



Using ICT Policy

September 2024

Date	Policy Reviewed	Policy Amended	Added to Website
September 2017	September 2017	September 2017	September 2017
September 2018	September 2018	September 2018	September 2018
October 2019	September 2019	September 2019	October 2019
September 2020	September 2020	September 2020	September 2020
September 2021	September 2021	September 2021	September 2021
September 2022	September 2022	September 2022	September 2022
September 2023	September 2023	September 2023	September 2023
September 2024	September 2024	September 2024	September 2024

Victoria Park Primary School

Using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy

Mission Statement

At Victoria Park Primary School we are proud to be an inclusive school providing a high quality, creative and challenging education within a secure, caring and happy environment, where every child experiences a sense of enjoyment and achieves their full potential. We aim to provide each child with a broad and balanced education which encompasses the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum (CCEA, 2007) and the social, moral, physical and aesthetic aspects befitting the needs of adult life. Emphasis is placed on each pupil developing a caring and respectful attitude towards peers, adults, the community and themselves. Ultimately, we seek to fulfil the vision of preparing pupils as best we can for adult life by 'living to learn and learning to live'.

Victoria Park Primary School recognises the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the primary school curriculum for preparing pupils to participate in a rapidly changing world in which work and other activities are constantly being transformed by access to varied and developing technology. We recognise that ICT is an important tool in both the society we live in, and in the teaching and learning process. Central to our vision for ICT is for all members of the school community, both students and staff, to become confident users of ICT so that they can develop the skills, knowledge and understanding which enables them to use appropriate ICT resources effectively as powerful tools for teaching and learning.

Vision for Information & Communication Technology

At Victoria Park Primary School, we believe that digital technologies are very powerful resources which can enhance and transform teaching and learning. Given the school's vision of preparing pupils for life, we are committed to promoting pupils' skills within the use of technology across the curriculum. We believe that technology has an integral role to play in helping pupils to achieve their full potential, assisting them in overcoming barriers to learning and in supporting learning throughout the school community. Ultimately, our vision is to encourage and nurture within our pupils, and the entire school community, knowledge, skills and qualities that will make them responsible digital citizens now and in the future. We aspire to safely and confidently empower and equip pupils, and the entire school community, to face the exciting, new and ever developing opportunities and challenges presented by constantly evolving technology.

Rationale

Why should our pupils use ICT?

- ICT can enhance and enrich the learning process across all areas of the curriculum.
- ICT can improve the thinking skills and personal capabilities of pupils.
- ICT can provide innovative ways to promote metacognition, build resilience and improve self-esteem and develop a stronger growth mind-set.
- ICT can have a transformational impact on teaching styles and techniques.
- ICT can open a world of new and exciting resources to staff, pupils and parents.
- ICT can motivate and enthuse pupils as the learning style is unique.
- ICT allows children to explore, exchange, manage and evaluate information.
- ICT promotes independent learning.
- ICT offers potential for effective group work and collaborative learning, both physically together and across vast distancing using online collaborative tools.

- ICT gives the children a platform to showcase and exhibit their skills and understanding in new and different ways.
- ICT supports different learning styles.
- ICT provides a vehicle for the development of pupils' creativity. It enables pupils to see themselves as creators of unique content, giving them ownership over their work.
- ICT can provide opportunities to develop important citizenship skills.
- ICT can help pupils overcome barriers to learning and so experience success in learning.
- ICT can be helpful in assisting staff in assessing learning and can be a powerful tool in providing ways in which barriers to learning and additional needs can be identified.
- In today's information society, pupils need to develop ICT skills in order to access relevant information.

Aims

Our aims in using ICT in teaching and learning are:

- To enable pupils to become autonomous, independent users of ICT, gaining confidence and enjoyment from their ICT activities.
- To extend, deepen and enhance learning across all areas of the curriculum.
- To encourage pupils to select and use the ICT resources and skills appropriate to the task.
- To develop skills in the use of ICT and the ability to apply these skills in a range of curricular contexts.
- To provide an effective means of identifying and overcoming barriers to learning and supporting those pupils with additional or special educational needs.
- To develop practical skills in the use of ICT and apply these to problem solving situations.
- To promote logical thinking, personal capabilities, decision making, metacognition and thinking skills.
- To give children access to a variety of sources of information, and to encourage them to evaluate these, increasingly justifying their thoughts.
- To enable pupils to develop the skills of Using ICT safely and responsibly, developing safe online behaviours to safeguard pupils' welfare in a safe learning environment.
- To use ICT as a means of communicating their learning with their teacher and their parents.
- To enable pupils to see themselves as digital creators.
- To create responsible digital citizens both now and in the future.
- To safely and confidently equip pupils to face the exciting, new and ever developing opportunities and challenges presented by constantly evolving technology.
- To enable learning to take place beyond the school site to support pupils' learning at home and enable a continuation in learning and teaching in the event of an emergency closure.
- To ensure staff are motivated and skilled in the use of ICT and aware of the contribution ICT can make to learning and teaching.

