



**Aston Village
Educate Together
National School**

**Information &
Communications
Technology - ICT Plan &
Policy Document.**

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Introductory Statement

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for ICT in Aston Village Educate Together National School. The policy was first developed in 2013 and was reviewed most recently in September 2019. This document is closely linked to the school Acceptable Use Policy and the School Digital Learning Plan 2018 & 2019.

Mission Statement

It is the hope of our school that the implementation and integration of ICT's across the curriculum will be grounded in effective and worthwhile learning theories and strategies, with a view to furthering the holistic development of the children in our care by means of the most progressive methods and technologies at our disposal.

We will serve our students in a safe, enriched environment that will:

- Focus on integrating technologies into the curriculum
- Support diversity of learning styles
- Maximise learning in the classroom

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 our students. 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 our school. The 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, emphasizing the key messages of ICT.

- The pervasive nature of ICTs in today's society, and the inevitable increase in their usage in the future makes the integration of these technologies into teaching and learning a priority in our school's development.
- ICTs are an invaluable motivational resource in today's ever-changing curriculum. The use of ICTs to integrate the existing subject areas with modern technology is a

- fundamental aspect of our ICT policy.
- ICTs provide a safe, non-threatening and ultimately patient, non-judgemental guide for innumerable tasks and programs.
 - ICTs have the flexibility and power to meet the needs of each individual student on a one-to-one basis.
 - ICTs can help teachers present learning in more motivating, interesting ways thereby improving the quality of their teaching.
 - ICTs promote the development of decision making and problem solving skills, providing opportunities for interpretation, observation and analysis.

Aims

1. To raise levels of pupil competence and confidence in using ICT – by developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in using a range of ICT tools, enhancing learning experiences across the curriculum.
2. To continue to make full use of resources now in place. To develop facilities further as the opportunities and needs arise.
3. To avail of further training opportunities for staff.
4. To keep informed of suitable new software available for different classes. Again, teachers are encouraged to suggest such materials to the ICT coordinator outlining their benefit and need.
5. To establish curriculum goals in ICT for each class bearing in mind the current equipment, knowledge and software provision in the school.
6. ICT plan to be reviewed informally on a continuous basis and formally at least once a year.

ICT Uses in our School

1. School Administration – Aladdin software
2. Research software e.g. World Book Online, Scoilnet, DK Findout
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. Storage of and management of Teacher planning, resources and records via:
School Server Drives (Internal Network) (personal, team and public levels)
G-Suite for Education apps and services
MS Office 365 apps and services (limited use)

8. Storage of Student Records of achievement/portfolio assessment
9. Music lessons via www.dabbledoomusic.com
10. Pupils with special educational needs:
Devices and provisions particular to the needs of individuals and groups of students.
11. Our school website, www.astonvillageetns.com , social media presence (twitter and facebook pages)
12. Coding related provision: Beebots, Bluebots, Lego WeDo 2.0 kits, VEX Robotics kit
13. Tablets and Chromebooks as student devices detailed later in this document.
14. Library cataloguing and loans using Alice software.
15. Ubiquiti WiFi Networks consisting of 13 Access Points throughout the school.

Our Current Hardware Provision and Infrastructure

Our school is equipped with an internal network of CAT-5 cabling connecting each teacher's computer to a server facilitating file storage and sharing as well as networked printing. Teachers can print to either black and white (2) or colour (1) printers. Each mainstream and Coisceim teacher computer is connected to a projector and in cases of junior and Coisceim classrooms, the board/projector is interactive. Where boards/projectors are not interactive in other classes, the classroom is provided with a wireless keyboard & mouse set facilitating the interactivity of students with digital teaching materials.

In addition, each mainstream class is equipped with a visualiser and each Coisceim class is provided with a teacher iPad. All classes have access to a range of devices and resources which include:

ASUS Zenpads	x25
Chromebooks	x22
iPads	x38
ACER Netbooks	x21
Lego WeDo 2.0 Kits	x5
BeeBots	x6

BlueBots

x6

Vex Robotics Robot Kit and Arena

Animation Kit (tripods, grips, greenscreen, clay etc)

Software Provision

The school has moved gradually to G-Suite for Education as a modern and free source of document management, storage and creation. Where users (teachers and staff) require access to Microsoft Office programs, the school has set up free MS Office 365 online accounts for all who require them. Older MS office local computer licences are not renewed and users are encouraged to move to one or both of the platforms mentioned above.

The school looks to enhance the teaching and learning experiences of teachers and students through strategic investment in tablet applications, internet tools and device software where deemed worthwhile and beneficial by the staff and senior management team.

Software in use in the daily teaching and learning throughout the school includes: Spelling Shed, Literacy Shed, Maths Shed, Reading Eggs, Jolly Phonics for the Whiteboard, Bua Na Cainte, Planet Maths, Proloquo2go, dabbledoo music, Nessy Typing games, Typing Club, Seesaw and Book Creator.

The school currently holds a site license for the anti-virus program, Panda endpoint Smart Security and renews this annually. The school has moved in recent years to the aladdin school administration tool which records student data, attendance, test scores as well as other information.

