directly involved /contributing to act as MC really helpful. They know the agenda and can focus on maintaining flow and also deal with technical issues."*

Looking ahead

1. *"We are working on a requirement of, at a minimum, one live session in perhaps every 4 hours of timetable subject."*
2. *"We need to work with students' skills uploading work and need to upskill students on digital etiquette."*

Appendix 5

Digital Learning Planning Guidelines

https://www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/en/Planning/Digital-Learning-Planning-Guidelines.pdf

Extract from pages 30 & 31, Digital Learning Planning Guidelines

School Leadership

Leadership is key to the successful implementation of the DL Plan and this is reflected in the statements of practice within the DL Framework, specifically in Domain 4, Developing Leadership Capacity (Leadership and Management).

DOMAIN 4: DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

Standards	Statements of Effective Practice	Statements of Highly Effective Practice
Critique their practice as leaders and develop their understanding of effective and sustainable leadership.	The principal and other leaders in the school ensure that technology systems are in place to support the digital pedagogical practices within the school. They question their own practice in relation to the use of digital technologies through processes of personal reflection and identify areas of their practice that require improvement.	The principal and other leaders in the school reflect on, critically assess and actively develop the digital pedagogical practices within the school. They develop self-awareness by regularly questioning their own practice in relation to the use of digital technologies through personal and collaborative reflection. They identify and work on areas of their practice that require improvement.

Figure 4: Excerpt from the Digital Learning Framework.

The principal and other leaders should:

- Support all staff to embed digital technologies in their teaching practice.
- Support staff development by facilitating sharing of practice amongst teachers and encouraging participation in relevant CPD programmes.
- Ensure all staff have a copy of the DL Plan and are provided with the necessary support, towards implementation.
- Monitor how the plan is progressing and consult regularly with staff members, both formally and informally, in relation to the plan.
- Regularly include Digital Learning on the agenda for staff meetings.
- Facilitate an annual review of the DL Plan.
- Ensure the involvement and support of the Board of Management, and other stakeholders, in implementing the plan.

Teaching Staff
The implementation of the Digital Learning Plan will differ between primary and post-primary schools. At primary level, where teachers teach all subjects, there is an opportunity for each class teacher to embed digital learning within her/his class. At post-primary level, each subject department will play a key role in ensuring the plan is successfully implemented.

Each teacher can contribute to the successful implementation of the DL Plan by:
- Being aware of and by being committed to the DL Plan.
- Sharing good practice with colleagues in relation to digital learning (both formally and informally).
- Using the DL Framework to reflect on their own DL practices (using six step process)
- Reviewing the exemplars of good digital learning practice on the PDST Technology in Education website.
- Identifying and engaging in professional learning activities that support the enhancement of DL practices in schools.

The Digital Learning Team
The DL Team can play a role in ensuring that the plan is owned by teachers, parents and students. Facilitation is essential in ensuring that the plan is successfully implemented.

The DL Team can support staff by:
- Discussing the DL Plan regularly at staff meetings and/or subject department meetings at post-primary.
- Holding formal/informal discussions with staff members.
- Facilitating events where teachers share their digital practices, and where more confident teachers work with other teachers on a one to-one basis and small group basis (mentoring approach).
- Sharing ideas, resources, and/or classroom management approaches that support effective and highly effective DL practices.
- Supporting staff to identify relevant external professional learning opportunities.

Professional Learning
Teachers, along with principals, will be instrumental in ensuring that digital technologies are embedded in learning, teaching and assessment practices in each school. There is a need to ensure that all teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to embed digital technologies into their practice. The DL Framework can support staff to reflect on their current DL practices and to identify areas where they would like to enhance their practice through engaging in professional learning activities.

The school can support staff to:
- Review their current digital practice on their own or with a group of colleagues.
- Identify gaps in their knowledge, skills or confidence in relation to embedding digital technologies into their practice.

- Identify and engage with appropriate professional learning activities, such as sharing practice with peers, participating in communities of practice or enrolling in accredited/unaccredited professional learning programmes.
- Share relevant articles, podcasts or videos on effective and highly effective DL practices with colleagues.

Digital Infrastructure

"There is an ever-expanding array of digital technologies that can support learning in schools. Many of these technologies have not been developed for education but with careful consideration and thoughtful planning they can transform learning, teaching and assessment practices. In selecting such technologies, schools must consider the security of the infrastructure with end to end encryption being a standard requirement; what learning practices they wish to promote and select the appropriate technologies for the task. Schools should review how other schools are using various technologies by viewing exemplar case-studies online, by attending conferences or by visiting other schools. The PDST Technology in Education website provides a range of video exemplars to enable schools to review a wide range of digital infrastructure being used to support the DL Framework."

