

Challenges and Comments:

- Email overload – school is at capacity for the moment - 2000 emails per day!
- Practical subjects are limited to theory and only so much can be achieved without the classroom.
- Pacing of work and upskilling for all -Many are overwhelmed
- Some teachers are under pressure especially if they have small children themselves to look after at the same time, they are available to their students online.
- The disparities now between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' is terrifying. Those who are self-directed and supported will be fine and thrive. Those who are marginalised, disconnected and vulnerable (for whatever reason) are now being further marginalised

What have we learnt:

- Keeping in contact is of utmost importance.
- Students miss school - they like some teacher interaction and they love interaction with their friends.
- The structure of a school day is impossible to completely replicate. Most students love the everyday social interaction of school and as such they want to be in class with their friends each day.
- Sharing resources works better than working alone.
- Some of our staff and some of our students have no ONLINE access
- Availability to students for questions and answers is vital. Knowledge of the students, good interpersonal relationships built up over the days, months and years paying off now
- Exams in some format are required to give a focus.

Management of Distance Learning:

1. INFRASTRUCTURE:

- **ICT: Devices for all.** We are offering to loan out our school laptops to students for the duration of the school closure. We are operating on trust and a signed agreement - we do not want to add any more financial pressure to parents who may already be in difficulty.
- School bought **phones** for the Guidance Counsellors and Chaplain who will continue to link in with their regular 'clients' for the duration of the shutdown. Over-the-phone counselling will continue where practicable. The HSCL teacher is also supporting families at this time. Year Heads have telephoned all homes this week and are supporting students by email.
- School has done a local radio broadcast to reach all students. Chaplain will do a broadcast this week and is linking with students who need ongoing support.
- **Guide to online COB and Netiquette** – See example from Malahide CS/ see emails etiquette doc.
 - What we are setting up must be both realistic and sustainable for what looks like being an extended period away from the school building and school life as we have known it heretofore. I want to implement curfews/parameters for both students and teachers - agreed times outside of which engagement is discouraged/not allowed. As a school, we are incredibly student-focussed but I am anxious that teachers do not assume more responsibility than they should. I think there are inherent dangers of this happening with any virtual learning environment.
 - Remote Learning Protocols for Teachers and Students has been devised in association with our Parents' Association and shared with all parties.
- **Guide to Data Protection and Distance Learning** - See Hilary's Info Note to all schools
- **Upskilling and building capacity**
 - **School eLearning team** is supporting colleagues online and by phone and helping them to upskill. Digital Strategy team providing **online workshops** to all staff who wish to improve their technological expertise. Dedicated group of teacher leaders has been organised to offer IT support to all other teachers. Each has 4/5 teachers under their remit. There is online group support for all. Teachers are

providing Edmodo CPD for other teachers to enhance the teaching and learning experience for students.

- **A shared file has been created with “how to” videos** showing how to use different platforms and online resources to maximise the efficiency of teaching and learning remotely. Some of these videos are sourced online and others have been created by our own staff. (to assist teachers with creating teams, posting assignments, uploading resources and creating of audio and video files. parents and students online.)
- **Subject Department online meetings** - Sharing of resources through online collaboration within subject departments. Teachers are actively engaging in new resources every day to improve the quality of the teaching and learning. They upload summaries of notes, structures to analyse material, more use of quizz etc.
- School has invested in a number of **additional webcams** to make them available to teachers of all subject departments. This will enable teachers provide a better quality of video lesson to students.
- **Set up a group chat online for teachers** i.e. **Sixth Year teachers** asking for suggestions and seeking out challenges that are occurring and try to solve them in some way.
- School wants to move to more interactive pieces such as Google Hangouts
- The AP for TLAR developed a **Distance Learning Digital Guide for the school** with support from members of the Digital Team.

- **Timetabling and STRUCTURE:**

- Follow the **normal school timetable**. Subject teachers are available to students during their class timetable period is working well. Students are sending work to teachers as they complete. Assignments are being set and corrected via teams and tutorials/lessons are being given using the voice over function in power-point.
- Establish a **block timetable**
- Assign **different times to different year groups**. Uploading material and videos that can be accessed by students at any time as some parents need the laptop/PC for work, so can't guarantee all students would be online at one time.
- Teachers are **assigning 1, 2 or 3 pieces of work per week** depending on the year group.
- **SEN team and SNAs also engaging online with specific students and parents.**
- **Subject teachers work with students as per Subject Department agreement.** Blocks of work suit the older and more able students and a strong case for project-based learning is emerging for younger students. **Setting creative tasks for non-exam years**
- **Staff originally planned for a two-week closure and outlined work for students for those two weeks.** Staff **printed hard copies of work for students** who may not be able to access on-line supports. Staff have delivered assignments though email and Teams. We recommended to our students to follow their regular school timetable to give a structure to their day. Staff are now working on reviewing students' engagement, alerting Year Heads to students who are not engaging and planning assignments for going forward
- **Sixth Years and Third Years** follow timetable where teachers are teaching live. For resources and other materials which **students can access in their own time**, each teacher has set up a **Class Notebook**.
- Teachers have been asked to **post work in time for class each day.**
- Individual teachers access Google Classroom or school email generally on the day the subject is taught. Teachers are often using video as opposed to live lessons which offers flexibility to students. **Group work/collaborative work** is arranged as necessary. **The content is discussed at Subject Department level and is under constant appraisal (in most subject departments).** Project based learning is emerging as a favourite with younger students. Considerable energy for the first week has been invested in engaging and motivating students. Teachers are now asked to log their engagement on a Google Doc

