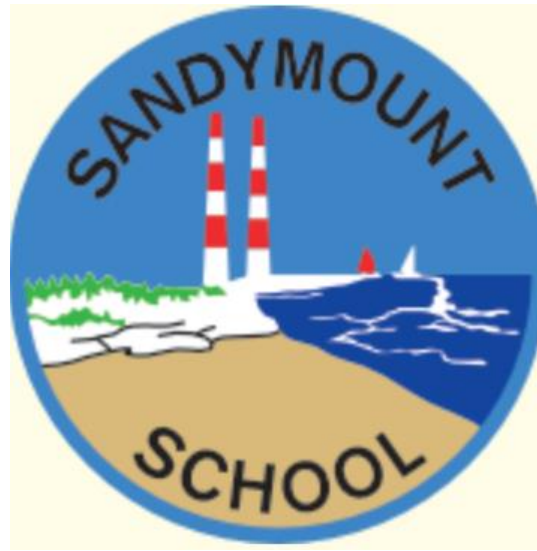# Enable Ireland Sandymount School

Digital Learning Plan 2019

Enable Ireland Sandymount School

Digital Learning Plan

1. Introduction

The development of this plan was set out as a priority area by the school to comply with the Department of Education publications 'circular 0001/2017' and 'Digital Strategy for Schools'.

In line with the guidance provided by the National Council for Technology in Education (NCTE), the approach in Sandymount School is to emphasize the integration of digital technologies and Assistive Technology across the curriculum, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Therefore digital technologies are not a subject or a curriculum in its own right. They are a tool that can add value to the teaching and learning process when it is used appropriately. The purpose of computer literacy is the same as all teaching and learning, to awaken and to support the development of intellectual curiosity.

We aim to educate children who live in a technological age (digital natives) and so our teaching and learning must reflect that reality. Pedagogically, a digital learning framework can be highly motivating for the learner and particularly for those children who have special needs. In that light, we will strive to maximize the potential for children's learning using digital technologies, where appropriate.

Students are introduced to digital technologies in the junior classes and where required, their means of accessing the computer is assessed by O.T. Department and suitable Assistive technologies availed of. The student then needs to be taught how to use the technology, i.e. a switch and gain an understanding of the relationship between hitting the switch and the action on the computer screen and developing an understanding of cause and effect.

Many of our students have multiple learning disabilities and digital technologies are a valuable tool in allowing opportunities for communication and access to learning and to the curriculum. It enables the student to have control over his or her environment where they can make real choices, for collaborative work, and for communication in a verbal or non-verbal manner. It also can enable students to become active learners where successful learning outcomes can lead to raised self-image and self-esteem.

Our vision for a digital learning framework is about trying to ensure that the children begin to develop a critical appreciation of the role of digital technologies in society and develop habits which reflect an ethical and responsible use of such technologies.

1.1 School Details: Enable Ireland Sandymount School is a co-educational special school providing a primary and second-level education to students from age 4 to 18 with physical and other complex needs. Some of our students experienced developmental delay and though may not presenting with a physical disability, they need our specialised setting. Our students are bussed daily into School from all parts of the South Dublin City and County.
We are co-located with Enable Ireland clinical services in a purposeful designed school building and have developed suitable indoor and outdoor physical environments which offer a rich and varied learning experience to each child.

The school has 42 students enrolled and 27 of these students require the use of Assistive Technology (AT) to communicate and access the computer. The AT most commonly used around the school are Eyegazes, tablets/ touch screen and switches.

1.2 School Vision: The school vision/mission statement reflects the characteristic spirit of the school, "Excellence in Education" and addresses:
- the placement of the student at the centre of the educational process
- enabling the student to participate in a full life according to their ability
- assisting the student with his/her holistic development
- preparing the student for continuing and lifelong learning
- empowering the student to realise his/her potential as an independent social being and self-fulfilled adult

Pupil learning needs are at the centre of all planning, and the focus of our school plan is the teaching and learning that takes place at the school. Enable Ireland Sandymount School promotes the 24 hour curriculum and our school day is a small part of what pupils learn throughout their lives. The school work in partnership with parents to ensure a quality education for our pupils. We recognise the work of the associated therapeutic disciplines provided by our patron body, Enable Ireland in supporting our pupils' access education.

1.3 Brief account of the use of digital technologies in the school to date:

- All classes have access to wired and wireless internet
- Wired Computers are networked to Enable Ireland's server and it is protected by a firewall and antivirus.
- Wireless connections are monitored and protected with a firewall by the PDST
- The use of personalised websites (Weebly) is available to classes to record news, work and homework
- All classes have access to their own digital camera
- School is currently developing a website that will allow better communication with parents
- Use of the electronic school roll Aladdin
- Use of Text-a-parent system and e-mail to communicate with parents
- Screen Magnification Systems - to increase the size of the text or image displayed on the monitor
- Interactive Touch Screens
- Switch Accessible Software - that allows pupils to input information into the computer using switches or use as a simple means of communication
- Trackerball/Rollerball
- Switches
- Adapted keyboards
- Keyguards
- Intellikeys
- Big Keys
- Joysticks
- Big Mack
- Augmentative devices: e.g. Dynavox
- Battery operated activities
- IPads
- Eye-Gaze
- Laptops / Desktops / Tablets
- Face-to-Face Communication Aids – This refers to communication displays and voice output.
- Written Communication/Education Aids – this includes the full range of hardware and software required for written/graphic output and educational access (e.g. from pencil grip to alternative keyboard access).
- Each class has a digital camera.

