Ardfinnan National School,

Clonmel,

Co. Tipperary.

Neart is Gaois

I.C.T. Policy

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
- 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 prepare children for life in a technologically advanced world.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

Our ethos statement expresses the desire that each child should learn and achieve to the best of his / her ability. We believe that ICT has a significant role to play in ensuring that each child does so. Our commitment is based on our vision of ICT as a vital tool of learning and teaching, rather than as an end in itself. We see ICT as enabling children and teachers to engage with the curriculum in a deep, child-centred and creative way, for example:

(1) Using high-quality interactive CD Roms or Internet-provided interactive activities enables deep learning in all areas of the curriculum.

(2) Word-processing packages encourage the Draft-Edit-Publish approach to both creative and functional writing. This keeps the child in control of his / her own creative effort throughout the process and enables him / her to maximise creative potential.

(3) Internet research enables child-centred learning in a wide variety of topics across the curriculum.

(4) Engagement with animation software supports much talk and discussion as children collaborate to produce art work that integrates Literacy, Mathematics, Music, Visual Art, Drama and SESE.

(5) Engagement with problem-solving software, e.g., *Maths Circus*, encourages the development of concepts in various curricular areas while also stimulating higher-order levels of talk and discussion.

(6) The use of digital projectors allows teachers to access a wide variety of resources on the internet and CD Roms, and to prepare their own material, all of which can be shown quickly and easily to the whole class. This facilitates professional lesson preparation and presentation, and stimulates whole-class discussion.

(7) The interactive whiteboard takes the digital projector one step further and allows the children to interact with the on-screen resources in a child-friendly way. They are able to touch the screen and manipulate text and images, thus engaging with the curriculum at a deep level.

(8) The school website provides an opportunity for teachers and students to publish and celebrate their work. The site is updated regularly and reflects the many activities and projects in which the school is involved.

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. Music composition and digital recording
7. Storage of Records of achievement/portfolio assessment
8. Special Needs pupils

Expected Skill and Learning Outcomes for ICT at each Class Level

Junior Infants

- Become familiar with vocabulary related to ICT: mouse, screen, monitor, hard-drive, keyboard, digital camera
- Learn to use the mouse
- Navigate software by entering, exiting, closing, choosing options, clicking, double clicking and dragging the mouse
- Navigate the interactive whiteboard with their hands.

Senior Infants

- Learn to use a keyboard and type their name
- Learn to operate the radio and CD player
- Turn on and safely shut down the computer
- Use and navigate a variety of software packages, currently including Maths Circus, Tizzy's Toybox, Starfall, Sesame Street, Superspell, Wordshark, Muppets and Brainfun
- Use the digital camera to take photos for clay animation projects
- Have many opportunities to engage with the interactive whiteboard.

Suitable software for Junior and Senior Infants that is available in the school:

- Maths Circus
- Tizzy's Toybox
- Starfall
- Sesame St
- Superspell
- Number Shark
- Wordshark
- Muppets
- Brainfun.

Junior Classes (1st and 2nd):

As for infant classes, plus:

- Learn to use Microsoft Word to draft, edit and publish creative writing: using upper and lower-case letters, full stops, commas and question and exclamation marks; using the spacebar, the return, shift and caps lock keys; highlighting text and deleting; changing font, adjusting font size and using the Bold, Italic and Underline tools.
- Learn to use software to engage in real learning, largely using the same software as for Infants.
- Log on to educational websites such as BBC and Channel 4 to explore content, play interactive games and search for information at an age-appropriate level. Sites to be chosen by the teacher and placed on Favourites list.
- Learn to use the digital camera under close supervision to document work / educational experiences.
- Continue to use interactive whiteboard activities.

Middle Classes (3rd and 4th)

As for junior classes, plus:

- Develop further use of Microsoft Word tools such as WordArt, Copy and Paste, Spellcheck, Justify / Centre / Align Left, Print.
- Publish creative writing and project work on the school website.
- Learn to create folders, store and file work in different locations and retrieve it when necessary.
- Learn to use an Internet browser to search for information.
- Use Internet interactive learning sites to deepen and enhance learning across the curriculum.
- Use Microsoft Paint to create art work.

Senior Classes (5th and 6th)

As for middle classes, plus:

- Learn to exploit further features of Microsoft Word such as choosing different fonts, changing colours, using text-boxes, creating columns and simple tables, etc.
- Learn to copy and paste from one file to another..
- Learn to use the school digital video camera.
- Contribute reports to the school website.

- Explore more advanced educational websites.
- Learn about safety on the Internet, especially with regard to social networking sites.

Summary of School Audit(See Appendix 1)

Current Software Provision

- The school has acquired a comprehensive library of computer software. Software is stored in the class that it is appropriate to and listed on that class' inventory. General IT books and CDs are stored in the resource room, along with computer installation software and folder relating to the use of IT in the classroom
- We now have a number of computer programs which run the whole way throughout the school. These are:
  - Wordshark
  - Numbershark
  - Reading for Literacy
  - Maths made Easy
  - Computer in the Classroom.

Current Usage of Facilities

- Computers are used as a medium of teaching and learning in all the classrooms, therefore it is not necessary to timetable computer hours
- Current usage includes pre-reading and early reading work; pre-number 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.

ICT Co-ordination

- The school has a special duties teacher, <u>Aoife Wade</u> who holds responsibility for ICT as part of a designated schedule of responsibilities
- Any IT faults which cannot be rectified by hardware user are to be reported to the ICT co-ordinator.
- Anti-virus Protection is installed on all computers with access to broadband.

Access

Pupils and teachers have permanent access to ICT.

<u>Safety, Security and Behaviour Issues</u>

<u>With regard to the Internet, an Acceptable Use policy has been in place for many years and has served the school well. Children only use computers while supervised and the school uses the Schools' Broadband service, which has a stringent "net nanny". Students are not permitted to access social networking or shopping sites.</u>

Special Needs

Computers and printer are provided in the learning support rooms, and resource rooms, 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. Laptops and specialised keyboards are also provided where appropriate.

Exceptional Students

ICT is used in all classrooms to challenge and extend the educational opportunities for pupils with above average attainment.

Maintenance

- We are have negotiated a maintenance contract for our IT needs with Direct I.T

- Each teacher is asked to delete any confidential information before passing it on to another member of staff
- The laptops are with the teacher and move with them from year-to-year.

School Website

- The school hosts a website at ardfinnanns.com (under construction)
- School newsletters and other news items will regularly be added
- School policies that are relevant to parents will also be added to this site.

Ratified by the Board of Management of Ardfinnan National School in January 2012.

Tony Kenny 2/2/12