

Ratification Date:	September 2015
Review Date:	September 2017

Introductory Statement

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for ICT (Information and Communications Technology) in Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover. The policy was developed during the academic year 2014-2015 through a process of consultation with the teaching staff. This policy is fully implemented as of September 2015.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide an overview of ICT in our school and to set out our general aims and goals in delivering ICT to the pupils. Our policy provides us with a framework for long and short term planning which will be of benefit to the teaching and learning of ICT in Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover. Our policy provides information for all teachers, the Board of Management and parents of the approaches and methodologies being used in the teaching of the ICT, emphasising the key messages of the ICT as outlined ICT in Schools document.

Vision for ICT

ICT is now a powerful tool which is central to the educational process. The Staff at Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover 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.

Rationale

Why should our pupils use ICT?

ICT can develop thinking skills and problem solving strategies.

- ICT can enable pupils to locate, gather, synthesis, analyse, reconstruct, communicate and present information.
- ICT can provide opportunities for deeper analysis of concepts and processes.
- ICT can allow pupils to gain more control over the direction of their learning.
- ICT can present social opportunities for collaboration on joint tasks both face to face in the classroom and online.
- ICT can develop creativity.
- ICT can encourage learning out of school in other settings.
- ICT can allow pupils to gain knowledge, understanding and skills beyond that of the teacher.

Aims

Our aims in using ICT are to:

- Raise levels of pupil competence and confidence in using ICT – by developing children’s knowledge, understanding and skills in using a range of ICT tools to enhance learning experiences across the curriculum.
- Offer equal entitlement of ICT to all pupils.
- Raise levels of teacher competence and confidence in integrating and using a range of different technologies into their planning, teaching and assessment of children’s work.
- To enhance and enrich children’s learning and add to its enjoyment.
- Provide access to internet, interactive learning resources and whiteboards.
- Develop children’s independent learning skills using ICT across the curriculum.
- Develop information handling and research skills.
- Embed ICT in the half yearly and fortnightly plans.

Teaching and Learning through ICT in our School

Organisation of Resources

- There is one PC in all classrooms which provide connection to the internet, software and shared printing facilities.
- All classrooms have interactive whiteboards.
- All classrooms have scanners.
- There are two networked printers. One is located in the staff room (black and white) and the other in the office (colour).
- Digital cameras are stored in the principal’s classroom.
- All software is centrally stored in the staff room. ICT resources may be used in classrooms but must be returned to the staff room after use.

The Internet as a Resource

The internet provides a wealth of educational resources that support the strands of the Irish Primary School Curriculum. Appendix 1 of this document contains a list of useful websites for this purpose.

Roles and Responsibilities of ICT co-ordinator

- Provide leadership and direction.
- Play a key role and liaise with Principal and staff in the drawing up of a whole school policy for ICT.
- Support, guide and motivate colleagues in the use and development of ICT across the curriculum.
- Advise staff on ICT training and support which is available to them.
- Ensure that the use of ICT is managed and organised to meet school aims and objectives.
- Contribute to the monitoring and evaluation process.
- Keep up to date with recent developments in ICT and advise colleagues appropriately.

- Source and update ICT software.
- Identify and assess new approaches to the use of e-learning
- Report technical problems to principal.
- Monitor the work being carried out in ICT throughout the school to ensure progression.
- Complete action plan for dissolving boundaries project.
- Monitor and update the school website.

Responsibilities of Class Teachers

- Assess pupils' skills.
- Share ideas, resources, skills and practices with fellow teachers on staff.
- Integrate ICT throughout curriculum.
- Have read the schools internet acceptable use policy.
- Inform the ICT co-ordinator of any technical problems and resources which need replacing.
- Ensure that all resources borrowed by them from the staff room are returned.
- Post updates on classwork to the school website.

Classroom Management of ICT Resources

Children will have planned opportunities to use ICT resources to carry out:

- Individual work
- Group activities – children will generally work in pairs or small groups at the computer
- Whole class activities – interactive whiteboard

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Planning at whole school level.
- The Principal and ICT co-ordinator discuss how ICT is incorporated into the school development plan.
- A line of development in ICT ensuring progression and continuity for children from junior infants to sixth class has been drawn up and agreed by all staff.
- ICT is embedded into the schemes of work of each teacher.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Children's use of ICT is assessed and recorded by the class teacher.
- Formative assessment – observing and questioning during classroom activities.
- Summative assessment methods – collecting samples of children's ICT work.