2. The focus of this Digital Learning Plan

We undertook a digital learning evaluation in our school during the month of February 2019. We evaluated our progress using the following sources of evidence:

- **Digital Learning Cluster Group Formed**
  Focus group of teachers established to work on developing our digital learning plan. The group Includes Arthur Farrell (Principal), Jennifer Doyle (Deputy Principal) and Julio Berrincha (Post Holder). Regular meetings were scheduled to evaluate our current digital practices and gather information from staff and parents to help develop our Digital Learning Action Plan.

- **Teacher Digital Learning Survey**
  Survey was carried out among the staff. The main areas of focus were:
  ○ Reflection on learning, teaching and assessment practices
  ○ The use of digital technologies in the classroom
  ○ Professional collaborative review

- **Observational Survey**
  Observation was carried out in the classrooms in how students use digital technologies and reflect on their digital learning experiences.

- **Parents Survey**
  A survey was sent to the parents regarding the use of the internet and digital technologies at home by their children.

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

Dimension: Teaching and Learning
Domain 1: Learner outcomes
Domain 2: Learner Experience
Domain 3: Teacher's Individual Practice
Domain 4: Teacher's Collective and Collaborative Practice

Dimension: Leadership and Management
Domain 1: Leading Learning and Teaching
Domain 2: Managing the Organisation
Domain 3: Leading School Development
Domain 4: Developing Leadership Capacity

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

Standard (Teaching & Learning)	Statement(s)
Domain 1: Learner Outcomes **Standard 1**: Students enjoy their learning are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners	Students use appropriate digital technologies to foster active engagement in attaining appropriate learning outcomes.
Domain 1: Learner Outcomes **Standard 2**: Students have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand themselves and their relationships	Students have a positive attitude towards the use of digital technologies and are aware of possible risks and limitations. Students understand the potential risks and threats in digital environments.
Domain 2: Learner Experience **Standard 1**: Students engage purposefully in meaningful learning activities	Students use digital technologies for sourcing, exchanging of information to develop understanding and support basic knowledge creation.
Domain 3: Teachers' Individual Practice **Standard 1**: 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 students.
Domain 3: Teachers' Individual Practice **Standard 2**: The teacher selects and uses planning, preparation and assessment practices that progress student learning	Teachers use appropriate digital technologies to design learning activities that facilitate personalised and differentiated learning.
Domain 4: Teachers' Collective/ Collaborative Practice **Standard 1**: Teachers value and engage in professional development and professional collaboration	Teachers engage in professional development and work with colleagues to help them select and align digital technologies with effective teaching strategies to expand learning opportunities for all students.

Standard (Leadership Management)	Statement(s)
Domain 1: Leading Learning and Teaching **Standard 1:** Promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching & assessment	The principal and in school management (ISM) team in the school encourage teachers to use digital technologies to enhance their learning, teaching and assessment practices, and to share their practice.
Domain 1: Leading Learning and Teaching **Standard 2**: Foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each student	The school understands how access to digital technologies can create divides and how students' social and economic conditions can impact the way technology is used.
Domain 2: Managing the Organisation **Standard 1**: Establish an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment, and maintain it through effective communication	The principal and the ISM team in the school ensure appropriate policies, procedures and safeguards are in place to ensure the protection of individual privacy, confidentiality and the safe use of digital technologies and data for all members of the school community.
Domain 2: Managing the Organisation **Standard 2**: Manage the school's human, physical and financial resources so as to create and maintain a learning organisation	The principal and the ISM team in the school ensure that processes are in place for the procurement, maintenance, interoperability and security of the digital infrastructure for effective learning, teaching and assessment.
Domain 3: Leading School Development **Standard 4**: Manage, lead and mediate change to respond to the evolving needs of the school and to changes in education	The principal and the ISM team in the school are informed by national policy, and technological developments, and see their relevance to the school.
Domain 4: Developing Leadership Capacity **Standard 2:** Empower staff to take on and carry out leadership roles	The principal and the ISM team in the school encourage teachers to take on leadership roles and to lead the use of digital technologies for learning, teaching and assessment, and is willing to distribute significant leadership responsibilities. They develop organisational structures to facilitate and encourage the sharing of practice and peer mentoring in the use of digital technologies for learning, teaching and assessment.

