Digital Learning Plan (Updated September 2020)

1. Introduction

This document records the outcomes of our current digital learning plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

1.1 **School Details:** Patrician Presentation Secondary School is a co-educational voluntary secondary school with DEIS status under the governance of Le Cheile. Currently there are 160 students on roll. There are 14 Teachers, 1 Special Education Teacher and our Principal. We also have 4 SNAs.

The School's Digital Learning Team consist of School Staff: Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, Postholder whose role includes joint responsibility for technology in the school and two parents.

Currently we have 2 equipped IT classrooms (Room 7 and Room 15). Each teacher has their own laptop and all classrooms have fixed desktop which is connected to a projector. A number of rooms also benefit from access to a visualiser. All computers in the school are connected to one of two servers and Wifi is provided throughout the building. These wifi networks and student access PCs are set on filtering level 1 for schools which blocks inappropriate content, along with Youtube and Social Media sites. Teaching/Learning PCs in each room and teacher laptops are set to filtering level 4 which allows Youtube through connection on a fixed IP address.

One of our current SSE foci is on Maths and we are tendering for the purchase of tablets/chromebooks with Maths software installed.

1.2 School Vision: As well as being an important educational resource, the ability to use IT effectively is a vital life skill in modern society. We aim to enable students and teachers, in so far as is practical, to be confident and effective users of IT. To this end we envisage that all participants would be active and learning. That the students have opportunities to be 'hands on' rather than observers is key to this. Tuition in basic computer usage is delivered in the first term of 1st year and through 3 classes a week of Computer Studies at TY.

1.3 Brief account of the use of digital technologies in the school to date:
a) All classrooms have a mounted projector and a desktop computer with internet access..
b) A number of SEN students use laptops to support their learning.

d) The school broadband is comprised of a combination of wired and wireless service.

e) We have a

– school website www.fethardsecondaryschool.ie

– a number of padlets for supports and resources

– school facebook, twitter and Instagram pages

f) From this year we will use VSWare to record student data, attendance, behaviour and assessment results.

g) "Way-2-Pay" software is used to contact parents.

h) Payments are received electronically via Way2Pay and payments are made electronically via P2P system.

2. The focus of this Digital Learning Plan

In preparing our application for the Digital School of Distinction Award we used the Self Evaluation tool on the Digital Schools website. We started this process in 2015. We took our time because we wanted our application to be authentic and to really reflect how technology was used in the school.

Over time the staff on the Digital School Team observed that while there was 'Leadership and Vision' and 'Resources and Infrastructure', The area 'Professional Development' was impacting on improvement needed in integrating 'ICT in the Curriculum' and the School's ICT Culture.

Regularly at our staff meetings, there is time given for sharing of knowledge on teaching strategies using IT with presentations from staff on the use of Padlets, Kahoots, Gsuite for Education, Zoom, Screen Recording, etc. .

-We continued to use the Self Evaluation tool on the Digital Schools website.
-We also evaluated our progress regularly at Staff Meetings and conducted a SWOT analysis reflecting on our strengths and where we needed to apply ourselves.

Though we found we were making some progress, as a staff we often came up against limitations on account of a cohort of the teachers having a lack of confidence in themselves, and their perceived lack of skills in the area of technology. Additionally in staff meetings the 'overcrowded curriculum' and lack of time was cited in a SWOT analysis as a drawback to the use of IT in the classroom.

In the light of an analysis of the evidence gathered we decided that our focus at present should be staff development.

2.1 The dimensions and domains from the Digital Learning Framework being selected:

Dimension: Teaching

Learning Domain: Individual Teacher practice

2.2 The standards and statements from the Digital Learning Framework being selected:

Domain: Teachers' Individual Practice

Standards:

-The teacher has the requisite subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills Teachers use a range of digital technologies to design learning and assessment activities for their pupils.

-Teachers design or adapt learning experiences that incorporate digital technologies and make learning activities relevant and meaningful to support pupils' learning.

-When teachers use digital learning activities, they evaluate their effectiveness, and revise their teaching strategies accordingly.

2.3. These are a summary of our strengths with regards digital learning

- All parties (staff, students and parents) are engaged, motivated and interesting in digital learning
- WIFI is installed and was upgraded this year so is much more reliable than the broadband we had previously. A new Wifi hotspot has been installed in Room 7 to widen the coverage of Wifi throughout the building for Rooms 6,7,8,9 and PE hall.
-Currently classes from 1st year up can be timetabled for a slot in Room 7 using the weekly timetable in the staffroom
– Some students in the school are relatively proficient in using digital technology
- Most students are very motivated to learn using technology
- A proportion of the teachers report feeling 'confident and competent' when teaching technology
- Support from the BOM who are funding for purchases needed and from the Dept of Agriculture who supplied 15 refurbished PCs for classrooms

We envisage offering Coding as a short course and Junior Cycle.

2.4 This is what we are going to focus on to improve our digital learning practice further

-Staff will continue to engage in CPD in order to facilitate a greater use of digital technologies by pupils
-Staff meetings will include a section on Digital Learning/Sharing of Resources
-We will extend peer support for staff members to increase competence and confidence in embedding digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Staff will share technologies and websites that they have found useful via staff@patricianfethard.ie

More details of the Digital Plan for Patrician Presentation Secondary School:

- The specific **targets** for improvement we have set

- The **actions** we will implement to achieve these

- **Who is responsible** for implementing, monitoring and reviewing our improvement plan

- How we will measure **progress** and check **outcomes** (criteria for success)

    areas attached in a separate document (Summary of Digital Learning Plan).

UPDATE 30th September 2020

With the school closure on account of COVID teachers found themselves engaging in Remote Learning. Staff engaged in CPD in order to facilitate this. In particular they upskilled in the use of the platforms they were using: Zoom, Padlet, OBS Studio, Google Classroom etc..

Planning for the possibility that pods or bubbles may be learning from home in the future on account of COVID, teachers continue to upskill, particularly in the use of the platforms: learning to do more with them and keeping up with the improvements on these platforms.

Staff meetings have included discussion about using technology to teach remotely.

Staff supported each other to increase competence and confidence in embedding digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.

Staff shared technologies and websites that they have found useful via the staff email group and google drive.