Our aims in using ICT in the management of the school are:

- To develop a whole school approach to ICT ensuring continuity and progression in all strands of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.
- To use ICT as a tool to support teaching, learning and management across the curriculum.
- To engage with parents to help facilitate their input to supporting their children's learning.
- To explore and utilise ways in which ICT can be used to strengthen and maintain home school partnerships.
- To support communication with parents and the wider school community.
- To encourage sharing of resources and good practice.
- To increase professional efficiency through the use of ICT systems for planning, record keeping, reporting and communicating.
- To enable teaching to take place beyond the school site to support pupils' learning at home and enable a continuation in learning and teaching in the event of an emergency closure.

- To enable the increasingly effective administration protocols and practices.

Strategies for the use of ICT

- Since the focus of the Northern Ireland Curriculum is on 'Using' ICT skills, ICT is not taught as a distinct subject, but is a tool to be used in a variety of meaningful contexts throughout the curriculum. As such when a session is planned to develop pupils' ICT skills, it will always be cross-curricular in approach.
- ICT is planned and delivered as an integral part of each curriculum area to support and enrich children's learning.
- ICT is used to enhance learning through whole class, collaborative group and individual work.
- All pupils are given equal access opportunities through management of ICT resources.
- Meaningful use of ICT at home will continue to be encouraged through homework and home learning.
- Children, and their families, should continue to be encouraged to access and make use of the school website which is regularly updated with resources for pupils, families and the wider community.

Requirements for Using ICT in the Northern Ireland Curriculum

Using ICT is identified as one of the three key cross-curricular skills in the Northern Ireland Curriculum (CCEA, 2007). Children will be given the opportunity to develop skills in ICT in accordance with the Northern Ireland Curriculum guidelines which state;

Information and Communication Technology, across the curriculum, has the potential to transform and enrich pupils' learning experiences and environments. It can empower pupils, develop self-esteem and promote positive attitudes to learning. Additionally, the creative use of ICT has the potential to improve pupils' thinking skills, providing them with opportunities to become independent, self-motivated and flexible learners.

Using ICT describes the ability to handle and communicate information, solve problems and pose questions through the use of information and communication technologies in a variety of contexts across the curriculum. It includes collaboration within and beyond the classroom; allowing pupils the opportunities to share and exchange work; and exhibit and showcase their learning.

(CCEA, 2007)

At Victoria Park Primary School, our scheme of work meets the requirements of the curriculum to develop the '5Es' of explore, express, exhibit, exchange and evaluate. A clear line of progression exists across the key stages within the school to ensure that pupils, at a level appropriate to their ability, are enabled to develop these five core skills.

Explore

Pupils should be enabled to:

- Access and manage data and information;
- Research, select, process and interpret information;
- Investigate, make predictions and solve problems through interaction with digital tools;
- Understand how to keep safe and display acceptable online behaviour.

Express

Pupils should be enabled to:

- Create, develop, present and publish ideas and information using a range of digital media;
- Manipulate a range of assets to produce multimedia products.

Exchange

Pupils should be enabled to:

- Communicate safely and responsibly using a range of contemporary digital methods and tools;
- Exchange, share, collaborate and develop ideas digitally.

Evaluate

Pupils should be enabled to:

- Talk about, review and make improvements to work, reflecting on the process and outcome;
- Consider the sources and resources used, including safety, reliability and acceptability.

Exhibit

Pupils should be enabled to:

- Manage and present their stored work;
- Showcase their learning across the curriculum;
- Use ICT safely and responsibly to share their work.

Desirable Features

It is our aim to give our pupils a broad and balanced experience of using ICT. As such, we endeavour to enable our pupils to develop their skills in using the 5Es across all of the desirable features identified by CCEA throughout their primary education. These are;

- Computational Thinking and Coding (Digital Technology – Making and Building pathway)
- Digital Art and Design (Digital Technology – Creative Technologies pathway)
- Digital Audio (Digital Technology – Creative Technologies pathway)
- Digital Storytelling: Film and Animation (Digital Technology – Creative Technologies pathway)
- Digital Storytelling: Presenting (Digital Technology – Creative Technologies pathway)
- Digital Storytelling: Publishing (Digital Technology – Creative Technologies pathway)
- Managing Data (Digital Technology – Making and Building pathway)
- Online Communication[^]

[^] Online Communication was previously removed from updated advice but was reintroduced by CCEA during a period of remote learning.

