



Letterfrack National School
Connemara, Co. Galway.

Tel: 095 41034 Email: letterfrackns@yahoo.ie
PRINCIPAL: Olivia Kerrigan CHAIRPERSON: Brian McDermott

Policy on Information and Communication Technology

Introduction

This policy was formulated in August 2012 and ratified by the Board of management in September 2012 & updated bi-annually.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

Our ethos statement expresses the desire that each child should learn and achieve to the best of his/her ability. We believe that ICT has significant role to play in ensuring that each child does so. Our commitment is based on our vision of ICT as a vital tool of learning and teaching, rather than as an end in itself. We see ICT as enabling children and teachers to engage with the curriculum in a deep, child-centred and creative way, for example:

1. Laptops/Chromebooks are used by the pupils for the purposes of typing, consolidating maths and literacy concepts, researching for projects using the internet and engaging with scratch.
2. iPads are used by pupils in different classes throughout the school to consolidate maths and literacy concepts and to research online.
3. Digital cameras & iPads are used for recording school events and classroom activities.
4. Website is used to inform parents of our policies and also used to keep parents up to date on and post pictures of school events and classroom activities, providing a home/school link. There is also a helpful tips page for parents with information on how they can help their child at home.
5. Interactive whiteboards are used by teachers to display and interact with a variety of online resources: Bua na cainte, Folens online, CJ fallon, Grow in love, twinkl.
6. Aladdin attendance is in use by all staff for school administration.
7. Seesaw used to record work completed by the children & homework given weekly via Seesaw.
8. Accelerated Reader used daily/weekly by children from 1st class-6th. They complete reading/comprehension quizzes & tests & teachers can access support information & results on the online portal.

Why should our pupils use ICT?

- 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.

CHILDHOOD SHOULD BE A JOURNEY NOT A RACE

Board of Management – Brian McDermott, Fr. Pudota, Olivia Kerrigan, Liv Heneghan,
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- 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 our planning.

Expected Skill and Learning Outcomes for ICT at each Class Level

Junior Infants

1. Children are exposed to an ICT environment on a daily basis through ipad activities and software such as Bua na Cainte, Starways oral language, Jolly phonics, grow in love, youtube.
2. Infants will learn how to power on and off ipads, find ipads apps in folders
3. Infants will use a wide range of apps to consolidate learning in numeracy and literacy.
4. Infants will begin to use seesaw to self-assess and create a digital platform of their progress.
5. Have many opportunities to engage with the interactive whiteboard

1st & 2nd:

As for infant classes, plus:

- As for Infant classes, plus:
- Become more familiar with the interface of an ipad, navigate between apps.
- Learn to turn laptops on and off, navigate software and internet by entering and exiting, closing, searching, access and use of school website.

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- Accessing and using seesaw on ipads and laptops independently.
- Doing AR quizzes & tests independently.
- Complete homework tasks using seesaw.
- Continue to use interactive whiteboard activities.

3rd & 4th

As for previous classes, plus:

1. Use MS word to draft, edit and publish written documents.
2. Engage with internet safety lessons and or workshops.
3. Introduction of Coding with the ponokee app on ipad.
4. Improve internet skills through research and project work.
5. Use Internet interactive learning sites & search engines

5th and 6th

As for previous classes, plus:

1. Develop typing skills using typing.com
2. Begin to use email as a form of communication.
3. Learn to use book creator app for project presentation.
4. Learn to use PowerPoint for project presentation.
5. Learn about safety on the internet, especially with regard to social networking sites

To what use will ICT be put?

1. School Administration
2. Research software
3. Games/Apps that stimulate higher order thinking skills and problem solving
4. Word Processing of children's work
5. Research on the internet
6. Communication via email
7. Digital recording/Seesaw/school website
8. Storage of Records of achievement/portfolio assessment/attendance
9. Special Needs pupils

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Safety, Security and Behaviour Issues

- With regard to the Internet an Acceptable use policy has been in place for many years and has served the school well. Children only use computers while supervised. Students are not permitted to access social networking or shopping sites
- Eating and drinking while using the computer are forbidden, and desk space should be tidy with no food, liquid or other items, (Clay, glue etc.) present while the computer is being used
- Other ICT equipment may only be used under supervision
- ICT equipment may not be removed from the school except with the permission of the Board of Management.

Current Infrastructure

- In keeping with our mission, we perceive ICT technologies being used as a tool of teaching and learning in each classroom.
- Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard, laptop & 4 tablets/iPads.
- There are 2 digital cameras in the school for use by all classes.
- The principal's office is equipped with a PC, colour printer/photocopier/scanner.
- The SET room has a laptop & tablets/iPads.
- We have 6 chrome books.

The Role of the ICT Co-ordinator

The staff selected Liv Heneghan to be the ICT co-ordinator. The role involves:

- Provide leadership and direction.
- Play a key role and liaise with the 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.
- 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 in consultation with all staff members.
- Monitor and update the school website.

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Special Educational Needs

- As a school we are deeply committed to providing the best possible learning experiences for the children with special educational needs. ICT has an important role to play in this commitment, as it facilitates deep engagement with the curriculum and caters for a variety of learning styles. iPads & Chromebooks are available in the Special Education room, and children are facilitated to use them. The Board of Management is happy to fund the purchase of special software or other equipment as necessary, using the ICT grants. Applications can be made for grants for any child if the need arises out of an assessment.

Staff Development

Staff members have received training on the use of ICT, through initial teacher training, summer courses, classes in the local Education centre and seminars/webinars provided. The Board of Management grant-aids staff professional development in this area as in many others. In addition, the staff members regularly contribute to each other's professional development in ICT through advice, demonstration and informal discussion. Some time at staff meetings could be devoted to staff members demonstrating aspects of their ICT expertise if appropriate.

Review of ICT Policy

As ICT is such a valuable tool for learning and curriculum implementation, its use is continuously under review by the teaching staff. Matters such as the website, new software, Digital Hub projects, or difficulties with the equipment are discussed at staff meetings when necessary.

A formal review and updating of the policy will be undertaken bi-annually by the staff. The aim of this review will be to ensure that the potential for ICT is maximised in the school and that the considerable funds invested are not wasted. The Board of Management will discuss the outcome of such reviews and ratify them as it sees fit.

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