

2018 NPC INNOVATION AWARD WINNING PROJECTS

2018 Joint Winner - St. Brigid's National School Parents' Association, Greystones, Co. Wicklow with their project

'Developing a student friendly ICT programme'

Purpose of the project:

To equip children with crucial technology skills, to proactively support the implementation of the Department of Education and Skills 'Digital Strategy for schools 2015-2020'.

Goals of the project, to:

- Enable all students to be equipped with essential computing skills to enable them to enhance their existing educational learning opportunities.
- Facilitate a smoother transition into post primary school for children by providing a child friendly ICT programmes to increase their IT knowledge and skills.
- Help develop a self-sustaining digital education programme in St. Brigid's to encompass digital audio-visual skills and basic programming in line with the Departments guidance and best practice.
- Encourage parents to engage with their children's learning through the use of digital technology.

Who needs to be involved?

The Parents' Association Committee, in partnership with the Principal and ICT coordinating teachers. The ICT programme decided upon in St. Brigid's National School was a result of agreed learning objectives between the Parents' Association and the teachers, with the children's interest at the core.

How to implement in your school?

Step 1: A pilot programme with 6th class pupils

In St. Brigid's National School a pilot programme was introduced to 6th class pupils (in the summer term 2017), providing them with exciting, creative and interesting content to use in their everyday learning.

Step 2: Trial the programme in junior classes

The programme was trialled in 3rd class to evaluate the best age to introduce the programme. Feedback received was very positive which resulted in the programme being adopted by 3rd and 4th class.

Step 3: Launch the full programme

The full programme was launched in February and March 2018, working with 3rd class. Led by a team of seven parents. Four intensive hour long sessions were run over two weeks.

In April 2018 a second set of sessions were delivered to 2 other classes, including 4th class. During this time the children were introduced to Desktop management, MS Word and PowerPoint.

Outcome:

St. Brigid's National School Digital and ICT Subcommittee created a self-sustaining programme, which can be replicated in other schools.

The children enjoyed working with new technologies and the opportunity these gave them to showcase their work/projects.

The ICT Subcommittee enhanced the presence of the Parents' Association with the students, which in turn made parents more aware of the role of the PA, resulting in greater parental participation and involvement. Parents are more aware of not just the technology that their children are learning about, but the curriculum as a whole.

The school received a 'Digital Schools of Distinction Award' – Digital Schools of Distinction is a flagship programme which aims to promote, recognise and encourage excellence in the use of technology in primary schools.