

Dundela Infants' School and Nursery Unit



Blended and Remote Learning Policy

Blended Learning is a hybrid approach that combines learning in school with distance learning, from home, including online learning.

It is a flexible model that supports a unit of learning to progress whilst not requiring teachers and learners to be in the same physical space at all times.

Rationale

In Dundela Infants' School and Nursery Unit we are supporting our families and children with their learning, by providing remote learning opportunities should we need to send individual children, whole classes or the whole school home for short or extended periods of time.

In order to deliver a coherent range of curricular experiences, our staff are committed to giving pupils access to learning activities which will, as far as possible, meet their needs and build upon prior learning.

Types of Blended Learning:

A. Face-to-Face Time with Pupils

This is the most traditional form of teaching and learning. It is a 'teacher-centred' method of education and takes place in school, in person. Pupils benefit from increased levels of interaction with their peers, as well as with their teacher, and are allowed the opportunity to bond with fellow pupils.

B. Flipped Learning

In the traditional approach to teaching and learning the teacher is the primary source of information. By contrast, the flipped learning model deliberately shifts instruction to a pupil-centred approach, where **in-class time** is dedicated to: exploring topics in greater depth; introducing complex concepts; answering questions; addressing misconceptions; setting clear expectations around work to be completed at home (online or paper-based); and, creating rich learning opportunities. As a result, pupils are actively involved in knowledge construction as they participate in and evaluate their learning in a manner that is personally meaningful.

C. Online Learning

The school's platform for sharing online resources and setting work will be the Seesaw App. Pupils will also be able to return/submit completed tasks through this platform. The school website will also be used to deliver videos and learning tasks.

Information gathered at the start of each academic year will indicate what internet access and devices families have. Following the criteria set by C2k and the school, available school devices (iPads) will be loaned out to suitable candidates.

D. Hard Copy Physical Resources

Research shows that engagement improves with access to Hard Copy Resources such as work books. This is likely due to the fact that using paper, in their learning at home, most closely replicates what the learning process is like in school.

Teaching & Learning: Roles and Responsibilities

The role of staff:

- To provide new learning opportunities as well as reinforcement and consolidation of prior learning.
- To build upon the “home learning” experience, systems and skills learned during lockdown.
- To promote an ethos of inclusion, respect, fairness and equality.
- To ensure that internet safety is central to all digital technology.
- To provide support and guidance for pupils and parents, and give feedback where this is appropriate.
- To engage with effective learning and teaching resources and adapt these as necessary to suit resources available to pupils at home.
- To foster an open pathway of communication between the school and home where appropriate.
- To keep abreast of research.
- To adhere to Safeguarding and Health and Safety guidelines.
- To deputise in the event of a year group colleague being ill and unable to set remote learning.
- Under the direction of the class teacher, classroom assistants to provide and/or source suitable activities and resources that can be sent out via Seesaw.

Staff will:-

- Select appropriate teaching and learning approaches, providing a comprehensive overview and clear instruction to enable pupils to balance work completed in school and at home. *(See Appendix 1 for P1, Appendix 2 for P2, Appendix 3 for P3, Appendix 4 for Nursery and Appendix 5 for guidelines on video calls).*
- Provide a balanced, broad range of remote learning tasks.
- Provide Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing tasks.
- Provide targeted, “differentiated” support to learners with particular needs.
- Feedback to pupils, as appropriate, in response to questions or requests, either individually or as a whole class.
- Consider the most important elements of teaching and learning and be aware which elements will be more difficult to explain remotely.
- Focus classroom work on key ideas and modelling.
- Make use of remote sessions to check knowledge and consolidate what the children have learned.
- Be mindful that extra support may be required where parents and guardians are less confident to provide such support themselves.

We will strive to provide work for assistants and other support staff to complete in the event of a class or whole school closure.

Pupils

For a blended learning approach to be effective, it is of critical importance that all pupils engage with the process. Therefore, pupils must have a secure understanding of what they have to do and by when.

