

# **ICT in Education – Ireland**



I R E L A N D



**ICT Ireland**  
**Aoife O'Brien**

Wednesday 22nd April 2009

# Today's Agenda



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

- 1. ICT Ireland- Who are we?**
- 2. Why is ICT in education such a major issue for our organisation?**
- 3. ICT in classroom – current situation**
- 4. Industry input into ICT Education Policy**



# ICT Ireland – who are we ?



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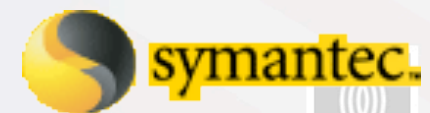
- **Representative organisation**
- **Established in 2001**
- **Part of IBEC**
- **350 members:**
  - leading players in the Irish technology sector,
  - early stage hi-tech companies,
  - telecommunications companies
- **Ireland retains and extends a global leadership role in information and communications technology**



# Technology companies in Ireland



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# Vision for ICT Ireland



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- **The vision of ICT Ireland is to:**
  - maximise the contribution of these companies to Irish society and the economy
  - create an environment where technology can transform and create a 'connected' society and economy
  - Focus on where we can make a difference, i.e. influencing policy; improving markets and supply chains; providing information and helping members to grow their business.



# ICT Ireland Core Messaging



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- Address cost competitiveness for Ireland's technology companies.
- Create awareness of the effective use of technology
  - In Education
  - In Society
- Promote technology as a career of choice
- Address skills needs for the sector



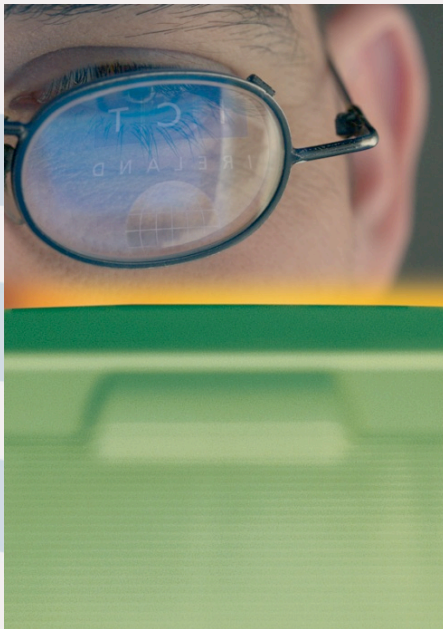


# So why is ICT in classroom so important to industry????



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## Four kinds of workplace tasks



- Routine Cognitive ↓
- Routine Manual ↓
- Expert Thinking ↑
- Complex Communications ↑

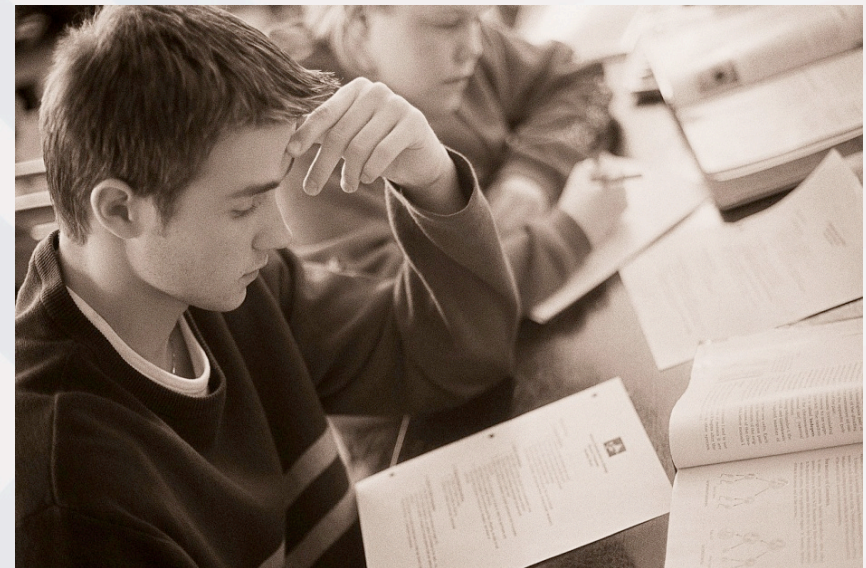


# Key elements of expert thinking



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- **Expert Thinking**
  - A great deal of well organised knowledge about the problem
  - Skills at pattern recognition
- **Complex Communication**
  - Observing and listening
  - Eliciting critical information
  - Interpreting the information
  - Conveying the interpretation to others





