



Digital Schools of Distinction Award Evaluation Report

School: St. Killian's JNS. Dublin 24.

Roll No: 19556F

Date of validation: 06/02/2017

Leadership & Vision

St. Killian's JNS, with a dedicated team of teachers and support staff, clearly demonstrates in both written word and in classroom practice, that technology-enhanced teaching and learning, play a fundamental and inclusive role in the students', teachers' and wider community's lives. Moreover the leadership and vision displayed during the DSoD validation confirm that 21 Century ICTs play an important part in the everyday lives of the whole-school community. Pupils and teachers are afforded the opportunities to become acquainted with a range of technologies and to advance the skills to effectively employ them in engaging and focused learning environments. This was of particular interest, and beautifully presented, in the Mindfulness and Animusic, Creative Arts lessons employing Digital Media. All students are also encouraged to seek out age-appropriate, ICT research projects and opportunities by a most committed team of ICT enthusiasts led by Ms. Noreen Coll and also a very supportive and dedicated Principal teacher, Ms. Kate Sweeney and a very welcoming teaching staff and ICT committee. The CPD, peer-to-peer provision and internal 'assistance' offered during the school-year is also noteworthy. The use of ICTs is incorporated in the various policies and posters on display and there is no doubt that technology plays a central and integral role in teaching and learning. The school is a modern building and the provision of wired and wireless technologies is well structured throughout. Moreover the school provides innovative mobile Wi-Fi devices to ensure that the technology provision, available to each student, is at all times connected to the Internet.

The secretary and teachers use an internal server and Cloud facilities to share files and documents and also a dropbox is available to all. The school uses the Aladdin system for communicating amongst staff and documenting administrative issues. They also use Aladdin to text parents about upcoming events in the school, along with utilizing the newly, re-vamped school website. The school is also committed to acquiring further hardware and has a provisional plan in place. The Leadership and Vision displayed, discussed and demonstrated during the validation was excellent.

Summary:

Alladin

Online school banking done through Aladdin. It is also used to communicate with various education partners, teachers, SNAs, Board Members.



Noticeboard is a staff communication tool. It is used to record and analyse attendance in e-roll books and also used for group analysis – SEN, EAL, RE etc. Test results, money collections, records of IEPs, IPLPs, report cards, documents, link to POD.

Text-a-parent: used to communicate with all stakeholders: Parents /Staff/ Board Members / Preschools.

Board of Management – online banking.

Wired Broadband through patched points in computer room.

Wireless broadband in centre block (hall area) to access internet for Parents meetings, seminars, talks.

Second wireless unit which floats according to need.

OLCS system.

Online recruitment for advertising, receipt of applications and processing.

IPPN dashboard.

NCSE engagement for SEN.

POD, input and management and roll over each year.

Excel used for school accounts.

Powerpoint presentations developed for Junior Infant Parents

Meetings x 2, First Holy Communion Parents Meetings, other parent presentations, seminars.

Engagement with SEAI, online reporting on energy usage BOM/Green Schools.

School website recently redeveloped and managed by IT coordinator, to communicate important information to parents, school calendar, class booklists, children's work and achievements, school competitions etc. The website has a Parents Association page and links to their Facebook page.

School blogs in operation in several classes, these blogs are not linked to the school website in accordance with parents' wishes.

School IT committee relays information to other staff members. Committee made up of one teacher from each class grouping.

Ms. Magee, Ms.Hickey, Ms.Lagan (who was part of the committee, which established the criteria for Digital Schools of Distinction), Ms. Duignan, Ms.Holmes and Ms.Coll. The committee is advised by our Board of Management IT rep, Gavin Doyle and our IT Technician Brian Furey.

Ebay account used to sell empty ink cartridges and outdated equipment, and to buy projector bulbs and small equipment at the most competitive prices.



Dropbox used as cloud storage for school admin and resources, Moving to Microsoft cloud storage later this year as soon as the school can access Microsoft Office Free for schools.

Intercom system for staff communication,
Digital security system in Secretary's Office, Principal's Office and Staffroom.