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

- The school has identified teaching strategies/ online resources to use in class.
- A teacher and parents survey was conducted in February 2018 and the results are as follows:
  - Over 85% of our staff is confident using new technologies in the classroom.
  - Over 85% of our staff regularly uses new technologies in the classroom as a form of learning.
  - 100% of our staff would like to have more professional development regarding new technologies and Assistive Technology
  - Over 85% of our staff records the use of digital technologies by the students.
  - 90% of our students access digital technologies at home.
  - 62% of our students are proficient in using such technologies.

    (View end of document for detailed results)

- The individual needs of our students are being met in terms of the assistive technology required.
- The school avails of suitable professional development and on-going support in relation to the use of ICT / AT and liaise with therapists on the type of assistive technology device a student requires and the type of software needed.

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

- More in-depth and updated training in current and emerging technologies for staff and parents
- Create a database of suitable and updated hardware and software that meet the students requirements
- Share staff expertise in the use of digital technologies in the classroom with colleagues
- Focus on getting additional funding for infrastructure/ equipment through the Digital Learning Framework.
- To maintain the existing digital learning infrastructure and improve upon it

3. Our Digital Learning plan
On the next page we have recorded:
- The **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)

As we implement our improvement plan we will record:
- The **progress** made, and **adjustments** made, and **when**
- **Achievement of targets** (original and modified), and **when**

Digital Learning Action Plan

DOMAIN: Domains 1 & 2: Learner Outcomes & Learner Experience

STANDARD(S):

Students enjoy their learning are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners.
Students have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand themselves and their relationships
Students engage purposefully in meaningful learning activities

STATEMENT(S):

Students use appropriate digital technologies to foster active engagement in attaining appropriate learning outcomes.
Students have a positive attitude towards the use of digital technologies and are aware of possible risks and limitations.
Students understand the potential risks and threats in digital environments.
Students use digital technologies for sourcing, exchanging of information to develop understanding and support basic knowledge creation.

TARGETS:

Students to be given specific tasks that require the use of digital technologies for their completion.

Digital safety module to be completed with all class groups during the school year

ACTIONS (What needs to be done?)	TIMEFRAME (When is it to be done by?)	PERSONS / GROUPS RESPONSIBLE (Who is to do it?)	CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS (What are the desired outcomes?)	RESOURCES (What resources are needed?)
To expand the use ICT in delivering the curriculum and ensure that all students experience digital learning activities regularly. Digital safety module completed with appropriate classes	October 2019 January/February 2020	All staff through subject planning Management to set date. Teachers to deliver module	That appropriate resources be identified from suitable websites, for all classes, for use in the classroom – these are to be saved on the school network. Senior classes to undertake a PowerPoint project or other Digital Learning activity that engages the student in the use of ICT. Students will conduct research and submit selected projects in digital format during the year. All students will have been taught a module on internet safety and risks.	Computer access Internet access Assistive technology Internet safety class resources

EVALUATION PROCEDURES:
(How are we progressing? Do we need to make adjustments? Have we achieved our targets?)

Carry out a survey in the beginning of the 2019/2020 school year among staff and parents and compare results with the data from the surveys carried in February 2019. An increase in staff and student use of ICT within school will indicate an achievement of targets.
Student questionnaire and observation regarding safety while engaging with digital environments.

DOMAIN: Domains 3 & 4 : Teachers' Individual Practice & Teachers' Collective/ Collaborative Practice
STANDARD(S): The teacher has the requisite subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills. The teacher selects and uses planning, preparation and assessment practices that progress student learning. Teachers value and engage in professional development and professional collaboration.
STATEMENT(S): Teachers use a range of digital technologies to design learning and assessment activities for their students. Teachers use appropriate digital technologies to design learning activities that facilitate personalised and differentiated learning. Teachers engage in professional development and work with colleagues to help them select and align digital technologies with effective teaching strategies to expand learning opportunities for all students.
TARGETS: To ensure all staff are both competent and confident to use new digital technologies in the classroom as part of their teaching.

ACTIONS (What needs to be done?)	TIMEFRAME (When is it to be done by?)	PERSONS / GROUPS RESPONSIBLE (Who is to do it?)	CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS (What are the desired outcomes?)	RESOURCES (What resources are needed?)
Identify relevant ICT courses for continuing professional development.	On-going	All Staff External Instructors	An increase in the number of teachers who are proficient and confident in the use of ICT in their everyday teaching	Computer access Internet access
Teachers to get involved in peer training to increase the IT proficiency and confidence among their colleagues.	On-going		Teachers will increase the use of ICT in the classroom and will identify class appropriate activities and integrate them into their teaching.	Assistive technology Internet safety class resources
Regular digital learning updates for teachers, new hardware procured, new websites, and new resources.	On-going		Teachers share information on new websites they find to be of particular use in delivering the curriculum	
Staff input into digital learning plan.	On-going		Teachers give feedback at staff meetings on the incorporation of digital learning to the curriculum delivery.	
Purchase new Interactive Plasma Screen	By October 2019	Arthur Farrell/ Jennifer Doyle/ Julio Berrincha	Plasma Screen in operation	
New switch accessible software	By October 2019	Arthur Farrell/ Jennifer Doyle/ Julio Berrincha	Software installed	Funding
Wheelchair mount for i-pads/tablets	By October 2019	Arthur Farrell/ Jennifer Doyle/ Julio Berrincha	Mount available for use	Funding
Catalogue all software in the school	By June 2019			Funding

EVALUATION PROCEDURES:
(How are we progressing? Do we need to make adjustments? Have we achieved our targets?)

