

Scoil Íosagáin

Policy on: ICT

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ICT Policy

Mission Statement

As well as being an important educational resource, the ability to use ICT effectively is a vital life skill in modern society. Our aim is to produce learners (pupils and staff) who are confident and effective users of ICT. We strive to achieve this aim by:

- Helping all staff and pupils to explore the learning resources provided by ICT
- Helping all children to use ICT with purpose and enjoyment
- Helping all children to develop the necessary skills to exploit ICT
- Helping children to become autonomous users of ICT
- Helping all children to evaluate the benefits of ICT and its impact on society
- Using ICT to develop partnerships beyond the school
- Celebrating success in the use of ICT.

Rationale

Why does our school require ICT?

1. To provide the best possible education for all our pupils
2. To provide a powerful and up to date teaching resource for all our teachers
3. To allow for more effective administration
4. To help provide more effective communication with staff and parents
5. To communicate with teachers and pupils Nationally & Internationally.
6. To prepare children for life in a technologically advanced world.

Specific Aims for ICT use in the Primary School include:

1. to enable the child to use a range of ICT tools in a relevant curriculum context
2. to enable the child to develop and use ICT skills in the attainment of curriculum learning objectives
3. to foster the child's confidence in his or her use of ICT, through enjoyable learning experiences
4. to develop the child's understanding and practice of the safe use of ICT
5. to enable the child to overcome barriers of access to learning resources caused by geographic location, culture, or language
6. to enable the child to use ICT to support his or her learning effectively and creatively
7. to inform the child's attitudes regarding the role of ICT in society, including the benefits and challenges of ICT use.
8. to support the development of the child's social skills through cooperative learning and problem-solving.

To what use will ICT be put?

1. School Administration
2. Research and accessing information
3. Interactive Whiteboards & Visualisers
4. Adventure games that stimulate higher order thinking skills and problem solving
5. Critical thinking and problem solving activities
6. Reinforcement of key literacy activities
7. Word Processing of children's work
8. Research on the internet
9. Communication via email and social media
10. Music composition and digital recording
11. Storage of Records of achievement/portfolio assessment
12. Supporting Special Needs pupils.
13. Digital Photographs, video recording and generation of posters.

ICT is now a powerful tool which is central to the educational process. The Staff at Scoil Iosagáin recognise the potential of ICT at the heart of the curriculum in terms of learning and teaching and as a core competence for the pupils. We recognise the success of ICT training in raising the profile of ICT within our school and in enthusing teachers. We aim to develop and strengthen the use of ICT to support learning and teaching. We want our pupils to become independent, autonomous learners who are confident and competent using technology. We are aware of the rapid development and the increasing complexity and range of uses of ICT (much broader than just computers), the increase of interactive technologies in schools and the development of communication through broadband

Good Practice: Pupils

It is important that from the beginning, children are taught to respect all equipment. The following points should be adhered to at all times.

- Respect all equipment – not to fiddle aimlessly with mouse, keyboard etc.
- Food or drinks must be never bought near the computer
- Pupils should never be allowed to plug in or unplug any appliance/device.
- Only one pupil using the keyboard at any one time.
- Pupil should be seated in front of the keyboard and should use both hands.
- Only one pupil should control the mouse and keyboard.
- Co-operation should be encouraged and pupils should share the time.
- To minimise the risks of virus infection no disc should be brought from home.
- No access to server.

- Leave the workstation ready for next user.
- IPADS - Students should be aware that they will have to adhere to our iPad etiquette. Staff will set expectations about how and when iPads are used, and sanctions will apply to those who do not follow guidelines.

Actual usage of ICT in School

Children will acquire a certain level of competency at using computers. Skills to be learned are outlined below:

Junior and Senior Infants:

- Be able to turn on and off (shut down) the computer
- Open and close apps on tablet devices and navigate to/from the Home screen independently
- Use Maths/Phonics Education software and websites
- Write/Draw on the IWB using the pen
- Insert and eject cds
- Manipulate mouse and keyboard
- Become familiar with basic computer terms – monitor, keyboard, mouse, enter, return, space bar, delete
- Through curriculum integration improve reading/writing/maths/art skills through games etc.

First and Second Classes:

- Understand the use of basic function keys – caps, space, delete, fada etc
- Format text e.g. Change to bold, underline etc
- Change fonts and font size
- Print and save their work
- Use drop-down menus and select function
- Integrate with reading words such as enter/click/double-click/delete/return
- Curriculum integration: reading and writing (word processing), maths, spelling, tables etc.
- Use a variety of apps to support their learning
- Use ICT to access age appropriate information
- Content generation
- Turning on and off iPads/computers in the correct manner
- Use the space bar and return keys
- Use the shift key for capital letters
- Use Microsoft Word for word processing
- Save a document in Microsoft Word
- Develop computer/iPad skills further through engaging in carefully selected educational software apps.
- Launch a web browser, access and navigate to a given website for research purposes.