ICT in the Curriculum

St. Killian's, a Junior, co-education NS school, endeavours to guarantee in a truly democratic and inclusive manner, that each child, irrespective of his or her background, ability or intellectual challenge, leaves the school feeling self-assured and confident using modern technologies, having gained a reinforcement of their general classroom work in many curricular areas and in particular, Visual Arts, Music, Literacy, SESE, Gaeilge, Oral skills, Maths, PE, Science and English. Other curricular subject areas are also accessed and explored utilizing a variety of Education Apps, websites and ICT tools to enhance learning and wellbeing. SCRATCH, Coding and Scratch projects were excellently presented throughout the school. It must be stated that the standard of Scratch observed, with students of such a young age, was excellent and at times remarkable! The effective use of digital media during classes and in various 'stations' during classes, is to be applauded and merits special mention, especially in the nine classrooms visited, where the students and their teacher were deeply involved in individual, station and group/team teaching with ICT. Furthermore they also demonstrated their media work with News and film/Visualisers/ICT Games and movie productions. *Bhí sé iontach an Ghaeilge a fheiscint, 'is a bhlaiseadh chomh maith faoi stiúr na múinteoirí.* It was absolutely wonderful to observe and discuss various aspects of Digital technologies with the students. The use of IWB systems is very effective also at all levels of assessment, classroom revision and testing throughout the school. The project work on display was also excellent throughout. The integration with other curricular subjects, utilizing Go Zen, Go Noodle, etc., etc., was expertly introduced and as a validator, it was a privilege to see such 'beautiful', meaningful and mindful work.

In catering for pupils' needs especially in Learning Support and the ASD Units: They use adaptive technologies on the iPads as per ability and needs of individual students as they present themselves and the SNA support is to be commended. This was observed by the validator during the visit to various settings. The use of technologies in the Sensory room was also a humbling experience and the Board of Management, the PA and the whole team must be congratulated and applauded. Station teaching is a key part of the approach to literacy and numeracy. iPads with age appropriate and effective Apps are carefully selected to enhance the subjects being taught and the teachers include



apps for all age and ability levels. The aim is for a balance between skill-based apps, life-enhancing apps and those designed to create content. Excellence exuded every aspect of Digital media integration in curricular aspects of school life! Comhghairdeas libh!

Summary:

- IWB and laptop in every room – teachers use the IWBs across all areas of the curriculum; Gaeilge, literacy, language work, Maths, SPHE, SESE, PE, RE, Science, Music, Art, Play. Competitions, classroom management.
- List of websites and IWB resources in every room.
- Licensed software in computer room and in classrooms, LS rooms to facilitate learning.
- Use of digital cameras – all curricular areas especially Maths, English and STEM work, iPads for LS and Resource, older desktops with variety of software in classrooms, visualisers, KidSmarts to help children access all areas of the curriculum.
- 16 desktops in computer room to facilitate all curricular areas.
- ICT initiatives – coding project, digital camera initiative with focus on Maths Eyes and STEM.
- Special focus on our SEN children with ICT to allow them to access the curriculum, iPads, desktops, sensory room, computer-generated music

School ICT Culture

There is clear evidence that ICT is ever present and visible into the cultural fabric and daily life of St. Killian's JNS. Posters on Cyberbullying and safe internet practices are also clearly noticeable in the school. Throughout the school, the effective use of various hardware is unmistakable. This is also effectively used for SSE (School Self Evaluation) with teachers/students/Parents/Community. The school's website is very informative <http://www.stkiliansjns.ie/> bringing together a variety of classroom and community based projects, calendar events, national events, school policies, new and current Information and classroom activities, Parents association, and so much more. Moreover, the provision of regular Newsletters and the emphasis on the Ethos of the schools and the importance of inclusive, democratic, child-centred activities, greatly enhances the website. An information, scrolling facility on the HOME page also greatly encourages parents and visitors to fully explore the website and the excellent work contained within. The daily use of internal software to communicate and organize school, internal e-mail, testing and attendance related activities was evident. It clearly shows a commitment to promoting every aspect of the school's professional life and work



as a central part of this community. Recent updates demonstrate the emphasis on Classroom and School News/ Literacy, Extra-curricular activities/Policies/Parents Association activities/ Visitors to the school/Photos, Science, Gaeilge, maths Green Schools, Space Week.....and so much more. <http://www.stkiliansjns.ie/> . This is all moderated by the ICT coordinators and committee. The Principal is fully supportive and encourages all teachers to participate and be active.

All children are comfortable utilising mobile technologies with excellent learning to learn tools. Finally, the PTA has worked with management to develop various policies for the association. *Iontach ar fad.*

Summary:

- School website to showcase children's work and communicate with parents.
- Evidence of digital camera work, school is particularly proud of their Maths Eyes work, with a winner in the National Competition in 2016, (and hopeful for 2017!).
- Evidence of internet safety rules, parents talk and pupil workshops in operation.
- Lots of project work using IT evident around the school.
- IT work is highly valued with time allowed at staff meetings for IT sharing, peer to peer work hugely encouraged.
- Children engaging in IT for homework, developing their project work and developing their coding skills.
- Second classes developing scratch projects of a high standard with some children excelling.
- Cross section of children from all class levels engaging in Hour of Code.
- Plaque of Excellence at the annual STEM awards awarded to St. Kilian's' JNS in 2015 and 2016 and project currently being developed for 2017. Technology based work is a large part of the STEM work.