- We are using a **mixture** of approaches as some teachers are using **structured video classes** on Microsoft Teams at timetabled times, some are **using video lessons and tutorials**, and some are using **assigned work and feedback** on **different topics**. All classes are receiving work for all subjects at all times and most are getting a combination of all the above at different times. Teachers are liaising with each other on Microsoft Teams and are ensuring that students are not being called to two different teachers at any time. **As such the school timetable takes precedent.**
- Varied approach with teachers of **JC students advised to adhere to their TT, SC more revision and exam paper focused by devising unique study plans.**
- Teachers are **checking in with their classes on the days** on which they are timetabled with them, and are **setting a balanced programme of work** across a **number of days.**
- **We have morning assembly every morning at 08.55 facilitated by Bere Island community radio.** This sets students and parents up for the day. Principal gives short address followed by teachers e.g explaining work for the day for a particular subject, explaining teams etc, input from student council, parents association and larger school community. Students are asked to log on to their email account after assembly and they will see the work for the day. Teachers have begun giving online classes as well as using other aspects of teams. Last week exam classes were prioritized but all students now see to be catered for. High level of engagement from lots of students.
- Teachers are posting work/assignments for all classes on Google classroom. They are primarily focusing on exam classes but are assigning work to all classes. Students are asked to follow their timetable **and to study/revise where there is no online work posted that day by their teacher. Teachers give feedback/comments to each individual.** Teachers are posting videos and have held class through Zoom.

2. PLANNING

- We have a 3-step plan that has been communicated to all staff.
 - Step 1: Establishing simple connections with all students. (Getting the technology right)
 - Step 2 Teachers engagement with students in learning.
 - Step 3: live Online Teaching
- **Development of guidelines for teachers for setting work –**
 - Open communication critical with regular updates to all parties. This is trial & error territory - we have had to request some teachers to row back & be realistic about the work being set. As all parties get better used to operating in this environment, we anticipate more streamlined flow. We are encouraging teachers to consider more video-conferencing style approaches.
 - All staff have been emailed a reminder that their Child Protection roles and responsibilities are unchanged by the closure.
 - The recently published (NEPS) guidelines for young people and mindfulness have been emailed to all students and are posted on our website. All parents have received a direct link to this via SMS.
 - Each day the senior management team is scheduling meetings with different subject departments to ascertain the level of engagement and progress among both staff and students.
 - I sought feedback from teachers in relation to following a school timetable. We are not sure if the exact timetable as it stands would work in terms of children beginning at 8.45. We do see the need for some routine and are looking at developing more bespoke timetables for individuals or groups. Full-time real time teaching is not possible for teachers who now have full-time childcare commitments. Parents of primary school children are trying to find time to do schoolwork with their own children.
- **Development of guidelines for students submitting work**
 - I keep in very regular contact with the students to gauge progress. **I have learned that they require specific guidelines in a clear and concise manner.** Huge scaffolding to ensure learning outcomes are achieved.
- **Development of advice for parents overseeing work**

- The recently published **(NEPS) guidelines** for young people and mindfulness have been emailed to all students and are posted on our website. All parents have received a direct link to this via SMS.
- School has sent **phone calls/letters/emails/SMS messages/posts on school app/school website/school twitter a/c/newsletter/Facebook** to all parents giving email contacts for our care team and SEN team
- Advice given to parents to follow the school timetable and complete the work assigned at those periods. School has a **dedicated Learning at Home Page** on website with links and resources to support students and parents.
- VSWare reports available to parents / Parents invite into their child's Google account to receive weekly reports on activity. Parents have access to child's Edmodo account to view all work being carried out./ Parents are kept updated through Compass.
- School has set-up a dedicated email for parents/ guardians to contact the school where there are issues with access to Teams etc. This account is monitored regularly.
- School surveyed the Parents' Association regarding the Remote Learning arrangements.

