

CHRIST CHURCH PLAYGROUP

Information Communication Technology Policy

Purpose

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) refers to the tools and resources used to create, process, communicate and store information by electronic means. ICTs are an integral part of our lives today and interest and confidence in engaging with ICT are considered to be necessary and powerful aspects of all children's development and learning.

The use of ICT must be appropriate for the age and stage of development of the individual child and staff should be knowledgeable about the appropriate and safe use of ICT equipment and resources to support his/her learning and development.

In implementing this policy, Playgroup will have regard to the principles contained in Developmentally Appropriate Technology in Early Childhood: 7 Good Practice Principles for the use of ICT with children*:

1. Ensure an educational purpose
2. Encourage collaboration
3. Integrate with other aspects of the curriculum
4. Ensure the child is in control
5. Choose applications that are simple and straightforward (that do what it says on the tin)
6. Avoid applications using violence or stereotyping
7. Be aware of health and safety issues

*taken from: **Developmentally Appropriate Technology in Early Childhood**. J Siraj Blatchford 2000

Aims of ICT

In implementing our ICT policy, we are seeking to enable children:

- 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 hardware and software to creative and appropriate uses of information
- to apply their ICT skills and knowledge to their learning in other areas
- to use their ICT skills to develop their language and communication skills

To achieve these aims at Playgroup we will work to ensure that:

- ICT is presented as a creative and fascinating process in which children are encouraged to use their own initiative, imagination, reasoning and investigative skills;
- Children appreciate the relevance of ICT in our society and see it as an essential tool for learning, communication, finding information and for controlling and understanding their environment;
- Children receive equal opportunity to develop their ICT capability, with the use of ICT being planned
- Children learn to work individually and collaboratively

Staff Involvement and ICT Co-ordinator

Playgroup's nominated staff ICT Co-ordinator is Zarah Bishop. Zarah is responsible for managing the development of ICT within the setting, coordinating and planning for the use of ICT and ensuring that health and safety guidelines in relation to ICT are being met.

Generally staff confidence and expertise will be developed through training sessions provided by the ICT Co-ordinator and external agencies.

All staff will be made aware of Playgroup's ICT policy, ICT ethos and ICT health and safety requirements and will be supported so that they may contribute to children's learning and development and support parents/carers to work in partnership with the setting.

Present and proposed ICT resource

Following a training course attended by the ICT Co-ordinator and advice from a parent ICT professional, Playgroup has acquired two Lenova laptops and an HP printer, 2 Apple iPads and a Canon colour printer. In addition to this, there are other items of ICT equipment already in Playgroup, including a camera, CD player and radio.

A variety of age appropriate software will also be made available for the children's use with adult supervision.

ICT for the younger children will be active and interactive including the use of musical toys, telephones and cause and effect toys.

A termly audit of resources will be undertaken to ensure that hardware and software are kept as up to date as possible. Any obsolete or broken machines and equipment will be recycled or repaired. Redundant items may be able to be used in the role play area if they are safe.

The ICT Co-ordinator will produce a yearly action plan outlining the ICT targets for that year which as far as possible will link to the school development plan.

Internet Access

The provision of internet access will be for the use of staff members to support children's learning and development. The children will only be able to access the internet for limited periods and when supported by a staff member or other appropriate adult e.g. a volunteer parent or workplace student.

An Internet policy is being developed to ensure the safe and efficient use of the internet for both staff and pupils in an educational context.

Equal Opportunities for access to the ICT curriculum

We recognize that all children should be provided with opportunities to develop an awareness and understanding of ICT and have access to the use of ICT regardless of gender, race, cultural background or physical or sensory disability. Where use of a Playgroup computer proves difficult for a child because of a disability, Playgroup will endeavour to provide specialist equipment and software to enable access.

Planning for ICT in the early years will be considered carefully so that children are able to begin to gain confidence in the use of ICT as soon as they start attending the playgroup.

Playgroup will aim to offer a range of appropriate hardware, software and activities to match the learning opportunities offered with the children's age, abilities and skills. We recognize that quite often there are significant differences in ability between children who have access to home computers and those who do not. Task matching may include provision of different software, varying the amount/type of support given, varying the tasks, varying the groupings etc.

We hope to encourage the children to develop through the following stages:

22-36 months - show a basic interest in ICT

30-50 months - know how to operate simple equipment

40-60 months - complete a simple programme on a computer; use ICT to perform simple functions; use a mouse and keyboard to interact with age-appropriate computer software; find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use ICT and programmable toys to support their learning.

Opportunities will be provided for the children to see staff using equipment effectively together with appropriate interaction and vocabulary so that they can extend their experiences and use the equipment with confidence.

Health and Safety

Playgroup recognises the importance of raising awareness around e-safety. Generally we will provide information about the safe and effective use of the internet and software programmes at Playgroup and at home to parents through the admission and registration documentation process, provision of the ICT and internet policies, newsletters and other communications; to staff through meetings and to children through staff interaction.

At Playgroup, each child will have individual access to a laptop or iPad for no longer than 10 minutes a day.

Parents/carers and staff will be required to sign acceptable use agreements in the admission registration documents (and in relation to registered children as soon as possible during term time) regarding the taking of photos and filming of videos of children. Parents will be asked to give or withhold written consent for photographs of their child to be used by Playgroup in the children's Profile Books, in Wall Displays and on the Playgroup Website. Photos on the website will not be accompanied by the child's name.

No photos will be taken using a personal phone or camera. Cameras and printed photos will be stored in locked cupboards and may not be otherwise shared or stored without the consent in writing of each parent whose child is in the photograph.

Children will not be responsible for moving heavy ICT equipment around the playgroup. They may load software but will not be given the responsibility of plugging in and switching machines on without a member of staff present.

Food and drink will not be allowed to be consumed near ICT equipment.

Staff will be responsible for ensuring that ICT equipment is stored securely, cleaned regularly and that it is left clean and tidy after use including checking batteries and virus protection.

Staff must ensure that the children are seated at the computer comfortably and be aware of the dangers of continuous use (e.g. eye/wrist strain etc).

ICT hardware will be included in playgroup's risk assessments.

Assessment and record keeping

On-going formative assessment is an integral part of good practice. Its main purpose is to enable the staff to match work to the abilities and needs of the children and ensure progression in learning.

Samples of work will be kept for each child at Playgroup. These will be stored on the hard drive in a folder and from time to time printed and included in each child's profile book.

Review and evaluation procedures

Playgroup acknowledges that the everyday use of ICT is developing rapidly, with new technology being produced all the time. This policy will be reviewed and if necessary revised on a yearly basis. The ICT Co-ordinator will liaise regularly with staff, both at staff meetings and informally, to monitor the effectiveness of the policy and any comments or issues which will be reported back to the committee at regular intervals.

This updated policy was adopted at a meeting of the playgroup held on 25 February 2013.

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(Signed on behalf of the playgroup)