



## Digital Schools Award Evaluation Report

**School:** Bishop O'Brien NS

**Roll No:** 157010

**Date of validation:** 8/5/17

### Leadership & Vision

The staff of Bishop O'Brien NS believe that pupils surrounded by information technologies in everyday life, can reasonably expect it to play a significant part in their education also. Pupils are given opportunities to become familiar with a range of information technologies and to develop the skills to use them. They are also given the advantage of the opportunities ICT provides to support learning in all areas of the curriculum.

There is a very robust ICT policy in place, complemented by the school's Three Year Plan and a comprehensive AUP. Both the ICT and the AUP policies are available to parents via the school's website - <http://www.bartlemyns.net/>

ICT underpins much of the work done by the children throughout the week. The ICT policy is very comprehensive and there is clarity around the development of ICT skills from class level to class level. Children have access to both content-rich and content-free resources, as well as the use of the internet for research purposes. To enhance the policy further, the school might consider including some specific references to suitable and relevant sites and other online resources, thus providing references to curriculum linkages in relation to ICT and learning and teaching.

### ICT in the Curriculum

In Bishop O'Brien NS, the staff provide training and support to each child in the area of ICT, equipping children with the relevant and necessary skillset to leave the school feeling comfortable and confident using computers. Children learn key word processing skills and internet research skills. ICT is used to provide a means of teaching and learning, as well as for the reinforcement of their general classroom work in all curriculum areas such as Maths, Gaeilge, English, Geography, History, Science, SPHE, Art, PE and Drama etc. using educational software, interactive games and digital devices. The staff keep abreast of and adapt to developments in new technology through teacher training in ICT and their aim is to continue to pass this knowledge onto the pupils.

In catering for pupils' need, they use adaptive technologies as per the needs of individual students as they present themselves.



Clear progression of the development of ICT skills from class level to class level is evidenced. The teachers include the use of ICT right across the curriculum, and work completed where ICT was integrated into SESE subjects, English and Maths were all recorded within the school. The Principal operates a Dropbox a/c which is used between herself and the school secretary. Teachers may find it useful to start utilising Google Drive for both the sharing of resources and for children's project work and the creation of ePortfolios as discussed in our meeting. Teachers may also find it useful to update their lesson planning template to include a box for ICT tools/sites/resources being integrated into their teaching.

Finally, the school should focus on developing collaborative opportunities with schools using technology such as Skype or via Twitter. They may also be interested in joining an eTwinning project.

### **School ICT Culture**

There is an undoubtable sense that ICT is deeply embedded into the cultural fabric of Bishop O'Brien NS. This is a small rural school and the linkage with the community can be further enhanced through more sustained use of the recently introduced Twitter account. The children themselves, under the correct supervision etc., should be well able to update the Twitter account and indeed the website - thus reducing the workload on the teachers.

All children are comfortable using technology from the junior classes right up to the senior end of the school. Children are confident using tablets and laptops, uploading pictures and using online resources for projects. They are very comfortable saving their work and utilising ICT (laptops/tablets/online resources/MS Office etc). In particular, the site IXL seems to be very popular, with the children completing work both at home and at school using this resource.

Teachers may look to increase the use of ICT at home by incorporating tools such as Edmodo or SeeSaw. SeeSaw in particular is a lovely tool which allows for children to post to a blog and create an ePortfolio for themselves. Further local/national and international use of ICT can be incorporated as previously mentioned. The school's Twitter a/c is an ideal starting place for this. Skype is another option for teachers to incorporate.

### **Professional Development**

During my visit, the Principal Joanne and her colleague Vicki acknowledged the constant need for Professional Development in the area of ICT. At present, training requirements are adequately catered for by attendance at various courses and support from PDST as and when is required. Peer to Peer training occurs between the



teachers when they find new ideas and practices.

Teachers are encouraged to share their knowledge with colleagues (during Croke Park hours) and also to personally improve through attendance at ICT Courses and personal practice of skills.

It is clear from talking with the principal and various staff members, that they all value the importance of ICT very highly. Their commitment to ensuring that the children have regular and structured access to ICT is evident. The children, from the Junior Infants level right up to 6<sup>th</sup> class, were working independently using various different online tools and downloaded programs when I was there. They were confident and competent in their use of the technology. Technology is very clearly embedded in the culture of the school and this is driven by the experience and motivation of the principal and members of staff.

#### **Resources & Infrastructure**

The school has a good variety of ICT resources throughout each classroom.

They currently have the following selection of digital devices available for use:

- Digital camera
- IWBs
- Laptops - one for each teacher and a class set (6-8 laptops, which is due to be increased to 15 per class) in every classroom.
- Tablets
- Visualisers

They aim to continue their current policy of upgrading and increasing equipment available for educational use.

