ST JOSEPH`S BOYS` SCHOOL

Blended and Distance Learning Policy

SEPTEMBER 2020:

Date of Review SMT: <u>24 November 2020</u>

Date of Review BOG: <u>9 December 2020</u>

Signature:

Chairperson BOG_Swelendrte_

Signature:

Principal_MMᶜC_ .

Date of next review: <u>**December 2021**</u>

<p style="text-align:center;">**St Joseph's Boys' School**</p>

<p style="text-align:center;">**AIMS**</p>

At St Joseph's we seek to help :-

- Develop pupils as individuals who aspire to reach their full potential   within society
- Develop skills, abilities and attitudes, relevant to and necessary for life-long learning
- Learn to work in partnership with others and to develop the following core skills:
- Communication
- Literacy
- Problem solving
- Whole person thinking
- Numeracy
- Teamwork
- Decision – Making
- ICT
- Learn to develop and evaluate their environment in order to develop ways to improve the quality of life
- Evolve a value system to live by through the relationship between God, themselves and others.

1. Purpose and Introduction

Background:

The 2020 pandemic, unprecedented and unplanned for, has brought about challenges for secondary school teaching and learning which previously and predominantly took place in large classrooms, under the instruction of teachers, within a highly structured day. The sudden need to adapt to distance learning allowed limited time for teachers to implement detailed procedures; however, as schools reopen to more pupils from August 2020, there is a requirement to ensure a more consistent, formalised and structured approach to blended and distance learning.

2. Definitions of Blended and Distance Learning:

Blended Learning is defined by Pearson as follows: Blended learning is a formal approach to education that creates an integrated learning environment where face-to-face and online teaching and learning become complementary, with the purpose of giving learners a more diverse and engaging learning experience.

Distance Learning as defined in our Distance Learning and Assessment Policy is as follows: Learners recruited and enrolled online and study independently using virtual learning environments - for example via online courses, posted resources, and telephone support.

3. Distance Assessment

Distance Assessment is a method of assessment where the assessment is designed to be carried out remotely. Distance Assessment enables learners to be assessed even if they are in situations/settings where traditional methods of assessment may be difficult or impossible to operate. Traditionally, St Joseph's Boys' School would not have engaged **in distance learning assessment but events during the pandemic of 2019/2020 have led to a change in many protocols.**

There are still scenarios where distance assessment will not be possible and not appropriate where:

•Practical skills and/or interaction with individuals/equipment need to be demonstrated and assessed in person

 •There are group work situations/units where collaboration with others is required

• There is a requirement for learners to be overseen in person by centre staff at a specific physical location, under controlled conditions, including observations of performance in assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear where possible.

However, given the new issues arising from the pandemic, it is incumbent upon the school to be prepared for distance learning and possibly distance assessment.

4. **Blended /Distance Learning Policy**

St Joseph's Boys' School's Blended / Distance Learning Policy aims :-

- To ensure that blended learning delivery meets the guidelines set by the awarding organisations and the requirements of our pupils, staff and parents.
- To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual learners.

 In order to do this the centre will:

- Ensure that staff in relation to teaching/delivery and assessment are timetabled to support blended learning when learners are working remotely.
- Ensure there is a process to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered, and feedback is provided in a timely manner.
- Ensure the setting of assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear.
- Ensure that when learners submit work, measures are taken to ensure the work is authentic and has been completed by the learner.
- Maintain and store all assessment and internal verification records securely in accordance with awarding bodies.

A. Types of Blended Learning:

- **Face-to-Face Time with Pupils**

This is the most traditional form of teaching and learning. It is a 'teacher-centred' method of education and takes place in school, in person. Pupils benefit from increased levels of interaction with their peers, as well as with their teacher, and are allowed the opportunity to bond with fellow pupils. In face-to-face learning, students are held accountable for their progress at the specific time the lesson is taking place.

- **Flipped Learning**

In the traditional approach to teaching and learning the teacher is the primary source of information. By contrast, the flipped learning model deliberately shifts instruction to a pupil centred approach, where **in class time** is dedicated to: exploring topics in greater depth; introducing complex concepts; answering questions; addressing misconceptions; setting clear expectations around work to be completed at home (online or paper based); and, creating rich learning opportunities. As a result, pupils are actively involved in knowledge construction as they participate in and evaluate their learning in a manner that is personally meaningful.

- **Online Learning**

The School's platform for sharing online resources and setting work will be **Microsoft Teams.** Pupils will also be able return/submit completed tasks through this platform. It is recognised that a considerable amount of engaging and effective work has been set through this platform. The continued use of this online platform is consistent with this policy and to be encouraged. However, for consistency (and to minimise the number of emails pupils receive) resources and links associated with the work on alternative platforms should be posted on Microsoft Teams instead of being emailed. This system will also synchronise with the SIMS homework and communication app being rolled out to pupils in December 2020.