Page 32, Digital Learning Planning GUIDELINES

Appendix 6

Students with AEN – useful websites

The National Council for Special Education (www.ncse.ie) have compiled fantastic resources for teachers and parents during these changed times:

Parents: https://ncse.ie/online-resources-for-parents
Teachers: https://ncse.ie/online-resources-for-teachers

NCSE (NBSS) Publications & Resources: Developed to support schools in addressing students' social, emotional, wellbeing, academic and behavioural needs: https://www.nbss.ie/publications-resources

ncse
An Chomhairle Náisiúnta um Oideachas Speisialta
National Council for Special Education

Working to deliver a better special education service

NCCA – National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/supporting-the-curriculum
Click on 'Supporting Special Needs Education' link. See 'Curricular Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities'. In the case of all subject areas go to lesson 'Exemplars' section of relevant PDF.

https://sites.google.com/view/distance-learning-specialed/home?fbclid=IwAR01f5F6MVoh0dZZUr4pwDcmlo5cUUtYIADtwHfAYQNXgH_bcYiHfhf9XBw

https://education.microsoft.com/en-us/resource/0c6e9c42

Appendix 7
Digital Safety Checklist

Digital Safety Checklist
(Source: teachersupport.ie)

Question / Statement	Yes / No / Action Required
Is information regarding data privacy clearly stated by the platform tool or app used by the school?	
Is it clear what data on your device and those of your students will be accessed by the platform, tool or app?	
The Website: **Terms of Service: Didn't Read** provides a quick-read ratings for the terms of service of some popular platforms.	
Informing students about the importance of their digital footprint is a valuable instructional opportunity in itself, so consider sharing websites like these with your students to enhance their understanding of digital citizenship.	
If you are hosting virtual classrooms via web conference software such as Zoom or Teams, be very cautious about taking screenshots for sharing on social media or via other channels. Remember that students' faces and names may be visible, and telephone numbers are usually visible on apps such as WhatsApp. As always, be guided by your school's policies and safeguarding principles.	
Maintaining your own privacy is also important. Instead of using your personal e-mail for communicating with students, use one that is provided or approved by the school. The same principle should apply to any web-based communication services you might use.	

Appendix 8
Glossary of Terms

Distance Learning
Distance learning is when students don't attend classroom lessons in person. Instead, they receive instruction, and learn and study from home.
Classes are usually conducted over the internet and students can submit assignments remotely. As distance learning offers students the flexibility and convenience of not having to be physically present in the learning institution, the advantages are numerous. Students can access class resources from a single location.

Blended or Hybrid Learning
This is where the traditional form of face-to-face learning converges with the newer methods of remote and online instruction. Blended learning uses technology to improve the learning process and is the model most likely to be adopted by third-level institutions as ongoing social distancing requirements limit the possibility of traditional in-person lectures taking place.
Blended learning is customisable and, as a result, a wide range of approaches to the method means the balance between in-class teaching and the use of technology varies from programme to programme. Advocates say it offers the best of both worlds. The curriculum is usually delivered through a combination of classroom-based lectures, online lectures and the use of other online resources. Ideally, these course components complement each other to strengthen the overall outcome. Blended learning also offers students the benefits of in-class engagement with instructors with the flexibility of online learning. The degree to which the course is blended depends on the course programme and the institution in question.

E-Learning
Short for electronic learning, eLearning is a term that essentially means *learning with the aid of digital tools*. It has its roots in distance learning. The internet has contributed greatly to a marked growth in the use of technology for the delivery of education over the past decade and has helped the development of new models of teaching, improved instruction methods and the possibility of better student outcomes.
As colleges and universities shut their doors, in came video conferencing, online quizzes, virtual learning platforms, specialised simulations, asynchronous and synchronous teaching.
Technology is at the centre of eLearning and without it the programme could not be delivered. Students use computer and internet technology to access the curriculum from outside the traditional classroom.
It is widely seen as a flexible and efficient way of delivering the curriculum as most people with a stable internet connection can access these tools and participate in some form of online learning. It is also efficient. Students no longer have to worry about attending a lecture or class at a set time, they can review lecture videos as often as they like, there is no commute time and it can help develop time-management skills. Unsurprisingly, it is often the preferred option for students who are working or who have other constraints on their time.
Critics sometimes cite poor student engagement as one of the greatest

drawbacks of eLearning. In traditional classroom settings, students can raise their hand and engage in face-to-face interaction with their instructor but it is not as easy to raise the hand digitally in an eLearning environment.
The very nature of the approach means students will invariably spend a lot of time on their own in front of the computer screen and the lack of social interaction can lead to a sense of isolation.

Emergency Remote Teaching
Not to be confused with distance learning or online learning, emergency remote teaching is a measure that is adopted in response to a crisis where the curriculum has to be rapidly moved to a virtual online setting.
The unintended consequences of emergency remote teaching can include a failure to meet the expectations that students had at the outset of the course. Simply broadcasting a lecture with the aid of a video conferencing tool or uploading a presentation to a virtual learning environment is not the same as presenting course content that has been planned, developed and designed for delivery via a framework that best enables learning to take place. The sudden change in delivery model can mean a change to how course material is absorbed by students and it can also mean a change to the assessment model which can be disruptive for those students who had prepared for another format entirely over a lengthy period of time.
The needs of all students might not be met by sudden change, and unexpected barriers such as the digital divide and other inequities can arise. There is also the danger that in the absence of a coherent emergency plan that teaching objectives can shift from the achievement of pre-defined learning goals to enacting a crisis management approach instead.
While the process of moving from an established teaching method to an unfamiliar new platform can be difficult, emergency remote teaching can be a useful learning experience as instructors quickly learn to apply what works and discard what doesn't.

