



ICT Policy

Scoil Naomh Colmcille



Durrow, Tullamore, Co.Offaly.

www.durrowns.com

Tel:0579332433

Email: info@durrowns.com

Foreword:

This policy sets out the school's aims, objectives and strategies for the delivery of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) throughout the curriculum.

This policy was adopted as a staff on *May 2017* and is to be validated by the Board of management at a meeting in the New Year. This document is for staff, Board of Management and is available to parents or as a hard copy and on our website www.durrowns.com. Another copy is kept in the Staff room for staff reference. It is held in a folder to allow for easy reference, amendment and development. Every second year this policy will be reviewed with the next review to take place in May 2019.

Executive Summary:

The development of ICT has been an important part of Scoil Naomh Colmcille since the school's opening in 1945. The main purpose of our ICT plan is to provide direction for the future use of new and existing ICT's for teaching and learning in our school. During the process of preparing the vision and mission statements, we concluded that learning would be enhanced by the use of ICT throughout the curriculum, necessitating the need for our ICT plan. Our vision and mission led us to focus on the curriculum, in both academic and social development to include students, staff and the community. Our main focus during the development of the plan was how technology could enhance learning. We believe that if ICT is integrated into all subjects of the curriculum, not only will it support children in areas of teaching and learning but will also enable them to have effective learning experiences in a collaborative learning environment. The use of technology must be encouraged, supported and implemented for its use to be successful. We realize that our plan is on-going due to the evolving nature of IT therefore we intend on revisiting and revising it as necessary to keep it updated.

Vision Statement:

Working in partnership with the Board of Management, Parents and our local parish community, the staff of Durrow National School recognise that ICT is crucial for every child's future in a modern society and that it should be an integral part of learning, teaching and communicating in an interactive way. By incorporating present and emerging Information and Communication Technologies into the way

we teach the curriculum, we hope to provide pupils with the opportunity to develop these essential, lifelong learning skills, serving both the educational needs of the children and the community.

Mission Statement

Our Staff aims to incorporate ICT as an everyday part of a creative and challenging curriculum in an integrated way. We will identify the educational ICT needs of our school and school community. We will access appropriate resources and skills necessary to implement our vision of educational development. We want to ensure that all students will have the opportunity to develop, with confidence, lifelong learning skills and be able to contribute and develop these skills as efficient members of ever-growing, information driven society.

Demographics:

Scoil Naomh Colmcille is a rural school situated in a close-knit community, 8 kms from Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The population of this parish has increased steadily in recent years and our staff today comprises of 8 mainstream teachers, 4 learning support/resource teacher, 2 SNA's and our school principal. We have a current enrolment of 209 pupils for the academic year 2017/18.

Digital Learning Team

Following a whole staff meeting, it was agreed that our ICT Committee would be discontinued and replaced by a Digital Learning Team that will work towards effectively embedding digital technologies into teacher practice. The Digital Learning Team will now be responsible for ensuring the effective monitoring, evaluation and review of this policy and the school's developing digital learning plan.

Our Digital Learning Team currently comprises of four members:

1. Frank Kelly (Principal)
2. Adrian Kelly (Classroom Teacher)
3. Aisling Morgan (Classroom Teacher)
4. Seán Óg Hynes (Classroom Teacher)

The Digital Learning Team meets when necessary to discuss whole school ICT issues. The duties of the team include the planning and development of ICT in the school, assessing the impact of existing technologies and analysing what upgrades are necessary. The monitoring of this policy is the duty of the Digital Learning Team and should be reviewed and presented to staff and Board of Management every second year.

Aims and Objectives:

‘We will re-examine, broaden and revise our educational objectives in the light of developing strategies and resources in ICT educational theory and practice.’

