



# Scoil an Chroí Ró-Naofa, Urlingford N.S.

Roll Number: 19930D  
New Road, Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny, via Thurles. E41 A567

8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents,

From Monday next, January 11<sup>th</sup> 2021, we are facing into three weeks of remote learning. This is a return to online teaching, which we experienced from March to June last year. However, there are a number of important changes in this new year that we would like you to know about.

### **Engagement with Work.**

There is an expectation that children engage with the work every day. This has been made clear to us by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). We do realise from last year, that parents who are trying to work from home and to interact with remote learning have found it stressful. To this end, we are planning to try and tailor the work in such a way that this stress will be minimal. Do your best and we will work with you.

Another requirement from the DES is that there should be daily interaction between school and home. Therefore, this time, work for each day will be given daily through the Aladdin Connect App/Website. It is very important that you have registered for Aladdin Connect and have it active. I will deal with this issue and how to access homework on Aladdin Connect later in the letter.

One important benefit of the Aladdin homework is that there is a way for you to submit homework to the teachers and for them to give feedback to you. This again improves the home school contact. Further details on this facility later also.

The staff are also planning to use Zoom to contact pupils up to twice a week. In this way, we hope to not only maintain contact between the teachers and pupils, but to also allow some time for the children to be in contact as a group.

Finally, as we will be attempting to move the curriculum on, teachers will be hoping to use short videos to aid learning. We are working on how to make this simple for you to access and it will be possibly the second week before we roll this aspect out. Baby steps and all that! This week is about getting things up and running.

### **Platforms we will use**

**Aladdin Connect:** This year we brought in Aladdin Connect and we have over 90% of families connected. I want to get this to 100%. We can use it for notifications, texts, emails and reports. We have now started to use the Homework Facility. This can be found on the app or website under Connect. You will receive the planned work for each day every morning. You will be able to see up to six days homework in the past at a time. (You will not be able to see homework in the future) There is also a facility for you to send a message or a copy of homework back to the teacher by photo or pdf. The teacher will be able to give feedback also. There is a video available on the app and an instruction manual which can also be seen on our website at this link. <http://urlingfordns.com/images/pdfs/Aladdin-Connect---Homework-for-parents.pdf>



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**RAZ+:** We invested in the RAZ+ (Reading A to Z) earlier this year. This reading programme, sourced for us by Ms Phelan, is available to every child. We invested in it as we saw it as a great asset with the possibility of another closure of schools. Children have all received access codes and many of you are using the programme already. Teachers will make great use of this programme over the next three weeks. It may be used in a different way, as teachers can and will assign reading to children and there are quizzes to be completed. There is also a facility for children to record themselves reading which then the teachers can review. This will be very important at the junior end of the school. If you haven't accessed your RAZ+ account, and/or you need your access code please contact the class teacher or the school at the appropriate email address.

**Email:** Last year, we established new email addresses for the school and for each of the classes. These emails are available on the front page of our website or at this link: <http://urlingfordns.com/images/pdfs/ContactemailsforUrlingfordNS2020.pdf>. The teachers will be available for important enquiries at these addresses. They will also be able to use email for important communication to parents, individually and as a class group. It is important that we have email contact details for parents. Please check that we have the correct email address for you on your Aladdin Connect.

**Zoom:** I'm sure many of you are very used to Zoom as a way to hold meetings online. Teachers plan to use Zoom to hold class meetings to give the children a chance to interact in a class grouping. There will be strict rules put in place for Zoom meetings. These will be issued to you as soon as we have them fully drawn up and I will be asking parents to agree to them before children will be issued Zoom Meeting Details.

**School Website:** While we won't be using our website as widely as we did last spring, it will still remain a very useful resource where we can post necessary information that we can link through Aladdin Connect.

**Seesaw:** We are looking at introducing the Seesaw platform if necessary. This platform will be similar to Aladdin Connect and RAZ+ but has the added advantage that teachers can upload teaching videos to help the children with their learning. It could be particularly helpful at the senior levels. If we bring this platform online, we will need to get permissions from you before we send on access codes to you. This might happen on a class by class basis. Keep an eye out for updates.



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## **Book Return:**

Many of the senior pupils brought bags and books home with them on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. These will suffice for the next number of weeks. Junior Classes have books ready and prepared for collection. My thanks to the class teachers who spent all day Friday getting them ready for you. I plan to give these out on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> and Monday 11<sup>th</sup> at the following times (both days):

10.30 am	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> Classes who were absent on December 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
11.00 am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class
11.45 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Class
12.15 pm	Senior Infants
12.45 pm	Junior Infants

Parents can come to the Front door at their appointed time and we will have a socially distanced queue in place. You will receive the books for all your children in one go, so please come for the eldest child's time. Children should not accompany you to the school.

## **In Conclusion**

Moving to online learning is not ideal but we are required to do it again. We ask you to do all you can to support your child through this process. In attempting to have more interaction between pupils and teachers online, there are concerns that we all have. I would remind you that as we are dealing with school activity, behaviour in online activities must comply with school rules. This especially applies in online communication. We would also ask parents to be very aware that while the internet is a wonderful tool, it requires parental supervision to keep our children safe.

Many thanks for your time in reading this letter. If there is any way I can help, especially with connectivity difficulties please let me know at [urlingfordns2020@gmail.com](mailto:urlingfordns2020@gmail.com) or try ringing the school, as the phone will be monitored most days, especially in the morning.

We look forward to making the next few weeks as successful as possible with all our combined efforts.

Yours sincerely,

Dermot Dunphy  
Principal