Synchronous Learning
Synchronous learning is a term used to describe a method where students engage in learning at the same time but not in the same place. Synchronous learning usually involves the use of online tools such as chat and videoconferencing where students and teachers can interact in real-time during class. Class activities typically take place through the use of dedicated virtual learning environments (also known as learning management systems) such as Brightspace, Moodle or Canvas.

Asynchronous Learning
Asynchronous learning is a term used to describe a method where students engage in learning at different times and locations. Asynchronous learning often utilises elements such as email, pre-recorded video and other tools such as online discussion forums that facilitate the sharing of information.

Learning Management System
Sometimes referred to as virtual learning environment or virtual learning platforms, learning management systems are web-based software platforms which facilitate the delivery of course content. Platforms provide teaching tools and supports but also allow course instructors to track student performance over time.
Multiple formats such as video, audio and text are catered for and students can be assessed through tools such as online quizzes and questionnaires. They are in widespread use at third level and can be used to deliver asynchronous or synchronous-based courses. Systems such as Brightspace, Canvas, Moodle and

Blackboard have built-in tools that allow instructors to deliver lectures by video or audio, facilitate discussions and even track student performance.

Virtual Classroom
A virtual classroom is an online learning environment where students interact in real time with the instructor and with each other. Usually delivered via videoconferencing tools, virtual classrooms are also a feature of learning management systems. Students can also usually interact and ask or answer questions by using a chat window. Presentation tools such as PowerPoint or whiteboard tools can usually be utilised by the teacher during class. It is also possible during a class or lecture to operate break-out rooms where students can work together or where the instructor can interact directly with an individual student.

Webinar
A webinar is a class in which participants view the same screen at the same time. Very useful in a classroom setting, the instructor controls proceedings and participants can communicate through the use of interactive features such as chatrooms, polls and quizzes.

Collaborative Tools
This is usually a reference to materials such as PDFs, slideshow, spreadsheets, presentations, images or text documents. These tools are usually found as a feature within the learning management systems.

Flipped Classes
A feature of some blended learning approaches where lectures are replaced by classes or tutorial-type settings. Students consume content – perhaps by viewing a lecture video or completing an assignment – at home before engaging in analysis and discussion in the live class setting. The practice results in more face-to-face time and affords the instructor greater flexibility in being able to engage directly with students during class, and it can help increase student engagement as they are required to prepare material ahead of the class.

(Source Irish Times Article, June 2020)

Appendix 9

Useful Websites

Web Address	Description
General	
https://www.toptools4learning.com/	Top 200 Tools for Learning 2019.
https://www.pdst.ie/DistanceLearning	PDST Distance learning resources to support schools.
https://www.dlplanning.ie/post-primary/	A range of resources to support schools in effectively embedding digital technologies in learning, teaching and assessment.
https://teachersupport.ie/resources/	Support Resources for teaching online - Hibernia College.
https://www.webwise.ie/welcome-to-webwise/us/	Webwise promotes the autonomous, effective, and safer use of the internet by young people through a sustained information and awareness strategy targeting stakeholders with relevant messages.
Teaching Resources	
www.scoilnet.ie	Scoilnet is the Department of Education and Skills (DES) official portal for Irish education.
https://www.senteacher.org/	Free Special Needs Teaching Resources.
https://www.pdst.ie/postprimary	View Resources by Subject.
http://www.teachnet.ie/resources/	Resources created by teachers for teachers.
www.khanacademy.org	Online tools for students.
https://alison.com/	Free online courses on: Technology, Science, Health, Language, Maths and much more.
CPD	
PDST https://teachercpd.ie/	The learning platform for *PDST Technology in Education* online courses on digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.
https://www.cpdlearnonline.ie/	CPD Learn Online is managed by GMIT Teaching and Learning Office and is hosted by HEANet Ireland.
https://vimeo.com/wrigglelearning	52 Webinar Videos – Remote Teaching & Learning (Wriggle).
https://teachfromhome.google/intl/en/	Teach from Home is a Google-led initiative that gives you everything you need to get started.
https://www.education.microsoft.com/en-us	Microsoft Educator Centre – Getting Started with Remote Learning.
https://www.apple.com/education/k12/apple-teacher	Apple Teacher Learning Centre.
TTV https://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/	Russell Stannard, from Teacher Training Videos provides a range of free videos to assist teachers in moving their teaching online, including useful videos on using Zoom, Padlet, Edmodo, Adobe Connect and Screencast-o-matic. It also includes useful information on assessing students using online quizzes for formative assessment, getting learners to create videos and the use of e-portfolios.
Further Education https://www.ecollege.ie/course	eCollege is the national online learning service for the Further Education and Training sector, funded by SOLAS.

Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha

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