Teachers will report on a child's progress to the next teacher:

- by discussing progress.
- by passing on samples of work.

Teachers will report on a child's progress to parents:

- by discussion during formal parent teacher meetings.
- by a comment regarding ICT competence on each child's report at the end of each year for 3rd – 6th class.

Provision for pupils with SEN in Mainstream

- It is important to recognise the potential of ICT to help address children's individual learning needs. ICT is used to enhance the learning experiences of children with special educational needs within the school.
- Where appropriate specialist hardware equipment such as laptops and are used to meet children's individual needs.
- Where appropriate specific software e.g. Switch skills.
- Where appropriate, teacher developed resources such as Clicker 4 word banks are used to assist learning.
- Teachers shall familiarise themselves with the variety of graded levels within suitable software in order to provide differentiation and cater for children with special educational needs within their classrooms.

Equality of Access

All children will have equal access to the use of ICT across the curriculum. Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover will guard against gender stereotyping with encouragement given to both boys and girls to engage in ICT related activities. Children of all ages, ability levels and backgrounds will have equal access to ICT resources.

ICT in the Home and in the Community

An increasing number of children have access to computers/laptops/tablets in the home or through their out-of-school activities.

In keeping with the school Homework Policy children will be encouraged to make use of home computers and ICT resources.

Where appropriate children will be given opportunities to make use of ICT resources to:

- Carry out research to support classroom work and projects.
- Use suggested websites provided by teacher to support learning.
- To complete work begun in school.
- Work carried out on home computers should be valued. It is important to ensure that a consistent approach to children's use of home computers is taken in each class as a child progresses through the school.
- As indicated in our approach to equity of access, children who do not have ICT resources at home should not be disadvantaged. To seek to facilitate this, provision may be made to permit the use of computers beyond normal school hours whether through aftercare, computer clubs or time set aside within the school day.

Internet Safety

Refer to school **Acceptable use of the Internet** policy.

Health and Safety

Each classroom has rules for safe use of the computer – devised and discussed with children. In all classrooms consideration is given to health and safety in the location and positioning of equipment.

The following issues are addressed.

- Position and posture of the child.
- Children should be seated correctly at the computer.
- When using the computer the child should be able to sit upright on a chair which gives some back support, having their arms roughly horizontal when using a keyboard.
- The child's body should face forwards, not twisted sideways.
- Children sharing a computer should be encouraged to make sure that everyone in the group can see without straining.
- Children should be looking down at the screen with the top of the screen roughly at their eye level.
- Children should be shown how to hold the mouse lightly in the widest part of their hand so that a very small movement is needed to click a button.

Furniture

- The computer table/bench should be of a height appropriate to the size of the child.
- The monitor should be kept well back from the front edge of the table/bench.
- There should be space on the computer table/bench for the keyboard in front of the monitor.
- There should be enough space on the computer table for a mouse mat to be used.
- Computers should be positioned to avoid glare from light or windows.

Reducing Risks

- Due care shall be taken not to overload extension cables or double socket adapters where it is necessary to use such equipment.
- Leads should not trail on the floor.
- Damaged plugs or leads shall be replaced.
- Ventilation grills should not be blocked as overheating may occur.
- There is a slight risk of triggering epileptic seizures from excessive screen flicker. As monitors can vary in the steadiness of screen image due care will be taken to use a monitor with minimum screen flicker where an individual child may be at risk.

Continuing Professional Development

Staff development in ICT is ongoing within the school. It is our aim to raise the level of teacher competence and confidence in ICT by:

- Becoming familiar with digital and online technologies.
- Use email to communicate.
- Making provision for ICT in-service training.
- Providing in-school support for teachers requiring assistance in developing particular aspects of ICT skills knowledge and understanding.
- Displaying information on the staff notice board for ICT courses.