The role of the pupils:

- To engage with learning opportunities and complete remote learning tasks online or in paper form.
- To engage in learning through our digital platform – the Seesaw App.
- To ensure everyone feels valued, respected and included.
- To contribute their views during remote learning.

If pupils do not engage appropriately, our normal procedures, as outlined in the School's Behaviour Policy, will apply. It may become necessary for the school to seek advice from the Education Welfare Officer with regard to an attendance mark, if a pupil does not engage at all in the remote learning activities set.

If a pupil has borrowed a school iPad to complete work at home, and fails to do so, the iPad will be retrieved by the school and loaned to another pupil.

Content associated with Blended Learning should not be copied, recorded or screen-shot in any way. Under no circumstances should content be shared or posted on any form of social media.

However, we must recognise that pupils may be having difficulty in adapting to the new way of working or are struggling with barriers to learning, e.g. lack of space to work at home; unreliable broadband or limited ICT provision. Therefore, it is important to try and establish what these barriers are and how we might help to remove them. Good communication between home and school will be an important way of addressing these issues.

Parents and Carers

It is important to remember that parents and carers are not expected to become teachers and that children will not need to learn in the same way as they do in school. The most important aspect is the relationship that families already have with their children, as this will enable them to support and reassure them during this unusual time.

Research indicates that pupils cannot be expected to replicate the school day when learning at home. Therefore, it is very important that children are not working online all day- parents and carers should factor in time for breaks, lunch, shared activities and time outdoors in the fresh air. A variety of different activities such as board games, puzzles or outdoor games can help children to further develop skills such as problem solving, turn taking, cooperating with others and resilience.

The role of parents and carers:

- To support the school values.
- To foster an open pathway of communication between the school and home where appropriate.
- To support children (to the best of their abilities) in accessing the variety of learning opportunities provided.
- To utilise the Seesaw App and school website to access remote learning materials which support, complement and consolidate school learning.
- To ensure children complete remote learning tasks online or on paper as required.
- To understand that teachers need time to respond to questions or queries, remembering that at times, the majority of children will still be in school and will require the teachers' immediate presence.
- To ensure that children have a range of short 'chunks' of time when they are engaged in an activity.

Safeguarding

Any complaints or issues regarding safeguarding should be shared in the normal way as detailed in our Safeguarding Policy.

In the event of a full lockdown the additional annex to our Safeguarding and E-Safety Policies will be reintroduced.

Parents and carers must set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites, as detailed in our E-Safety Policy. These are usually free, but often need to be turned on.

It is essential to have and communicate clear reporting routes so that children, teachers, parents and carers can raise any safeguarding concerns. If parents / carers have any concerns they should phone the school office or contact the school via email:

info@dundela.belfast.ni.sch.uk . Information will be treated in confidence and where necessary reported to the appropriate agencies.

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as the situation demands, and as the challenges of children being sent home from school for extended periods develops.

It will be reviewed formally by Governors in January.

Appendix 1

What should Parents and Pupils Expect?

Blended and Remote Learning approaches in Primary 1: -

1. Individual child not in class due to illness:

No remote learning will take place.

2. Individual child not in class due to PHA self-isolation advice:

The teacher will set some additional remote learning for the pupil.

This will take the form of:

- Boom Learning activities - activities which can be completed on a phone or tablet. These activities will utilise and encourage skills already acquired, reinforcing learning already covered in Literacy and Numeracy and learning being covered during this time in class. The teacher can view how the child is progressing with these activities.
- Suggested practical activities in Literacy and Numeracy using resources found at home.
- Links to websites and activities relating to our World Around Us topics.
- Reading books via the Seesaw app if a child is at that stage.
- Teachers will expect to see some evidence of children completing work e.g. photos sent via Seesaw.

However, it is important to note that the teacher will be in class throughout the day and will **not** be available for consultation between 8.45am - 2.30pm each day.

