



**St. Flannan's College,  
Ennis,  
Co. Clare.**

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**Distance Learning Policy**

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## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and information to students, parents/guardians, and staff of St. Flannan's College, in respect of the use of technology for distance or remote teaching and learning, hereafter referred to as "Distance eLearning". This policy operates in conjunction with our school's Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Usage Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Data Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement and Policy.

## **2. Scope of this Policy**

This policy covers any aspect of student distance learning as used by St. Flannan's College Staff.

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

The list of applications that will be used for distance learning will primarily be:

- Office365, incorporating:
  - Microsoft Outlook (e-mail)
  - Microsoft Teams
  - Microsoft OneNote
  - Microsoft Forms
  - Microsoft Stream

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

## **3. eLearning Approach**

**3.1** eLearning will take what is known as a blended approach and teachers will have the option to use the method(s) they deem to be most appropriate for their class groups.

- i. All teachers will ensure that all students' work is distributed using Office 365 applications.
- ii. All teachers will interact with students using Office 365 applications to give clarification on questions that arise from the work that is expected from the student.
- iii. All teachers will interact with students on Office 365 platforms to provide formative feedback on work submitted.
- iv. Some teachers may use regular live classes/tutorials, through Teams, while others may not.
- v. Some teachers may use a blend of live classes/tutorials through Teams and other platforms.
- vi. 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 is to cover the required curriculum areas for their specific subject. The teacher will decide the most effective method to use to achieve this aim. Students should get in touch with their teacher via Teams or school email if they are having difficulty with any aspect of their subject or if they are finding the workload unmanageable.

#### **4. Responsibilities while partaking in eLearning**

##### **4.1 Live Online Classes**

Teachers may deliver some aspects of the coursework “live” using Teams. This may use varying combinations of audio, video, virtual whiteboards and screencasts.

##### **In the use of Teams:**

##### **4.2 Students:**

- i. A high sense of respect is expected from our students when engaging in Remote Learning and all students participating in online classes are expected to conduct their communications in a respectful manner.
- ii. The moment a student logs on, he/she must abide by our school policies. Any behaviour or language deemed inappropriate during school, applies online and after established school times.
- iii. Only the teacher is allowed record a lesson/meeting. Recordings should not be made of any work by the student or any person (e.g. video conference, live class, recorded video, PowerPoint with recorded explanations) unless with explicit permission from the teacher. In this instance, it is of utmost importance that any such recordings are **not** shared.
- iv. All Teams sessions may be recorded by the teacher, and these recordings may be made available by the teacher to the class only to watch back again later. This recording includes any comments, video, screenshares, whiteboards and audio from the class.
- v. 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.
- vi. A Teams link is intended for the student only. The teacher will decide who should receive the link. Do not forward any link to anyone else.
- vii. Students must be appropriately dressed and bedrooms should not be used for live classes.

##### **4.3 Parents:**

- i. Please ensure that your son/daughter has access to a web-enabled device such as a smartphone, tablet or pc and is checking in regularly for assigned work.
- ii. Where live classes are being run you should ensure your son/daughter is in an area of the house that is quiet and free from distractions. Please be mindful of Child Protection

Guidelines, for example, bedrooms should not be used for live classes and students should be appropriately dressed.

- iii. Live online classes should be viewed by your son/daughter only.
- iv. Parents/Guardians are requested to make contact with the school through your child's Year Head or via the school office email [info@stflannanscollege.ie](mailto:info@stflannanscollege.ie) (marked for the attention of your child's Year Head) if issues regarding WIFI or equipment act as barriers to student access. The school may make recommendations to assist access.
- v. Teachers, when working remotely will endeavour to communicate with students during normal working hours, however teachers may have to send material/ assignments outside of regular school opening hours. This does not mean there is an expectation on the student to begin work at the time it is received.
- vi. Likewise, there is never an expectation on the teacher to have to correct or comment on work sent outside of normal school hours. Whilst it might suit teachers or students to communicate outside of normal working hours, it is essential that everyone agree that responses or actions outside of normal working hours are not required.
- vii. The SET department and SNA Team will endeavour to support all students with additional needs to access Remote Teaching and Learning.
- viii. Use of students' Office 365 accounts for communication between parents and teachers is inappropriate and will not be facilitated. Parents may communicate with teachers via the relevant Year Head or Deputy Principal.

## **5. Data Privacy Statement**

Our Distance Learning Policy operates in addition to our Internet Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) and Data Protection Policy. For clarity, we will outline aspects specific to Distance Learning, but this should be read alongside our existing policies mentioned above.

### **5.1 What we retain:**

- i. Login activity, specifically, the last time a student logged in to their Office365 account
- ii. Within Teams and OneNote, the date and time of if/when a student views any assignments or OneNote notebooks set for them and when they submit any work for same.
- iii. In live classes using Teams, all audio, video, whiteboard, annotations and screenshare activity of both teacher and participants (audio/video is not recorded if the student is on mute and the video is not enabled).

### **5.2 Why we retain it:**

- i. To assist us in making sure students are engaging in learning sufficiently and in good time.
- ii. To assist us in generating appropriate and relevant feedback to parents on progress.
- iii. 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.

- iv. To provide a record of activity in the event of a disciplinary or other issue arising during a live class.

**5.3 Where we retain it:**

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

**5.4 How long we retain it for:**

- i. Ordinarily this is cleared at the end of each exam session, i.e. at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> Year and at the end of 6<sup>th</sup> Year. In any case, activity and content will not be retained beyond the students exit from the College, either through early exit or through graduation.

**6. Approval and review of the policy**

This policy was approved by the Board of Management on October 14th, 2020

The policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management in 2022

**Signed:** *Mr. Leonard Cleary*

Chairperson, Board of Management

**Date:** October 14th, 2020

**Signed:** *Fr. Ignatius McCormack*

Principal

**Date:** October 14th, 2020