Third to Sixth Classes:

- Keyboard skills
- File management
- Editing
- Word processing
- Printing
- Use internet for information gathering
- Running/loading software.
- Content generation
- Creation of Presentations in PowerPoint
- Take photographs using iPads
- Navigate educational websites
- Develop awareness of online environment safety

Summary of School Audit

Current Infrastructure

- In keeping with our mission, we perceive computers and IPADS being used as a tool of teaching and learning in each classroom. Therefore, we have supplied each classroom with a computer, a teaching laptop, a visualiser, an IWB as well as access to a school set of iPads.
- All computers are networked for printing and Internet access. This networking is provided through a series of wireless hubs as well as hard-wired access points.
- Our broadband is provided through the schools' broadband network and avails of the PDST/Technology in Education filtering service. (Currently Level 4 – allowing access to YouTube)
- All computers have Microsoft Office installed for teaching and learning.
- The secretary's office is equipped with a PC and colour printer, as well as network printing access.
- We currently have 7 iPads available to all students in the school. .
- Most up-to-date operating system to be chosen when purchasing new computers.
- All new I.T equipment is purchased using the Department of Education procurement Framework.
- One digital camera is in the school for use by the classes.
- A digital Dictaphone is also available for recording school related audio.

Current Software Provision

- The school has acquired numerous items of software, see attached list of resources. Software is loaded on each teachers laptop and is used on the interactive whiteboards. General IT books and CDs are stored in the art room/central resources storage area room, along with computer installation software.

- There are also a number of computer programs which can be used on the classroom computers and in the learning support room
- Each mainstream class has an IWB with Promethean or Starboard software installed.

Current Usage of Facilities

- Computers and laptops are used as a medium of teaching and learning in all the classrooms, therefore it is not necessary to timetable computer hours
- Current usage includes pre-reading and early reading work; pre-number and early number work; mathematical application; development of thinking and problem solving skills; word processing, desktop publishing; use of multimedia encyclopaedia and typing skills; internet work; presentation of project work; creating art work; spelling; development of fine motor skills; music composition and recording.
- The school set of iPads is rotated on a flexible timetable where teachers sign up for blocks of time to suit their teaching timetable each day.

Additional Information

ICT Co-ordination

- The principal holds responsibility for ICT and oversees purchasing and implementation in consultation with the staff.
- IT faults that cannot be rectified by the hardware user are to be reported to the principal. An external IT repair company is contacted if necessary Anti-virus Protection is installed on all computers with access to broadband.
- NCTE's own filtering programme is also used on our network
- All laptops and computers have AVG Free antivirus installed.

Access

Pupils and teachers have access to ICT whenever the need arises

Special Needs

When planning for the integration of ICT at Scoil Iosagáin , careful consideration will be given to the needs of children requiring learning support and those with Special Educational Needs. The child with Special Educational Needs or in need of learning support may experience more success with the curriculum when familiar equipment is combined with additional or differentiated resources.

Pupils requiring learning support may benefit from using software to support the development of reading and writing skills, while engaging his or her auditory and visual senses. The availability of specialised supportive software allows the teacher to provide differentiated material to support the learning needs of children in a range of areas.

Similarly, the motivational aspect of working independently develops the child's ability to learn independently. A variety of ICT equipment can help children with learning disabilities.

Planning for the use of such equipment will take account of the identified needs of each child. Where a child has had an educational assessment, and the use of technology is recommended, the recommendations will be examined to ascertain how they are going to be implemented.

Multimedia technology, which can present sounds, photographs, and video, as well as text and graphics on the screen, can support children who have difficulty with the printed word alone in accessing the curriculum. In this way, ICT may allow these children greater access to the curriculum than more traditional methods of teaching and learning.

Exceptional Students

ICT is used in all classrooms to challenge and extend the educational opportunities for pupils with above average attainment.

Maintenance

- Each teacher is asked to lock away their laptop at the end of the day
- Each teacher is asked to delete any confidential information before passing it on to another member of staff
- The laptops remain in the classroom from year to year regardless of teacher rotation.
- Computer issues are reported to the principal.
- iPads are locked away each evening.
- iPads are updated at least once per term. New apps are added as needed.

Donations

We no longer accept donated second hand computer hardware.

Health and Safety Aspects

All new computers purchased will comply with European regulations regarding radiation. Dedicated power points have been installed for all computers, and fused plugs used. Designated network points are also available in each classroom.

School Website

- The school website is www.upperchurchns.ie
- School newsletters and other news items will regularly be added to the website.
- School policies that are relevant to parents will also be added to this site.
- It can be used as a means of communication between school, home and the wider community.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

Ratification:

This policy was reviewed by Staff of Scoil Íosagáin and ratified by Board of Management in December 2017.

Signed P. J. Harrington
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 12th Dec 2017

Signed Alma Quinn
Principal

Date: 12th Dec 2017