# Implications for Irish education



- Expert thinking & Complex Communications should be at the centre of teaching in all subjects
- Computer use in school should focus on using computers as tools to develop expert thinking and complex communication skills



# ICT Policy - Background



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- **ICT in schools programme commenced in 1998**
  - At the time we lagged significantly behind our European partners in the integration of ICT into first and second level education
  - Since then almost €209m has been invested in the Programme addressing the following
    - ICT infrastructure and networking in schools
    - Access to broadband connectivity to schools
    - Upskilling teachers' ICT skills
    - Integrating ICT within the curriculum



# Current state of play in Ireland



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- **There have been significant developments in relation to ICT in classroom**
  - Effect of investment in ICT infrastructure is evident with number of computers in schools increasing from 36,000 in 1998 to 97,709 in 2005. This translates into the ratio of pupils to computers in primary as 9:1 and at post primary level 7:1.
  - 99% of schools have broadband



# Current State of Play continued..



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- **Upskilling of teachers**
  - Teaching skills initiative
    - Provides for the continuous professional development of teachers and offers a range of ICT related training programmes
      - Basic ICT skills
      - Training in ICT Pedagogical Practice
      - Technical skills e.g website design, system management and troubleshooting
- **ICT in the Curriculum and Digital Resources**
  - Scoilnet ( our national portal)
    - [www.scoilnet.ie](http://www.scoilnet.ie)



# The National Portal- Scoilnet



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

- Scoilnet is a central resource to teachers, pupils and parents
- Offers advice, information and evaluated and categorised web sources, software and multimedia resources for use in teaching and learning
  - *Sci-Spy* ( science for 10-12 year old primary school students)
  - *Science Unleashed for Junior Cycle Science* ( 13-15 year old post-primary)
  - *I am an Artist* (Primary School students)
  - Look at history ( 15-17 year old students)
  - Scoilnet Maps ( Geography)





# How does ICT Ireland influence and contribute to Education Policy?



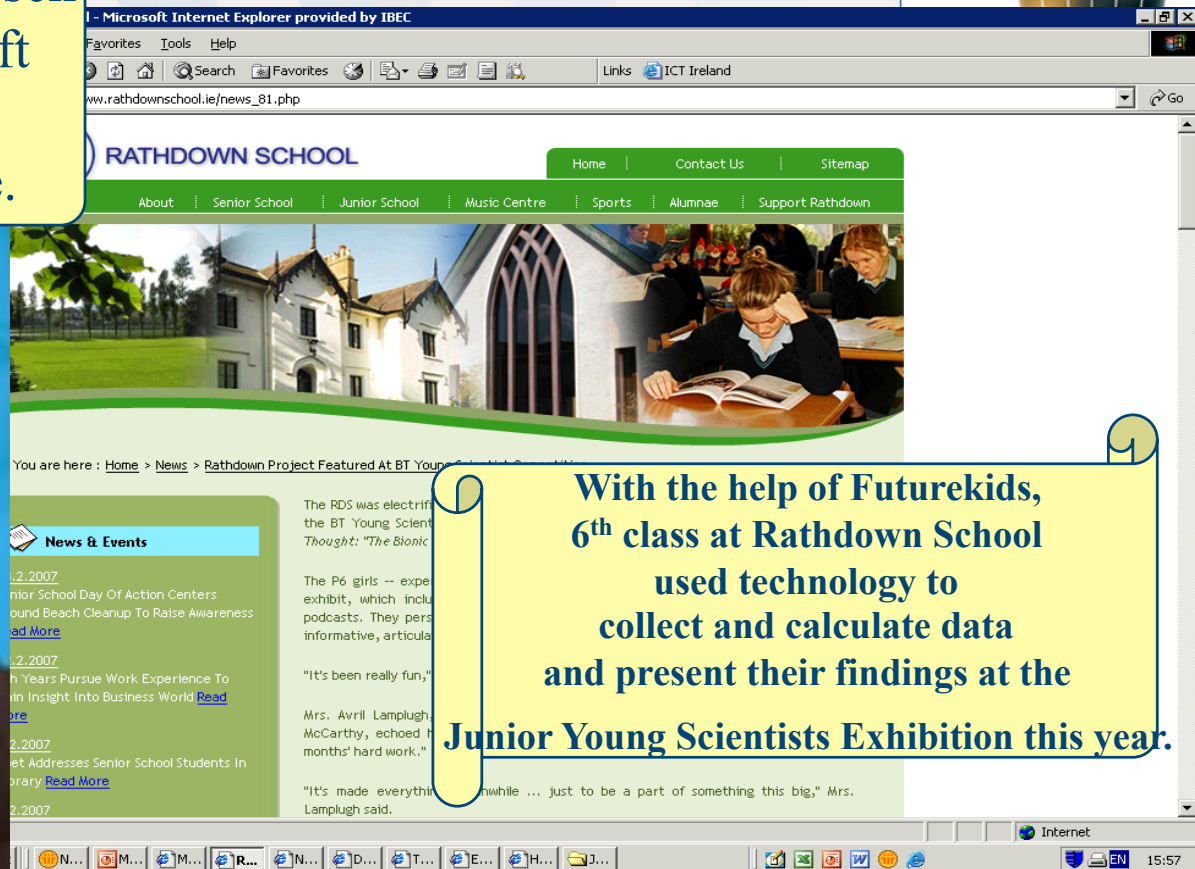
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- **Engage with Dept Education & Science (DES) on the roll out of ICT in the classroom**
  - Representatives from the technology sector work with DES to:
    - Assist in planning future ICT infrastructural development in school
    - Provide advice on the ongoing & future potential of ICT in schools
    - Provide a focus whereby the contribution by industry in Ireland to the integration of ICT in schools can be discussed and identified
    - Explore the potential to develop links and partnerships
  - Engage with other stakeholders to showcase best-in-class examples

