**ICT and the learning principles of the Primary School Curriculum**

The Primary School Curriculum presents a vision of education, which is expressed in three general aims:

* to enable the child to live a full life as a child, and to realise his or her potential as a

unique individual

* to enable the child to develop as a social being through living and cooperating with

others and so contribute to the good of society

* to prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning.

To support children’s ongoing realisation of their potential as individuals and as members of

society, it is important for the primary school teacher to incorporate a range of teaching and

learning resources into his or her teaching methods. Guided by the needs of the individual

child, the philosophy and content of the curriculum, and the use of tools and resources that

can enhance the child’s learning, the teacher can design learning experiences that support

the broadly stated aims of the Primary School Curriculum.

**Context for ICT in the Primary School Curriculum**

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) offer teachers and children educational

tools and resources which extend their learning environment. When used to support the

aims, principles and objectives of the Primary School Curriculum, these technology tools

have the potential to augment and transform classroom learning and teaching.

**Using ICT in teaching and learning may be approached in three ways:**

* Learning through ICT
* Learning with ICT
* Learning about ICT

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Specific aims for ICT use in the primary school include:

* to enable the child to use a range of ICT tools in a relevant curriculum context
* to enable the child to develop and use ICT skills in the attainment of curriculum learning

objectives

* to foster the child’s confidence in his or her use of ICT, through enjoyable learning

experiences

* to develop the child’s understanding and practice of the safe use of ICT
* to enable the child to overcome barriers of access to learning resources caused by location, culture, or language
* to enable the child to use ICT to support his or her learning effectively and creatively
* to inform the child’s attitudes regarding the role of ICT in society, including the benefits

and challenges of ICT use

* to support the development of the child’s social skills through cooperative learning and

problem-solving.

This chapter explores the role of ICT in supporting the principles of learning underpinning the curriculum, in the context of these aims. It examines how we can align the unique opportunities for learning that ICT affords, with the aims and general principles of the Primary School Curriculum.

Learning about ICT: teachers and children develop skills and knowledge in the potential uses of ICT to support learning.

Learning with ICT: teachers and children use ICT resources to support the classroom curriculum.

Learning through ICT: teachers and children use ICT to transform the process of teaching and learning, learning in new ways.

The use of ICT in teaching and learning in such ways, does not follow a continuum, rather, these functions are inter-related and mutually supportive. Much of children’s learning about ICT will develop as an integral part of learning with ICT.

At the same time, it is acknowledged that learning about ICT will be necessary in order to successfully use ICT tools to support the curricular objectives, and to learn in new ways.

Learning through ICT, which supports the general aim of ICT use in the Primary School Curriculum, places a greater emphasis on the recognition of individual difference, and the use of varied approaches and methodologies in teaching.