BALLYTOBER

PRIMARY SCHOOL

U.I.C.T Policy

Ratified : 28th June 2022

Signed : _____ Chairperson, BoG

GENERAL STATEMENT

UICT comprises a variety of systems that handle electronically retrievable information. These include computers, digital resources, interactive whiteboards, floor robots, CD/DVD players, calculators, digital cameras and video cameras. UICT is concerned with the handling of electronic information and involves creating, collecting, holding, processing, presenting and communicating this information in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes. Using Information and Communications Technology (UICT) is one of three cross-curricular skills in the Northern Ireland Curriculum, with an emphasis on the use of ICT resources to enhance and enrich all areas of learning.

RATIONALE

Why should our pupils use ICT?

* ICT can enhance and enrich pupils' learning across the curriculum.
* ICT provides pupils with learning and teaching experiences not readily accessible otherwise.
* ICT provides a vehicle for the development of pupils' creativity.
* ICT can motivate and enthuse pupils.
* ICT can empower pupils, develop self-esteem and promote positive attitudes to learning.
* In today's information society, pupils need to develop ICT skills in order to access relevant information and become economically aware and active.
* ICT gives pupils immediate access to high-quality learning materials.
* ICT has the flexibility to meet the individual needs and abilities of each pupil, catering for both weak and high achievers.
* ICT promotes access for pupils with learning difficulties.
* ICT offers potential for effective group work and collaborative learning.
* ICT supports different types of learners – audio, visual and kinaesthetic.

AIMS

Our aims in using ICT in Teaching and Learning are to:

* extend and enhance learning across all areas of the curriculum.
* contribute to raising standards in literacy, numeracy and other areas of learning.
* encourage pupils to select and use ICT appropriate to the task.
* develop skills in the use of ICT and the ability to apply these skills in a range of curricular contexts.
* give children access to a variety of sources of information.
* instil in children a sense of confidence, achievement and enjoyment.
* enable pupils to extend their learning beyond the school environment.
* ensure teaching staff are motivated and skilled in the use of ICT and aware of the contribution ICT can make to learning and teaching.
* enable pupils to develop the skills of using ICT safely and responsibly in a safe learning environment.

Our aims in using ICT in Management are to:

* create, use and adapt high quality digital teaching resources.
* support communication with parents and the wider school community.
* encourage sharing of resources and good practice through ICT.
* increase professional efficiency through the use of ICT systems for planning, record keeping, reporting and communicating.
* enable the use of pupil performance data to inform strategic planning.

STRATEGIES FOR USE OF ICT

* Since the focus of the Northern Ireland Curriculum is now on 'Using' ICT skills, ICT is not taught as a distinct subject, but is a tool to be used in a variety of meaningful contexts throughout the curriculum.
* ICT is planned and delivered as an integral part of each curriculum area to support and enrich children's learning.
* All pupils are given equal access opportunities through management of ICT resources.
* ICT is a statutory entitlement for all pupils – **never** a punishment or reward.

PLANNING AND PROGRESSION

Planning for ICT ensures coverage of the statutory requirements for ICT as set out under the 5 Es – Explore, Express, Exchange, Evaluate and Exhibit. All pupils have opportunities to develop a wide range of skills and competencies appropriate to their age and abilities as they progress through the school from P1 to P7.

ACCESS

Pupils have access to ICT through a network system (C2K). Pupils also have access to ICT through use of a class-based computer and all classes have internet access via stand-alone laptops.

Every classroom has an interactive whiteboard which is used by teachers to enhance learning and by pupils to complete activities interactively. All classrooms also have an ipad for shared use by teachers and pupils, as well as a CD player and DVD player (via interactive whiteboards).

Further ICT resources such as Roamers, Bee Bots and video cameras are stored centrally for access by all.

INCLUSION

The school's ICT facilities are available for use by all pupils and staff. All children will be given access to ICT regardless of gender, race, physical or sensory disability.

For pupils with learning difficulties and/or physical or sensory disability appropriate use of ICT can often enhance access to aspects of the curriculum. In co-operation with the SENCo we will endeavour to provide, wherever and whenever possible, appropriate software and hardware to enable such access.

INTERNET AND E-SAFETY

The school has internet access on the networked computers in every classroom and in the computer suite. Any use of the Internet will be strictly in accordance with the school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, which has been communicated to and agreed by staff, pupils, governors and parents. Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of e-safety and acceptable online behaviour at a level appropriate to their age and ICT capability.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Teachers routinely evaluate their use of ICT in learning and teaching and the impact on pupil outcomes.
Teachers comment on pupils' levels of achievement in using ICT on annual reports.
Tasks within the CCEA task bank are used to develop and assess pupil competence in ICT in curricular contexts.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The school's action planning for ICT forms part of the overall School Development Plan, identifying and prioritising areas for development. This is reviewed on a bi-annual basis, taking into account developments in technology and outcomes of monitoring and evaluation procedures.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

We recognise the need for the on-going development of ICT capability to reflect the constantly changing nature of technology. We have a culture of continuing professional development of all staff, including support staff as appropriate. This will be provided in accordance with the school development plan and based on audits of identified need as well as developments in technology.

REVIEW

Because of the rapidly changing nature of technology this policy will be reviewed on a bi- annual basis by the UICT Co-ordinator, in consultation with the Principal, teaching staff and governors.