



COLÁISTE GHOBNAIT INIS OÍRR

DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY 2021-2022

Adopted by the Board of Management
on 2/11/2021

Approved by Galway and Roscommon Education
and Training Board (GRETB) on

This policy has been prepared in consultation with Parents, Students, Staff, The Board of Management
and GRETB.

This policy applies to:

Pupils, School Staff, Parents, the school's Board of Management as well as Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Coláiste Ghobnait is to encourage the educational, intellectual, physical and cultural development of the school's students in a pleasant and healthy environment that prioritises the self-esteem, independence and development of all members of the school community.

SCHOOL VISION

"Growing and learning together diligently through the medium of Irish, in which balance, respect for well-being and integrity are given priority, with the spirit of co-operation among the whole school community."

VALUES

As a school community we have high expectations based on the vision and mission of the school and we aim to plough the road with our core Values together.

- Excellence
- Duty
- Equality
- Community
- Respect
- Determination
- Freindship
- Equality
- Courage

As a school community these are our core values that are intertwined with the vision and mission of the school. We will be plowing the road in Coláiste Ghobnait together to achieve our core values and that our core values will be central to all aspects of the school environment.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and information to students and their parents surrounding the use of technology when learning remotely i.e. from a place other than school and where it is not necessary or possible for the teacher to deliver the class within the same location, as would be the case, if the class was taking place in a classroom setting.

This policy does not set out to replace our Mobile Phone or Acceptable Use Policies but rather intends to be an important addition to the area of learning from a digital platform.

The policy presented here should be read also in tandem with other school policies.

Colaiste Ghobnait is a school under the Patronage of Galway, Roscommon Education and Training Board. (GRETB).

As a school under the patronage of GRETB and who take instruction from the Department of Education it is of paramount importance that we have policies to ensure that procedures are in place that fulfil our statutory obligations.

The primary obligations that all schools have are to the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all student learners under Child Protection Policy and that their data is also protected under GDPR legislation.

Schools must ensure that learning may be able to take place in an environment that is respectful and fair and meets its statutory duties.

This Policy is prepared, therefore, in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Education and relevant sections of:

- (a) The Education Act (1998).
- (b) Education (Welfare) Act (2000).
- (c) Equal Status Act (2000).
- (d) Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004).
- (e) Disability Act (2005).
- (f) Children First 2017.
- (g) GDPR
- (h) Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post- Primary school' s
- (i) NEWB Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008)

Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century and through IT we are provided with great opportunities as learners and teachers.

Never before has there been greater scope to learn using technology and it continues to change the learning relationship between teachers and students. Advances in technology mean that assignments can be delivered remotely and that greater access to information on the internet affords the opportunities for real learning to take place under the watchful and professional guidance of the teacher.

However, whether, a child is being directed remotely or via a traditional classroom environment it is very important that all partners are aware that once a learning exchange takes place between a student and teacher, whether at home or school, the same statutory rules apply i.e. the school's Code of Behaviour and all other of the school's policies.

This Policy so as to avoid ambiguity or other, therefore, has been developed to make it very clear to all of our partners that the values that are instilled in our policies remain, no matter how we change our teaching and learning methodologies. This includes remote learning or when a child is being taught in an environment that is not within the school building and the teacher is working remotely also and is not present with the student(s).

The staff and students of Coláiste Ghobnait are prepared for remote learning if we have to undertake this route due to Covid-19.

Coláiste Ghobnait recognizes and understands that the teaching and learning experience will undoubtedly be different for the students when remote learning takes place.

Coláiste Ghobnait have measures in place to enable all the students to be as connected as possible with their own school community and classmates, so that their learning is, as far as possible, in line with the curriculum in the event of remote learning. Teaching and Learning is a priority at Coláiste Ghobnait.

Coláiste Ghobnait has excellent learning opportunities for the school community. Our priority is to provide worthwhile learning opportunities to promote and develop students learning through independent tasks, collaborative learning opportunities and project work and other engaging learning experiences.

There are many opportunities for students to take ownership of their learning and expand their knowledge in this environment – Remote learning.

We in Coláiste Ghobnait understand that some students may face additional challenges while remote learning is taking place for example, lack of study space, parent/guardians not being able to support the students learning, socio-economic background or the lack of suitable digital devices. If a situation like this occurs, please contact the school immediately and other strategies will be considered for communicating with the students.

The support of parents/guardians will be essential for remote learning. We ask you to support your son/daughter in the event of remote learning.

Regular checks will be necessary with parents/guardians and students to determine how students are getting on with the remote learning. All year groups in Coláiste Ghobnait have a class teacher and I ask you to contact them immediately if your son/daughter has any issues with remote learning.

It is very important to maintain a relationship with Coláiste Ghobnait if remote learning is in place. Contact with and between students is an essential element of the students learning experiences and also for their social and emotional development. Teachers will facilitate contact through online interaction, providing feedback on assignments and organising project work. This will take place in Coláiste Ghobnait on Teams – student’s interaction and contact with friends in the classroom and it will maintain the connection between themselves and the school community.

There will be a balanced mix of independent learning and instructional tasks. All teachers will be able to monitor learning and provide feedback to support the next step in the students learning through the tasks set out to be completed.

