

# Review of Remote Learning at Laxey School and Dhoon School During the Lockdown Period

## Home-learning activities

Our teachers planned home-learning activities which were formatted in a style that children and parents are used to. At Dhoon, we presented our activities in the style of our usual "termly homework grids" and at Laxey we presented our activities in the style of our "Learning At Laxey" termly information sheets.

These home-learning activities were regularly published, and at a count in early May we had well over 100 bespoke activities published for each class or year group that had been planned by teachers - that is over 1000 activities across all classes in both schools. Teachers planned all of these activities alongside their commitments in the hub-schools where they had been redeployed to look after key-worker children.

These home-learning activities were published to our school websites, and in late April we redesigned the website layout to make it easier to locate all of this information.

## Creation of our online "Resource Bank"

Our teachers came across many high quality links to pertinent websites, online resources, powerpoint presentations, PDF worksheets and activities from various partners such as Ardwhallan Outdoor Education Centre, Curragh's Wildlife Park, Manx Birdlife and Culture Vannin. All of these were added to our newly created online "Resource Bank" which was accessed via our school website and made more visible during the website redesign in late April. The online "Resource Bank" at Laxey School was built on the Google Classroom platform. At the last count we had several hundred age-appropriate links and resources in the Resource Banks.

## Endorsement of the OAK NATIONAL Platform

The Executive Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team spent time evaluating a range of external platforms that could augment the home-learning activities that we were planning and publishing for our classes. As part of the evaluation process, the Executive Headteacher had contact with key contributors on the Oak National platform and this resulted in our endorsement of this resource which offered daily video lessons in English, Maths, Science and a range of other subjects. These lessons were linked to year groups and national curriculum objectives, and once we affiliated with Oak National, teachers' planning began to dovetail into the resource.

We made access to this platform easily available with a link to the portal from our "Home-Learning" landing page on our school websites.

## Individual feedback to children on their learning

We publicised Google email accounts for all of our class teachers and invited children / parents to contact their teachers with examples of their learning. This system was introduced part way through the lockdown period in response to parental feedback, and enabled us to provide personalised feedback on children's work and their learning, and help them to maintain their link to their class teacher during the school closure.

## Telephone contact with children and families

We devised a programme of establishing contact with all of our children and families, and this started as soon as the school closures were announced. Our safeguarding officer drew up a list of families we knew had specific requirements and / or vulnerabilities and we prioritised making contact with this group first, and then continuing to do so at regular points during the emergency period. As the lockdown continued, our Special Needs Co-Ordinator made telephone contact with all children on our special needs register to check that their learning needs were being addressed, and our class teachers made regular phone contact with every child / family in their class. The Executive Headteacher and both Heads of School contacted several families too, offering bespoke support.

## Personal expense

Access to the internet to upload home-learning activities, provide feedback to children by email and telephone calls to families were all made using personal broadband connections and telephone lines. Teachers funded these expenses themselves and Government have not reimbursed personal costs.

## Videos from the Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher maintained a weekly VLOG with recorded videos which were widely shared with the school community. These messages updated parents on the evolving home-learning offer, appraised families of the latest information received from Isle of Man Government and served to maintain an active presence from the senior staff throughout the lockdown period. The videos were uploaded to the school Facebook pages, Twitter accounts and have been archived on the following link: <https://maximheadteacher.wordpress.com/2020/05/26/10-weeks-of-lockdown-10-weeks-of-video-messages/>

Additional videos were recorded by the Deputy Headteacher and Special Needs Co-ordinator periodically.

## Active social media presence

We increased our social media presence to maintain an active engagement and link to our school communities. Facebook and Twitter were used to share and celebrate the work of our children and families. The schools produced montages, video messages, poems and other novelties along the way to remain a presence in everyone's lives during lockdown.

## Real-time video conferencing

We trialled a couple of video-conferencing platforms and settled on Zoom. From a standing start - having never even heard of MS Teams or Zoom at the start of the pandemic - we risk assessed, trained our staff in the use of, and completed a DPIA in respect of Zoom. We also sought a licensed version. We then offered an online school experience in real-time to every child across both schools on the Zoom platform in the form of a school assembly. Our "Big Federation Assembly" had around 150 participants, with more than one person on many of the webcams meaning we had a reach of in excess of 250 people.

Post-lockdown, we have been continuing to use Zoom to offer webinars for transition briefings for Year 6 and as a way to disseminate information to our new starters for Reception.

## Pastoral care letters

Our teachers wrote two pastoral letters to the children in their classes, one either side of Easter. The Executive Headteacher also wrote a separate letter to the children in May. These letters were a way of letting the children know that the teachers were thinking of them and helped to maintain their link to their class teacher during the school closure.

## Parental consents

We reviewed and checked all of the consents we had from parents in respect of social media, apps, and the Google Apps suite. Where we felt we needed to revisit consent, or double check consent with particular families, we did so.

We also undertook a large scale exercise to collect parental consent for our use of Zoom and this involved writing to all families to share our risk assessment, DPIA and request for written consent.

## Information for parents (infographics)

We published regular information for parents on our ever-evolving home-learning offer, including specific guidance around managing expectations to assist families during this unprecedented time. We did this through infographics which we regularly produced. Six infographics were ultimately published during lockdown.