Aims:

- to provide *every* child with the opportunity to use ICT.
- to provide children with the skills needed to access and utilise I.C.T.
- to develop ICT capability in finding, selecting and using information.
- to enable teaching staff to use their knowledge and skills to assist children in acquiring ICT skills.
- to use ICT for effective and appropriate communication.
- to apply hardware and software for creative and appropriate uses of information.
- to provide opportunities to apply and develop pupils’ ICT skills to enrich and extend learning throughout the curriculum.
- to use their ICT skills to develop their language and communication skills.
- to enhance the students overall learning opportunities by use of I.C.T.
- to provide pupils with special educational needs with the opportunity to use appropriate technology to develop their independence and develop their interests and abilities.
- to acquire confidence and pleasure in using information and communications technology, become familiar with everyday applications of ICT, and become able to evaluate the technology’s potential and limitations.
- to introduce all students and give guidance in “safe” use of the Internet.
- to prepare the pupils to take their place in a rapidly changing technological society.

Objectives:

- to actively promote school community involvement in the educational activities of the school with respect to ICT.
- to provide both pupils and teachers with the necessary hardware and software that will enhance their learning experiences.
- to identify further ICT educational needs.
- to continue staff development in ICT through training opportunities.
- to develop a school community profile of ICT resources.
- to build up a glossary of computer terminology.
- to give children basic computer operating skills.

School ICT Profile:

- 10 Interactive whiteboards
- 1 Interactive Screen
- 28 notepad computers
- 15 iPads
- 1 laptop Trolley
- 1 iPad Trolley
- 2 printer/photocopier/fax
- 18 laptops (8 mainstream, 3 SNA, 1 Secretary, 1 Principal, 4 LS/ Resource, 1 Office)
- 3 wireless mice
- 3 computers
- 8 printers
- Joystick
- 8 CD players
- My first mouse
- Alpha keyboard + tags
- 5 digital camera
- 2 televisions

Short term goals:

- To provide regular access to the laptop trolley and notepads to all children in the school.
- To transfer our data storage from Dropbox to Google Drive.
- To move our reports and record keeping to Aladdin.
- To update the notebooks and refurbish the old staff laptops for pupil use.
- To transfer sound system and a pass around microphone in the classroom for a pupil with hearing loss.
- To enhance the technical skills of all pupils regarding the use and maintenance of computers in the schools.
- To train pupils in the use of certain software packages, that are directly relevant to their areas of education, from juniors to seniors in the school.
- To present pupils with certain project ideas that can be enhanced through the use of computers ie. 5th and 6th class taking part in projects similar to Dissolving Boundaries, 4th class making an interactive book displaying art work and English writing.
- To engage in coding such as Scratch, MSW Logo, etc.
- To acquire an iPad for every mainstream classroom.
- To purchase a set of BeeBots and resources to accompany.
- To train pupils in the use of the Internet, E-mail and Internet facilities.
- To educate children on the importance of Internet Safety.
- To give pupils the technical skills to make them independently responsible for the continued use of computers in their school.
- To monitor skills needs and to organise training for teachers as required.
- To pool resources within the school and for teachers to have regular access to any equipment available.
- To source, within the community if possible, technical advice and expertise.
- Establish an ICT committee made of pupils from 5th and 6th class. This committee would be responsible for updating blogs and digital noticeboards.

Long Term Goals:

- To have 32 laptop computers available so there is one per pupil.
- To update the wireless Internet in the school to ensure the current speed is improved.
- To purchase a set of ipad minis for the junior classrooms and for the senior classrooms.
- To re-evaluate the use of the Text-A-Parent system and consider using Aladdin as an alternative.
- Pupils should become comfortable and proficient with computers in education.
- To have every classroom using Twitter on a daily basis.
- Pupils would be expected to have a basic knowledge of a number of relevant software packages so that they will be able to use these packages confidently.
- Pupils will be able to use e-mail and the Internet as an educational resource.
- Pupils will begin to be in contact with other schools nationally and internationally thus broadening the education experience for children and staff.
- Provide relevant computer facilities for teachers.
- Provide incentives for staff to attend ICT courses to update skills.
- Facilitate teachers attending ICT Exhibitions & Information Days.
- To keep abreast of new hardware developments.
- To update equipment as necessary.
- To monitor software developments and keep up to date with new material & resources.

