

# ICT Strategy for Buckinghamshire Schools 2004-2007

## ***Introduction***

Since 1998 there has been a significant investment in ICT in schools through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) and the ICT in Schools programme. Although the average number of computers in schools for teaching and learning has virtually doubled many schools are only beginning to tap the full potential of ICT to enhance teaching and learning and to modernise the way in which schools are run and organised. This strategy outlines the direction in which Buckinghamshire is moving to support schools in their development of e-learning and the use of ICT.

## ***Our vision***

Our strategic vision for ICT within Buckinghamshire schools is to enable teachers to teach and learners to gain knowledge more effectively using ICT, hence improving standards.

## ***Main aims of the strategy***

- To raise standards in ICT
- To use ICT to assist the effective management of schools.
- Increase staff confidence and competence in ICT.
- To extend ICT based communications infrastructure and connectivity.
- To ensure Best Value by focussing on the Total Cost of Ownership of ICT.

## ***Major national targets***

- 1) All schools have Broadband connections by 2006.
- 2) To beat the computer to pupil ratios of 1:8 in Primary schools and 1:5 in Secondary schools by 2004.
- 3) Two in every three teachers to have personal use of a laptop by 2006.

### ***Aim 1: To raise standards in ICT***

ICT has immense power to motivate and support learning across the curriculum. It can be used to help develop more autonomous learning, both within the traditional structures of schools and outside. At the same time, it can promote collaborative learning, both online and in classrooms. It can also reach the most disaffected learners and boost their self-esteem. We support schools to develop their hardware, software, online and other learning resources embracing emerging technologies and creating the classrooms of the future.

#### ***Key actions in support of the aim***

- 1.1 Develop the County Council web presence for schools as a primary resource for creating and disseminating learning materials and good teaching practice. To develop and promote online learning, curricula and courses, to maximise flexibility over the location and timing of learning and teaching.
- 1.2 Targets for ICT in the Education Development Plan are met.
- 1.3 Encourage, Buckinghamshire schools to achieve the minimum DfES targets for computer: pupil ratios of 1:8 primary and 1:5 secondary (2004).
- 1.4 Deploy resources to support schools through a rolling programme of visits. Targeted support provided to respond to requests from link advisers "Annual Dialogue meetings", OFSTED inspections, LEA school reviews & school requests.
- 1.5 Implement Government Strategies supporting ICT in schools.

### ***Aim 2: To use ICT to assist the effective management of schools.***

To ensure the effective management of schools, they all need to derive the maximum benefit from their Information Management System. This means that data must only be entered once and used often. The system should be readily available for staff to use in a format that is easily accessible.

- 2.1 Supporting the efficient and effective use of ICT based systems to provide timely management information.
- 2.2 Develop the County Council web presence for schools as a primary resource for the provision of comprehensive management information to support senior managers and governors fulfil their management responsibilities effectively
- 2.3 Provide good quality management information, including pupil, school and personnel data, incorporating all elements of the DfES's common basic data set (CBDS).
- 2.4 Introduce a web-enabled integrated management system (Sapphire) to schools. Initially this will be implemented as a pilot to a small group of schools and, subject to the outcome of the pilot, will be rolled out to more schools in subsequent years.
- 2.5 To promote and develop the Schools-LEA Management Information Strategy, incorporating feedback from schools.

### ***Aim 3: Increase staff confidence and competence in ICT.***

In order to exploit the potential of ICT to raise standards across the curriculum, we need to ensure that school staff have access to the training and resources to further increase their skills and confidence in using ICT.

- 3.1 Provide training courses that focus on achieving an administrative or teaching & learning need.
- 3.2 Tailored consultancy in response to specific requests from schools. Audit of curriculum software in use compiled to determine training requirements.
- 3.3 NAACEMARK for schools is encouraged.
- 3.4 Increase the confidence and competence of teachers through the wider usage of laptops (two in every three teachers by 2006).
- 3.5 Encourage more teachers to become Leading and Advanced Skills Teachers in ICT.
- 3.6 Develop online learning and video conferencing in Initial Teacher Training for NQTs and continuing professional development.
- 3.7 Teacher confidence in ICT shown through evaluation to have risen.

### ***Aim 4: To extend ICT based communications infrastructure and connectivity.***

The provision of a reliable, broadband communications infrastructure is essential for us to be able to take full advantage of emerging technologies to support learning, improve communications and enhance the value gained through technology investments. These communications need to increase the volume and type of data that is exchanged but also enable better dissemination of good practice.

#### ***Key actions in support of the aim***

- 4.1 Plan, develop and implement broadband connections to all schools in Buckinghamshire by August 2006.
- 4.2 Pilot, promote and increase the use of integrated curriculum and administrative server based networks in all schools.
- 4.3 Provide all pupils, teachers and other school employees with email access with access from school, home or the local library..
- 4.4 Promote the use of more wireless networks, remote access and use of portable computers. Extend the pilot "Laptops for Pupils" scheme.
- 4.5 Encourage the use of ICT by governors to enhance their access to information, so enabling governing bodies to fulfil all their functions more effectively.
- 4.6 Investigate and implement a single Internet filtering service for use by children from any location connected through the Buckinghamshire County Council broadband connection.
- 4.7 Continue to extend the use of the "Buckinghamshire File Transfer" system to exchange vital information between schools and the LEA to reduce the administrative burden on schools.

***Aim 5: To ensure Best Value by focussing on the Total Cost of Ownership of ICT.***

The County Council is well placed to secure best value due to its active involvement in the “Central Buying Consortium” of 17 local authorities that jointly tender for all their ICT requirements. Using standardisation of ICT across schools and the County Council enables us to enhance the sustainability of ICT by minimising costs and increasing investments. The rural nature of parts of Bucks and the number of small Primary schools is a key factor to consider when ensuring good value is achieved. Broader publicity on the “Total Cost of Ownership” of ICT will further enhance the value derived from ICT by schools.

***Key actions in support of the aim***

- 5.1 Support schools’ acquisition of appropriate ICT requirements by publicising the current contracts available through the “Central Buying Consortium”, recognising the particular issues for small & rural schools.
- 5.2 Promote standardisation of networking, software, hardware and IT operational matters by explaining the “Total Cost of Ownership” of ICT in Schools Management Briefing.
- 5.3 To promote standardisation and connectivity by producing basic technical and hardware standards advice, together with appropriate security guidance, updated every year. (On-going.)
- 5.4 Reduce total cost of ICT ownership per workstation (hardware, software, support, financing).
- 5.5 Investigate alternatives to the current outsourced hardware maintenance arrangements to identify whether better value can be obtained.
- 5.6 Complete the re-organisation of ICT Support services into a single team to enable the provision of cost-effective ICT technical support for all ICT needs in schools. (August 2004)
- 5.7 Continue full membership of the South East Grid for Learning (SEGfL) Consortium to gain additional funding and procure broadband connections to the “Bucks Grid for Learning”. (On-going until August 2006.)
- 5.8 Continue to offer corporate purchasing and leasing arrangements for hardware and software at competitive and advantageous rates for schools and others. (On-going.)
- 5.9 Examine how a ‘funding officer’ role could be established to identify opportunities and to assist schools in bid preparation.

## Monitoring and Review

This strategy will only achieve its objectives if there is widespread acceptance of the aims and principles – this will only be achieved by engaging all the stakeholders during the creation, review and development of this strategy.

We will consult, listen and incorporate changes into this plan from as many stakeholders as possible including through the Schools Information and Communication Group, ICT Co-ordinators meetings and bursars meetings.

We will review and update this plan annually in the light of national and local developments.

Buckinghamshire County Council  
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