3. Whole Class not in school due to PHA self-isolation advice:

Remote learning activities (appropriately differentiated) will be sent daily via the Seesaw app.

Should remote learning need to continue over the longer term, the teacher will make a fortnightly telephone call to parents to check on children's welfare and progress.

Activities will take the form of:

- Boom Learning activities – as described above.
- Practical activities in both Literacy and Numeracy using resources found at home.
- Worksheets can be sent via the Seesaw app or emailed to be printed. If no printer is available, teachers will give parents an alternative idea for completing/recording work e.g. small chunks of written work that can be copied into a notebook or page for children to complete.

- Reading books sent via the Seesaw app if appropriate.
- Word and sound game suggestions.
- Links to websites such as Topmarks or BBC Bitesize which will help to reinforce past and present learning.
- Video story times (by the teacher) linked to our World Around Us topic and giving the children ideas for crafts or challenges related to topic work.
- Some suggestions for both outdoor/indoor physical challenges and mindfulness activities.
- Teachers will expect to see some evidence of children completing work eg photos sent via the Seesaw app.

Appendix 2

What should Parents and Pupils Expect?

Blended and Remote Learning approaches in Primary 2: -

1. Individual child not in class due to illness:

No remote learning will take place.

2. Individual child not in class due to PHA self-isolation advice:

The teacher will set some additional remote learning for the pupil.

This will take the form of: -

*overview of the Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing activities being done in class.

*reading – ebooks and Phonics Bug books.

*overview of topic area being covered in class. Other e-materials will be given to facilitate this where possible.

However, it is important to note that the teacher will be in class throughout the day and will **not** be available for consultation from 8.45pm-2.30pm each day.

3. Whole Class not in school due to PHA self-isolation advice:

The teacher will set appropriately differentiated remote learning for all the children in the class. The principal platform for this will be the Seesaw app, but the teacher will also endeavour to maintain contact with pupils and amongst pupils through a safe video app such as Collaborate. Should remote learning need to continue over the longer term, the teacher will make a fortnightly telephone call to parents to check on children's welfare and progress.

This will take the form of: -

- Use of the emergency pack already sent home – daily instructions given on timetable as to what to complete each day. (The pack will be updated each half term to try and keep the work relevant to what we have been covering recently in class.)
- Weekly reading and reading activities will be sent to each group using EBooks and Phonics Bug resources.
- Some Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing tasks may be sent via Seesaw activities. These are completed on the child's Seesaw account and returned to the teacher electronically.
- Overview of topic work that would be covered in class will be sent with links to relevant videos and websites that children can access at home where possible.

- Teachers will provide feedback on relevant pieces of work. Level of feedback will depend on the activity.

The teacher will endeavour to respond to all queries within a 24 hour period and will be available via Seesaw to parents and pupils between the hours of 10 and 11am, and 2.30 and 3.30pm each day.

Appendix 3

What should Parents and Pupils Expect?

Blended and Remote Learning Approaches in Primary 3: -

1. Individual child not in class due to illness:

No remote learning will take place.

2. Individual child not in class due to PHA self-isolation advice:

The teacher will set some additional remote learning via the Seesaw app for the pupil.

This will take the form of: -

- * reading from ebooks and Phonics Bug books.
- * an overview of the Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing activities being done in class.
- * an overview of the topic area being covered in class with links to relevant websites to facilitate learning.

However, it is important for parents to note that the teacher will be in class throughout the day and will **not** be available for consultation from 8.45am-2.30pm each day.

3. Whole class not in school due to PHA self-isolation advice:

The teacher will set appropriately differentiated remote learning for all children in the class. The principal platform for this will be the Seesaw app, but the teacher will also endeavour to maintain contact with pupils and amongst pupils through a safe video app such as Collaborate. Should remote learning need to continue over the longer term, the teacher will make a fortnightly telephone call to parents to check on children's welfare and progress.