The digital learning plan will be implemented on an on-going basis. Progress will be reviewed every year and this document will be updated to reflect progress made.

Results from the parents' survey:

Does your child use the internet or digital technologies at home?
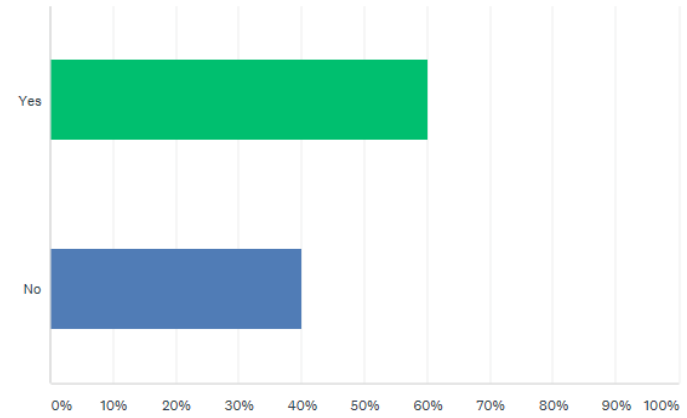
Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
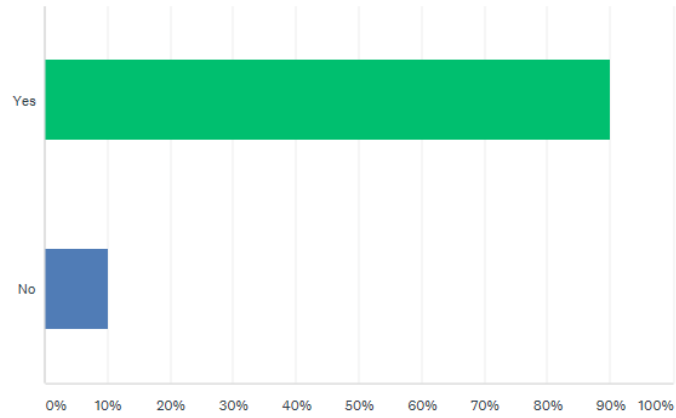
Digital Technologies use at home

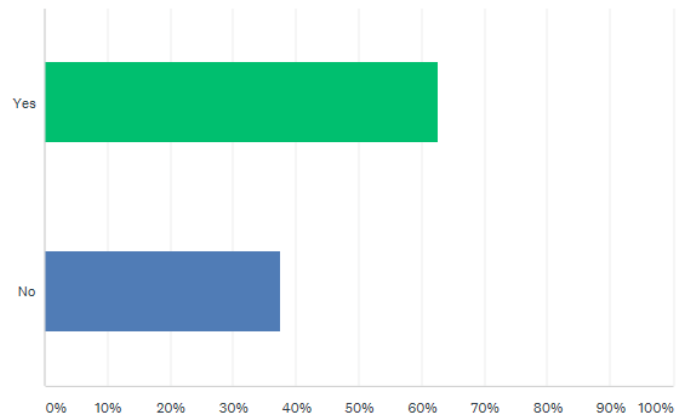## Does your child require special access/ help when accessing digital te...

