

OVENS NATIONAL SCHOOL
ICT POLICY
INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy was revised by the ICT Coordinator of Ovens National School in consultation with the staff in March and April of 2018 and further reviewed in December 2020 in light of changes due to Covid 19. The review of the plan was contributed to by all teachers via a staff survey. The planning framework devised by the Professional Development Service for teachers (PDST), the Digital Learning Framework, was used as a guideline for reviewing the Whole School Plan for ICT. It is hoped that the redrafted version will be a useful tool for teachers, providing them with clear guidelines and ensuring consistency and continuity in practice throughout the school.

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 prepare children for life in a technologically advanced world.

To what use will ICT be put?

1. School Administration eg Aladdin, emails, texts .
2. Research software e.g. World Book online via Scoilnet
3. Learning games that stimulate higher order thinking skills and problem solving
4. Word Processing and display of children's work
5. Research on the internet
6. Communication with parents via email, website, blog etc.. up to and including remote teaching/learning using ,for example ,Seesaw as well as emails.
7. Music composition and digital recording
8. Storage of Records of achievement/portfolio assessment
9. Special Needs pupils

Aims

Integrated technology in teaching and learning across the curriculum is a new challenge which we feel must be met in Primary Education. We aim to develop skills in our pupils to enable them to live and work in an ever-changing world. We, as teachers, recognise the potential of ICT as a cross-curricular resource at primary level. In line with the general educational philosophies of the school, the mode of instruction will attempt to generate in the children, a sense of fulfilment, while experiencing the benefits of ICT to facilitate creative expression and academic achievement.

1. We wish to promote a positive, masterful attitude to technology.
2. To use computers as tools to enhance further learning.
3. To facilitate cross-curricular learning.
4. To develop basic key board skills.
5. To promote imagination and creativity.
6. To develop problem-solving skills.
7. To motivate children to collect, enter and interpret data.
8. To encourage children to communicate effectively.
9. To develop project management and presentation skills.
10. To develop co-operative skills through participation in I.C.T. projects, that demands the pooling of skills and interactive development of ideas and materials.
11. To enhance our ability to teach/learn remotely , when needed.

Curriculum Planning

Ovens National School recognises the need to provide all its pupils with computer literacy skills so that they will be able to maximise the opportunities presented to them by the information age in Ireland. We are aware that it is increasingly important that a basic appreciation and understanding of the modern information and communication technologies is fostered in young people, from their early years in school up to the completion of their education.

Teachers aim to integrate ICT across a variety of subject areas throughout the school year, while using ICT equipment on a daily basis in the classroom.

Linkage and Integration

Opportunity for use of an integrated approach exists in all levels of the ICT curriculum within the school. Teachers will make provision for this linkage in their short-term planning, particularly in the area of mathematics and English. SESE often features highly in the use of ICT for project and investigation work. In the classroom, teachers use the IWB for most lessons, and find it particularly useful for display and discussion purposes.

Skills Development

The main skills developed through our ICT are communication and thinking skills. When used to support learning objectives in the Primary School Curriculum, ICT can positively contribute to the children's learning across the curriculum, including their literacy and numeracy skills, higher order thinking skills, and collaborative and interpersonal skills. ICT also facilitates the differentiation of the curriculum to suit the range of learning needs and styles of individual children. In this way ICT can offer the teacher a powerful teaching and learning resource, helping to ensure that all children can enjoy success as learners. We aim to develop the children's ICT policy progressively throughout their time at the school. The following table sets out the progression (this may be subject to change):

Junior and Senior Infants
Children interact with Interactive Whiteboard
Interactive software such as Bua na Cainte or Jolly Phonics used in class
Online stories or rhymes etc. shown on IWB
1st and 2nd Class
Children can use the mouse and keyboard
Children can identify the main keys on the keyboard; spacebar, enter, numbers, letters
Children can draw picture using paint or other similar software/website
Children can play relevant learning games on the computer
3rd and 4th Class
Children practise typing
Children can change font size, colour and script in text
Children can use the internet for information gathering
Children can save files into folders and open files from folders
5th and 6th Class
Children can use an internet search engine
Children can print their own work
Children can use Microsoft Powerpoint or Word to publish a piece of personal work