Our students in Coláiste Ghobnait will have opportunities to demonstrate the progress they have made in their learning. Teachers will be providing support and feedback to the students in their classes. The voice of the students will also be sought so that Coláiste Ghobnait can review how remote learning is working for them. This kind of feedback is important in maintaining motivation, progression in learning and supporting student’s wellbeing.

All students can borrow a laptop if needed. Students will have to sign a contract (See Appendix).

We in Coláiste Ghobnait have supported our student’s skills and learning by developing their digital competencies, self-organisation skills and their ability to engage in remote learning.

If any student is absent from school, they can log in to Teams from 8:50a.m. and follow the classes for the day. Students can log in if their absence is due to the student being sick with or having Covid-19 symptoms. The school day begins at 8:50a.m. and they can participate in classes. All teachers will ensure that classes are available on Teams. Students will be marked on the roll book if they attend the classes on Teams.

Communication between teachers and home is vital. Coláiste Ghobnait has a process in place for communication between parent/guardians and teachers. See diagram.

Cá dtéann tú, má tá fadhb/inní/ceist agat/Where do you go if you have a problem/you are worried/ you have a question:

- Dul chun cinn **acadúil** in **ábhar áirithe** nó cur chuige teagaisc agus foghlama san ábhar sin/ *Academic progression in certain subjects or the approach to teaching and learning in that subject:*

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| Teagmháil Tosaigh <i>First point of contact</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> |
| Múinteoir an ábhair sin <i>Subject teacher</i> | | Múinteoir Bliana <i>Year Head</i> | | Comhordaitheoir Riachtanais Speisialta <i>Special Needs Coordinator</i> | | Príomhoide Tánaisteach <i>Deputy-Principal</i> | | Príomhoide <i>Principal</i> |

- Dul chun cinn **acadúil go ginearálta**, nach mbaineann le hábhair amháin ar leith/
General academic progression that is not confined to one subject in particular:

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| Teagmháil Tosaigh <i>First point of contact</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> |
| Múinteoir Bliana <i>Year Head</i> | | Comhordaitheoir Riachtanais Speisialta <i>Special Needs Coordinator</i> | | Príomhoide Tánaisteach <i>Deputy-Principal</i> | | Príomhoide <i>Principal</i> |

- Dul chun cinn go ginearálta, maidir le gnéithe seachas gnéithe acadúla (sóisialta, bulaíocht, fadhb phearsanta, fadhb sláinte, fadhb bhaile)/*General progression regarding non-academic aspects (social, bullying, personal problems, health problems, home problems):*

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Teagmháil Tosaigh <i>First point of contact</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> | ⇒ | Mura bhfuil Réiteach <i>If there is no resolution</i> |
| Múinteoir Bliana <i>Year Head</i> | | Príomhoide Tánaisteach <i>Deputy-Principal</i> | | Príomhoide <i>Principal</i> |

Wellbeing – During the period of Distance learning the schools wellbeing programme will be in place.

- Sports class
- CSPE
- SPHE - The teacher will be posting the work on Teams but there won't be an open online discussion of sensitive topics. It is up to the class teacher to decide what arrangement best suits his/her own class.
- Wellbeing – all year heads have one period a week to meet with students to promote the students voice and discuss their learning experience.
- Assembly – There will be assembly every morning from 8.50 – 9.00.
- Teachers may be providing recording demonstrations for the students so that the students can watch them. There may be short explanatory videos with activities such as sports drills, skills and exercises

to practice at home alone and/or with a family member. Parent/guardian support and supervision will be vital here.

Online live Teams meetings/classes

Student etiquette

The following are expectations from all students. Students that do not follow these guidelines can be removed from the Teams meeting/class if necessary.

- A Teams meeting/class is intended for the students only.
- Mute your microphone if you are not speaking
- Join the meeting/class on time
- Do not use the Chat feature with your class unless the teacher states to do so. When using chat, write using school appropriate language. Remember that the class meeting is public, and a record of the chat is retained.
- Only post chat messages relevant to the lessons.

If your connection is lagging or slow, do the following:

- Close extra open computer apps.
- Try to limit others on your WiFi while you participate.
- Turn on your camera and listen to the discussion.

The primary online resource our school is currently using is Microsoft Teams. This may change in time but the sentiment and instructions within this policy shall remain valid no matter what platform we use in the future.

