

Preamble

Distance Learning does not replace the benefits of face-to-face teaching in the classroom. However, in accordance with the *Guidance on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning in a COVID-19 Context For post-primary schools and centres for education*, Dundalk Grammar School have devised a Distance Learning Protocol to reflect the changed circumstances brought about by Covid-19 and the significant increase in the use of technology to continue learning. These protocols should be read in conjunction with *Circular 0074/2020 Communication/Teaching & Learning Platform*, and *Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs For post-primary schools*. Available at <https://www.dgs.ie/covid19-protocol/>

It is essential that all stakeholders engage with distance learning to maximise student involvement.

This protocol does not introduce any new concepts, rather, it specifically outlines the various applications used for the delivery of online classes remotely. It also outlines online etiquette associated with being taught remotely. It acknowledges that remote teaching can place additional pressure on students, teachers and parents. This can be caused by poor internet connectivity, shared devices, childcare needs, more than one child attending school, to name but a few.

This new protocol operates alongside all of our existing policies which can be viewed at <https://www.dgs.ie/policies/>

Introduction

This document sets out the protocol of the school in respect of the use of technology for distance or remote teaching and learning during the current Coronavirus stay at home instruction, hereafter referred to as “Distance eLearning” – it operates in addition to our existing Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Scope of this Protocol

This protocol covers any aspect of student distance learning as used by Dundalk Grammar School staff.

In all cases students must use their @dgs.ie account to log in. Students are not to use any other account under any circumstances for the purposes of Distance eLearning within the school.

The applications being used for distance learning are:

- Office365, incorporating:
 - Microsoft Outlook (e-mail)
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Microsoft OneNote
 - Microsoft Forms
 - Microsoft Stream
- Zoom – for live online classes (where applicable)

There may be some additional applications that teachers may use, and the teacher will provide the student with the information required to access them. These must, in all cases, use an @dgs.ie account as the login.

Distance eLearning Approach

eLearning will take what is known as a blended approach and some teachers may use different methods to another teacher in covering the curriculum. For example:

- Some teachers may use regular live classes while others may not
- Some teachers may use live classes through Zoom while others may use Teams
- Some teachers may distribute work as weekly bulk assignments while others may do so as daily homework-style tasks

In all cases the primary aim of the teacher is to cover the required curriculum areas for their specific subject. The teacher will decide on the most effective method to use to achieve this aim. Students should get in touch with their teacher promptly, but during school hours, if they are having difficulty with any aspect of their subject or if they are finding the workload unmanageable. Due to the volume of emails received by teachers, students should allow a full working day before expecting a response. If working during evenings or weekends, students should draft emails to teachers for sending during school hours.

Everyone's Responsibilities while partaking in Distance eLearning

For teachers and staff:

- Teachers have overall control of the online interaction of their class
- Disruptive students will be removed to enable other students their right to learn. Repeatedly disruptive students may receive a temporary ban (or other sanction on return to school) from all online access. Parent/guardian will be contacted
- Teachers will do their utmost to be available at the identified time on their timetable – this may be via a Zoom live video, through Teams chat or by e-mail

For students:

- It is the responsibility of the student to engage constructively with the online efforts of their teacher
- Students are expected to dress appropriately for virtual classes
- You are to communicate through your @dgs.ie account only. The use of any other account or e-mail address is expressly prohibited
- Do not engage in communications with any account other than an @dgs.ie account and report any such activity to your teacher or Year Head's @dgs.ie email account
- You must always be civil and respectful to your teachers and fellow students
- You are **not to record / photograph or forward any content** within a Teams group – such as worksheets, exam papers, answers, solutions, videos, notes or Zoom links – to anyone else without the permission of the creator of that content
- You understand that all your online activity is recorded. This includes anything you send or say via e-mail, Teams, Zoom and OneNote, and whether you are checking regularly for assigned work

For parents / guardians:

- You should ensure on a daily basis that your son/daughter is checking in regularly for assigned work and positively engaging in their Distance eLearning
- It is important to be conscious of Child Protection Guidelines during virtual classes, be mindful of what might be displayed within backgrounds
- Live online classes should be viewed by your son/daughter **only**
- Parents/guardians should inform the school if their son/daughter experiences any difficulties associated with distance learning

Live Online Classes

Teachers may deliver some of the course “live” using Zoom or Teams. This will use varying combinations of audio, video, virtual whiteboards and screencasts.

During Online Classes:

- Students must always follow the direction of their teacher just as in the classroom
- Students are not to turn on their video at any time unless instructed to do so by the teacher
- Students are not to turn on their microphone unless the teacher invites them to do so. In any case, all microphones should be on mute when a person is not speaking to avoid distracting background noise being broadcast to everyone
- Students must not attempt to mute the teacher nor any other student
- A virtual class link is intended for the student only. The teacher will decide who should receive the link. Do not photograph or forward any link to anyone else
- Virtual sessions may be recorded by the teacher, and these recordings may be made available by the teacher to the class to watch back again later. These recordings may include any video, screenshares, whiteboards and audio from the class
- Only the teacher is allowed record a session. No-one else is permitted to record
- Some recordings may not be made available for sharing

Data Privacy Statement

Our Distance Learning Protocol operates in addition to the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) 2018, Dundalk Grammar School Data Protection Policy and Dundalk Grammar Code of Behaviour which are available from our website. For clarity, we have outlined aspects specific to Distance eLearning and should be read alongside our existing policies mentioned above.

What we retain:

- Login activity, specifically, the last time a student logged into their Office365 account
- In live classes using Zoom or Teams, all audio, video, whiteboard use, annotations and screenshare activity of both teacher and participants

Why we retain it:

- To assist us in making sure students are engaging in Distance eLearning and in good time
- To assist us in generating appropriate and relevant feedback to parents on progress
- (In the event of the class being recorded) To provide revision materials by means of replaying topics covered in a live class, and to ensure those who might be unable to attend live classes can still cover the same content as the rest of the class
- To provide a record of activity in the event of a disciplinary or other issue arising during a live class

Where we retain it:

- All recordings are kept within the school's own systems which requires a valid @dgs.ie login to access
- The school's systems are configured so that all data resides within an EU country only, which in the case of Office365, is Ireland

How long we retain it for:

- All data will be retained and handled in line with the DGS Data Protection Policy <https://www.dgs.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/DGS-Data-Protection-Policy-October-2018.pdf>