In September 2022, CCEA identified digital pathways as part of their Digital Skills Framework that chart pupil progress from Foundation Stage through to Post 16. It is our desire to provide a broad and balanced ICT provision that will enable our pupils to progress in their skills and abilities long after they leave Key Stage 2. To help with this, we have identified the corresponding digital pathways above for each desirable feature. These are identified in brackets above.

Online Safety and ICT Competence

At Victoria Park Primary School, we endeavour to help our pupils to develop competence in the use of ICT. Online safety forms an integral part of this competence, and as such the school has in place an Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies Policy, which has been agreed by the Board of Governors and forms part of the safeguarding policy. ICT competence is concerned with:

- Developing the knowledge and skills required to use ICT safely and effectively and to apply these in a range of contexts.
- Developing the skills required to access and use information from a range of electronic sources, interpret it, evaluate it and use it safely and effectively.
- Developing and demonstrating consistent safe online behaviour to safeguard pupils' well-being.
- Applying the skills in their own learning either at school, at home or in the community.

Victoria Park Primary School has in place a progressive and preventative online safety curriculum which was developed in collaboration with other schools in the East Belfast Primary ICT Cluster to meet the needs of pupils in our local community. The scheme is progressive to meet the needs of learners as they move through the different key stages from Foundation stage to Key Stage Two. The scheme focuses on eight different themes identified by the United Kingdom Council for Child Internet Safety. These are;

1. Managing online information
2. Privacy and security
3. Copyright and ownership
4. Health, wellbeing and lifestyle
5. Self-image and identity
6. Online reputation
7. Online relationships
8. Online bullying

This education forms part of the Digital Life and Work Pathway identified by CCEA. For further information on this please see the Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies Policy or the Online Safety Curriculum, which is available on the school website and from the Principal or the ICT Co-ordinator on request.

Computational Thinking Across the Curriculum

At Victoria Park Primary School we recognise the importance of developing strong computational thinking skills amongst our pupils. Computational thinking is a set of logical skills, concepts and approaches that can be used by pupils to help them solve a problem or overcome a challenge. The six concepts (logic, algorithms, decomposition, pattern recognition, abstraction and evaluation) and five approaches (tinkering, creating, debugging, perseverance and collaboration) are often referred to as coding skills, but we believe that these skills go beyond ICT sessions to help pupils explore and approach learning opportunities across the curriculum, such as problem solving in Mathematics and promoting their Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities which lie at the heart of the Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum.

Due to their importance, computational thinking skills, concepts and approaches feature in each key stage within our scheme of work for ICT. Many of the skills are taught in non digital or unplugged activities with reinforcement using digital resources. Such skills begin in the Foundation Stage where pupils work with a range of software and hardware to programme sprites and physical devices, such as BeeBots to follow commands. These skills are then built upon when pupils move to Key Stage 1 where they develop their computational thinking skills by programming BluBots to solve a range of problems. When pupils enter Key Stage 2, there is an explicit focus on the teaching of computational thinking and coding skills and pupils are encouraged to use these concepts and approaches to overcome challenges across the curriculum.

From P5 to P7, pupils are given the opportunity to apply their skills programming both virtual and physical devices each year. This includes the use of Probots and MicroBit in P5, Scratch and Spheros in P6 and Lightbot, Tynker and Mini Drones in P7. Pupils are encouraged to utilise the skills they have developed during the explicit teaching sessions, and apply these in cross curricular challenges. Furthermore, pupils are encouraged to utilise their computational thinking skills in different aspects of the curriculum, to complete tasks and approach problem solving activities. This includes, for example, in how they approach problem solving in Mathematics, how they plan, carry out and evaluate science investigations in the World Around Us and using their skills in writing tasks in Literacy. Within all key stages pupils are encouraged to use the language of computational thinking and coding to describe their

learning and thinking. It is hoped that by explicitly teaching the core concepts and approaches, and encouraging pupils to apply these in everyday classroom situations, that they will develop computational thinking skills and attitudes which will prepare them for post primary level education and beyond into higher education or a work place setting.

Planning and Progression

Planning for ICT ensures coverage of the statutory requirements for ICT as set out under the five 'E's – Explore, Express, Exchange, Evaluate and Exhibit. All pupils have opportunities to develop a wide range of skills and competencies, in line with their age and abilities as they progress through the school from P1 to P7.