- **Asynchronous Learning**

Asynchronous learning is learning that doesn't necessarily happen at the same time for the teacher and the pupils. There is no real-time interaction; the learning resources are created and made available for pupils to use later on. The main features of asynchronous learning are:
- resources and activities delivered online, e.g. through Microsoft Teams (Teams);
- recorded lessons/video instruction/podcasts;
- flipped learning - pupils engage with material before discussions in class.

- **Synchronous Learning**

Synchronous learning is teaching and learning that happens where the teacher is present at the same time as the pupils, meaning that there is real-time interaction between them. The main features of synchronous learning are:
- live, streamed lessons (see information below).

Important legislative policies and procedures, do not currently provide a sufficiently robust framework for these types of lessons to be considered in the best interests of staff and pupils. Therefore, teachers are not expected to deliver live, streamed lessons until appropriate policy, legislation, secure technical hardware and software is available. Appropriate consultation with teachers and Trade Unions will also need to take place at a local and national level before any change to the School's position is considered.
- live online/ telephone pastoral/achievement team check in sessions

- **Hard Copy Physical Resources**

Where possible and viable the school will provide hard copies of physical resources. The school will continue to audit and attempt to address shortfall in staff student access to hardware. Resources may be in the form of -
- paper packs and work booklets;
- textbooks;
- resources needed for projects, games and activities, for example, music, art, D&T, etc.

B. Responsibilities

i. **Leadership** -The role of the Senior Leadership Team is to:

- develop, monitor and evaluate the whole school strategy for blended and distance learning;
- communicate with, and provide support to, departments, staff, pupils and parents, to ensure effective implementation of blended and distance learning;
- provide opportunities for appropriate CPD training to ensure that staff are able to deliver blended and distance learning effectively;
- ensure accountability of the blended and distance learning process, through departmental self- evaluation.

ii. **Subject Leader** -The role of the Head of Department is to:

- lead and support the department in the design and development of high-quality blended and distance learning experiences for pupils, by ensuring that departmental plans are fit for purpose and audience
- monitor and evaluate the provision of blended and distance learning through departmental self- evaluation
- communicate with pupils and parents, as appropriate, as per the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, to ensure engagement and progress with the blended and distance learning experience

● disseminate excellent practice amongst colleagues, both formally and informally.

    iii.   **Learning and Teaching Manager** - The role of the Teaching and Learning Manager is to:

● research, trial and develop excellent practice and new innovation, using varied
strategies for blended and distance learning and informally;
● provide a forum for colleagues to discuss, trial and implement strategies to: improve
the quality of blended and distance learning; share good practice; develop ideas; and,
reflect on teaching and learning;
● work towards helping to create a proactive school culture where the quality of
blended and distance learning is openly observed, discussed, challenged and
enhanced within a supportive and non-judgemental environment;
● promote high quality blended and distance learning, using the elements of the DRICE
principles.

    iv.   **Teachers** -The role of the teacher is to:

● continue to strive to deliver consistently excellent lessons in accordance with the
Teaching & Learning Policy whilst being mindful that in the event of a lockdown the circumstances of individual
staff may affect the times the may engage on line.
● engage with CPD training to ensure proficiency in delivering effective blended and
distance learning;
● collaborate with colleagues to design and develop high-quality blended and distance
learning experiences for pupils, in accordance with departmental plans;
● plan and deliver blended and distance learning experiences for all pupils, including
those with additional learning needs, taking into account Individual Education
    Plans and ensuring that pupils' needs are fully catered for;
●   staff should consider the increased difficulty for some students in accessing material on line or responding on
    line when deciding on the amount of tasks set and the content required for completion.
● staff should communicate with, and provide timely feedback to, pupils in line with the School's Marking and
Feedback Policy;
● staff should carefully monitor pupils' work completion and deadline compliance;
●staff should communicate with pupils and parents, as appropriate and as per the Positive Behaviour
Management Policy, to ensure engagement and progress with the blended and distance learning experience.
●   individual staff or HODS are obligated to deal with every instance of work being missed as this will be
    addressed at a pastoral/curricular level.
●   teachers should ensure their HOD has access to any Team which they have set up to allow collegial sharing of
    good practice and to allow a second "manager" in the event of the owner of the team being unable to engage.
●   live streaming of classes, whilst successful in some instances may have staff well -being/protection issues and
    advice on this should be sought on an on- going basis from Principal and / or Designated Teacher for Child
    Protection.