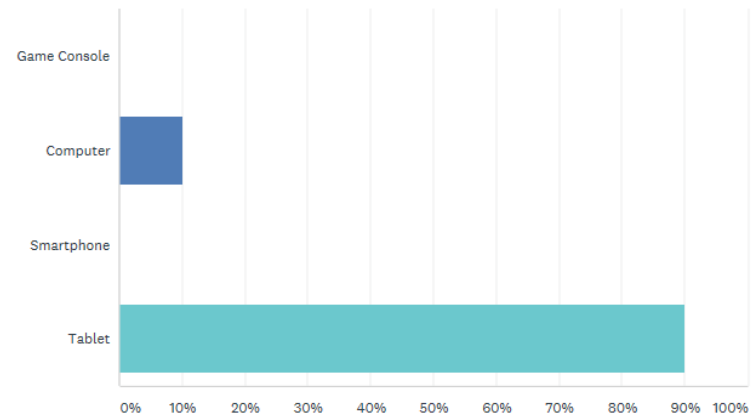Answered: 10   Skipped: 0

Digital Technologies use at home

Is your child proficient in using such technologies?
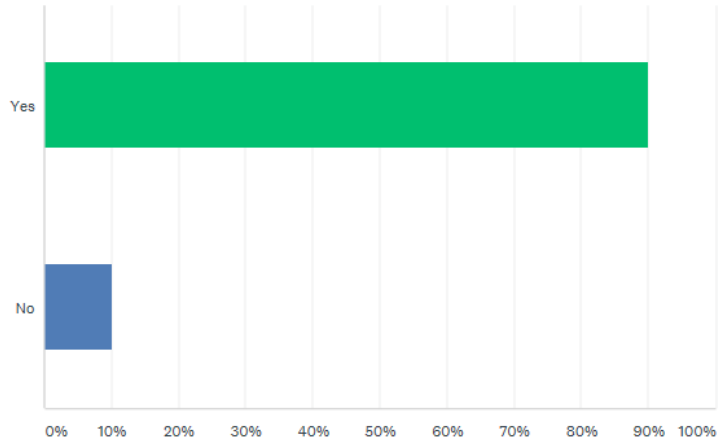
Answered: 8   Skipped: 2

What type of technology does your child use at home?

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0

Are you comfortable with the above technologies?

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0

Digital Technologies use at home

What sort of content does your child access when on the internet or o...

Answered: 9   Skipped: 1
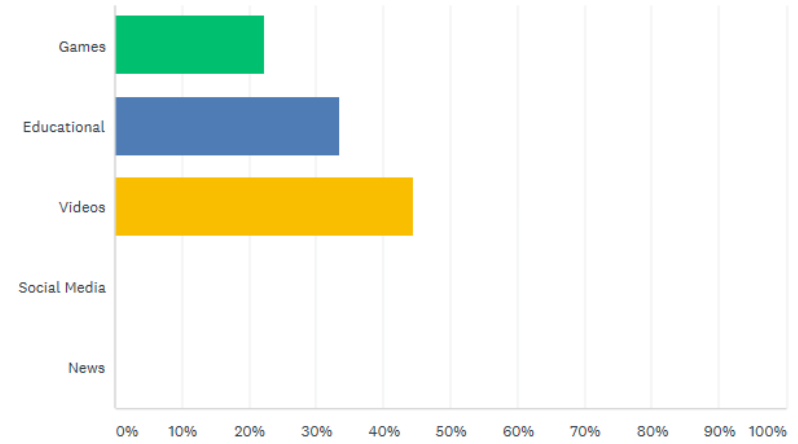
Digital Technologies use at home

