



8th January, 2021

Re: Online Provision for Teaching & Learning

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

I hope that you and your families had a safe and restful break. We are yet again in unprecedented times and it has come as a bit of a shock to find ourselves back in another full lockdown. Please see the link to the announcement made by the government in relation to remote teaching and learning during the periods of school closures.

[gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - [Ministers Foley and Madigan provide further detail of in-school and remote learning provision during the periods of school closure \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

They say that a day is a long time in politics and yesterday was a very long day in the education world. Thursday was fraught with logistical planning to enact the Government's initial decisions and by late Thursday evening there was a subsequent announcement clarifying arrangements:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2021-press-releases/PR21-01-07.html>

We are now in a position to let you know that online teaching will commence on Monday 11th of January for every year group.

In OLS we look to the positives and our hope is that with a vaccine programme starting, this lockdown will be brief and that we can return to school shortly to finish out the year with all of our students.

In the meantime we will do our very best for our students. We have all learnt much from the last session of remote teaching and learning and with the knowledge and expertise gained by both students and staff we will be in a stronger position to start delivering remotely. A reminder to you that many staff will be juggling childcare issues whilst trying to deliver online teaching and learning and that this will present varying challenges throughout the school community.

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Surveys

Online surveys will be sent to parents (on the app) and students (via their school email address) today to establish any concerns arising from remote teaching and learning and any supports required that the school can provide. Please ensure that both you and your daughter fill this in.

Monday 11th January

All staff will attend a staff meeting at 8.30am -9.28am on Monday morning and all students will be asked to attend for their **2nd morning class at 9.28am** where a roll will be taken. At this time, students log on to the Google Classroom for the subject they are timetabled to have and follow the instructions their teacher has posted for them regarding accessing the class.

Students and teachers will follow the normal timetable every school day.

Daily Remote Learning Routines

It is imperative that your daughter establishes a good routine from day 1 and is at her desk for every class in the day.

Our delivery of online learning is essentially 3-fold as advised by the Department of Education:

1. Teacher-student engagement should involve both direct teaching by the teacher and the assignment of independent learning tasks for completion by the students. Teachers should ensure, as far as practicable, that direct instruction is provided for aspects of learning that require it, using a variety of approaches, for example video, audio, presentation software and written instructions.
2. Teachers hope to ensure that the chosen learning tasks give students an opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a clear and concise way. It may be necessary to adjust the number of tasks usually given in the school setting to take account of the fact that students are doing this work from home.
3. The tasks chosen will be aligned to the needs of the student, including students with SEN, and should enable the teacher to monitor progress and give constructive, developmental feedback to support the next stages in their learning. It is vitally important that you, as parents, engage with your daughter in supporting and directing her during this period out of school. The level of support will largely depend on her age and level of maturity.

You will greatly assist us in ensuring that your daughter is present for online interactions with her teacher and that she completes work which will be assigned and then interacts appropriately with the feedback given to her.

Class register for every class each day.

A class register will be taken for every class whether it is a live class or a class where tasks are scheduled. In both cases students will be expected to engage with the subject at the timetabled time and be present for a class register. If your daughter is unable to attend class for any reason the school should be notified in the usual way through the school APP.

Please ensure that your daughter has a dedicated study area and a desk at which to work.

Your daughter needs to establish a new school work routine immediately from Monday morning and attend classes and do her work during the school hours. Some of this time will be online interaction, live classes, recorded classes and some time spent working on the completion of assigned tasks.

Students are reminded that movement breaks are a must between classes and especially at break and lunchtime to ensure a balanced approach to remote learning.

OLS Distance Learning Policy

Please see attached the school's Distance Learning Policy which is also up on the website. All parents should familiarise themselves with this policy as it clearly outlines the school's approach to remote teaching and learning and the students' responsibility during this phase of learning. Please in particular note **Appendix 1 OLS Stay Connected Plan** and **Appendix 4 & 5** which provide supports and links for both students and parents for remote learning and for all aspects of the Google platform

1. Our online platform is G Suite. We will follow the normal timetable where possible to avoid clashes. Reminder: student-specific resources have been designed and already shared with students on a Google Classroom that can be referred to for a range of digital solutions (Student Digital Supports: The code is wfh5a6jwfh5a6j).
2. The Code of Positive Behaviour will apply online if there are any issues. Students are expected to adhere to all relevant online protocols that will be outlined to them again at the start of the week.
3. Students who have mislaid passwords for their gmail should contact their **Year Head** who can ask for a reset.
4. Teachers giving SEN assistance will ensure that this provision continues during the remote phase.

State Examinations

We await Government recommendations on all aspects related to the State Examinations and will be in touch as soon as we hear any more information. It is important that examination students and you continue on the assumption that examinations will proceed as normal in the summer term. This is the likely outcome. Ms Porter and Ms Costello will continue to deliver the usual Guidance supports to students who require it.

Tips to Students for Safe Online learning

- Notify parents that you are joining a virtual classroom before sessions begin
- End /Leave the meeting when your teacher says to do so
- Do not share the session link with anyone else
- When using the video feature consider your surroundings
- Turn on and off audio when requested by your teacher.
- Remember staff expectations on behaviour and participation in a virtual classroom remain exactly the same as a physical lesson.

- Join the lesson on time
- Immediately turn off microphone when entering a meeting
- Send questions using the chat feature
- Follow all expectations and guidelines set by your teacher
- Be respectful
- Use appropriate volume and academic language
- Be courteous and respectful of other students
- Wait your turn to be invited to speak
- Respect others' privacy
- Our Lady's Acceptable Use Policy applies to all virtual classrooms.
- Please follow staff instructions to make this a positive learning experience for all involved.
- Please check your messages on your school gmail account first thing every morning to see if you have any online classes scheduled or if teachers have sent you any assignments
- Be aware of deadlines given by teachers to complete the work
- When you are online – write the work given into your journals.
- Teachers will use the normal timetable to organise times for online classes.
- Make sure you have Copybooks, Textbooks & Activity books available when you are attending an online class.

As events evolve and new information becomes available I will be in contact with you to keep you updated.

My very best wishes to you and all of our students for a rewarding engagement with remote learning .

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marguerite Gorby', written over a horizontal blue line.

Marguerite Gorby
Principal