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is an essential element of the teaching and learning process in our school. Assessment in ICT is less formal than most other subjects. Children are expected to

complete and master certain tasks at each class level, as detailed above. The children will begin ICT instruction in 1st class, beginning with basic skills such as using the mouse, turning on and off the PC, basic Word etc.. This progresses to 6th class where children use Microsoft PowerPoint to display work they have investigated through the use of the Internet, as well as typing and printing various projects. Each teacher monitors and observes this progress throughout the year, and further instruction is given to any pupil experiencing difficulty with a task.

Children with Different Needs

The ICT facilities within Ovens National School aim to meet the needs of all the children in the school. This will be achieved by teachers, varying the pace, content and methodologies to ensure learning for all pupils. This will be recorded in the teacher's yearly notes. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into account when planning ICT specific classes and related activities. The S.N.A. supports particular children and groups as directed by the class teacher.

Within the SET setting, some children have access to their own laptop to support their learning. Guided by the SET staff, children engage with word processing using Microsoft Word, typing skills using Ten Thumbs and older children often practise presenting information and research using Microsoft PowerPoint. A variety of other pieces of software and websites are used based on the specific needs of the children.

Resources and Equipment

- Each class is fully equipped with an interactive white board, a visualiser and a laptop.
- A number of classes use wireless mice to allow children to navigate the computer from their tables.
- An inbuilt speaker system is in place in each classroom.
- A number of classrooms can facilitate an amplification system for children with hearing impairments.
- There is a school camera available to all teachers.
- A fully equipped ICT room, incorporating 20 PCs is available to all classes from Junior Infants to 6th. A one hour, weekly time slot is allocated to each teacher, and free slots are available for use if any class needs an increased amount of time (this was modified due to Covid 19).
- This room also contains a laser printer, connected through a LAN system to all the computers.
- A large amount of curriculum specific software has been uploaded on these computers, and these CDs are available to teachers to use on their class PCs.
- Within this room is a projector screen linked to one PC, which is used by the teacher to demonstrate programmes or instructions.
- Aladdin, The School Management software, is used as record keeping resource, to track attendance, to communicate with staff members/parents, as a resource for documents/ school plans/ policies and much more.

Website

Ovens National School has a functioning and regularly updated website and school blog. These are used for:

- Informing parents of news and events
- Displaying photographs of children's work, achievements and activities
- Providing access to policies and booklists
- Giving contact information to members of the public
- Providing information on the school for prospective parents
- School calendar showing holidays, planning days and other important school events

- Giving information to parents and members of the public, of the in school / extra curricular activities provided in Ovens NS.

Maintenance

Issues regarding the upkeep, repair and replacement of existing ICT infrastructure occur regularly. In the secretary's office there is a notebook for recording ICT-related issues in the classrooms or computer rooms. The ICT coordinator assists in trying to solve issues. Projector bulbs are replaced by the ICT coordinator. Other issues are recorded and are passed onto an external company, who visit the school at regular intervals to fix such issues. This company also arranges for the replacement of equipment which is no longer viable.

Success Criteria

That the children are fully engaging with the different aspects of the plan and are seen to really enjoy the use of ICT across all subject areas.

Future Considerations

We aim:

- to keep abreast of new hardware developments.
- to update equipment at regular intervals
- to monitor software developments and keep up to date with new material and resources.
- to facilitate teachers who wish to attend ICT courses.

Review

Timeframe for review: Every 3 years

Responsibility for Review: ICT Coordinator

Ratification and Communication

Ratified by Board of Management on: 24/9/18

Reviewed on: 10/12/20

Signed: 
Chairperson, Board of Management