Whilst there was lots of software being used and accounted for in the school's ICT policy, I would like to see further software included - particularly around the area of Coding. The 3rd/4th class teacher is shortly introducing Scratch to her class. This should be continued as they enter 4th/5th class. Teachers in the junior end may like to consider utilising Scratch Jnr or Light bot etc.

#### **General comments and recommendations**

This school is a beacon to what can be achieved in the integration of ICT. The confidence and familiarity which all the students displayed in their use of technology was truly impressive. The creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking the children showed as they displayed their ICT skills was a credit to Joanne and her team.



This school meets all the criteria for Digital School of Distinction Status and I have no doubt it will continue to lead the way for other schools to follow in this area. I would like to thank Joanne, Vicki and the other staff members, as well as the students of this school for helping to give us a glimpse of what a successful future might look like for Ireland when these young people reach the workforce. With schools like this, Ireland's future is secure.

### **Scoring**

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





## Digital Schools Award Evaluation Report

**School:** Bishop O'Brien NS

**Roll No:** 157010

**Date of validation:** 8/5/17

### Leadership & Vision

The staff of Bishop O'Brien NS believe that pupils surrounded by information technologies in everyday life, can reasonably expect it to play a significant part in their education also. Pupils are given opportunities to become familiar with a range of information technologies and to develop the skills to use them. They are also given the advantage of the opportunities ICT provides to support learning in all areas of the curriculum.

There is a very robust ICT policy in place, complemented by the school's Three Year Plan and a comprehensive AUP. Both the ICT and the AUP policies are available to parents via the school's website - <http://www.bartlemyns.net/>

ICT underpins much of the work done by the children throughout the week. The ICT policy is very comprehensive and there is clarity around the development of ICT skills from class level to class level. Children have access to both content-rich and content-free resources, as well as the use of the internet for research purposes. To enhance the policy further, the school might consider including some specific references to suitable and relevant sites and other online resources, thus providing references to curriculum linkages in relation to ICT and learning and teaching.

### ICT in the Curriculum

In Bishop O'Brien NS, the staff provide training and support to each child in the area of ICT, equipping children with the relevant and necessary skillset to leave the school feeling comfortable and confident using computers. Children learn key word processing skills and internet research skills. ICT is used to provide a means of teaching and learning, as well as for the reinforcement of their general classroom work in all curriculum areas such as Maths, Gaeilge, English, Geography, History, Science, SPHE, Art, PE and Drama etc. using educational software, interactive games and digital devices. The staff keep abreast of and adapt to developments in new technology through teacher training in ICT and their aim is to continue to pass this knowledge onto the pupils.

In catering for pupils' need, they use adaptive technologies as per the needs of individual students as they present themselves.



Clear progression of the development of ICT skills from class level to class level is evidenced. The teachers include the use of ICT right across the curriculum, and work completed where ICT was integrated into SESE subjects, English and Maths were all recorded within the school. The Principal operates a Dropbox a/c which is used between herself and the school secretary. Teachers may find it useful to start utilising Google Drive for both the sharing of resources and for children's project work and the creation of ePortfolios as discussed in our meeting. Teachers may also find it useful to update their lesson planning template to include a box for ICT tools/sites/resources being integrated into their teaching.

Finally, the school should focus on developing collaborative opportunities with schools using technology such as Skype or via Twitter. They may also be interested in joining an eTwinning project.

### **School ICT Culture**

There is an undoubtable sense that ICT is deeply embedded into the cultural fabric of Bishop O'Brien NS. This is a small rural school and the linkage with the community can be further enhanced through more sustained use of the recently introduced Twitter account. The children themselves, under the correct supervision etc., should be well able to update the Twitter account and indeed the website - thus reducing the workload on the teachers.

All children are comfortable using technology from the junior classes right up to the senior end of the school. Children are confident using tablets and laptops, uploading pictures and using online resources for projects. They are very comfortable saving their work and utilising ICT (laptops/tablets/online resources/MS Office etc). In particular, the site IXL seems to be very popular, with the children completing work both at home and at school using this resource.

Teachers may look to increase the use of ICT at home by incorporating tools such as Edmodo or SeeSaw. SeeSaw in particular is a lovely tool which allows for children to post to a blog and create an ePortfolio for themselves. Further local/national and international use of ICT can be incorporated as previously mentioned. The school's Twitter a/c is an ideal starting place for this. Skype is another option for teachers to incorporate.

### **Professional Development**

During my visit, the Principal Joanne and her colleague Vicki acknowledged the constant need for Professional Development in the area of ICT. At present, training requirements are adequately catered for by attendance at various courses and support from PDST as and when is required. Peer to Peer training occurs between the



teachers when they find new ideas and practices.