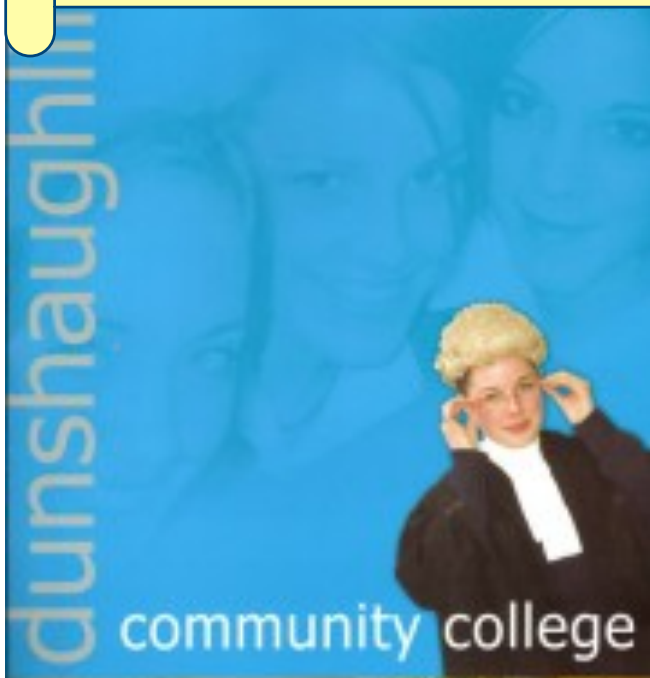
# Some schools are already embracing technology in Ireland, with the help of technology companies...



Dunshaughlin has been chosen as one of twelve Microsoft Innovative Schools of the Future worldwide.



With the help of Futurekids, 6<sup>th</sup> class at Rathdown School used technology to collect and calculate data and present their findings at the Junior Young Scientists Exhibition this year.



## And some Irish technology companies are working with schools abroad

ICT  
IRELAND



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Riverdeep, an Irish elearning company, provides educational software worldwide. It does less than 1% of its business in Ireland.

### Writers' Blocks

Here kids join together to build a story block by block!

Help us finish a story by adding your own ideas! It's simple. During one week each month, we'll begin a new story, and you add the middle and ending of the story. At the end of the week, we'll post the completed story.



write

Check back **March 5** to help write the next story with other kids from across the country!

start writing



read

Once a story is complete, you can come back here to read it. Click here to read "Where is Mr. Lincoln?"

read past stories

"I am delighted to visit Al-Forsan schools to see the positive impact that e-learning is having on teaching and learning. I am very impressed to see teachers and young learners interacting with these high quality curriculum and technology solutions in the class-room".

**Former Minister Mary Hanafin, on a visit to a Riverdeep school in Saudi Arabia**



# Thank You !

# Questions ?



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