Would training be something you would be interested on?
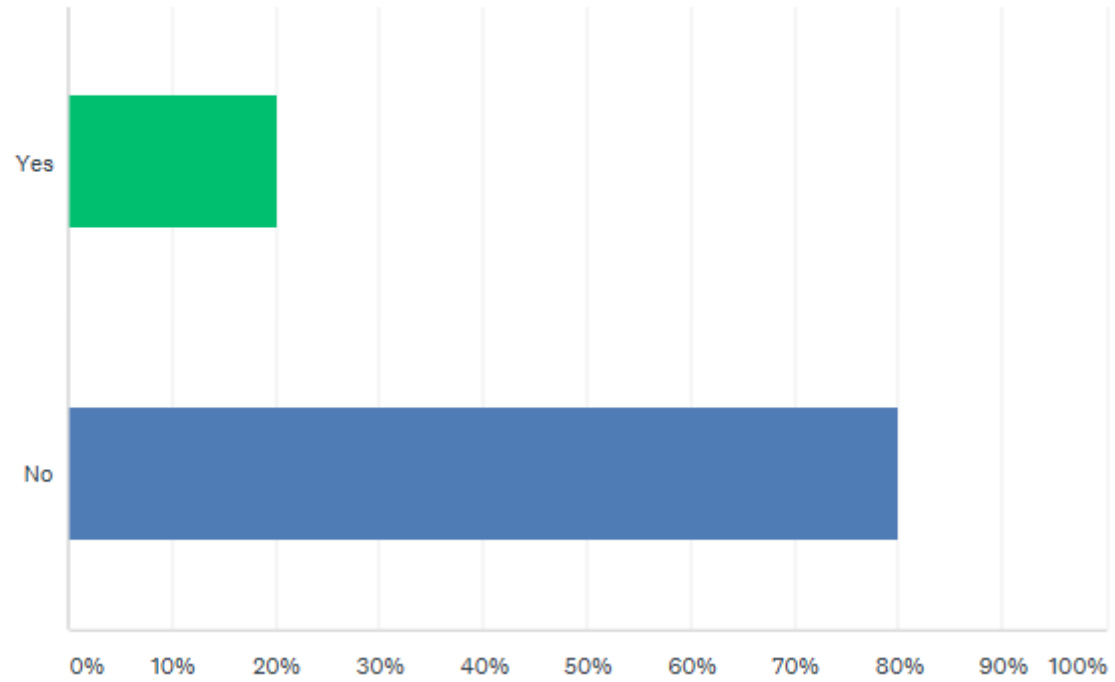
Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
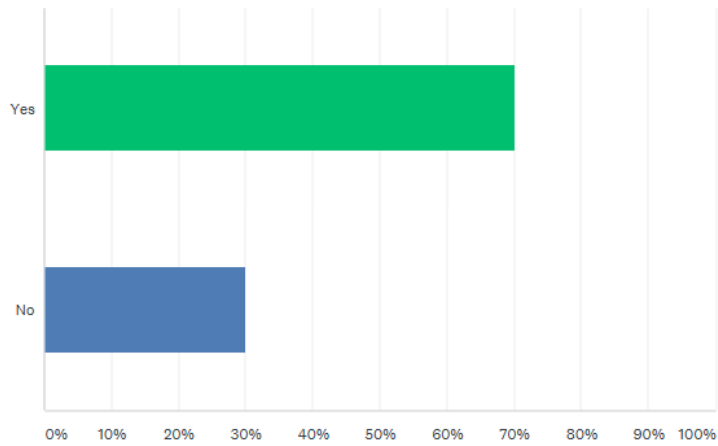
Does your child need to further develop their digital skills?
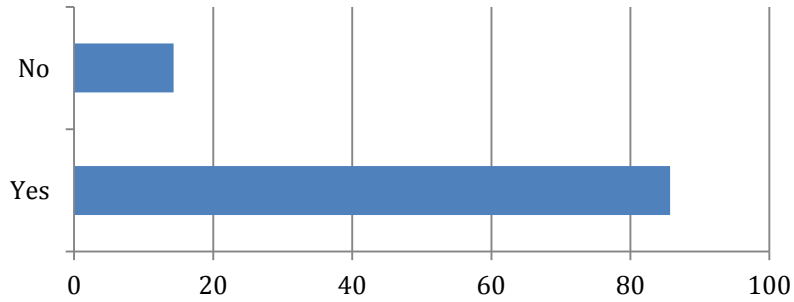
Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
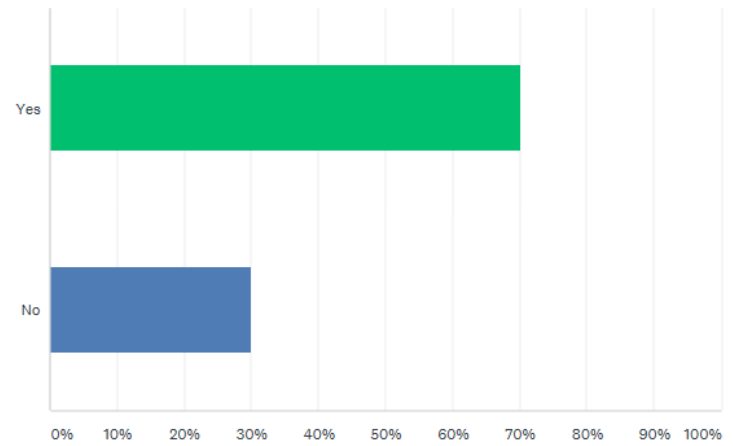
Do you have any concerns regarding child protection while your child…
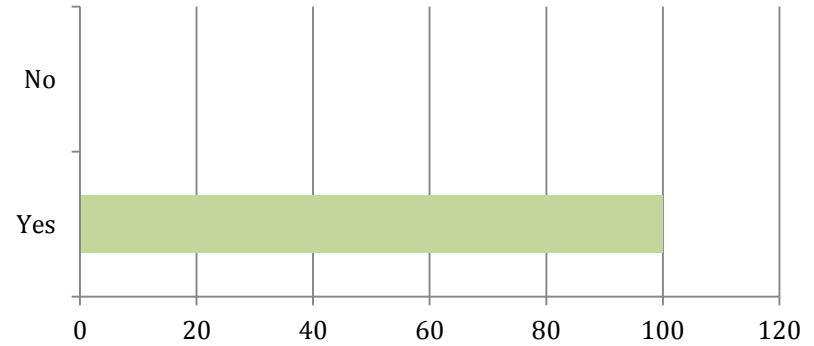
Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
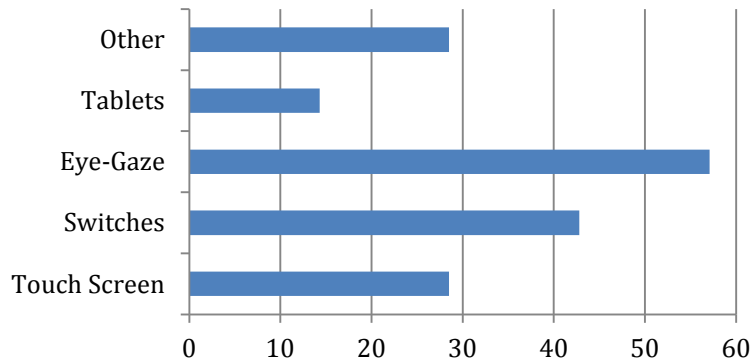
Results from the staff's survey:

Q1 - Are pupils using appropriate digital technologies to foster active engagement in attaining appropriate learning outcomes?
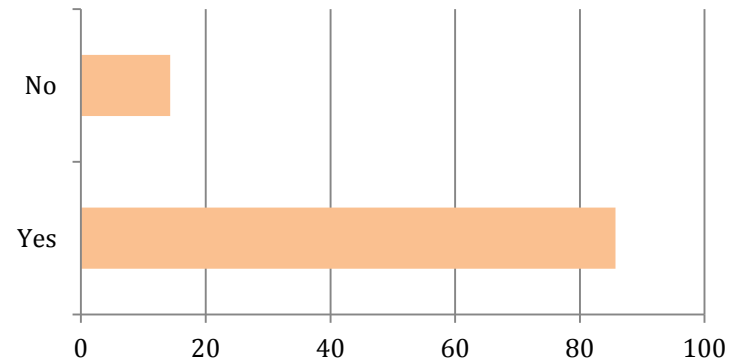

Q2- Is assistive technology required for the students to access digital learning?