1. If, and when, a teacher decides to work remotely they will on most occasions try to communicate online during normal working hours and will not be communicating with students in the evening/ outside of normal hours not unless the teacher has advised all learners in the group/team that a lesson/revision will be taking place at a certain time after the usual hours. Therefore, during a normal school day the teacher may put work on Teams for the student to work on that evening- the student can then send the work/assignment back for the teacher to correct in their own time. (see point 6 also).
2. Provision for all SEN students, in so far as possible, will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies, whereby, a differentiated approach will be employed, as would be the case if the teacher was in the classroom.
3. No matter what time a student and/or teacher is on Teams i.e. whether the teacher is online giving a class or not- the moment a student logs onto Teams they must abide by the school rules and the rules will be implemented if and when necessary.
4. Students cannot choose to leave a Team once a teacher has created one.
5. The material created by the teacher on Teams is the property of the teacher and students do not have permission to share to others outside of the team unless given permission to do so.
6. Parents and students need to be aware that teachers may have to send material/assignments at night as they are working during the day. This does not mean there is an expectation on the student to begin work at the time it is received. Likewise, there is never an expectation on the teacher to have to correct or comment on work sent on Teams outside of normal school hours. Again, the teacher will give and receive work within their own time frames and will communicate this to students.
7. Teachers are the owner/ manager of the Teams they create. Most Teams will be whole class groups but this may vary. When students are invited onto and put into a Team it is the exact same as been in the classroom and being with a class group. They have a teacher and the school's same rules continue to apply.
8. A teacher will only correspond to a student who is signed up to the correct Platform.
9. A teacher will only correspond and engage with a student who is using and is logged into their GRETB account.
10. Social media sites eg. facebook, snapchat, WhatsApp etc, to communicate with students is never permissible and teachers have been advised accordingly.
11. Other Teams created by students themselves within a Team created by the teacher is not permitted.
12. Any behaviour or language deemed inappropriate during school applies online and after established school times. The consequences for such behaviour will be the same as if the student was in school as they are involved in prescribed school work, on a school created platform using a school log- in and which has been directed by school personnel.
13. Any language directed towards a fellow student or teacher that is very aggressive/threatening or offensive may also be reported to the Guards or TUSLA or both.
14. The criteria for mandated Child Protection reporting remains the same as if the child was being taught in school.
15. All provisions relating to the child's Data remains the same under GDPR procedures and guidelines.
16. As per all matters pertaining to our school's Code of Behaviour, if a student acts in a fashion that is contrary to our Code's expectations they may receive a sanction and or Suspension/ Recommendation to the Board of Management for Permanent Exclusion.
17. Teaching and learning best practice will continue to apply with students expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where this evolving and unprecedented situation allows you to do so.

18. Attendance will be taken for all classes and parents are asked to support students being in attendance for all classes. Year head teacher will send the parent a weekly report on attendance.
19. Attendance is taken at the morning Assembly. A text is sent via VS Ware if a student is absent.
20. It is not required to wear the uniform for video learning, however appropriate dress is expected when participating in live Team meetings/classes.
21. Teachers need to create an "Assignment" in Teams so students can upload their homework there.

All students can borrow a laptop if needed. Students will have to sign a contract (See Appendix)

We in Coláiste Ghobnait have supported our student's skills and learning by developing their digital competencies, self-organisation skills and their ability to engage in remote learning.

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Coláiste Ghobnait

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Student Laptop Loan Agreement

Galway & Roscommon Education and training Board (“GR ETB”) provides laptops to students to enhance their education. It is imperative that parents/guardians stress to their children how important it is to take good care of their issued device and to behave appropriately when interacting with others digitally. Certain rules are necessary to protect the laptop and the network.

By accepting possession of a GR ETB laptop, student and his/her parents/guardians agree to the following responsibilities for the use and care of this device:

1. The student agrees to follow all GR ETB policies and regulations governing the use of computers, including, but not limited to, the Expectations for Responsible Laptop Use printed on the back of this form, as well as the Student Code of Conduct.
2. The computer is the property of GR ETB. If a student withdraws from the school prior to the end of the loan period, the laptop must be returned to school officials by the student prior to withdrawal.
3. The student shall not remove or alter any GR ETB identification labels attached to or displayed on the computer, nor shall the student change identification within the computer, such as the computer name.
4. The student agrees to keep the computer secure and safe. The parent/guardian will assume the risk of loss by theft, destruction, or damage caused by intentional misuse. If, during the loan period, the computer is damaged or returned with any accessories missing, GR ETB may charge the parent the lesser of the repair or the replacement cost.
5. The student must report theft (or suspected theft) of the computer to Gardaí and the School, loss of the computer, damage to the computer, or malfunctioning of the computer to the school promptly and no later than 24 hours of the incident.
6. The laptop cannot be loaned, sold, bartered, traded, leased, rented or given to any other person or persons without the express written consent of GR ETB.

I have read and agree to comply with these rules and all GR ETB policies and regulations for the use of equipment, including the attached Rules, the Acceptable Use Policy.

I understand that the laptop is the School property and it may access, monitor, and archive my use of the computer system, including my use of the internet, e-mail and downloaded material, without prior notice to me.

I will report any damage to hardware or software immediately to designated school personnel and will return equipment promptly when requested.

GR ETB grants permission to the student to have limited use of the laptop described in this continuing agreement. The school system insurance and the permission granted to the student ceases on the LAST CALENDAR DAY OF THE SCHOOL YEAR (unless terminated earlier by GR ETB) and failure to return the laptop and charger on or before that date to the building principal or his/her designee could result in billing for the unreturned item(s) and/or other legal proceedings against the student and/or the person who has the laptop.

GR ETB reserves the right to demand return of the laptop at any time.

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Equipment Provided

Make:

Model:

Accessories:

School/ College name

Student's Full Name and Address (please print):

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date