

Botanic Primary School

Remote Learning Policy - Focusing on Potential School Closure – initially created for COVID-19 Outbreak 2020 but applicable in other circumstances where the school has to be closed.

Revised April 2024

Introduction

In the event of enforced closures, staff at Botanic Primary School will provide education and support to pupils using remote learning. In our case, all learning will be conducted using the Seesaw Class app, links on the school website and possible Google Classroom for P6 and P7. This allows teachers to keep in daily contact, in a professional and confidential manner with each pupil in their class. Teachers will plan for learning that seeks neither to overwhelm or concern pupils. Learning and teaching can be tailored and updated as time progresses, allowing replication of classroom activities to the best of our ability. In all communication we will adhere to our commitment to maintain pupils' wellbeing.

Flexibility

We realise that the circumstances that cause our school to close will affect families in a number of ways. In our planning and expectations, we are aware of the need for flexibility from all sides: parents may be trying to work from home and so access to technology as a family may be limited; the socioeconomic situation of a family may limit their access to technology and the internet (although mitigations where known have been established), teachers may be trying to manage their home situation and the learning of their own children; systems may not always function as they should. An understanding of and willingness to adapt to these difficulties is necessary for success. Botanic community; leaders, teachers, staff, pupils and families will do the best they can.

Expectations

In the case of long-term closure, we believe it is in the best interests of our pupils that we continue to provide support to the best of our ability. Bearing in mind the need for flexibility, we understand that work may not be completed straight away. That said, the work that pupils engage in during a period of closure will be part of our current planning and so cannot be considered optional.

Remote Learning - Start Date

Home Learning codes for Seesaw have already been sent home - as this is used for homework and school communications. Should the school close, resources will be available as soon as reasonably practicable through platforms including Seesaw, Sumdog, Accelerated Reader and Bug Club.

Teaching staff will:

- Share teaching and activities with their class through Seesaw or Google Classroom.
- Continue teaching, as much as reasonably practicable, in line with current planning that is already in place throughout the school.
- Acknowledge that learning remotely will be difficult, so tasks will be shortened and supported in smaller steps to allow for this.
- Reply to messages and set work/activities online for an agreed time during the day (as per separate teacher expectations criteria).
- Make allowances for learning and not set deadlines for completion on activities, understanding that the circumstances leading to our closure will affect families in a number of ways.
- Take regular breaks away from the computer or iPad to engage in other professional duties as much as circumstances allow.
- If the teacher is unwell, parent messages will not be replied to. Teachers will notify parents and pupils of this through a Seesaw announcement.
- Plan for five literacy, five numeracy and five other lessons per week.

Pupils will

- Be assured that pupil well-being is at the forefront of our thoughts and they should take regular breaks, get fresh air, exercise and maintain a reasonable balance between online engagement and offline activities.
- Complete work on the day that it has been set (unless there are mitigating circumstances).
- Only send messages that are directly about the work.
- Only access the material shared by their teacher.
- Read daily, either independently or with an adult.
- Consider using the closure time to learn a new skill, follow their own interests to find out more about the world around us or be creative.

Parents will

- Support their child's learning to the best of their ability.
- Encourage their child to access and engage in work set by the teacher, including booklets and Seesaw.

- Only message the teacher with queries about the work that has been set. Be aware that general enquiries / queries should be directed to school staff on;
 - info@botanic.belfast.ni.sch.uk
- Not screenshot or copy any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform
- Check their child's work each day and encourage the progress that is being made.
- Be mindful of mental well-being of both themselves and their child and encourage their child to take regular breaks, play games, get fresh air and relax.

At ALL times, the safety and security of pupils is our absolute priority. In this regard, parents MUST;

- Monitor pupil use of any electronic device – what type of programmes they are using and websites they are visiting. They need to be aware of appropriate age guidance i.e. Fortnite has a 12 year old rating and therefore should not be accessed by ANY Primary School child. Currently Google gives a 16+ rating for WhatsApp.
- Engage the parental controls on any electronic device i.e. computers / tablets that pupils have access to.
- Encourage regular, appropriate breaks and ensure children are not sitting hunched over (incorrect posture) for prolonged amounts of time.