ICT Policy
2026

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 confident, responsible and autonomous users of ICT
- Helping all children to evaluate the benefits of ICT and its impact on society
- Using ICT to develop partnerships beyond the school
- Celebrating success in the use of ICT.

Rationale

Why does our school require ICT?

1. To provide the best possible education for all our pupils
2. To provide a powerful and up to date teaching resource for all our teachers
3. To allow for more effective administration
4. To help provide more effective communication with staff and parents
5. To communicate with teachers and pupils in Europe and further afield
6. To prepare children for life in a technologically advanced world.

To what use will ICT be put?

1. School Administration
2. Class Project work
3. Research software e.g. Google etc.
4. School apps enhance reading
5. Research on the internet
6. Communication via Aladdin
7. Seasons recording and also used for homework
8. Storage of Records of achievement/portfolio assessment
9. Teaching of and storing of documents relating to SEN pupils. (Assistive Technology)

School's Role

The school will provide leadership and direction in keeping abreast of the latest educational and technological advances and informing staff and parents of resultant educational opportunities.

Aims & Objectives

- To promote a positive attitude to technology
- To facilitate cross-curricular learning
- To enable the child to use a range of ICT tools in a relevant curriculum context
- To develop the child's understanding and practice of the safe use of ICT
- To enable the child to overcome barriers of access to learning resources caused by geographic location, culture, or language
- To enable the child to use ICT to support his or her learning effectively and creatively
- To inform the child's attitudes regarding the role of ICT in society, including the benefits and challenges of ICT use
- To support the development of the child's social skills through cooperative learning and problem-solving
- To develop problem-solving skills
- To motivate children to collect, enter and interpret data
- To develop co-operative skills through participation in ICT projects that demand the pooling of skills and interactive development of ideas and material

School ICT profile

At Grangemockler NS, we are very actively using ICT every day in every classroom of our school. We are very fortunate in that we have a Whiteboard in each of our mainstream classrooms. Along with these IWBs, each teacher has their own laptop. Each computer/ laptop is connected to the main printer in the school. We also have 27 Samsung tablets for the use within the classroom

Web Safety Filtering in provided by the PDST and therefore we do not have a firewall on site. We will continue to use anti-virus supplied by Solve IT to ensure that our systems remain clean.

ICT MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

- The integration of ICT is possible at many different levels and in various areas in Grangemockler NS. Interactive boards allow teachers to use a fully integrated approach across all curricular areas. We have access to content rich software that consolidates the areas of the curriculum. Time is spent on the computer using software to reinforce what is taught in the classroom
- Each teacher is responsible for choosing particular topics and pieces of software for their own class level. They then inform the ICT co-ordinator and/or the Principal and the ICT Co-Ordinator orders it after consulting with the principal.
- We are very happy with the content rich software that we are using in the school at the moment. Any new or relevant software comes into the school and the Principal gives it to the teacher of the appropriate classes to assess. Our systems run on Windows Vista, Windows XP and Windows 7 & Windows 8. We also have Microsoft Office running on our machines
- Teachers can bring the laptop home to view software and are fully conversant with any software package that they introduce to their classes. When the need arises, teachers will be given the opportunity to assess new software and familiarise themselves with new software

Short Term Goals

Children:

- To make children comfortable and reasonably proficient with the computer as a new educational resource
- To provide for all children regular access to the ICT facilities of the school
- To ensure that the computer training given to Primary school children is relevant to their needs
- To train children in the use of certain technical skills regarding use and maintenance of computers in the schools

- To train children in the use of certain software packages that are directly relevant to their areas of education, from juniors to 6th class in the school.
- To present children with certain project ideas that can be enhanced through the use of computers
- To train children in the use of the Internet, E-mail and Internet facilities
- To enthuse children so that computer skills are seen as a relevant, coherent and basic part of education in the future
- To give children the technical skills to make them independently responsible for the continued use of computers in their school
- To encourage schools to link educationally with other schools, via e-mail etc.
- To engender co-operative skills as part of the work ethic of the children

Teachers:

- To monitor skills needs and to organise or sponsor training for teachers as required
- To create a Staff ICT committee
- To pool resources within the school
- To identify a teacher or teachers within the staff with special interest and/or skills in the area of ICT
- To construct evaluative procedures for monitoring the progress and effects of ICT in the classes
- To provide supports in terms of hardware and software
- To provide teachers with access to new theories of education that are directly related to the evolving educational processes of ICT
- To provide teachers with easy access to Internet and e-mail
- To provide a method of allowing individual feedback from the teachers as to the success or failure of the ICT in various initiatives.

Technology:

- To audit the ICT resources of the school in terms of hardware / software / technical skills base (school and community) and staff skill level and commitment level.

- To acquire the necessary hardware to continue the development of ICT skills and initiatives at the school. A number of items on this list have been identified
- To acquire the necessary software to continue the development of ICT skills and initiatives at the school
- To provide a number of ICT related periodicals for the staff, with special reference to those with an educational bias or an educational section
- To source, within the community if possible, technical advice and expertise
- To identify a person or persons within the community with skills for hardware repair and maintenance

Administration:

- To develop a system of data administration that is secure and user friendly
- Specifically to develop data systems that will help to correlate various evaluation procedures with the school. (Record in-house testing, standard tests like Micra-T and student records of various kinds)
- To develop a strategy for keeping track of software within.