Timeline:

The following table sets out the long term and short-term goals for the school in terms of ICT development and the time span that we expect to achieve these goals. We hope to achieve our short-term goals in the next 6 months and our long-term goals within two years.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Equipment</i>
<i>Resources and Infrastructure</i>	<u>By March 2018</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Upgrade the current notebook computers● Transfer sound field system.● Acquire iPads for classroom teachers.
	<u>By June 2019</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Upgrade current broadband internet● Acquire an additional 15 ipads.● Buy 5 ipad minis for use in the junior classroom.● Move from Dropbox to Google Drive.● Decide whether we should switch from Text-A-Parent to Aladdin.
<i>Increasing pupils exposure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 5th and 6th class to take part in projects similar to Dissolving Boundaries.● Establish an ICT committee to assist with the school blog and digital noticeboards.● Ensure all pupils receive exposure to ICT● Pupils to carry out various projects using notepads● Engage in more projects such as Safer Internet Day and the Hour of Code● Educate children on the importance of Internet Safety.
<i>Curriculum Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Gathering ICT work from a number of classes and for this work to be published on the school website● Use ICT more in teaching (using notepads, Interactive Whiteboards, digital cameras, etc)
<i>Staff Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Staff training to take part to train teachers in the use of ActivInspire.● Staff training to show teachers the benefits of Twitter.● Staff training to teach staff how to update website and school blog.● Staff training through Erasmus
<i>Community Links</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Provide information night for parents on Internet Safety.

Public Relations:

The public, with which we communicate, relates mainly to the school community; parents, pupils and staff. We regularly take photographs using the digital camera of school activities such as pupils' work, school matches, concerts, plays or other performances. These photographs are displayed on notice boards located on the school corridors for parents and pupils to see. The 6th class pupils also produce a school magazine in June, which contains information relating to school events and samples of children's work with ICT. The school will also occasionally publish awards in the local newspaper (Tullamore Tribune).

In Scoil Naomh Colmcille we recognize the important role technology is playing in communicating with people in a quicker and more efficient manner. To this effect we have been using the Text-A-Parent service as a means of communicating with our parents since 2007. This allows us to update parents on a frequent basis pertaining to school activities and school closures.

We also take great pride in being able to display our efforts and achievements on our website and blog at www.durrowns.com. The staff and pupils update this on regular basis to keep the community updated on what's happening in the school. This further strengthens ties with the school and the wider community. It is exciting to see and show the progress of students and for it to be viewed and valued by other people all over the world.

We have a school Twitter page which is used daily to update pupils, parents and the wider community. Junior Infants have a Twitter page, which was established in 2013 and is well received by the parents of the students.

Equipment:

We are eager to expand our present range and our priority at the moment is updating our 28 notepad computers and purchasing staff iPads. These would provide access to the Internet for whole classes making use out of the wireless broadband. The purchase of these notepads would allow children to work independently and make use of the rich source of information available online. The pupils can also develop their computer and presentation skills using these

computers. As the children will be accessing the wireless broadband in the school we are aware that with so many laptops accessing the Internet at the same time there may be a need to update the network to ensure there is no congestion, which may slow down the Internet speed.

With the purchasing of this additional hardware we have considered the need for additional training to use this equipment. We have been using our local Education Centre (Athlone) for advice and guidance with this training. Niall Larkin, the ICT coordinator will help train the staff in the use of ActivInspire, the use of Twitter and the updating of the school website/blog. We have also received funding from Erasmus to engage in training abroad. This will help teachers establish links with other schools outside of Ireland.

Implementation:

It is the duty of the Digital Learning Team for the overall implementation of the school's ICT plan in consultation with the principal and Board of Management. The Digital Learning Team has inherited a number of short-term goals, which we hope to achieve within the academic year and long term goals, which we hope to achieve in the next two years.