    v.   **Pupils**
Pupils should:-

● record tasks set at the end of each face-to-face lesson in school, noting the due date
for completion or utilise the HW app when rolled out.
● dedicate appropriate time to distance learning, in order to complete the tasks set by
the due date;
● check Microsoft Teams for information on tasks, assignments and resources daily,
throughout the school week;
● identify a comfortable and quiet space to study/learn;
● engage in all learning set with academic honesty;
● submit all tasks and assignments in accordance with provided timelines and/or due
dates;
● appreciate that when working at home, teachers will be delivering lessons every day
at school.

vi **Parents/Carers** -Parents/Carers should support their child/ren in their learning by:

● providing an environment conducive to learning;
● engaging in conversations about resources, tasks and assignments provided/posted;
● monitoring time spent engaging in online and offline learning;
● helping to provide emotional balance through ensuring ample room and time for
reflection, physical activity, conversation, rest and play.

- Appreciate that staff are obligated to answer queries and messages only during the hours of a normal school day. While staff may reply outside of these hours it is not mandatory.
- Parents who chose to communicate with staff via teams or email should clearly indicate that is they who are doing so – do not use a child`s email account without specifying you are a parent.

C. General Guidelines and Expectations

A consensus would suggest :-

- Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered;
- Ensuring access to technology is key, particularly for disadvantaged pupils – this has been rigorously addressed via SEN and other agencies to give pupils access to hardware;
- Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes;
- Supporting pupils to work independently can improve learning outcomes.
- Therefore, it is important that everything put in place meets the four guidelines referenced above and that we have clear expectations for blended learning.

Expectations:
● Staff should establish a Microsoft Teams section for each individual class and ensure it is used in the most effective and efficient way. The establishment of the Team and its effective use is the **responsibility of the class teacher.**
● Staff should ensure that the title/label of the Team clearly identifies the **class, subject and teacher** so that pupils can easily identify and quickly access their work;
●Staff should recognise the need for one 'work stream' - the work completed during face-to-face learning will complement and consolidate the work completed by pupils remotely, and vice versa;
● staff should consider and plan for the 'work stream' to be completed, anticipating likely questions and problems that pupils may encounter;
● staff should ensure face-to-face learning incorporates the following:
- the introduction of new concepts;
- the explanation of difficult concepts;
- problem solving;
- explicit teaching of new skills;
- tasks that complement and consolidate the learning that takes place at home;
- interactive discussion;
- practical work (as/when appropriate);
- the use of class time to personalise learning.
- appropriate differentiation to meet need and ability level
● staff should ensure at-home learning incorporates:
- tasks that complement and consolidate the learning that takes place in the classroom;
- tasks that pupils can complete to enhance learning that takes place in the classroom, for example -research of /reading about a new topic to be introduced;
- tasks that allow pupils to practise new skills learnt during face-to-face time in school;
- note-taking, summarising and formation of questions in preparation for face-to-face time in school.
- appropriate differentiated materials and tasks
● staff should 'chunk' work that is to be completed. Masses of content should not simply be 'dropped' into TEAMS platform   with a completion date. Teachers should consider learning objectives for periods of two weeks (or linked to period of lockdown/isolation) and ensure that all tasks to be completed (both in school and at home) allow pupils to meet these

objectives;

● staff should clearly communicate learning objectives, for each period of work, to pupils so that they know exactly what is expected of them and what they will be doing in school and at home.

● staff should make deadlines for work completion clear to pupils. Make explicit the method of how pupils can submit completed written work (e.g. during face to face lessons on paper/ books, by uploading to TEAMS and providing clear instructions for how the work set can be completed. These instructions can be delivered during the face-to-face time with pupils but should also be available for pupils to access at home, either by uploading them to Teams or by including them in the paper resources provided;

●staff should consider how videos/podcasts can be used effectively to supplement, complement, and assist with the completion of, work set.

Marking, feedback and assessment

In line with the School's Marking and Feedback Policy, not all submitted written work needs to be quality marked in detail by the teacher; however, it is important that work completion is tracked so that pupils who are not engaging with the work set can be appropriately supported. It is important to remember that feedback is considered so that learning, rather than simply provision, is taking place. The nature of marking and feedback given will depend on the type of work completed and the method of submission.

The School's Marking and Feedback Policy should be followed as the overall framework on which to base our approach. Staff should consider how pupils can be formally assessed so that progress can be effectively monitored and intervention can be put in place where necessary.

Self- assessment may be an integral part of a blended learning approach; however, in order for this effective, pupils must be able to accurately and confidently self- assess their work and progress. Therefore, clear guidance and expectations relating to this will need to be provided by subject teachers

D. Engagement

For a blended learning approach to be effective, it is of critical importance that all pupils engage with the process. Therefore, pupils must have a secure understanding of what they have to do and by when. Differentiation, a comprehensive overview and clear instruction will be of critical importance, to enable pupils to balance work completed in school and at home. We expect that all pupils will engage with this approach to teaching and learning and exceptional levels of engagement can be celebrated by departments in already established ways. It needs to be made clear to pupils that work is not "optional" and we expect tasks to be completed. Clear deadlines should be set to give pupils an explicit understanding of what is required, by when. If pupils do not engage appropriately, our normal procedures, as outlined in the School's Positive Behaviour Management Policy, will apply.

