

Rathkeale No. 2 National School

I.C.T. Policy Statement

To enable progression and continuity we must have suitable machines; this includes the upgrading of the hardware and the software where needed and when manageable. The manageability is determined by available finance and realistic demands on staff time.

Pupils are given basic skills teaching through time spent working on the computer. Pupils are encouraged to use I.C.T. in a variety of situations and contexts.

- As part of mathematics
- As part of Science
- For Geography
- For History
- For English
- For Irish
- For Art
- To develop transferable skills to encourage them to gain confidence to experiment with unfamiliar software.
- To gain experience in the following areas of I.C.T.: communicating and handling information, using graphics, charts, databases, spreadsheets and CD ROMs.
- To develop critical awareness of I.C.T. within society to support the development of the above skill.
- To support the progression of skills for the pupils we endeavour to expose the pupils to the use of I.C.T. in as many subject areas and contexts as possible. This will increase with more confidence and will begin to extend the incorporation of I.C.T. into their schemes of work.
- Use a wide and expanding range of software and I.C.T. equipment as appropriate, manageable and affordable.
- Encourage pupils to increase their depth of knowledge of software as they gain in confidence.
- Teach pupils to use I.C.T. equipment and software confidently and purposefully to communicate and handle information and to support their problem solving, recording and expressive work.
- Teach pupils to become discerning in their use of I.C.T., select information, sources and media for their suitability of purpose and to assess the value of I.C. T. in their work practices.

The teachers of Rathkeale No. 2 National School believe guidance is important as pupils begin to learn to take responsibility for their work and progress. Work must be sufficiently challenging, meet the needs of all individuals and provide a balance between teacher-directed and self-directed work. Teacher confidence is critical within the realm of I.C.T. for them to feel confident enough to allow the pupils to develop at their own rate.

Teachers encourage discussion and sharing of ideas when appropriate to the work. Teachers will conduct their lessons within an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. This atmosphere is conducive to pupils demonstrating new techniques to teachers. This encourages pupils to take “risks” with their work without the fear of ridicule or feelings of failure. To actively involve the pupils in their learning will help to foster independent thinking and informed planning which is crucial if they are to exploit the I.C.T. facilities to the maximum.

Pupils are encouraged to make informed choices at appropriate points. The aim is not to inhibit pupils by placing a ceiling on their target.

To bear in mind the need for pupils of all abilities to have access to satisfying, rewarding I.C.T. that is able to support and enhance their learning across the curriculum. The mode of delivery must remain flexible so as to address the various needs of the pupils in the classroom. Where appropriate a variety of I.C.T. facilities are made available to encourage pupils of all abilities to experiment and progress.

The importance of I.C.T. as a cross-curricular tool is recognised. The school aims to expose the pupils to the diversity, influence and uses of I.C.T. All curriculum areas are identified as having the possibility for pupils to make use of I.C. T. within the subject areas.

Strategies for ensuring the achievement of I.C.T. Policy

- Provide ongoing suitable training for teachers to enhance their competence and confidence in the use of I.C.T. as an educational tool.
- Make available sufficient standalone computers in each classroom.
- Provide a network between all the computers in the school.
- Provide suitable resources to support the I.C.T. plan.
- Provide internet access to each classroom via the network.
- Provide a budget, where possible, for the specific purpose of upgrading and replacing outdated hardware, for the purchase of new software and/or hardware and for the purchase of software licences.
- Provide a fast and efficient maintenance service without outside professionals.
- Provide password protected files for confidential information.

Activities designed to develop computing abilities

- **Text handling:** Use of word processors to compose, edit and revise text.
- **Information handling:** Use of databases, spreadsheets, word processors, graph plotting to store, analyse and display information.
- **Simulations:** Use of simulation software and consideration of the benefits and limitations of this method of learning.
- **Sound and graphics:** Use of the computer systems to compose and play sounds/music, use of drawing and design packages in visual arts.
- **Impact and value of I.C.T.:** Learn about and discuss the applications of computer software from their own uses and by considering uses outside school.
- **Language:** Generation of text, editing and revising text, composition of pages, booklets, news sheets and reports, sending and retrieving e-mail, developing awareness of use of new technologies in mass media.
- **Mathematics:** Use spreadsheets and other generic packages to solve numerical problems, use computers to investigate patterns, carry out investigations and problem solving activities based upon computer simulations.

- **SESE:** Use word processors to produce reports, use database to store data, process and retrieve information, use spreadsheets to store, analyse and interpret data, use simulations to investigate scientific and technological process, geographical phenomena and historical events, investigate and consider the effects of new technologies.
- **Religious/moral education:** Using word processors to generate text, develop an appreciation of the ethical and moral issues associated with the use of computers.

Review and Ratification

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 11th March 2015 and will be reviewed again in the 2016-2017 school year.

- * While pupils have access to the internet this is supervised by the class teachers (see Internet Acceptable Use Policy).