New and Emerging Technologies:

In an ever-increasing world of ICT developments Scoil Naomh Colmcille feels it is important to try keep in touch with any emerging technologies and review their potential impact on learning in the school. To support this, the Digital Learning Team will review national publications and attend relevant conferences and networks when appropriate. Staff are also encouraged to research possible programs or equipment which would benefit the teaching and learning in the school.

Professional Development:

Our school encourages staff members to widen their ICT skills and knowledge to integrate into the curriculum. A key factor for the successful integration of ICT into the curriculum involves providing opportunities for professional development. We receive regular information from Athlone Education Centre on courses available to teachers and encourage all teachers to avail of relevant ICT courses and to share their skills with the staff.

Teachers were questioned to see what specific training would benefit them in the classroom. The areas that teachers wanted additional training were in the use of the Interactive Whiteboard software ActivInspire. Teachers also felt that they would like more instruction on how the digital camera can be used in the classroom. The staff also felt instruction was needed on how to operate the school website and blog. On the success of the Junior Infant Twitter page more staff members were interested to learn how they could use Twitter in their classrooms. The Digital Learning Team will facilitate this training in Scoil Naomh Colmcille and this will count towards the schools' Croke Park hours.

Purchasing:

The school in consultation with the Digital Learning Team and staff will carry out the purchasing of new equipment. This will be guided by the evaluation of the ICT plan, budget constraints, and Department of Education guidelines. Advice on purchasing will be sought from various areas – staff, parents, B.O.M and local community. Cost comparisons between different agencies will be viewed with special relevance of backup service.

Legal Aspects:

The school will respect all software copyright laws. We have bought site licenses for all current laptop computers and will ensure the same is true of future investments. Data on students is kept on the computer in the school office. Complying with the law under the freedom of information acts, this data will be available to relevant persons as requested. We will respect our *Acceptable use Policy* on the use of the

Internet and e-mail to ensure the safety of all children and expect that all users are responsible users of this resource.

Curriculum, Instruction & Evaluation:

Curriculum (what is learned by students in school.)

Scoil Naomh Colmcille recognizes that ICT is a tool for teaching, which should be used across the curriculum. If children are to use ICT effectively to learn, they need regular opportunities to use ICT tool in the context of their engagement with the curriculum.

Instruction (what is the method by which the curriculum is taught.)

Scoil Naomh Colmcille anticipates that ICT is used within both specific curricular areas and also through a cross-curricular approach to integrate the necessary learning skills. Teachers hope to develop children's life long learning skills as well as promoting a positive, masterful attitude to technology. Through the use of this technology teachers aim to promote imagination and creativity and develop pupil's problem-solving skills. Classroom-based ICT offers the potential for children to work independently, in pairs and in co-operative groups.

Evaluation (have the aims and objectives have been met.)

Scoil Naomh Colmcille provide the staff a regular opportunity to evaluate the use of ICT in the school. From this evaluation the school's ICT plan can be revised and modified if necessary. We believe that through this regular evaluation we can maximize the benefits of using ICT in the school.

Networking:

Our former ICT Coordinator Niall Larkin was aware that the the school's old network, which was hosted by the site www.dropbox.com, only offered a limited amount of storage. A short-term goal of our school was to transfer our data storage from Dropbox to Google Drive, an option that provides unlimited storage for all users through Google Apps for Education. This process was put into place at the end of the 2017/2018 academic year and has been a good resource for safe file management .

Maintenance:

We will try to solve problems with computers before they arise by asking that all users of computers respect them and use them properly. Also all school computers have AVG anti-virus software installed to protect them from becoming corrupted. All users will be shown how to update this software and to scan for viruses.

All members of the Digital Learning Team are skilled users of technology and computers. They are always on hand to fix any minor technical problems within the classrooms and we are grateful that most problems can be resolved without hired help. For major problems teachers may encounter it may be necessary to contact Promethean, Mckenna Electric or Bellcom because they provided us with our current hardware.