Teacher Planning and Reporting

Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover recognises that advantages to using ICT as a tool for teacher planning, preparation, record keeping and reporting. All teachers use ICT to prepare termly, fortnightly and weekly plans. End of Year Reports are also completed using ICT. Teachers make use of the NCCA online planning tool to inform their planning. Additionally, the school has access to a number of educational companies' online resources for planning including cjfallon.ie and folensonline.ie.

Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover's Website

Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover's website will be kept updated regularly with current information regarding events and ongoing work by pupils in the school. It will also be used as a tool for informing and involving parents in their child's education. A number of educational and informational links have been placed on the site under the parents section with this aim in mind.

Policy Review

As ICT resources increase and pupil and teacher ICT competence develops the ICT Policy will be reviewed to evaluate its effectiveness. This policy will be updated when further information becomes available.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management ratified this revised policy at its meeting on November 26, 2013. Copies of the policy will be circulated and communicated to all members of the staff, parents and guardians. A copy will be available on the school website.

Appendix 1 Websites

English

www.theschoolbell.com
www.alphabet-soup.net
<http://www.monsterexchange.org/>
www.funbrain.com
www.starfall.com Website offers early literacy activities.
www.twinkle.co.uk
www.pbskids.org
www.storynory.com

Maths

www.enjoymaths.co.uk
www.maths-drills.com
www.numberline.co.uk
www.mathszone.co.uk
www.funbrain.com
www.themathworksheetsite.com Generates maths worksheets based on what the teacher wants the children to focus on.
www.mangahigh.com
www.iboard.co.uk

Gaeilge

www.theirishpage.com
www.gaelscoil.com
www.seomraranga.com
www.tg4.ie

SESE

<http://www.teachnet-uk.org.uk/2005%20Projects/History-Using%20ICT/using%20ict%20for%20history/resources.htm> Partition and the 1916 Rising
www.ireland.com/focus/easterrising Created in association with the Department of Education & Science, this site explores the events surrounding the 1916 Rising.

www.schoolhistory.co.uk
www.primaryscience.ie
<http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/vikings/> <http://www.ncte.ie/viking/index.html>
The vikings

www.askaboutireland.ie
www.learningplanet.com

www.araskids.ie This is the official website of the President of Ireland for children. It describes the president's home, a typical day in the life of the president and provides other interesting facts regarding Áras an Uachtaráin.

<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/otherunsites.html> Lots of information and links on developing countries.

www.kbears.com Lots of information about animals and countries provided in a fun interactive way.

Art

www.allfreecraft.com

<http://library.thinkquesr.org/J001159/famart.htm> All about famous artists

www.dltk-kids.com

Music

<http://www.sfskids.org/templates/home.asp?pageid=1>

PE

<http://www.cul4kidz.com> GAA resource page: includes activities, worksheets, history, photos, quizzes, coaching tips, action videos.

<http://test.scoilnet.ie/res/crosswords/MM57PEGAA.html> GAA crossword

<http://www.teachnet.ie/stpats2006/athletics/Athletics%20Powerpoint%20final%20one.ppt> Overview of athletics in PowerPoint

http://www.rte.ie/sport/gaa/championship/mediaplayer.html?fundo/fd_skilllist Videos of hurling/football skills

<http://ceim.gaa.ie> Céim ar Aghaidh/Step Ahead uses the fun of Gaelic games to deliver an exciting range of exercises and worksheets to support all subjects

General Resources

www.cjfallon.ie

www.folensonline.ie

www.bbcbitesize.co.uk

www.edhelper.com

www.lessonplanet.com

www.primaryresources.co.uk

www.apples4theteacher.com

www.scholastic.com

www.teachingideas.co.uk

www.pppst.com

www.teachnet.ie

<http://www.priorywoods.middlesbrough.sch.uk/resources/restop.htm> priory woods (special needs)

<http://www.bpl.org/KIDS/Netiquette.htm> netiquette for kids

www.topmarks.co.uk Gives suggestions for sites that work well on the interactive whiteboard.

www.schooldays.ie Information for both teachers and parents.

<http://www.ceim.gaa.ie/> GAA website has excellent resources to support all areas of the curriculum.