Blacklands primary school

# Digital technology policy

The use of digital technologies is central to our vision for teaching and learning within Blacklands Primary School.

‘All staff take responsibility for developing literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and digital literacy across the curriculum. Learners demonstrate these skills at a high level in a variety of meaningful contexts.’ (HGIOS4)

We believe in staff using digital technologies across their practice as an engaging and effective learning and teaching tool and that pupils develop vital digital skills ‘necessary for the rapidly changing challenges of life, learning and work in the modern world’ (Building the Curriculum 4 – Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work, Scottish Government, 2009).

‘Scotland’s curriculum – Curriculum for Excellence – helps our children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st Century’ (Refreshed Narrative CfE ‘Scotland’s Curriculum for Excellence’ http://scotlandscurriculum.scot)

In Blacklands Primary school the use of digital technology is embedded in daily practice and central to effective teaching and learning. The school, with the support of North Ayrshire Council, have implemented a range of digital technologies for all members of the school community and continue to improve access to and adapt to changes in digital technology. The school has a culture of professional development such that almost all staff are enthusiastic users of digital technologies both in their teaching and personal use. Central to the programme of professional development is the sharing of good practice as well as input with staff on new applications within the classroom.

# Management of Digital Technology

Regular access is given to all pupils in a safe environment using a variety of technologies including:

* Laptops
* Promethean Interactive whiteboards
* iPads
* Spheroes
* Fitbits (bands)
* Microbits
* Green Screen
* Beebots
* VR Headsets

All staff have a PC laptop which is used for preparing resources and linking to the Interactive Whiteboard. These can also be used by pupils to support learning. All classes have a class iPad which is used for photos/videos, updating class blogs and Twitter, focused apps and class challenges.

The school is supported by North Ayrshire Council IT technicians. Jobs can be logged and support provided, in most instances within a week. North Ayrshire Council also deploy updates to hardware.

We have six digital leaders, from Primary 5, 6 and 7, who support the timetabling of iPads and laptops, report faults and support SLT and Digital Council with new developments with IT throughout the school. They continue to have extra training to cascade skills to their peers and support staff in delivering lessons.

Our digital leaders wear special badges which help them to be identified on a daily basis.

# Pedagogical development

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Blacklands Primary Schools Technology Planner which sets out in detail which skills pupils in different stages will be taught and how ICT can facilitate or enhance work in other curriculum areas. This sets relevant, ambitious and forward-thinking targets across the school linked to the benchmarks. (See Appendix 1.)

Education Scotland provides advice on resources for practitioners, parents and pupils to engage with these technologies in order to inform and enhance the learning experience.

At Blacklands Primary, we recognise the distinctive contribution of digital technology in learning and teaching. We promote varied and effective pedagogical approaches. It is widely recognised that learners are motivated and purposefully engaged in the learning process when concepts and skills are underpinned with technology and sound pedagogy. Resources used regularly within learning and teaching include:

* Glow\*\* – for blogging, emails, school website, access to resources such as BBC languages, glow meets, Primary Language Learning, Barefoot Computing
* e-books
* Photos from iPad used to create collages to display on our school learning journey
* games based learning: Sumdog/Education City/Studyladder
* digital teaching resources: Wordsmith/Heinemann Active Maths
* a variety of apps (core apps include Book Creator/iMovie/Garageband/Rekenrek)
* QR code generator to enhance and support learning across the curriculum
* standardised testing
* coding
* Green Screen to enhance and support learning across the curriculum
* iTunesU course material
* communication tools such as Twitter, Xpressions App
* VR headsets to bring lessons to life

\*\* All staff and children have their own log on details for GLOW. These are kept securely and not shared with others. All children have regular opportunities to access Glow through whole class discussions and contributions using Glow blogs, by emailing and by accessing the wide range of resources available. Staff can customise their Glow launch page to access the most relevant tiles for them and use these often with the children to consolidate learning.