Special Needs and gifted children:

All pupils are to have access to the use of ICT regardless of gender, race, cultural background or any physical or sensory disability. We believe that pupils with learning difficulties can be given greater access to the whole curriculum through the use of ICT.

At present we have one boy in first class with a hearing disability, a girl in sixth class with Cerebral Palsy and a boy in 5th class with dyslexia. In 2010, we applied for and received assistive technology for a past pupil with CP including a special mouse and keypad, which proved a fantastic resource for him and other children in the class. We have a joystick, which is easier for the students with Cerebral Palsy to use rather than a mouse. This hardware is available to each of these aforementioned pupils to enhance their learning. We found out while he was in Junior Infants, that the boy from First Class had a hearing impairment. We received a grant for the purchase of a sound field system and a pass around microphone. This is transferred every year to his new classroom.

There are children with special learning difficulties. We believe that these children experience more academic success when the content is presented in a multi

sensory approach using pictures, sounds and videos. Over time, we have developed a bank of software, which is being used to this effect. This was done in consultation with the resource and class teachers. Programs like Word Shark, Clicker 5, The computer classroom/ Granny's Garden (early years), Quiz pa literacy, Number Shark, Kidspiration, Oxford Interactive Encyclopedia and Clicker 5, cater for some of these needs. Staff training is always encouraged to broaden the skills base in this area.

At the other end of the spectrum we need to identify software that will challenge high achievers and give them further opportunities to extend their educational experience through the use of ICT. Teachers will create conditions in which all learners are challenged in their learning. Children will be allowed to demonstrate their skills and receive credit for previous mastery of concepts, incorporating student's passionate interests into their research and facilitating sophisticated research investigations. We will use advance coding programs to challenge this pupils critical thinking and computational skills.

We have also decided to establish an ICT committee for children who have a particular interest in ICT. Some children are involved in Coder DoJo and this will give them an opportunity to work with members from the Digital Learning Team to further develop their skills. The committee with be responsible for turning on/off the digital noticeboards and updating them when necessary. They will also be responsible for assisting teachers with the school blog and helping to update when necessary.

Security:

We endeavour to use any available methods to protect data on our computers, including regular changes of passwords and making duplicates of files. All personal files on children are stored on the main computer in the school office. Hard copies of these files are kept in a locked cabinet in the office. All important school files will be stored securely online on the school's google drive, which is password protected.

All PC's and laptops have AVG antivirus software installed, which is automatically updated on a regular basis and teachers are encouraged to run scans on a weekly basis. These computers are also secured with a password-protected screensaver, with the automatic activation feature set at 15 minutes. Because information contained on laptops is especially vulnerable, special care should be exercised. Where laptops are not taken home after hours, teachers are responsible for ensuring that this equipment is secured in a locked room or cabinet.

All laptops and iPads are locked in the Safe Room at the end of the school day and reopened every morning before school.

During the summer months the school's security was updated to help keep any hardware safe. We installed security cameras at the front and rear of the school to monitor everyone who arrives on the school grounds. Motion sensor lights were also fitted to ensure the clear visibility of anything recorded using the cameras. Screens were also put into the secretary's office to observe the coming and going of people. Anything recorded using the cameras will be stored on a computer in the secretaries office, which can only be accessed by a code. The installation of this security system will help keep the hardware in our school safe during school hours and outside school hours.

Support:

In Scoil Naomh Colmcille we have support available from outside agencies in the areas of finance, training and technical issues.

Finance:

The Department of Education is rolling out grants to schools for ICT on a yearly basis. We received a grant in January 2017 and this money was spent on a total of 15 iPads (€6,700.) A laptop trolley was ordered for €1400. 4 laptops were ordered for €1350. iPad cases were ordered for €306.