All children develop and learn at their own pace. Progression is assured as children move through the school by a range of increasingly challenging activities covering all areas of ICT and embedded in the cross-curricular nature of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Pupils in the Foundation Stage begin developing basic ICT skills from P1 in line with the Developing Using ICT Continuum for Foundation Stage, whilst Key Stage 1 and 2 work to develop pupils' abilities to reflect the ICT Levels of Progression identified by CCEA. A scheme of work for ICT is maintained to help guide teachers' in their cross-curricular planning, and owing to the ever changing nature of technology, is updated as appropriate to guide the work of class teachers across the school.

Access

ICT resources are deployed throughout the school to maximise access, to enhance teaching and learning and to assist in raising attainment. Victoria Park Primary School is well resourced with networked laptops and workstations located in every classroom, as well as in the ICT area and school library. All computers have access to printers, with some classrooms benefitting from their own printer. iPads are deployed across the three key stages and assist with the integration of ICT into every day classroom activities. Promethean Activpanels and Apple TV are installed in all classrooms, with three further interactive boards located in the ICT area, the Learning Support Room and the Sydenham Room. A range of portable technology to supplement learning is also available to teachers. This includes headphones, microphones, EasiSpeak Recorders, Green screens, Apple mics, iPad crayons, Bee Bots, Blu Bots, Probots, Sprk+ and flying drones.

Each child is enabled to access the computer system using their own personalised login. Pupils are educated about the need to protect these important details from a young age. All computers and iPads have access to appropriate curriculum supporting programmes.

Adults within the school also have access to networked computers through their own login and iPads. Both adults and children (P3-P7) agree to the school's acceptable use policies as set out in the Online Safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies Policy, while in P1 and P2 teachers discuss these key behaviours with their classes and parents agree to the policy on their child's behalf.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

ICT facilities at Victoria Park Primary are for use by all pupils and staff who have accepted the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Care will be taken to ensure that all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs, have equal opportunities to be involved in ICT activities. For pupils with learning difficulties and/or physical or sensory disability appropriate use of ICT can often enhance access to aspects of the curriculum. The ICT Co-ordinator, in liaison with the SENCO, will endeavour to ensure appropriate adjustments are made to accommodate pupils with Special Educational Needs, including the requirement for specific resources. The school has in place extra resources, such as smaller mice, larger screens and Dyslexia friendly

software to help promote the inclusion of all pupils in ICT. We also endeavour to ensure that curriculum material and software is not gender biased. Every opportunity will be given to children who do not have access to ICT resources at home.

Monitoring, Assessing & Evaluating

Monitoring

Monitoring ICT will enable the ICT Co-ordinator to gain an overview of ICT teaching and learning throughout the school. This will assist the school in the self-evaluation process identifying areas of strength as well as those for development. The ICT Co-ordinator will monitor the half-termly and yearly planning of ICT, review the scheme of work, and assist class teachers appropriately.

Evidence, in the form of children's work, is stored within each pupil's folder on the Shared Resources of the school system. Teachers will assess pupils' abilities in the use of ICT in line with the Levels of Progression and these will be reported to the ICT Co-ordinator. Internal moderation of levels assigned, and samples of pupils' work will take place, led by the ICT Co-ordinator as appropriate.

It is currently the responsibility of the ICT co-ordinator to monitor the standard and progress made within ICT by gathering appropriate evidence during each school year. Statutory end of Key Stage results for Using ICT are monitored by the school and reported to CCEA as appropriate.

Assessment

ICT is assessed both formatively and summatively using the 5E's as identified by the Northern Ireland Curriculum and the Levels of Progression laid out by CCEA. Throughout the year teachers will assess pupils' skills and abilities, tracking these each term, and using this information as a basis for an end of year level which is recorded in the pupil profiles and passed onto the next teacher. Formative assessment occurs on a lesson by lesson basis based on the learning intentions of the lesson. These are conducted informally by the class teacher and are used to inform future planning. Pupils' work is stored centrally on the Shared Resources section of the school system enabling each child to build a digital pupil profile. This enables internal moderation of levels to ensure consistency across the school and in line with the curriculum, and internal moderation of samples of levelled work is carried out by the ICT Co-ordinator, and where appropriate and possible, involves all the teaching staff. End of Key Stage assessment levels for ICT are recorded and submitted as required to the statutory agencies.

Evaluating

ICT provision and the attainment of pupils across the school is consistently monitored and evaluated. Appropriate amendments to planning are carried out, and activities tailored to meet the needs of individual learners and year groups, and to improve future teaching and learning. All staff are encouraged to be reflective practitioners of ICT. Skills audits are carried out by the ICT Co-ordinator amongst the staff to identify training needs to enable staff to best meet the needs of learners and to provide a broad and balanced classroom ICT experience.

