

# Kilchreest National School

## I.C.T. Policy

### **RATIONALE:**

In this era of continuing world technological advances, we at Kilchreest National School aim to give our students the skills to use ICT in their future lives. ICT offers teachers and students educational tools and resources, which extend their learning environment. ICT is a cross-curricular competence and can be used in all subjects. It facilitates the differentiation of the curriculum to suit the range of learning needs and styles of individuals.

At Kilchreest National school we aim to give our pupils opportunities to develop and apply their ICT capabilities across the curriculum.

### **Specific Aims:**

#### ***We aim:***

- To enable children to develop and use ICT skills in the attainment of curriculum learning objectives
- To enable children to use a range of ICT tools in a relevant curriculum context
- To foster confidence in the use of ICT through enjoyable learning experiences
- To develop understanding and practice of safe use of ICT
- To support development of social skills through co-operative learning
- To access curriculum content through ICT

### **STATEMENT OF INTENT:**

The main emphasis on teaching ICT is on the use of computers as tools to support and enhance learning. As pupils progress through the school they will use a greater variety of programmes. Older pupils will have supervised access to the Internet. Pupils at all levels will have access to ICT in ways appropriate to their abilities.

### **Uses for ICT include the following:**

1. School administration
2. Word Processing of children's work
3. Research on the Internet
4. Communication via email
5. Special Needs pupils.

## **TEACHING and LEARNING**

Children will acquire a certain level of competency at using computers. Skills to be learned are outlined below.

### **Junior & Senior Infants:**

- Become familiar with the basic computer terms –monitor, keyboard, mouse, enter, return, space bar, delete.
- Through curriculum integration improve reading/writing/maths/art skills through games etc.

### **First & Second Class:**

- Understand the use of basic function keys – caps, space, delete, fada etc.
- Format text e.g. Change to Bold, underline etc.
- Change font and font size
- Print their work
- Through curriculum integration improve reading, writing (word processing) maths, spelling, tables etc.

### **Third to Sixth Classes:**

- Keyboard skills
- File management
- Editing
- Word Processing
- Power Point presentations
- Printing
- Use Internet for gathering information
- Curriculum integration reading and writing (word processing), maths, spelling, tables, etc.

### **Special Needs**

Computer is provided in the learning support room, as we recognise the potential of ICT to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils with special needs. Children with specific writing, reading and numeracy needs are using ICT to provide alternative and complementary educational experiences.

## **LEARNING RESOURCES:**

All classes are equipped with a range of hardware and software. Broadband is available in each classroom. We are fully networked, thanks to an ICT Networking Grant. We have fully updated the Internet User Policy for students and teachers.

The NCTE are providing content filtering with their broadband program and we will continue to use anti-virus to ensure that our network and systems remain clean.

We will continue to expand our range of hardware and software with the aim of increasing individual access to tablets. Specialist equipment, where appropriate, will be provided within budgetary constraints. An inventory of software and hardware is kept updated as new resources become available.

See **Appendix 1** for School Audit of Hardware and Software.

## **SAFE PRACTICE**

The school offers support for students in developing responsible and informed attitudes regarding the use of ICT in the classroom. This will include:

- Health and Safety awareness in the use of ICT equipment
- A policy for Acceptable Use of the Internet (See Appendix 2)
- Appropriate desks and chair heights for pupils
- Care of all Equipment is promoted.

## **Staff Professional Development.**

We have a very open and inclusive attitude to staff training and skills development in our school and we endeavour to provide any and all opportunities for staff development. All teachers use some of the technologies and members of Kilchreest teaching staff are open to staff training and development in this area. Teachers are encouraged to be innovative by exploring new ideas in ICT and relating them to their classroom teaching.

## **ICT STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE**

All small equipment is stored in locked filing cabinets or cupboards in the classrooms. Large equipment is protected from heat sources and software is kept in appropriate containers. Maintenance of equipment is carried out as the need arises and in accordance with manufacturers recommendations. Individual instances of repair are outsourced with local ICT provider/consultant.

## **INTERNET ACCESS:**

The school aims to offer a supervised and protected web environment for students and retrieve information from the Internet and other sources. Access to online resources will enable pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases and bulletin boards throughout the world. The school believes that the benefits to pupils from access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. Pupils will not be given access to the Internet without teacher supervision.

## **INTERNET SECURITY:**

At present, our Internet provider is the company **LIGHTNET** whom are based in Loughrea.

Access to online content via school network is restricted in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills through its agency, the National Centre for Technology in Education. **(NCTE)**. Students are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution and are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline. We make a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of school technologies. Students are expected to alert his/her teacher immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

Also anti-virus programmes are run periodically to safeguard our computers from malware, including viruses, computer worms and Trojan horses.

We are currently in the process of securing our internal network (wired and WIFE) with a username and password which will be set at the router. Network credentials will only be shared with Kilchreest N.S. Staff.

## **Personal Safety:**

The teachers in Kilchreest NS will introduce internet safety to the pupils through the use of **Webwise Primary School Programme** which has been specifically designed for primary schools. This Education Programme has been developed to assist and support educators when teaching students about the safe and responsible uses of the Internet. It is envisaged that the Webwise Education Programme will be taught as part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum in Kilchreest NS for children between the ages of 8 and 12.

The first part of this resource focuses on skills needed for surfing the web such as effective and safe searching, downloading images and determining what online content can be trusted. It is appropriate to use with children who are learning to use the Internet for schoolwork or for generally finding information. It is designed specifically with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class in mind. This section is followed by an assessment to determine if pupils have achieved the desired learning outcomes. A Surfwise certificate is provided and may be awarded to successful pupils.

The second section deals with the skills required to safely and effectively communicate online (Chapter 6, 7 & 8). It deals with issues relating to sharing personal information online, treating others with respect and dealing with spam. The chapters are designed for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class with some differentiated activities for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class only. It is envisaged that these lessons be used first in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> class, then revisited in 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class using the differentiated activities provided.

## **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 Kilchreest N.S. Engaging in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyber-bullying.

## **School Website:**

The school website is available at [www.kilchreestns.com](http://www.kilchreestns.com). Individual photos of pupils are not published on the website. The focus is on group activities only. Under the Data Protection Act, personal information is omitted from web pages. The website is predominately used as a source of information regarding what is offered in Kilchreest National School, along with copies of all newsletters distributed and events/activities that take place in the school.

## **Success Criteria:**

The success of this ICT Policy will be reflected in the competency and interest of the pupils. Success is also relevant in the work produced by staff and pupils using many formats, eg. Word Processing, Power Point presentations etc.

## **Timeframe for Review:**

This policy will be reviewed when deemed necessary.

## **Responsibility for Review:**

Principal and teaching staff are responsible in conjunction with the Board of Management and in consultation with parents.

## **Ratification and Communication:**

This policy is ratified by the Board of Management and available to parents on request.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chariperson, BOM