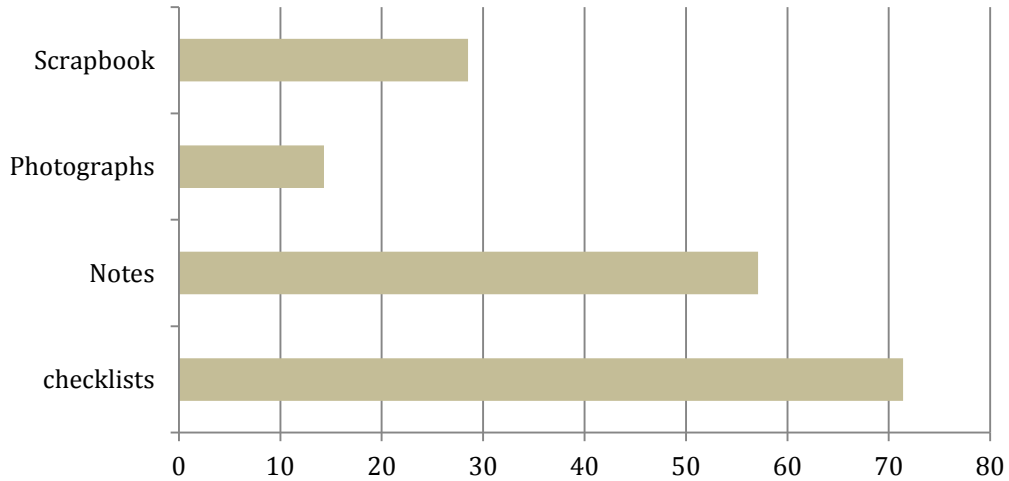**Q3 - What tools are being used for learning (including assistive technology)?**

Q4 - Do you keep records of students' engagement with digital learning?
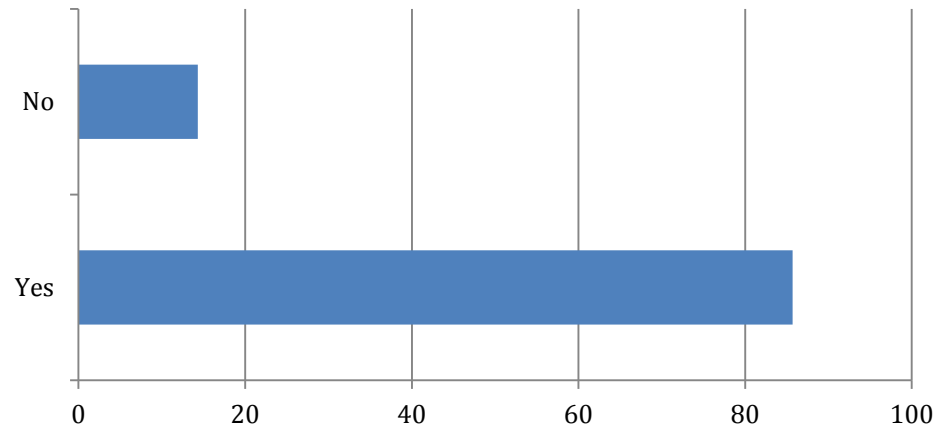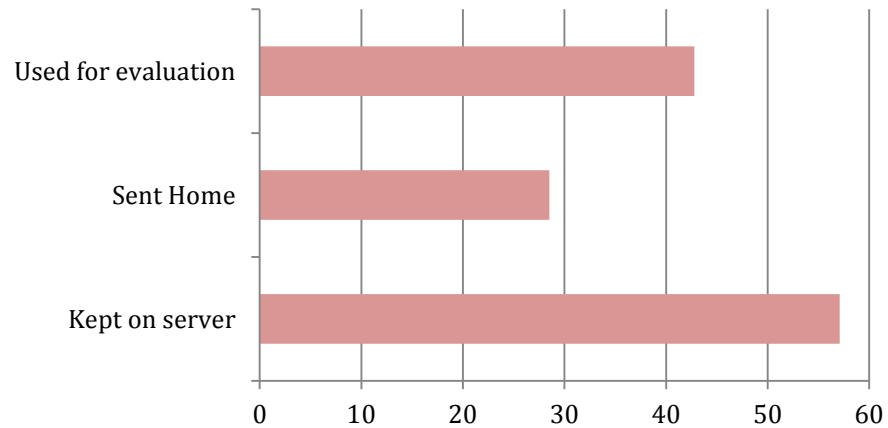
Q4 - Type of records listed

Category	Value
Scrapbook	~28
Photographs	~14
Notes	~57
checklists	~71

(x-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80)

Q5 - Are pupils using digital technologies to collect evidence and record progress?