Teachers are encouraged to share their knowledge with colleagues (during Croke Park hours) and also to personally improve through attendance at ICT Courses and personal practice of skills.

It is clear from talking with the principal and various staff members, that they all value the importance of ICT very highly. Their commitment to ensuring that the children have regular and structured access to ICT is evident. The children, from the Junior Infants level right up to 6<sup>th</sup> class, were working independently using various different online tools and downloaded programs when I was there. They were confident and competent in their use of the technology. Technology is very clearly embedded in the culture of the school and this is driven by the experience and motivation of the principal and members of staff.

### **Resources & Infrastructure**

The school has a good variety of ICT resources throughout each classroom.

They currently have the following selection of digital devices available for use:

- Digital camera
- IWBs
- Laptops - one for each teacher and a class set (6-8 laptops, which is due to be increased to 15 per class) in every classroom.
- Tablets
- Visualisers

They aim to continue their current policy of upgrading and increasing equipment available for educational use.

Whilst there was lots of software being used and accounted for in the school's ICT policy, I would like to see further software included - particularly around the area of Coding. The 3rd/4th class teacher is shortly introducing Scratch to her class. This should be continued as they enter 4th/5th class. Teachers in the junior end may like to consider utilising Scratch Jnr or Light bot etc.

### **General comments and recommendations**

This school is a beacon to what can be achieved in the integration of ICT. The confidence and familiarity which all the students displayed in their use of technology was truly impressive. The creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking the children showed as they displayed their ICT skills was a credit to Joanne and her team.



This school meets all the criteria for Digital School of Distinction Status and I have no doubt it will continue to lead the way for other schools to follow in this area. I would like to thank Joanne, Vicki and the other staff members, as well as the students of this school for helping to give us a glimpse of what a successful future might look like for Ireland when these young people reach the workforce. With schools like this, Ireland's future is secure.

### **Scoring**

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





Bishop O'Brien N.S. &lt;bobrienns@gmail.com&gt;

---

**Fwd: Digital Schools of Distinction Award**

1 message

---

**bobrienns** <bobrienns@gmail.com>  
To: Helen Arnold - TVM <helen@tvm.ie>

11 May 2017 at 18:28

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy S6 - powered by Three

----- Original message -----

From: Zita Robinson &lt;zrobinson@dwec.ie&gt;

Date: 11/05/2017 15:56 (GMT+00:00)

To: bobrienns@gmail.com

Cc: neilos@innovate-together.com

Subject: Digital Schools of Distinction Award

**For the attention of:** Vicki O'Sullivan, ICT Coordinator, Bishop O'Brien NS, Bartlemy, Fermoy, Co Cork

Dear Vicki,

I am writing to congratulate you and the school staff and to let you know informally that your school has received the Digital Schools of Distinction Award. I have attached logos for your website and documentation. I would be grateful if you would let us know when you plan an award ceremony and I will try to ensure that the plaque arrives on time. I have also attached the summary report of the visit.

Finally, I would like to let you know about an offer which I received recently which may be of interest to Principals of schools which have been awarded (or intend to be) Digital School of Distinction status. The message from Robbie O'Leary, Principal of Sacred Heart SNS Tallaght, 19543T is as follows:

*"Following a number of requests from principals I have been able to source a company - related to one of my SNAs - that can make a flag of good standard featuring the DSoD logo. They will make and post one to any part of the country for €50. If you would like to acquire one please contact me directly at principal@sacredheartsns.net and I will look after it for you."*

*Robbie O'Leary*

Well done,

Zita.

-

---

Zita Robinson

Digital Schools of Distinction (DSoD)

Dublin West Education Centre

Old Blessington Road

Tallaght

Dublin 24 PX58

☎ 01 452 8002

✉ zrobinson@dwec.ie



[www.digitalschools.ie](http://www.digitalschools.ie)

The Digital Schools of Distinction programme is part of the Irish Government's Digital Strategy for Schools 2015 – 2020 and is a nationally recognized digital schools award for primary schools in Ireland.

Confidentiality Note: The information contained in this message and any attachments, may contain confidential and/or privileged material. It is intended solely for the person(s) or entity to which it is addressed. Any review, retransmission, dissemination and other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient(s) is prohibited. If you have received this in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from any computer.

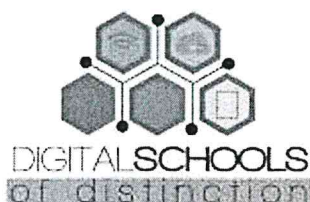
---

### 3 attachments



DIGITALSCHOOLS  
of distinction

**ds-300-b&w.jpg**  
2036K



**ds-300-colour.jpg**  
2562K



**BishopOBrienNSEvaluationReport DSoD.pdf**  
132K