However, we must recognise that pupils may be having difficulty in adapting to the new way of working or are struggling with barriers to learning, e.g. lack of space to work at home; unreliable broadband or limited ICT provision; etc. Therefore, it is important to try and establish what these barriers are and how we might help to remove them. Established lines of referral (Class Teacher – HOD/HOY/HOS/SMT -) should be used as necessary. Communication with pupils in school and with parents at home will be an important way of addressing these issues. If a pupil still fails to engage, then the usual procedures within the School's Positive Behaviour Management Policy / Learning and Teaching Policy/ Reporting and Assessment Policy   will be followed. Microsoft Teams' **reports section** will allow analysis of pupil engagement.

E. Continued Professional Development (CPD):

 CPD re: Blended / Distance learning in St Joseph's Boys' School was completed for staff and pupils in September 2020 and is ongoing as appropriate in this situation to continually upskill staff and pupils.

To ensure that pupils can make the most of blended and distance learning, they may require training and support on:

● the effective use of TEAMS:

- how to navigate the TEAMS;

- how to submit work;

- how to keep track of tasks/assignments.

● the effective use of self-assessment grids/templates.

-ensure that teachers can proficiently deliver blended and distance learning experiences, they may require training and support on:

● how to ensure the TEAMS is the main source of setting and receiving work;
● how to organise TEAMS and, in particular, classwork into categories; to photograph their work rather than upload a 'Word' document) within teams;
● how to create a quiz/assignment on Office forms;
● the effective use of PowerPoint including;
● creating and embedding and video clips into PP;
● use of hyperlinks to bring pupils from PP to necessary documents.

Teachers may use time not spent teaching to:
● source/create podcasts/videos relevant to SoWs for use when pupils are working at home;
● create prescriptive self-assessment templates for use with pupils, especially for tasks that will be completed at home that would not otherwise be teacher assessed.

F. Monitoring and Evaluation

This will be carried out by the Learning and Teaching Manager- SMT in liaison with Curriculum Development Team every two years or as appropriate in current pandemic situation – weekly / monthly etc and subject to changes in statutory guidance or legislation.

Readiness for Continuity of Learning At Home
A basic checklist intended to help schools prepare for learning at home.

Access	*Please make sure that everyone can access learning.* a) Do all staff have internet access and a laptop or other device? b) Do all the learners have internet access and a laptop or other device? c) Do we know who has no internet/laptop/device? Can we address this? d) Do we know who has poor internet connection? e) In this case, how are we providing alternative learning materials, feedback and opportunities to speak with staff and peers? How often?
Routines	*Please do not try to replicate a school timetable.* a) Have we made online lesson protocols clear to keep everyone safe? b) Do we expect every learner to log in every day? c) What is our minimum expectation for teacher contact with each class? d) What is our minimum expectation of teacher-led lessons per day/week?
Wellbeing and engagement	*Please make sure the learners have regular two-way contact with their teachers and with peers.* a) Do we have a simple checklist for the learners of what the school expects of them? b) Do we have a daily point of contact for the learners with a pastoral focus, eg a morning greeting from Class Teacher/Form Teacher? c) Do we have a group online conversation for learners about how they are managing, eg with as a Form Class with their teacher? d) Do Classroom Assistants assigned to learners have a daily/weekly contact routine? e) If learners are not engaging, what are our approaches to help them? f) If a teacher is ill, what contingency do we have in place?
Teaching, Learning and feedback	*Please make sure there is a good balance of:* a) teacher-led, independent and collaborative learning; b) online and off-line learning; c) ways in which to collect the learners' work, eg typed and submitted; photographed pieces of writing or art; recorded piece; d) ways in which to provide feedback to the learners, eg individual, whole class, verbal, written, video, marks, grades and/or annotations.
Monitoring and evaluation	*Please make sure to keep regular checks that all of the agreed approaches, routines and structures are working well for the learners, their parents/carers and staff.*
Communication with parents/carers	*Please make sure there is regular two-way contact with parents/carers.* a) Do we have a clear and straightforward checklist for parents/carers, eg 'What you can expect from our school'? b) Do we have clear and accessible guidance for parents on how to help their children access and engage in their learning and stay safe online? c) Are our parents/carers clear on how to make contact with the right staff member if their children have any difficulties related to their wellbeing or to their learning?