Training:

The staff of Scoil Naomh Colmcille are encouraged to widen their skills and knowledge in the area of ICT. Equipment in our school is updated to keep up with

the most modern technology available. As a result training will also be needed to ensure staff are educated on how to use the technology. We receive regular information from Athlone Education Centre on courses available to teachers and we encourage all teachers to avail of relevant ICT courses and to share their skills with the staff. There is more information available on training in the Professional Development part of the document.

Technical:

For major technical problems teachers may encounter it may be necessary to contact Bellcom because they provided us with our current hardware. They have always provided us with the necessary support in the past.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying Harassing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyber-stalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Such bullying will not be tolerated in Durrow N.S We advise the following:

- Our students must not send messages or post comments or photos with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges
- In some cases, cyber-bullying is a crime
- Remember that your activities are monitored and retained
- The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyberbullying.

The Board of Management of Scoil Cholmcille is committed to the new Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Circular 0081/2017), Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the Preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements and will act as required by the Department of Education and Skills, The Department of Children and Youth Affairs, The Department of Justice and Equality and the Health Service Executive.

Health and safety:

The school will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet (see Acceptable Use Policy). All children and staff will be made aware of the hazards of using electronic and electrical equipment.

- All computers and technology to be stored and placed in secure areas within the classroom/school.
- All wires and plugs in classrooms are to be placed safely behind computers and away from the general path of students and teachers.
- Faulty equipment to be labelled and repaired/ disposed of as soon as possible.
- INTERACTIVE BOARDS, LAPTOPS, ALL PLUGS SHOULD BE PLUGGED OUT EVERY AFTERNOON BY THE TEACHER AS SOON AS HE/SHE IS FINISHED WITH EQUIPMENT. This is to avoid boards being damaged as a result of lightning/electrical fault etc.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) offers the following guidelines for the safe use of computer projectors in the classroom (reproduced under the terms of the Click-Use Licence):

Computer projectors, which are used to show presentations or to illuminate interactive whiteboards, can expose the eye to levels above one of the exposure limits by which the HSE takes its guidance. Therefore, although such exposure limits are not statutory, the HSE considers the following advice to be good practice in respect of the use of these projectors by employers in the education sector.

Guidelines

Employers should establish work procedures for teachers/lecturers and pupils/students and give instruction on their adoption so that:

- Staring directly into the projector beam is avoided at all times.
- Standing facing into the beam is minimised. Users, especially pupils and students, should try to keep their backs to the beam as much as possible.
- Pupils and students are adequately supervised when they are asked to point out something on the screen.
- Employers should also try to ensure that projectors are located out of the sight line from the screen to the audience; this ensures that, when presenters look at the audience, they do not also have to stare at the projector lamp. The best way to achieve this is by ceiling mounting rather than floor- or table-mounting the projector.
- In order to minimise the lamp power needed to project a visible presentation, employers should use room blinds to reduce ambient light levels.

Application:

Reviewed and updated by staff members on: **November 2018**

Signed by and on behalf of BOM:

_____ Date: _____
Mary Daly (Chairperson)

Signed by on behalf of Scoil Naomh Colmcille:

_____ Date: _____
Frank Kelly (Principal)

Next Review Date: *May 2019*

Software Index:

Microsoft Office 2007 – 4 boxes (Serial numbers available in staff room)

Painting/drawing software;

Clip art;

Audacity;

A music composition package;

A multimedia programme;

Spreadsheets/database programmes;

CD-ROMs- (These are available in the staff room/Learning Support room)

- Clicker 5
- Art attack
- The computer classroom - early years
- Jolly Phonics DVD
- Become world explorer
- Number train
- Quiz pa literacy
- Lexia
- First Key Steps2
- In The Classroom
- Primary Learning
- Number shark
- Word shark 3
- Number plane
- Beir bua - Gael Linn
- Oxford Interactive Encyclopaedia
- Be Safe on the Farm- Child Safe
- Marvellous Mammals
- Destination Education
- Alive O 8
- Math's Invaders
- Horrible Science
- Spelling
- Water Safety – Guidelines
- Busy Bodies