Recently, with the addition of more student devices (September 2019) the school has seen it necessary to invest in device management software available online. We have sought advice and best practice in this area from the PDST and professional communities and we have to date been able to use ManageEngine and G-Suite Admin Console without charge. In 2019 we have adopted the Mosyle suite of tools to manage the school's growing number of Apple devices.

Similarly in 2019, the school has added an investment in the music teaching program, Dabbledoo music which provides stimulating and engaging lessons and teaching resources for teacher use throughout the school.

ICT Development

The process of ICT development began in 2008 with the introduction of computers into the school upon its opening. From this start, computers and interactive whiteboards/projectors have been added with each additional classroom and today, all teaching staff have a computer/laptop as well as access to a modern ICT infrastructure, student devices and CPD opportunities. The school recognises the importance of ICT and its value in the daily learning and teaching in the classroom. It is also recognised that teachers have varying levels of ability and confidence in the area of ICT in the classroom and to that end, the initial focus of the school's Digital Learning Plan (2018) was to identify areas of CPD strength and weakness and to target those weaker areas for improvement. The process is expected to be ever changing and expanding into the future, such is the nature of ICT generally. Teachers are encouraged to suggest courses and areas of learning need to the ICT coordinator and/or principal so that these areas can be targeted.

Funding

As per the Department of Education [Circular 0018/19](#) the current Digital Strategy for Schools Infrastructural Grant funding process is due to conclude in the Spring of 2021. It has been a 5 year program of increasing grant amounts paid out to schools based on their size. The school has also availed of the additional funding aid available to schools who have engaged with the Digital Learning Framework and Planning process. The school factors in the amounts likely to be made available in the coming two years when considering the current and future ICT infrastructure requirements.

In 2018, the school also engaged with two other schools in the northeast to form a cluster which was successful in its application to be considered for funding under the Schools Excellence Fund - STEM program with the aim of promoting the teaching and learning of STEM subjects in our schools, communities and the wider areas. The project will continue for three years and as well as providing funding to the schools for resources and activities, the schools are also working closely with a dedicated PDST

advisor throughout the duration of the project to assist and provide valuable input to our efforts.

Organisation of Resources

Tablet and Chromebook resources are stored in the school 5th & 1st Class corridor storage rooms. They are transported in adapted containers (trolleys, carts and toolboxes) and they provide for centralised charging of devices. All resources must be returned when finished with and charged. Teachers are encouraged to request assistance from senior class students when transporting class quantities of devices.

Other resources such as Beebots and Lego WeDo kits are also stored in the same locations.

Teachers must book devices for use in their classroom using the google calendar app. This facilitates visibility as to the use of the devices, their location and indicating when the devices are free to be booked. All teachers are shown how to use the google calendar app.

Suggested ICT skills progression for students:

Below is an outline of the suggested skills attainments for students. As mentioned later in this plan, a means to assessing and recording the progression of students under the below skills and others will be formulated as part of the “next steps” for this plan before June 2020.

Skills	Class Levels >>>	Junior & Senior Infants	First & Second Classes	Third & Fourth Classes	Fifth & Sixth Classes
Tablet familiarity					
Introduction to keyboard use					
Typing & Word Processing (eg. format a document, insert media)					
Data Manipulation (Use of Google Apps)					
Coding & Computational Thinking (Beebots, Scratch, Lego WeDo)					
Photograph Composition					
SeeSaw App (Portfolio Assessment)					
Animation (eg. Toontastic, Stop Motion Studio)					
Movie Making (iMovie, Adobe Spark Video)					
Green Screening					
Audio Recording					
Internet Research					
Digital Citizenship & Online Safety					

The ICT Coordinator Role

The role of the ICT Coordinator includes the following:

- Co-ordinate the compilation and production of this policy, the associated Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and the Digital Learning Plans with staff and management of the school and arrange for ongoing reviews of the contents and aims.
- Provide leadership and direction.
- Support, guide and motivate colleagues in the use and development of ICT across the curriculum.
- Facilitate training of staff via
 - summer PDST TiE courses
 - PDST Advisor visits
 - teacher group workshops lead by ICT Coordinator and/or volunteer teachers
 - provision of short “how to” video clips shared on Google Drive
 - promotion and awareness of PDST TiE online courses and good practice videos
- Develop strategies for integration of ICTs across the curriculum by providing suitable software in a variety of subjects.
- Liaise with Board of Management and advise on ICT strategies and planning.
- Develop, share and monitor a system/means for teachers to borrow and book usage of school ICT equipment. (google calendar).
- Evaluate the use of ICTs in the school on an ongoing basis.
- Develop a means by which the IT system can be maintained and upgraded.
- Developing and building links with other teachers through the Internet and mailing lists such as the Computers in Education Society of Ireland cesi-list@googlegroups.com, attending professional events and training in the area of ICT in Education, and the school’s involvement in the SEF STEM Cluster Project, Northeast STEM Champions.
- To liaise with local industry, other schools and colleges, PDST TiE, the Department of Education, and the Monaghan Education Centre in the area of ICT.
- To develop and maintain a school website, manage the school’s internet presence including social media pages.
- Constitute and convene monthly meetings of the school ICT/ Digital Learning Committee.
- To maintain the school ICT infrastructure and hardware stock with the

support of the ICT Committee and volunteers from the school's wider community.

