



ICT Policy

Policy for Athea National School

Introductory Statement

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for ICT in Athea National School. The policy was revised and reviewed during the academic year 2019/20 and revised again in 2021 through a process of consultation with the teaching staff. The Board of Management approved the policy in December 2020. This policy is fully implemented as of 08/12/20.

Mission Statement

As well as being an important educational resource, the ability to use ICT effectively is a vital life skill in modern society. Our aim is to produce learners (pupils and staff) who are confident and effective users of ICT. We strive to achieve this aim by:

- Helping all staff and pupils to explore the learning resources provided by ICT
- Helping all children to use ICT with purpose and enjoyment
- Helping all children to develop the necessary skills to exploit ICT
- Helping children to become autonomous users of ICT
- Helping all children to evaluate the benefits of ICT and its impact on society
- Celebrating success in the use of ICT

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 Athea National School. 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 ICT.

Vision for ICT

ICT is now a powerful tool which is central to the educational process. The Staff at Athea National School 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.

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 fortnightly plans.

To what use will ICT be put?

1. School Administration
2. Research software
3. Adventure games 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. Music composition and digital recording
8. Storage of Records of achievement/portfolio assessment
9. Special Needs pupils

Current Infrastructure

- In keeping with our mission, we perceive ICT technologies being used as a tool of teaching and learning in each classroom. All computers are networked to our own internal network including networked printing.
- Our current broadband provider is **Eir**, as dictated by Department of Education and Skills Schools Broadband scheme. We have e-fibre broadband and a/c wireless access points circulated around the school to maximise coverage.
- Each classroom has a data projector, interactive whiteboard, desktop, colour printer and a photocopier/scanner.
- Each class desktop was replaced in January 2021 with new desktops.
- There is 1 digital camera in the school for use by the classes.
- The principal's office is equipped with a new PC (January 2021), colour printer and a photocopier/scanner.
- We currently have 43 iPads, with two iPad storage/charging trolleys. The iPads are charged by teachers in Room 3 and Room 6 in order to prevent the over/under charging of the devices (March 2018 and October 2018).
- There is 1 whiteboard, 1 iPad, 1 PC and printer/photocopier in ASD Unit classroom.
- There is 1 iPad, a ProWise touchscreen, 1 Laptop, a printer/scanner and a photocopier in the Early Intervention Classroom.
- There are 10 laptops- 5HP and 5 Lenovo in the school (March 2018).

Current Usage of Facilities

- iPads/computers are used as a medium of teaching and learning in all the classrooms.
- Current usage includes early reading work and early number work; mathematical application; development of thinking and problem solving skills; word processing, desktop publishing; use of multimedia encyclopaedia and typing skills; internet work; presentation of project work; creating art work; spelling; development of fine motor skills; music composition and recording.
- Staff are encouraged and frequently attend ICT courses for up-skilling and continuous professional development.

Teaching and Learning through ICT in our School

Organisation of Resources

- We currently have 43 iPads, with two iPad storage/charging trolleys which provides a connection to the internet and educational apps. The iPads are charged by teachers in Room 3 and Room 6 in order to prevent the over/under charging of the devices (March 2018 and October 2018). The 10 laptops are stored in Room 6 on a trolley.
- All classrooms have interactive whiteboards, computer, colour printer, data projector and a photocopier/scanner.
- There is a networked printer located in the staff room.
- Digital, Video and web cameras are stored in the principal's office.
- A computer, colour printer, a scanner and a photocopier are located in the principal's office.

The Internet as a Resource

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

ICT Progression from class to class

2nd class – iPad Familiarity; Competency using keyboard; Airdrop; Write Stories; Competency using Drill Software

3rd class – iPad Familiarity; Competency using keyboard; Airdrop; Write Stories with Mixed Cases; Competency using Drill Software; Internet Research

4th class – iPad Familiarity; Competency keyboard; Airdrop; Write Stories with Mixed Cases; Competency using Drill Software; Internet Research, Data Manipulation

5th class – iPad Familiarity; Competency Using keyboard; Airdrop; Write Stories with Mixed Cases; Competency using Drill Software; Internet Research; Search Engines; Data Manipulation; Coding Skills

6th class – iPad Familiarity; Competency Using keyboard; Airdrop; Write Stories with Mixed

Cases; Competency using Drill Software; Internet Research; Search Engines; Data Manipulation; Coding Skills; Publication of Work;

Roles and Responsibilities of ICT co-ordinator

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 post-holder of any technical problems and resources which need replacing.
- Ensure that all resources borrowed are returned.
- Create an ICT corner in each classroom.

- 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

Whole class activities – interactive whiteboard and iPad/laptops

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 all classes from second class 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

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 iPads are used to meet children's individual needs.
- Where appropriate specific software e.g. Switch skills.
- There are a range of accessibility features, the following is sample that can be used on iPad:

Guided Access: Guided Access helps students with autism or other attention and sensory challenges stay on task. A teacher or therapist can limit an iOS device to stay on one app by disabling the Home button, and even restrict touch input on certain areas of the screen. So wandering taps and gestures won't distract from learning.

Speak Selection

Hearing a word as it's being read can help with comprehension for a wide range of learners. Speak Selection can read a student's email, iMessages, web pages and ebooks out loud. Double-tap to highlight text in any application, tap Speak and the device reads the selected text. Students can have words highlighted as they're being read so they can follow along. And the voice's dialect and speaking rate can be adjusted to suit students' needs.

iBooks

iBooks Author gives teachers a way to create customised learning materials for iPad to support a wide range of learning needs. Features like multicolour highlighting, notes, search, study cards and the glossary help students be better organised and better prepared. Built-in review questions give students an immediate assessment of their knowledge so they understand where to focus more study time. iBooks supports VoiceOver, Speak Selection and closed-captioned videos to help all types of learners.

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. 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 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 e.g. time set aside within the school day.

Internet Safety

Refer to school internet policy

Health and Safety

Each classroom has rules for safe use of the iPad – please refer to iPad acceptable use policy – 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 iPad.
- When using the iPad 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.

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.
- Continuing to have Professional Development training where possible during Croke Park Hours
- 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

Athea National School recognises the advantages of using ICT as a tool for teacher planning, preparation, record keeping and reporting. All teachers use ICT to prepare yearly and fortnightly plans. 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 folenonline.ie.

Athea National School Website and App

Athea National School's website and app 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.

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 in 08/12/20.

It will be reviewed again in 2022 or earlier should the need arise.

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.

Signed: *Marie Gleeson*

Date: 08/12/20

(Chairperson B.o.M)

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.twinkl.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.playgrounds.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- Partition and the 1916 Rising](http://www.teachnet-uk.org.uk/2005%20Projects/History-Partition%20and%20the%201916%20Rising)

[Using% 20ICT/using% 20ict% 20for% 20history/resources.htm](http://www.teachnet-uk.org.uk/2005%20Projects/History-Partition%20and%20the%201916%20Rising-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://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](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](http://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.