Long Term Goals

Children:

- Children should become comfortable and proficient with computers in education
- Children 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 in the classrooms
- The computer will become an educational tool rather than a tool.
- Children will be able to use e-mail and the Internet as an educational resource
- Children will be encouraged to frequently update their knowledge base about computers
- Children will begin to be in contact with other schools nationally and internationally thus broadening the education experience for children and staff
- Children will appreciate the value of educational opportunities provided by a skills base in ICT

- That ICT in education will enhance the learning opportunities of all the children, from the weak to the gifted, in an atmosphere of self -worth, self -belief and self-motivation.

Teachers:

- Provide computer facilities for teachers
- Provide incentives for staff to attend ICT courses to update skills
- Facilitate teachers attending ICT Exhibitions & Information Days
- Teachers will be encouraged to use ICT skills to develop specialised or area dependent reference material on authoring software or alternative method.

Technology:

- To keep abreast of new hardware developments
- To update equipment at regular intervals
- To monitor software developments and keep up to date with new material & resources.

Administration:

- Continue to enhance the reputation of the school as a leader in the area of educational development in the field of ICT
- Attract the attention of a number of sponsors to aid the hardware and software resources of the school to be updated as technological advances change the nature of ICT.
- Develop administrative tools for use with the school
- The school's ICT Plan will be evaluated at regular intervals
- The ICT Plan will be amended and updated as educational trends, best practice in the use of ICT, evaluation of local progress and hardware/software developments are observed.

Envisaged Competency of Graduating Children

The following are the ICT skills that we would hope that children would have on leaving our school:

- Basic knowledge of computer hardware - e.g. hard drive, monitor, mouse, cables, printer.
- Children should be proficient and comfortable in the use of computers.
- Children should be enabled to use a Word Processing package. Basic techniques needed for word processing will include saving/loading from various areas, various formatting techniques. Discussion and application of various projects for these applications - books, projects, flyers etc.
- A look at a printer and the various modes associated with the dedicated printer, paper jams, inking problems, queuing problems, default printers etc.
- Using the computer as a reference tools. Looking for information and filtering the relevant information. Adapting information for insertion into related word-processing packages.

Critical Issues

Purchasing

Purchasing of new equipment and software will be done by the school principal in partnership with the ICT Co-Ordinator. 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 and cost comparisons between different agencies will be viewed with special relevance of backup service.

Equipment

We have created a data list of all the ICT equipment presently in stock. The growing demands of children and staff for more ICT contact time will mean that we will be looking to expand the present base. There will have to be allowances for staff training on the new equipment. The hardware specifications for this equipment will vary from time to time and will be determined in consultation with the ICT committee as needs arise.

We will use the local Education Centre for advice.

As with the hardware a list of software titles available in the school is available to all the staff and school community. This list will be expanded in collaboration with staff, the ICT committee, the educational centre and whatever other sources are available

New and emerging technologies

One member of staff will be nominated to monitor new developments in the technology.

Professional Development

Staff will be encouraged to utilise training opportunities provided by Department of Education and NCTE. The type of training will be determined by staff needs, the availability of funding and ICT developments.

Legal aspects

Grangemockler National School will respect the software copyright laws and will encourage all the community to do the same. When any new software is purchased, the appropriate site licence will also be purchased.

Acceptable Use policies on the use of the Internet and E-Mail will ensure the safety of children.

- Internet access for children to be supervised
- Inadvertent access to spurious material to be reported by a member of staff
- Filter -type software to be utilised - this is provided by NCTE

Assessment

With ICT not being a formal subject in the Primary School Curriculum, assessment skills in Presentation Primary School will be mainly performed by the class teachers through observation via the following:

- Observational evaluation on collaborative and social skills
- Evaluations of project material presented.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to digital tools and systems that can support learning by generating text, images or ideas, or by assisting with problem-solving and creativity. As AI technologies continue to develop, the school recognises the importance of introducing pupils to AI in a safe, age-appropriate and educationally meaningful way.

AI tools, where used, will support teaching and learning and will be used under the guidance and supervision of teachers. AI will not be used as a replacement for teaching, learning or assessment, but as a support to enhance creativity, critical thinking and digital literacy.

Pupils will be taught to:

- Use AI tools responsibly and ethically
- Understand that AI-generated content may not always be accurate or reliable
- Respect privacy and data protection, and never share personal or sensitive information
- Ensure that work submitted reflects their own learning and effort

In line with the Department of Education notification circular on the use of nudification apps and the creation or sharing of sexualised images, the school explicitly prohibits the use of AI tools to create, alter, generate or share inappropriate, harmful or sexualised images of any person. Pupils will be educated, in an age-appropriate manner, about the serious legal, emotional and safeguarding implications of such actions, as part of the school's SPHE, Anti-Bullying and Child Safeguarding policies.

The use of AI will comply with all relevant data protection and child safeguarding requirements, including GDPR. AI tools that collect personal data or require pupil accounts will not be used without appropriate safeguards and parental awareness.

Staff will engage in ongoing professional development to ensure informed and appropriate use of AI in the classroom. The school will continue to review and update its approach to AI in line with guidance from the Department of Education and other relevant bodies.

Ratification of Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

This policy will be made available on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years.

A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, on request.

Signed: _____ Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____ (Principal)

Signed: _____ (Teacher Responsible)

Date of next review: December 2028