- Manage the school's ICT Budget with the support of the school Principal, Treasurer and the ICT Committee in such a way as to achieve best value for money spent on ICT items, whilst maintaining accurate records of quotations received and receipts for money spent.
- Formulate an ongoing spending plan which targets the areas of ICT need within the school that maintain the highest levels of ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Role of Class Teachers within this Plan

- Assess and document pupils' skills.
- Share ideas, resources, skills and practices with fellow teachers on staff.
- Integrate ICT throughout the curriculum.
- Have read the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Inform the ICT post-holder of any technical problems and resources which need replacing.
- Book the desired use of ICT resources using the Google Calendar app.
- Ensure that all resources borrowed by them are returned as received to their correct storage location and placed on charge where necessary.
- Model positive and responsible use of the Internet, Apps, and school resources.

Evaluation Strategy

The ICT Coordinator will be responsible for the day to day evaluation of the resources and the uses to which they are being put. The school staff/ ICT committee will have ongoing discussions with a view to fine-tuning this document and developing effective learning strategies and classroom aids for the integration of ICTs across the school and curriculum. A committee meeting will be held once a month to ensure a coherent and comprehensive approach to the development of ICT throughout the school. This plan is a whole-school plan and is intrinsically linked to our whole school efforts for School Improvement (SIP) primarily in the form of our Digital Learning Plan.

Assessment and Reporting

It is intended that within this plan (by June 2020) that teachers will be able to assess and record each child's progression in the area of ICT skills attainment. Such recording is already evident in the school but this plan will aim in the coming months to formulate a series of milestones of skills attainment for students such that teachers may note each student's progress in a number of key areas and report same to parents/guardians and the student's next teacher.

Students with Additional Learning Needs

At present adaptive technology is required in catering for the learning needs of some children both in mainstream and special class settings. For example, some children with hearing impairments are provided with assistive technology in the classroom, some children are able to access the curriculum with the aid of a tablet or access to an extra PC in their classroom. In some cases, parents have agreed with the school to privately source recommended devices and/or tools for students to help them access their learning and in other cases an application can be made to the Department of Education for funding to provide for assistive technology to help cater for any one child's individual learning needs.

Pupils currently have access to tablets (android and IOS), netbooks and chromebook devices in their own classrooms as and when desired by their teacher. It is the policy of the school to practice positive discrimination when a pupil has special learning needs. Suitable software has been purchased for children with particular literacy, communication and numeracy needs and more will be provided when the need arises.

Teachers have indicated their willingness to explore suitable software with a view to using it with the pupils.

iPads in particular provide a range of accessibility features that provide children with autism and communication needs the means access otherwise inaccessible content. Features such as speak selection, larger text, voiceover and guided access are some examples of features that can be used to great effect in the special educational needs setting. Teachers are reminded that such features can be explained and demonstrated upon request to the ICT Coordinator.

Technology also presents opportunities for challenging higher achieving students and teachers are reminded that ICTs may be used to meet their needs, whilst such students also represent a means to furthering the progress of their peers.

Health and Safety Considerations

Surge protected charging adaptors are used for the charging of devices.

Care should be taken when moving large numbers of devices about the school.

Adapted trolleys, toolboxes and carts are used to store, transport and charge devices and care should be taken in reconnecting devices to charging cables and returning them to storage.

Cables are strengthened with colour matching ends using sugru moldable glue. All users should avoid pulling on cables to disconnect devices and instead pinch cables on the coloured end before pulling.

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 should be reported to Paul, Frank or Dermot and shall be replaced.

Filters on projectors should be regularly cleaned and replaced to avoid instances of overheating and damage.

Projectors should ALWAYS be turned off when not in use.

Devices are left on charge when returned to their storage location and at the end of each school day, volunteer teachers are asked to check the storage locations before they leave and unplug the main charging plugs. **No devices should be left on charge overnight or for unduly long periods.**

Teaching computers should be turned off at the end of each school day and plug removed from the wall in advance of school holidays and midterm breaks.

The Next Steps for this Plan

- Continued monthly meetings of ICT / DL Committee with actions document shared to all members.
- Incorporate section pertaining to agreed Assessment and Reporting of Student skills attainment into this document by June 2020, with teacher input.
- Audit to be carried out of quality of display image being achieved on projector screens throughout the school (OCT/NOV 2019) with a view to prioritising corrective actions in particular cases. (See DL Plan Document.)
- Enhancement of school wifi network to include all areas of the school on the same teacher and student networks. (See DL Plan Document.)

Review

- This plan is considered a “living document” as it is amended and changed in line with the ever changing needs and developments in the ICT world. Printed versions are by their nature invalid.
- Review & revision of this plan as necessary by June 2020.

Appendices linked

[AVETNS Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[AVETNS Digital Learning Plan](#)

[AVETNS Enrolment Form](#) (Parental consent section)