



GUIDELINES FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to set up parameters for teachers and parents/guardians in relation to supporting children's learning during long term school closures. Parents/guardians, as the primary educator, will decide when and if their children will avail of the learning opportunities set out by the teachers. The guidelines and suggested work set by teachers is intended as a support and not to add further stress to parents, children or staff in any way.

In setting out these guidelines, we are mindful of the situations that families and school staff are currently experiencing for various reasons. We are mindful that not all children have access to a PC, laptop or tablet and that not all families have access to devices or ample broadband, particularly when the rest of the family might also be working from home. We are mindful that not all parents can invest the same time into their child's learning at the moment if also trying to work from home and run a household. Each family's unique circumstances will determine how much work can be done at home.

We ask parents/guardians to also be mindful of the limitations teachers may be under while working from home at this time.

Type of Work/Activities

Teachers will aim to provide broad and varied work which helps children maintain academic skills learned already and also practical application of skills such as research, maths skills and social skills.

Teachers will draw on resources from their own resource bank, textbooks, websites and online content. There is a wide selection of online resources available under the 'Ed Games' tab on our school website rathpeaconns.com. These resources will assist parents and staff during the closure. It is updated regularly.

As well as use of digital tools, teachers must be mindful of having a mix of the following:

- Self guided / independent learning
- Tasks that do not require digital technology
- Play based learning
- Life skills (baking, tidying etc)
- Exercise / Mindfulness

Please be advised that websites, apps and work being sent home, while very useful, are no substitute for teaching. They will consolidate learning but not teach a new concept.

Communication : Aladdin Connect Noticeboard and Email

Teachers will use the Homework tab on Aladdin Connect to communicate suggested daily work to parents/guardians during the school closure. Teachers may also send notices to parents/guardians via the noticeboard or the email feature on Aladdin. Parents/guardians may reply directly to the teacher using Aladdin Noticeboard. With Aladdin Noticeboard, only the parent of the child can see their private comments and communication with the teacher.

The Principal will share teacher's school email addresses via a text or notification on Aladdin. These email addresses have been set up specifically for parents to send their child's completed work to the teacher, if they wish, for comment and feedback. Parents should not send work to Aladdin email as teachers will not receive these emails.

Any issues with Aladdin should be sent to office.rathpeaconns@gmail.com. This is a new school office email address. It will be checked on school days during school hours.

This will be a new system of learning for us all and mistakes, no doubt, will happen. However, teachers will, at all times, endeavour to be professional about their work and communications with parents/guardian and pupils.

When replying to parents/guardians with their school email address, teachers will observe GDPR regulations. Teachers are advised to use Aladdin Noticeboard or Aladdin Email to send messages or notices to groups of parents/guardians. Teachers should not use their new school email address to reply to a group of parents. Teachers must make every effort to ensure that parent/guardian's email addresses are not shared with other parents/guardians.

We sincerely hope that parents/guardians and pupils will respect that teacher's email addresses are purely for uploading pupil's work during the closure and for normal communication as would be the case if in school. They are not a forum for complaints or other issues.

Unfortunately, any misuse or abuse of the teacher's email address will result in that parent/guardian's email address being blocked indefinitely by the teacher.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Correction of Work

In the first instance, parents/guardians should check their child's work as they would on a normal school day. Parents/guardians may upload photos, word documents etc to the teacher's specified email address provided. Teachers will, during their working hours, endeavour to reply and provide feedback/answer sheets as appropriate.

Parents/guardians should be mindful of the limitations in relation to correcting primary pupils' work through distance learning. It will not be possible for the teacher to correct work and provide feedback in the same way as in school.

Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The work that is being shared on Aladdin Homework by its very nature is generic. It will not address the needs of each child as an individual. Please be mindful that all children learn at different rates and respond to different styles. The SEN teachers are working on additional resources for students with any numeracy, literacy or other needs to support parents in the home as much as is possible. They will make contact separately.

Conclusion

We are conscious of the difficulties in which the school community now finds themselves. A structured routine where pupils and their parents/guardians share in the responsibility for their own development will be very important during this time.

The school will continue to work with your child to achieve the best educational outcome from this situation.