3. FOLLOW UP:

- **Subject teachers /Year Heads / SLT** follow up on students who are not engaging and send a follow up email to parents on this.
- **Weekly Meeting of Student Support Team**– Agree students of concern, link with Year Heads and follow up.
- Principal updates and reports regularly to teachers.
- **SMT** conduct regular admin Google Meets.
- **SMT MEET with Year Heads and Care Team and SEN.** Follow on responsibilities assigned from this meeting re student access deficits and SEN progress.
- Website and texts used to manage school admin of timetable and subject choice provision for 1st, 3rd, TYs etc.
- We are working on a **mentor programme** where each child will be assigned a staff mentor to keep in touch.

4. EVALUATION:

- Weekly survey of all stakeholders:
 - *What's working well?*
 - *Even better if...*
- Feedback from students and parents through school admin system
- Student Council input.
- Survey all teachers on use of Google Classroom and MEET for 3rd and 6th Years and check against the Admin Console Audit
- To date the priority is engagement & motivation of students. 97% of students engaged at some level following calls home from tutors, Year Heads, SCP & HSCL. There is a good deal of structured learning with built in feedback & good engagement but not across all groups. School is developing a Google sheet to keep track.

5. WELLBEING:

- **SCS** (Sufficient (appropriate amounts of work) Connection (continuously connect with students) Sustainable (workload that is achievable)
- Support Team Personnel check and connect – emails, phone calls, TEAMS /GOOGLE Meeting

- **Phone calls to every staff member** by SLT to provide support and ensure accountability.
- School management send **regular emails** to the school staff to support and engage with them and offer a listening ear and support for anyone experiencing difficulty.
- Our Guidance Counsellor has set up an **Online Wellbeing Programme** for both students and staff.
- Our school chaplain and Guidance Counsellor are providing **online assistance and one to one video supports** to all students who wish avail of these supports. They have also **posted school Facebook and Twitter messages informing students of these supports.**
- Chaplain is devising plans to link with all students through MSTEAMS
- Chaplain offers **positive and uplifting quotes** on a shared platform
- Access through Office 365 to guidance counsellor who will then work with students over the phone if needed (via parents)
- Guidance counsellor's email details provided for **subject choice**
- Guidance Class on Timetable proceeding for 5th & 6th at **timetabled slot.**
- All stakeholders can contact office by email (and are encouraged to do so) and put them in touch with whoever they need.
- **Wellbeing materials have been distributed to all students. Several activities / workouts** have been **recorded by the PE teacher** & sent individually to students and put on school social media for access by all.
- School hosts **online sessions for more vulnerable parents and students.**
- Guidance Counsellors have contacted all students **via email.** They **have shared their contact details with students and encouraged communication where needed.** The Guidance Counsellors have also **shared the contact details of various support organisations** both nationally/ locally.
- **Year Heads** are available to students who are finding the current circumstances difficult. **Regular messages** are being sent out to the year groups by the Year Heads.
- **Tutors call each family weekly.** Pastoral team will now take responsibility for the more vulnerable students and students with emerging needs. Guidance, Chaplain, SCP and HSCL all involved.
- Guidance counsellor has set up **dedicated site for 6th years.**
- School is **rolling out conference calls facility** with chaplain for students in need
- The Guidance Counsellors have a dedicated email that parents, students/ teachers can send questions etc
- School ensures that any emails, advice put on the Facebook page is balanced and gives opportunities for wellbeing -links to PE with Joe, Yoga etc, advising students to ensure that they have some down time too.
- School is running a **competition for photographs** of what is making you happy at this time.
- Both chaplain and guidance teachers are in the building and engaging with pupils. All Leaving Cert students are being phoned individually from a pastoral perspective. Vulnerable student from other year groups are also being contacted.
- Our Wellbeing Coordinator **creates a weekly newsletter** for our **school community.** It is available on our **website and on twitter.**
- Students are contacted **to share their experiences** and there is advice on how to deal with this crisis.
- PE department has a Wellbeing class for all students with a focus on physical exercise.
- School has a TLC (Tutor Led Care) class every week and content is co-ordinated by one teacher

6. RESOURCES

- Using YouTube channel to prepare videos for different language levels.

- Plan to schedule work on tv programmes on TG4 that can be used for classwork.
- Learning to use Loom and Zoom. (student feedback indicates they like some teacher interaction)
- Zoom and Instagram live plus use of recorded visualisers have enhanced usage greatly in last two weeks. So far and particularly the level of engagement has risen greatly in week two among all year groups.
- Teachers are collaborating on Schoology sharing resources, and sharing their success and failures
- School is extending the use of videoed lessons and graphic tablets (especially for maths)
- Teachers are experimenting with Zoom and Google Meet for increased interaction with and between students.
- School has had offers of help from parents to set up Webinars.