IT Policy Document

Introduction

The development of Information Technology is changing at home and in the community. Its impact on the lives of individuals continues to grow and it is essential that our pupils can take advantage of its opportunities and understand its effects.

Therefore, it is important that pupils in our school gain the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to have the confidence and capability to use IT throughout their lives.

The National Curriculum Orders require IT to be used in all subjects where appropriate. Information Technology is a cross curricular competence which is concerned with the acquisition, storage, manipulation, interpretation and telecommunication of information and involves creating, collecting, organising, storing, processing and presenting information for specific purposes by electronic means.

Aims of Information Technology in our school

To provide pupils with opportunities to develop their IT capabilities in all areas specified by the National Curriculum Order.

To allow pupils to gain confidence and enjoyment from their IT activities and to develop skills which extend and enhance their learning throughout the curriculum.

To develop pupils' awareness of the use of computers not only in the classroom, but in everyday life.

To allow pupils to evaluate the potential of computers and also their limitations.

To develop logical thinking and problem solving.

To provide opportunities for pupils to gain knowledge about IT tools. These include CD-ROM, word processors, databases, control devices, graphics and software for processing sound and images.

To encourage pupils to become autonomous, independent users of IT both as a learning resource and as a discipline in its own right.

To develop a whole school approach to IT ensuring continuity and progression.

Role of the IT Co-ordinator

The IT co-ordinator plays an important part in achieving these aims. Therefore it is important that all members of staff are aware of this significant role, as outlined below:

- Highlight areas for the development of IT within the School Development Plan.

- Co-ordinate the purchase and maintenance of equipment.

- Ensure that all equipment is safe to use.

- Review INSET needs of all staff and provide suitable training opportunities.

- Disseminate relevant information from CMU courses to all members of staff.

- Keep up to date with developments and new technologies.

- Develop the scheme of work ensuring a whole school approach to the planning, recording and assessment of IT.

- Ensure that this policy is successfully implemented throughout the school.

- Review and update this policy periodically.

Professional Development

INSET will be provided as school based training or through courses run by the LEA via Cheshire Micro Unit or other providers. The IT co-ordinator will discuss with colleagues their INSET needs and encourage them to attend relevant courses or plan whole staff INSET through staff meetings or a Staff Development Day.

Planning and Delivery

The Dearing Review recommendations assumes that the knowledge, understanding and skills of IT as identified within the Technology Orders should be taught through all relevant curriculum subjects throughout the Key Stage. Dearing indicates the following time allocations for IT :

Key Stage 1 - 45 minutes per week   (27 hours per year)

These time allocations are for IT work delivered in a cross-curricular manner; for example, in Key Stage 1 Dearing recommends that cross curricular IT should occupy 27 hours per year. This time is not additional to the time allocated to individual subjects.

During medium term planning IT will be planned from the scheme of work. This takes into account the need of all pupils to use IT in appropriate contexts, throughout Key Stage 1.

While planning, colleagues should consider whether pupils are :
1. Developing IT skills, knowledge and understanding
    (i.e. discrete IT lessons)

2. Using IT to enrich and extend their understanding of another subject
    (e.g. using a CD-ROM to research a topic in History)

3. Developing or using their existing IT skills whilst working in a different subject context (e.g. reinforcing word processing skills when working on a Geography project)

Progression

Curriculum planning should ensure continuity and progression. The school recognises that progression in IT involves four main aspects :-

- The progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding
- Breadth of IT applications
- Increased complexity of contexts in which IT is applied
- The growing autonomy of the pupil in their learning

Differentiation

Differentiation should be achieved both through differentiated activities and through differentiation of intended outcomes. For example pupils who are progressing rapidly should be encouraged to extend their IT experiences either through use of more challenging software, or simply an alternative software package to provide depth of experience, or by extending the task which has been set.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Teacher assessments of IT capability will be recorded through the year and reported to parents at the end of each academic year. Staff should keep examples of pupils' work and sufficiently detailed records to form a judgement on each pupil's level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. A record book is kept for each pupil and added to throughout key
stage 1. Class group activities are often recorded in the form of video, printouts etc., recording the significient I.T. activities and outcomes. These will demonstrate appropriate coverage within the Programme of Study.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils regardless of race, gender or ability should have the opportunity to develop IT capability.

We ensure that all our pupils :

1.   have equal access to IT resources
2.   have equal opportunities to develop IT capability
3.   use software which is appropriate to their ability

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Pupils with Special Educational Needs benefit from using Information Technology as it enhances access to the curriculum, and this in turn encourages motivation and the development of skills ensuring significantly higher achievements. Therefore, the opportunities to utilise IT should be maximised.

Health and Safety

It is imperative that all electrical equipment is kept in good working order. To ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff the following guidelines must be adhered to:

1.	Pupils should not be allowed to switch on the power at the mains.
2.	Equipment should be situated away from water.
3.	Pupils should always be supervised when using electrical equipment.
4.	All plugs, leads and equipment should be checked regularly and tested for electrical	safety in accordance with County Council guidelines.
5.	Pupils should not be allowed to carry equipment.

Child Protection

Computer networks, including those which may be accessed via the Internet, are an important aspect of information technology education. However, they present possible risks to the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils, particularly in terms of the nature of some of the material which may be obtained via the Internet.

At the present time it is our school policy not to purchase a modem and to connect to the Internet for both financial and practical reasons. Subsequently although we are aware of network systems and the ever changing aspects of technology which we have constantly under review, it is not at the moment an issue for us.

Resources and their Management

Our school currently has the following resources:

Hardware
2 BBC B
2 single disc drives
6 black and white printers
4 Acorn A3000
1 Acorn A3020
1 colour printers
1 RM Nimbus with CD ROM with colour printer
1 Roamer
1 Cheshire Toolkit
1 Concept Keyboards
1 Expanded Keyboard
2 televisions
2 video
1 camcorder
1 camera
7 tape recorders with sets of headphones
1 portable tape recorder with headphones
1 Portable CD / radio / cassette player
2 Language masters

The hardware is distributed as follows:

Nursery
1 BBC B

Reception
2 A3000

Year 1
1 A3000
1 A3020

Year 2
1 PC 386
1 A3000
1 RM Nimbus with CD ROM

Special Needs Assessment Class
1 BBC B

The computers have been allocated to a specific class room but are shared within the Key Stage where appropriate. They have maximum usage.

Staff are encouraged to take the computers home. For insurance purposes the equipment must be signed out in the book in the staff room, taken directly home and signed in on its return to school.

Software

Each member of staff has a box of discs and simple guides. Master discs are kept in the co-ordinators class room.

Software is purchased and used according to age range, topic work, interests etc., and it is interchangeable and shared.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the IT co-ordinator in consultation with the headteacher and staff. It will be reviewed and updated by Summer 1998.