

Columba College

ICT Policy

Introduction

Our School endeavours to strive for teaching excellence by recognising the value of integrating ICT into teaching and learning methodologies in the classroom.

Adapting our classrooms and equipping our teachers with modern, up to date Technologies provides our students with greater opportunities to acquire diverse skills in keeping with the modern world.

Objectives

- To extend and build upon the IT skills of students entering our school.
- To provide each student with an appropriate level of IT literacy.
- To engage students to learn using ICT as an integrated teaching methodology in their subject.
- To encourage responsible use of using ICT in their studies at home.
- To embed technology into everyday learning in our classrooms.
- To enhance the teaching and learning in a subject.
- To encourage and support teachers in the use of ICT in education.
- To build on our current model of open teacher access of shared subject information on our common server in an organised way.
- To use assistive Technologies with students with Special Educational needs.

School Profile

Computer Room

- One fully equipped large computer room with 18 networked PC's. All have Windows XP Professional, High Speed Broadband Internet Access and a range of applications software including MS Office 2010, Sage, Scratch and Natural Reader. The room has a fixed digital projector and a printer. All first second, fifth and sixth years are timetabled for the computer classes and the room can also be booked by staff for a number of class periods each day. During lunch (for 20 minutes or more), the room is available as a supervised open access facility. The computer room is also available to the homework club if required.

ICT in Subject Areas

- The classrooms are well equipped with ICT resources, most classrooms have a fixed digital data projector, all teachers have access to a PC in their classroom and all have internet access through our wired network. High speed broadband of 100 MB has been installed in the school. This facilitates the use of ICT in all classes.
- Three Inter Active White Boards are installed in the in the school and are used by staff on a daily basis (Mathematics, Science, Home Economics).
- The specialist rooms are well equipped and provide great scope to maintain and broaden the curriculum provision for students , Science laboratories are equipped with a PC and Interactive whiteboard. The DCG room is well equipped with networked PCs, data projector, printers A4 and A3.
- Students have individual usernames and passwords for privacy, security and accountability.

- A good range of resources has been developed within most subject departments. Individual teachers have also collated some very good resources and are sharing these resources through a shared common drive on the schools network.
- A range of digital devices such as digital cameras are readily available.

ICT as means of Communication

- We are currently developing a school website which we feel will provide Information relevant to all partners in our educational system.
- We use Web text SMS to communicate very regularly with parents
- Inside the school three plasma screens are used to communicate with students, teachers and visitors.
 - One of these screens is dedicated for student information particularly for extracurricular activities, these are located as follows: one at reception and one in the assembly hall. These reduce class disruption by minimising the need to use the intercom system.
 - One screen is dedicated for visitor information and is located at the reception area.
 - One screen is dedicated for teacher information and is located in the staff room.

ICT in the Staff Room

- Our Staff room is equipped with 1 networked PC and a shared printer, which allows staff to integrate ICT into lesson preparation. The computer has internet access and it also has a shared common drive where resources are shared and uploaded by students during class in the IT room.

Special Needs / Learning Support

- Assistive Technology is available to some students where appropriate.
- Extra I.T. periods are allocated where possible to students on a one-to-one basis for students with special educational needs.

Special Needs / Learning Support Teachers

- Plan, encourage and engage with students to increase their learning outcomes in required subject areas.
- Use assistive technologies where available for students with special educational needs.

Future Plans

Short Term

- Audit of school equipment and systems to facilitate the development of ICT infrastructure
- Engage with initiatives within Longford and Westmeath ETB towards greater development of ICT throughout the ETB
- Setup an eLearning Team in order to develop an eLearning plan which will outline how our school will improve and develop the level of integration of ICT

- Currently, we are working on providing wireless internet access to the areas of the school that do not have Internet access.
- Continue to support the inclusion of pupils with special needs using ICT and assistive technologies
- Introduce a Printer Management System in our PLC section
- Continuous maintenance and upgrading of ICT equipment.

Medium Term

- Introduction of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) such as Moodle for the sharing of resources between teachers and students.
- Introduce netbooks/I pads/laptops as a means of improving teaching and learning in the school
- Develop an eLearning Plan and based on this plan invest in ICT and multimedia equipment in an effort to move towards a school that widely uses technology.
- The promotion of internet-related classroom activities by encouraging and promoting CPD within subject departments.
- To develop a VLE (Moodle) in our PLC section
- **Long Term**
- Develop an eLearning Plan and its implementation on an on-going basis. (other long-term goals will be outlined in the eLearning Plan). Do we have an eLearning plan?

ICT and the Curriculum

- 1st year Students
- 1 class period per week

- 2nd year Students
- 1 class period per week

- 5th year Students
- 2 classes per week

- 6th year Students
- 1 / 2 classes per week

- Additional access to computer rooms through booking system and open supervised access at lunchtimes.

School Policy on Internet Usage

- As set out by Columba Colleges Schools Internet Usage Policy. The policy is provided to all students and parents when they enrol signed and agreed to by the student and parent/guardian.
- The proper use and respect of the facilities is monitored by teachers and the policy is reviewed on a regular basis.

Supervision

- The internet service is filtered and it is and the school rules state that no student is unsupervised in either of the Computer labs and no food or drink is allowed in any computer lab.
- Each lunchtime, the Computer Room has open access. This is supervised on a voluntary basis by Ms. Curry to facilitate students in the completion of project, etc.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- When using the school's facilities, all students must comply with the rules and regulations of the school and the computer room and must accept the internet usage policy.

Subject Teachers

- Endeavour to incorporate ICT into their teaching and learning in the classroom.
- Avail of the educational website that is available for school wide use (e.g. ExamSupport.ie)
- Avail of occasional pilot educational learning management systems e.g. Y-Teach, Global Grid for Learning.
- Professional Development staff IT training was provided by the IT staff and other experts; this included training on how to use data projectors, Interactive whiteboards and how to use our common server.