Professional Development

At present training requirements are adequately catered for by in-school, peer-to-peer, on-going blended-learning, online and Summer CPD and ICT Support evenings at Dublin West Education Centre. The ICT coordinator and committee also provide opportunities of one-to-one CPD, with interested teachers, in identified areas of ICTs. There is also noticeable Peer to Peer collaboration going on when teachers find new ideas and practices. Individual teachers have undertaken courses like SCRATCH, coding (using SCRATCH), Movie Editing, data Processing and MS suite to enhance their professional lives and those of the students.



Summary:

- All staff members are very IT savvy.
- Teachers frequently attend DWEC and other locations to upskill in IT. Teacher CPD.ie is accessed very often as courses can be accessed there at times of teachers' convenience.
- Notification of all courses available are posted frequently in our staffroom by the Principal and IT coordinator.
- Lots of peer-to-peer work with all teachers willing to share their expertise and experience.
- Attendance at IT summer courses by most staff members.
- Some whole school training facilitated by DWEC.
- Time at staff meetings allocated to ICT related issues on a continuous basis.

Resources & Infrastructure

Excellent resources are evident throughout the school. Every classroom visited had an IWB facility, access to a visualizer and/or similar hardware with effective and satisfactory internet access and the necessary equipment to offer an engaging, technology-enhanced environment for all students. Mobile iPads with wireless connectivity and printing facility are available to all classes. There is absolutely no doubt that the evidence of ICT fusion, synthesis and usage both seen and witnessed during the validation is admirable and laudable. An effective school server-network and Cloud facility is available for educational and organizational purposes. Teachers are expected to maintain their 'server' presence. A wired and wireless connection is available for use with iPads and other mobile media. The Broadband is provided by the NCTE.

There is a wealth of licensed software and other related educational tools and Apps available throughout the school. Excellent print facilities are also available throughout the school.

Summary:

- IWB and teacher laptop in every room
- Older desktops with headphones and appropriate software in classrooms.
- iPads used in LS, Resource, small group work and projects
- Digital cameras used by all children, science, maths, language work etc
- Visualisers in 1st/2nd classes
- KidSmarts in senior Infant rooms



- Computer Room with 16 desktops (2 children to each desktop) children attend at least once a week, SEN children attend more often
- Software library in computer room, in classrooms and LS rooms
- Wired (recently updated for faster speed) and wireless broadband (in 2 areas)
- Hearing system with microphone in room 2 for hearing-impaired child.
- Sensory room with laptop for computer generated music for SEN pupils.
- Security door system – security cameras.

General comments and recommendations

St. Killian's JNS is living proof of effective, democratic and inclusive integration of ICT in everyday school life. The validator was given a detailed, time-tabled, guided tour of the school facilities, classrooms and associated ICT / SEN/ ASD provisions. The expertise and thoughtfulness displayed and demonstrated by all involved in their use of ICTs and mobile technologies is to be highly commended and celebrated.

The standard of utilising and integrating ICTs in such meaningful and mindful ways, was most impressive and inspiring.

St. Killian's JNS meets all the criteria for Digital School of Distinction Status and I have no reservations whatsoever in recommending them for this prestigious award. I believe St. Killian's JNS, its teachers, students and community will continue to lead the way for other Junior Schools to follow. I would especially like to thank Noreen Coll such an enthusiastic and motivated ICT co-ordinator and the príomhoide Kate Sweeney, all the team at St. Killian's JNS and students of the school for giving the validator a glimpse of what a committed school can achieve and is achieving in the areas of ICT, when a clear vision is defined and implemented. It was my pleasure and privilege to feel very invigorated and refreshed after my visit to St. Killian's JNS. *Níl dabht ar bith ach go bhfuil obair fhiúntach theicneolaíochta faoi lán-seol sa scoil. Go leana sé. Molaim go mór iad.*

Please outline any good or noteworthy examples of ICT integration in this school:

Mindfulness and Go Zen

SCRATCH

Go Noodle

Gaeilge

Maths

Literacy

SESE

Music

Science



Scoring

The visit more than validated the statements on their Self Evaluation Review.