All classes have a Glow Blog – some private and some public. Children are able gain experience in how to blog in a safe environment.

# E-Safety

Staff

Staff are aware of the e-safety risks associated with the use of digital technologies, know how to keep themselves safe and can provide e-safety guidance for others. Staff training is available as part of the Child Protection training calendar and through e-learning modules. A basic training is completed by all staff. All staff are aware how to protect their professional identity online and understand the boundaries between personal and professional use. Staff can access a Comprehensive guide for teacher’s use of the internet - ‘The Internet Safety Teacher’s Network’ through [Glow](https://glowscotland.sharepoint.com/sites/learners/learntogether/internetsafety/SitePages/Home.aspx?wa=wsignin1.0) and look at the ‘National Action Plan on Internet Safety for Children and Young People’. Staff follow a progressive skill based programme, delivering Internet Safety as a core part of the digital technologies curriculum.

Pupils

Internet access is planned to enrich and extend learning activities. The school has acknowledged the need to ensure that all pupils are responsible and safe users of the Internet and other communication technologies. North Ayrshire Council provides an internet access policy to protect all parties and rules for responsible internet use must be agreed to by pupils and their parents before use. (See Appendix 2).

North Ayrshire Council ensures that the web content is subject to appropriate filtering, ensuring the school offers a safe online environment. However, we recognise the importance of teaching our children about online safety and their responsibilities when using communication technology. Children are taught about e-safety and the skills that enable them to make safe and responsible use of ICT. Pupils have had the opportunity to contribute to explore e-safety particularly through peer activities. This is part of the Technologies and Health and Wellbeing curriculum taught at each stage. We use the 360 degree safe self-evaluation tool to monitor and evaluate our current practice and identify actions for improvement in areas of e-safety. This will become part of the annual self-evaluation calendar.

# Inclusion

We recognise ICT offers particular opportunities for pupils with additional support needs. ICT can cater for the variety of learning styles which a class of children may possess.

Using ICT can:

* increase access to the curriculum
* raise levels of motivation and self esteem
* improve the accuracy and presentation of work
* address individual needs
* remove barriers to learning
* provide technologies to support specific Additional Support Needs

We aim to maximise the use and benefits of ICT as one of the many resources to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential. Children make use of technology to support their learning. Staff are developing ways of using ICT to meet accessibility legislation. The specific learning needs of many pupils are met, at least in part, through the use of ICT.

# Career long professional learning

Regular opportunities for CLPL are provided in school to support digital learning and teaching for both teaching and non-teaching staff. The authority provides further opportunities which staff can opt in to. These include a variety of events where staff actively share information and experiences, regular iPad training, specific app training and access to tutors from Education Scotland. Staff can access further training and skills development through GLOW.

There is a programme within the school for in-house training on a drop in, weekly basis which covers a variety of topics linked to ICT and is led by a variety of staff.

Staff are kept informed of all digital events.

# Communication

ICT is used to communicate with parents through the school website, class blogs and Twitter. A school app is also used successfully. (See Appendix 3 for aims of Twitter account).

# actions

* Develop skills of our educators
  + Staff to reflect on the importance of digital technology and skills in further CLPL and discuss in PRD where appropriate.
  + Continue to offer wide range of CLPL to develop skills and confidence and promote NAC training.
  + In-house CLPL calendar to be updated and maintained.
* Continue to review curriculum and assessment delivery
  + Through school quality improvement evaluate the quality of teaching and learning including ICT.

Kress (2006) believes that with digital media becoming embedded within our everyday social, cultural and economic environments, it’s vital not just for children, but for all people to gain the skills integral to the use of these technologies, and thus gain from the benefits they offer.

‘The Scottish Government is committed to delivering excellence and equity in Scottish education. The use of digital technology can make a significant contribution to this commitment.’ (Enhancing Learning and Teaching through Digital Technology – Smart Scotland)