Information and Communication Technologies Policy

Rationale

It is important to remember that as children and young people play and learn they will develop an interest, confidence and enjoyment in ICT skills that can be transferred and applied in different learning contexts.

Curriculum for Excellence – Technologies, Early Stages

In providing learning opportunities in ICT, we equip children to participate in a rapidly-changing world where work and leisure activities are increasingly transformed by technology. We enable them to find, explore, analyse, exchange and present information. ICT skills are a major factor in enabling children to be confident, creative and independent learners.

Aims

- To develop ICT capability in finding, selecting and using information
- To use ICT for effective and appropriate communication.
- To monitor and control events both real and imaginary.
- To apply ICT skills and knowledge to develop language and communication skills.

Objectives

To adhere to the principles set out in the framework for ICT, which are:

- Understanding the different ways in which children learn, and how information and communications technology is only one of a range of learning tools that can support the learning
- Relationships and interactions lie at the heart of all experiences including those involving information and communications technology
- Inclusion is promoted through a rich and varied information and communications technology environment.
- All children can access a range of appropriate information and communication technologies within their early years setting

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Guidelines

Understanding the different ways in which children learn

- Knowledge of young children's learning informs how information and communication technologies are selected, planned for, used and evaluated
- Information and communication technologies are embedded within the learning environment, and not seen as separate entities
- There is no assumption that ICT will always offer a better learning tool; staff will make informed choices about how and when to use it

Relationships and interactions

- Children are encouraged to view ICT as a natural strand in their learning and play.
- Effective adult interaction will promote children's learning and contribute to development of self esteem

Inclusion

- Through finely differentiated opportunities and individualised, sensitive feedback, ICT can be utilised to help bridge the gap for children with additional support needs
- Children with additional support needs may be able to benefit from different access strategies such as touch screens and switches
- ICT increases diversity in the early years setting where it is sensitive to the differences of gender and cultural and language backgrounds
- Increased use of ICT closes 'digital divide', ensuring all children have access to technologies which are part of their world

All children can access

- Resources which are wide-ranging and varied, and reflect the range of technologies available
- Resources which have been selected with the particular needs of children in mind
- ICT in all areas of the setting
- Planned experiences where integration of some ICT resources into the learning environment is limited, for example desktop computers and interactive whiteboards

Health and Safety

Children are taught how to handle technical equipment safely and correctly. We do this through;

- Use and safe storage of sockets, cables, monitor, keyboard, mouse, printer, scanner, digital camera and other peripherals
- Annual PAT testing carried out
- Comfortable distance from the monitor
- Location of computer in play area

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- Software virus check system
- Limit each child to 15 minutes per day
- Restricted access to some sites

Interactive Whiteboard

Children's use of the interactive whiteboard as a tool for learning can assist development of the necessary skills to achieve an understanding of technological use in everyday life.

How do we use this resource effectively in the playroom?;

- Ensure there is sufficient space both in front of and at either side of the whiteboard
- Make use of full screen utilities within applications, such as viewing a website using internet explorer making the page more visible
- The whiteboard is positioned at a height that the children can reach without over-stretching
- If a particular website is going to be used regularly, it will be added to favourites in order to access it without typing in complex web addresses.
- All content within favourite sites will be checked regularly to ensure it continues to be appropriate for use.
- Websites for learning/investigating will be checked by staff in the first instance to ensure appropriate content for children's use.
- Only use the resources supplied i.e. pens, eraser for the whiteboard
- When staff create their own presentations for or with children they must only use copyright free images and sounds to illustrate teaching/learning points to provide a stimulus for discussion.
- Consideration is to be given to the individual needs of children and a system of turn taking using timers should be utilised for sharing the whiteboard use.

Use of computer display screen

The children's use of the computer should be monitored by staff in the room, they should be restricted to no more than 15 minutes per day. This is monitored by using the computer diary

All software should be vetted by the staff in the room for the suitability before use.

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Internet access is allowed under staff supervision and nursery computers should have the necessary restricted content control.

Staff may use the computer for input of work or research only. Research should be undertaken within agreed time frames and at suitable times agreed with management or supervisor.

Staff must monitor their own use of the computer and must seek medical advice if they feel discomfort. Appropriate action can be taken i.e. adjustable chair etc.

All computer equipment should be switched off after use and PAT tested annually. Computer equipment is also maintained by Hyper ltd as and when required.