



Digital Schools of Distinction Award Evaluation Report

School: Scoil San Carlo JNS

Roll No: 19653d

Date of validation: 22/06/2017

Leadership & Vision

Scoil San Carlo JNS, with a dedicated team of teachers and support staff, clearly establishes in both written word and in classroom practice, that technology-enhanced teaching and learning, play an essential and inclusive role in the students', teachers' and wider community's lives. Moreover the leadership and vision demonstrated 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 presented with 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 use of station teaching with Toshiba Encore tablets employing Digital Media. The Parents' Association is to be commended in their active role in providing funds to enhance all digital media in the school. All students are facilitated and empowered to seek out age-appropriate, ICT research apps and opportunities by a most committed team of ICT enthusiasts led by Ms. Niamh Conroy and also a very supportive and dedicated Principal teacher, Ms. Catherine Diggins and a very welcoming teaching staff. 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. The school strives to provide mobile Wi-Fi devices to ensure that the technology provision, available to each student, is at all times connected to the Internet and a discussion around better connectivity in the computer room took place during the validation. The acquisition of a new suite of Toshiba Encore Tablets has put a strain on the wireless capacity but this is being well managed at present. 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 acquisition of a new 'suite' of E-Beam technologies for the classrooms is already agreed and will be in place for the coming school-year. The Leadership and Vision displayed, discussed and demonstrated during the validation was excellent.



ICT in the Curriculum

Scoil San Carlo, a Junior, co-education NS school, strives 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, Social skills, Music, Literacy, SESE, Gaeilge, Oral skills, Maths, PE, 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, Just Dance/Go Noodle was excellently presented throughout the school. The effective use of digital media during classes and in various 'stations' during classes, is to be applauded and merits special mention, especially in all classrooms visited, where the students and their teachers were deeply involved in individual, station and group/team teaching with ICT. Furthermore they also demonstrated their media work with Stories and Oral Language lessons and even Bertie Bear!. *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 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 Noodle, Book Creator, class e-mails and Social skills etc., etc., was expertly introduced and as a validator, it was a privilege to see such 'beautiful', meaningful and mindful work with such young children.

In catering for pupils' needs especially in Learning Support/SEN/SET: They use adaptive technologies on the Tablets 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. Station teaching is a key part of the approach to literacy and numeracy. Tablets 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!

School ICT Culture

There is clear evidence that ICT is ever present and visible into the cultural fabric and daily life of Scoil San Carlo 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.sancarlojunior.org/> 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, child-centred activities, greatly enhances the website. The link to Pupils' Work is excellently presented and absolutely up-to-date. The daily use of internal software to communicate and organize school, internal e-mail, testing and attendance related activities was evident. The pupils of 2nd class even called the 'rolla' using Aladdin. 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/ School Calendar, School History and so much more. <http://www.sancarlojunior.org/>

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.

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 a variety of Education Centres. 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 to enhance their professional lives and those of all students.

Resources & Infrastructure

Excellent resources are evident throughout the school. Every classroom visited had an IWB facility, access to digital media 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, Toshiba Encore tablets with wireless connectivity and printing facility are available to all classes and timetables ensure that each class has access to the computer room on a regular basis. There is absolutely no doubt that the evidence of ICT fusion,



synthesis and usage both seen and witnessed during the validation is 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 the Tablets and other mobile media. The Broadband /Fibre is provided by the NCTE. The wireless capacity is at times 'weak' due to the lack of suitable hardware to ensure provision but the school is committed to providing extra 'boosters' in the near future, especially in the computer room, which is principally wireless with some older desktop computers available to finish existing work. This discussion also took place during the validation.

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.

General comments and recommendations

Scoil San Carlo 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/ SET 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 ways, was most impressive.

Scoil San Carlo JNS meets all the criteria for Digital School of Distinction Status and I have no reservations in recommending them for this prestigious award. I believe Scoil San Carlo JNS, its teachers, students, parents and community will continue to lead the way for other Junior Schools to follow. I would especially like to thank Niamh Conroy, such an enthusiastic and motivated ICT co-ordinator and the príomhoide Catherine Diggins, all the team at Scoil San Carlo JNS (who were so welcoming) and students of the school (such wonderful energy) for giving the validator a glimpse of what a committed school 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 Scoil San Carlo JNS. Níl dabht ar bith ach go bhfuil obair fhiúntach theicneolaíochta faoi lán-seol sa scoil. Go leana sé. Molaim go mór iad.

** Trolley for charging the New suite of TABLETS

** Booster devices for Wireless connectivity in the Computer room.

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



Effective use of tablets and Station teaching

Numeracy

Literacy

Creativity and Research

Go Noodle

Gaeilge

SESE

Scoring

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