Staff Roles & Responsibilities

The Principal

The overall responsibility for the use of ICT rests with the senior management team of the school. The Principal, in consultation with staff:

- determines the ways ICT should support, enrich and extend the curriculum;
- decides the provision and allocation of resources;
- decides ways in which developments can be assessed, and records maintained;
- ensures that ICT is used in a way to achieve the aims and objectives of the school;
- ensures that there is an ICT policy and identifies an ICT co-ordinator.

ICT Co-ordinator

The appointed ICT Co-ordinator's role is to oversee the leading, planning and delivery of Digital Skills and Using ICT across the school and to take a lead in the promotion digital citizenship, including online safety.

The ICT Co-ordinator will be responsible for:

- assisting all teachers with the implementation of this policy;
- facilitating the use of ICT across the curriculum in collaboration with all subject co-ordinators;
- providing or organising training to keep staff skills and knowledge up to date through a programme of ongoing and continuous professional development in the aspiration of encouraging professional learning amongst both teaching and non-teaching staff.
- forming part of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Team.
- advising colleagues about effective teaching strategies, managing equipment and purchasing resources;
- monitoring and evaluating the delivery of the ICT curriculum and reporting to the Board of Governors, through the Principal, on the effectiveness of provision.

Subject Co-ordinators

Other subject co-ordinators should identify where ICT could be used in their subject schemes of work. This might involve the use of dedicated programmes or hardware that support specific learning opportunities or involve children using a specific application which they have been taught how to use as part of their ICT study and are applying those skills within the context of other curriculum subjects. Subject co-ordinators work in partnership with the ICT Co-ordinator to ensure all Northern Ireland Curriculum statutory requirements are being met with regard to the use of ICT within curriculum subjects.

The Classroom Teacher

Even though whole school co-ordination and support is essential to the development of ICT capability, it remains the responsibility of each teacher to plan and teach appropriate ICT activities and assist the co-ordinator in the monitoring and recording of pupil progress in ICT. There is a responsibility on the classroom teacher to ensure that every child in their class has equal access to develop their ICT skills through effective teaching, learning and differentiation. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that they promote safe online behaviours at all times with their pupils.

Staff Development

At Victoria Park Primary School we recognise the need for the on-going development of teachers' understanding and skills in using and teaching ICT, taking account of the often rapidly changing nature and evolution of technology. We recognise the need to continuous professional development and the cyclical nature of school improvement. We commit to providing a robust programme of staff development in the aspiration of promoting a culture of continuous professional learning for both teaching and non-teaching staff.

Staff training will be provided as appropriate and identified through the school's self-evaluation process and the development and deployment of technology. The school is committed to engaging with a range of stakeholders, organisations and companies in relation to digital education. This includes being an integral member of the East Belfast Primary ICT Cluster, working for the promotion of ICT across primary and special schools in the east of the city, participating in CCEA initiatives as appropriate, linking with local businesses through Business in the Community and working alongside companies, developing and testing classroom emerging classroom-based technologies.

Using ICT Beyond the Classroom

Victoria Park Primary School seeks to promote the holistic development of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to both use and develop their ICT skills beyond the classroom, through, for

example, the provision of extracurricular activities such as Coding Club and the Digital Leader Programme. Pupils are also encouraged, where possible and appropriate, to use ICT to complete homeworks or project work.

Using ICT to Support Home and Remote Learning

Victoria Park is committed to exploring new and innovative digital tools to support both pupils and their parents/guardians at home. Both class teachers and subject co-ordinators seek new opportunities to reinforce learning across the curriculum at home. This includes through the use of Bug Club reading schemes by Pearson Education utilised in school aims to support parents in developing their children's learning at home in a real and meaningful way.

The school is promoted to continually reviewing and developing the resources it makes available online to help with learning beyond the school premises. This includes during periods of emergency school closure. The school maintains and updates a home learning platform that is accessible to all and has in place a remote learning strategy which is reviewed and issued to staff when required. This strategy effectively ensures that every opportunity is given to promote a continuation of learning at home when school is not available, and includes the setting of differentiated work as appropriate, the use of a range of online tools to promote understanding, the use of video conferencing as appropriate and strong partnership being fostered through effective two-way communication between home and school. The school has in place a Video Conferencing Policy to ensure the safety of all parties. This policy is available to all staff, and is available on request from the Principal or ICT Co-ordinator to all members of the school community. Further information relating to remote learning and the continuation of school business can be found in the school's Remote Learning Policy.

Policy Review

Given the ever-changing nature of technology and development, this policy will be reviewed annually by the ICT Co-ordinator.