e-pic

Essex Primary ICT Curriculum Newsletter – Summer 2009

Welcome

This issue concentrates on the possible implications of the Rose Review and also offers resources for teaching e-safety. The footnote numbers relate to links on the web page at www.e-pic.org.uk/news

The importance of ICT

The report[1] published this March is based on Ofsted visits to schools and gives clues as to what they will be looking for in the future. It outlines the current situation with statements including:

- The pupils observed generally used ICT effectively to communicate their ideas and to present their work, but they were less skilled in collecting and handling data and in controlling events using ICT.
- Teachers tended to give more attention to those aspects of ICT where they themselves felt confident.
- At best, teachers integrated ICT carefully into the curriculum and it was helping to raise standards in other subjects.
- Good leadership and management made developing ICT a priority in these schools.

To what extent would these findings apply to your school?

It also makes a number of recommendations including:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of their provision for teaching pupils and students how to keep themselves safe when online and record incidents where the safety of individuals may be compromised
- Ensure that they achieve value for money by implementing the principles of best value in evaluating, planning, procuring and using ICT provision
- Improve the assessment of ICT by establishing pupils' and students attainment on entry and by tracking the progress of individual pupils, including their achievement when using ICT in other subjects
- Audit the training needs of teachers and teaching assistants and provide extra support to improve their subject knowledge and expertise, particularly in data logging, manipulating data and programming.

The role of assessment in raising standards was reinforced in part B of the report.

- Assessment was generally weaker than other aspects of teaching and learning. This goes some way to explaining the unevenness of pupils' progress in different aspects of ICT and some underachievement.
- Few teachers had a formal system for recording pupils' progress or a clear picture of the level of individual pupils' ICT capability.
- Assessment data were rarely used well to track pupils' progress, for benchmarking or to evaluate impact.

How can you respond to these recommendations? Would the materials developed by the Essex ICT team be useful in your school e.g. E-safety[2], shopping portal[3], assessment materials[4] and teacher audit materials[5]?

ICT in the Rose Review[6]

There is joined up thinking between the Ofsted report and the recommendations of the Rose review.

One of the key features of a modern curriculum put forward by the review is to:

> Strengthen the teaching and learning of information and communication technology (ICT) to enable children to be independent and confident users of technology by the end of primary education. Used well, technology strongly develops the study and learning skills children need now and in the future, including the fundamentals of 'e-safety'. Embedding ICT throughout the primary curriculum and giving it greater prominence within the core of 'Essentials for Learning and Life' will provide children with more opportunities to harness the potential of technology to enhance learning. Specific requirements for ICT are set out in each area of learning where it directly contributes to the essential knowledge, key skills and understanding within that area

He reinforces the role of ICT in the core:

> While it is usual for primary schools to think of mathematics, English and ICT in this way, virtually all subjects serve more than one purpose: they are valuable as disciplines in their own right and add value to cross-curricular studies.

He is aware that many teachers will need support to raise their levels of skill[5]:

> The DCSF, working with the QCA and Becta, should consider what additional support teachers will need to meet the raised expectations of children's ICT capabilities and use of technology to enrich learning across the curriculum and set in train adequate support.

In Recommendation 8 he sets out how ICT should look in the future:

- Literacy, numeracy and ICT should form the new core of the primary curriculum.
- Schools should continue to prioritise literacy, numeracy and ICT as the foundational knowledge, skills and understanding of the primary curriculum, the content of which should be clearly defined, taught discretely, and used and applied extensively in each area of learning.
- The DCSF expert group on assessment should give consideration to how the new core of literacy, numeracy and ICT should be assessed and these aspects of children's performance reported to parents.

How will regarding ICT as part of the core change the way you view ICT in your school?
What does it mean to teach it discretely and also applied in each area of the curriculum[7]?
Have you considered enrolling your school in the e-maturity package[8]?

Curriculum consultation?

The proposed level descriptors and curriculum are out for consultation until the end of July 2009.
The ICT core curriculum is outlined in the section **Essentials for learning and life** as:

Children use and apply their ICT knowledge, skills and understanding confidently and competently in their learning and in everyday contexts. They become independent and discerning users of technology, recognising opportunities and risks and using strategies to stay safe.

Children learn how to:
1. find and select information from digital and online sources, making judgements about accuracy and reliability
2. create, manipulate and process information using technology to capture and organise data, in order to investigate patterns and trends; explore options using models and simulations; and combine still and moving images, sounds and text to create multimedia products
3. collaborate, communicate and share information using connectivity to work with, and present to, people and audiences within and beyond the school
4. refine and improve their work, making full use of the nature and pliability of digital information to explore options and improve outcomes.

The revised levels[9] reflect pupil's ability to use ICT facilities at a younger age and also the need for safety[10].

Which aspects of the new levels will be most challenging in your school?

The detail of the programme of study for ICT is woven through the six areas of understanding [11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16] but a document[17] on the DCFS site brings them together as a coherent programme for ICT.

Which aspects of the new levels will be most challenging in your school?

Report of the Expert Group on Assessment

Accessing ICT

The expert group on assessment made the following recommendation for ICT:

We have stated elsewhere within the report that it is vital that pupils leave primary school with a good grasp of the core curriculum, so that they can successfully engage with learning in secondary school. Following the recommendations of the recent Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum, this core curriculum will now include ICT from 2011 onwards. ICT can be of great benefit when used across all subjects, but in an increasingly digital age it is important that all children know how to use ICT, and it is therefore appropriate that it should be assessed during primary school. This should be based on teacher assessment rather than an externally marked test, and pupils' levels should be reported to parents and to secondary schools.

How do you currently assess pupils' ICT levels within your school? How may this need to change? What would be the implications of the APP[18] scheme being extended to primary ICT?

Safeguarding within e-pic[19]

Safeguarding and e-safety is very much in the public focus at the moment and quite rightly so! As educators we know that while we can offer protection within school settings via filters, through adherence to Acceptable Use Policies etc. the real challenge is how to equip children with the skills and knowledge to help them stay safe outside school.

The Essex ICT Team has written and published a series of e-pic activities designed to highlight these issues and to equip pupils in Key Stages One and Two with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to help them stay safe when using information and communication technologies. Each of the activity packages has been linked to a specific year group and the resources are age-appropriate.

The activities, although linked with specific ICT concepts (e.g. Communication), focus on the following four areas:

- content
- contact
- commerce
- culture

What we mean by content and contact is reasonably obvious, but schools should also be aware that even very young users can be targeted by advertising and offers and understanding how communications technology impacts on culture is also key to staying safe.

The materials have been well-received not only by those schools already using them but also by the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). They have also received national recognition and praise from Becta.

To what extent are pupils in your school taught to use ICT safely? How could this be improved?

If you would like further details of any of the following please circle and fax back to 01206 865817 or contact the Curriculum ICT helpline on 01206 863636

School _____

Contact _____

I would like more details about:

- Responding to Ofsted ICT recommendations
- The proposed ICT Primary Curriculum
- e-pic (Essex primary ICT curriculum)
- Assessing ICT
- Flippi software (ICT planning and assessment tool)
- Training in the use of Flippi
- Safeguarding
- Staff ICT audit of skills
- e-maturity staff CPD package

The footnote links can be found at www.e-pic.org.uk/news