Remote learning will take the form of: -

- A daily greeting from the teacher and encouragement for all pupils to pursue their learning targets at home.
- Some brief advice to parents about learning intentions and how best to help their children with the activities which have been set for that day.
- Daily Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing activities, practical and written. These will work on areas which would otherwise have been covered in class. A notebook will be supplied by school to be used for such activities, with the expectation that written work will be submitted for marking once pupils return to school.
- Regular Seesaw Class activities which can be sent directly to the teacher for marking and feedback.
- Regular reading tasks sent to each group using ebooks and Phonics Bug resources.

- An overview of the topic work which would have been covered in class, with links to relevant videos and websites which could be accessed from home.

Pupils and their parents will be encouraged to upload work on a daily basis. Feedback to pupils about how they are doing with their tasks and how they might improve their performance, may take the form of a written comment or sticker/stamper on the child's Seesaw journal, or a short voice recording or video made by the teacher. The teacher will endeavour to respond to all queries within a 24 hour period and will be available via Seesaw to parents and pupils between the hours of 10 and 11am, and 2.30 and 3.30pm each day.

Appendix 4

What should Parents and Pupils Expect?

Blended and Remote Learning approaches in Nursery: -

1. Individual child not in class due to illness:

No remote learning will take place.

2. Individual child not in class due to PHA self-isolation advice:

The teacher will set some additional remote learning for the pupil.

This will take the form of:

- 'Getting Ready to Learn' home learning pack - this pack will contain a variety of age-appropriate play resources.
- Teachers will make a list of suggested activities that pupils could do with the resources from their pack. If they have to self-isolate, they will be directed to complete some of the suggested activities.
- Parents will be encouraged to take photos of their child completing the activities and send them to the class teacher on the Seesaw app so that the teacher can interact and see how the pupil is progressing in their learning.

However, it is important to note that the teacher will be in class throughout the day and will be available for consultation from 3.00pm to 3.30pm each day.

3. Whole Class not in school due to PHA self-isolation advice:

Remote learning activities will be sent daily. These will take the form of:

- Practical activities related to a book with which children are familiar with using resources found both at home and sent out via the Seesaw app. These Activities will be planned to be completed over a 2 week period.
- Children will be encouraged to complete one practical activity per day and will receive a virtual sticker for every activity they complete. If they complete all activities over the 2 week period a certificate will be awarded. All activities will be age-appropriate for the Nursery pupils and will be based on the six areas of the Pre-School Curriculum.
- Parents will be encouraged to take photos of their child completing the activities and send them to the class teacher via the Seesaw app so that the teacher can interact and comment on the child's learning.

- Video story times (by the teacher) so that the children can still hear a story daily.
- Teachers will also endeavour to interact with pupils through a safe app so that they will have the opportunity to chat to their teacher and their friends. Parents will be asked to be beside their child during these video calls.
- Teachers will also upload apps or games that children can complete should they wish to do something more. This will include links to videos on YouTube, e.g. Go Noodle, yoga or familiar stories being read or animations of the stories.
- Teachers will be available via the Seesaw app during the hours of 10 to 11am and 2.30 to 3.30pm daily. Parents can leave a message and teachers will respond within 24 hours.
- Teachers will also phone each parent once per fortnight to see how everything is going and, if they can assist them in any way, they will endeavour to do so.

Appendix 5

Live Classes/Video Calls

If we do provide live classes/video calls, here are some basic principles to safeguard everyone during blended learning:

- A risk assessment will be completed for the use of live learning using webcams.
- No 1:1 sessions. Children will take part in groups/with their parent/carer.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any devices used should be in appropriate areas, e.g. not in bedrooms; and where possible be against a neutral background.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including that of any family members in the background.
- Data Controllers need to reassure themselves that any teaching/learning software and/or platforms are suitable and raise no privacy issues. Use should also not go against the providers' terms and conditions (e.g. no business use of consumer products or vice versa).
- Parents / Carers will sign an agreed letter / form to give their consent.