Response	Value
No	~14
Yes	~86

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100)

Q7 - What happens to the recorded evidence?

Category	Value
Used for evaluation	~43
Sent Home	~28
Kept on server	~57

(x-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60)

Q10 - Do you require professional development?

Category	Value
Currently doing training	~28
Yes	~100

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120)

Q10 - Areas of training requested

Bar chart showing areas of training requested, with horizontal bars for Music and AT, General use of AT, and Switches, each extending to approximately 14 on a scale from 0 to 16.
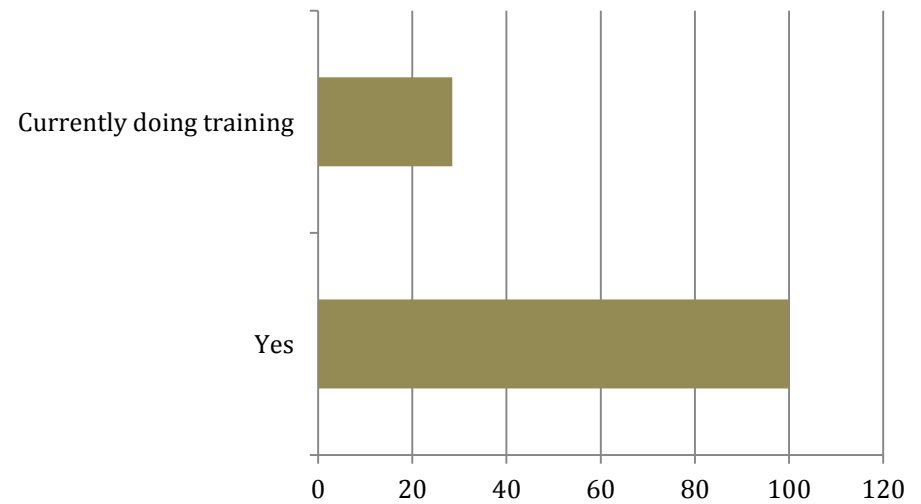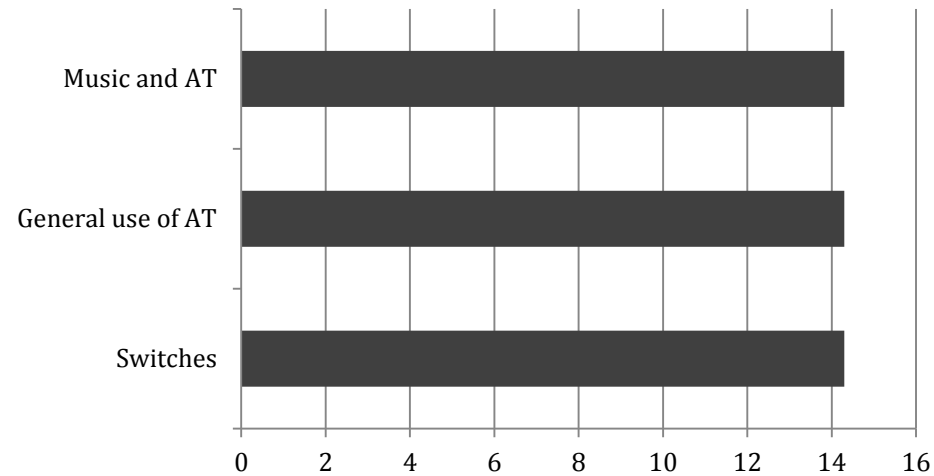
Question 6: What tools are being used by students? Eyegaze, Big Mack, The grid, Computers, Switches, Go talk, RM Maths, Google, Clicker, YouTube

Question 8: List resources that you find useful (including websites) News2Day, Twinkl, JCT.ie, HelpKidzlearn, Switch it, Clicker, Switch activated Games/toys, Starfall, RTE player, Barefoot Books, ianbean.co.uk

Question 9: List resources that you think the school needs (software/ hardware) Irish accent voices, more switch accessible programmes, mount for I-pad/ tablets for wheelchairs, phonics websites, More Eye-gazes, Literacy Lift off

Bibliography:

- Digital Strategy Information, available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Information-Communications-Technology-ICT-in-Schools/Digital-Strategy-for-Schools/Digital%20Strategy%20Information.html

- Digital Learning Planning Guidelines, available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Information-Communications-Technology-ICT-in-Schools/digital-learning-planning/digital-learning-planning-guidelines.html

- Enable Ireland Sandymount School ICT and AUP policy 2019

- Enable Ireland Sandymount School Plan 2019

- Enable Ireland Sandymount School Data Protection Policy 2019