

e-Update May 2006

Welcome to the 17th edition of e-Update, the monthly electronic bulletin from the Buckinghamshire ICT Curriculum Support Team.

The purpose of this bulletin is to keep you informed with the latest developments in ICT.

The information in e-Update has been taken from a variety of sources including ICTSN and Becta. Details on how to subscribe to these and other sources of information can be found at the end of e-Update.

e-Update can also be found on the Buckinghamshire ICT Curriculum Support Team's website at <http://www.bucksict.org.uk/e-update/> and on the Buckinghamshire Grid for Learning website at <http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk/resources/course/view.php?id=126>.

If you have any comments on e-Update, please send them to adickson@buckscc.gov.uk.

If you wish to unsubscribe from e-Update, please send an email to adickson@buckscc.gov.uk with the title **Unsubscribe**.

General News

Bucks Grid for Learning Broadband – Discounted price until (at least) 2008

Mike Woods, County Adviser – ICT

We are delighted to announce that the charge for Bucks Grid for Learning Broadband will be reduced with immediate effect and for at least the next two years. The base charges will remain as before but the price per pupil will be halved.

If your school hasn't signed up, then now is a great time to join for the growing benefits of being on Bucks Grid for Learning. Committing now will entitle you to the price reduction. For more information please contact Karen Wilkinson (email kwilkinson@buckscc.gov.uk) tel: 01296 383146 or 01494 540202.

So: -

- Primary schools will pay £1,800 plus £5 per pupil (reduced from £10).
- Secondary schools will pay £8,000 plus £2.50 per pupil (reduced from £5).
- Special schools will pay £3,000 plus £3 per pupil (reduced from £6).
- Pupil Referral Units will receive a flat £300 discount.

Please note that small Primary schools or Prus using "IPStream" will still pay their flat £995 p.a.

Further information about the benefits of joining BucksGfL Broadband can be found at: <http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk/resources/course/view.php?id=49>

Teachers' TV now UK's number one online video provider

Teachers' TV

Teachers' TV has reached the unprecedented landmark of 1000 complete television programmes available on its website <http://www.teachers.tv>. The documentary 'A Passion for Physics' is the 1,000th programme to become available via Teachers' TV. The Secondary Zone programme profiles Wirral based physics teacher Andy Smith's approach to teaching, and the dramatic effect it has on his pupils. Teachers' TV is the first UK channel to offer all its commissioned programmes for free viewing on its website and provides the most comprehensive video-on-demand service of any UK broadcaster. Since launch the channel has logged over 1.1 million programme viewings via its website, which represent around 270,000 hours of viewing

Andrew Bethell Chief Executive of Teachers' TV said: "Teachers' TV is leading the field in public sector TV and web broadcasting and we will continue to pioneer new strategies to reach our audience. The online video library and new podcasting function are just two ways in which we are meeting the needs of teachers, delivering excellent, cost effective training resources."

There are over 150,000 viewings of Teachers' TV programmes online at Teachers' TV every month. Over 80% of viewers in the schools workforce say that programming has affected their personal motivation in their

work, and over half of viewers from the schools workforce say they intend to implement some of the programme content in their own work.

Jaguar Cars Maths in Motion Challenge 2006/7 in Buckinghamshire

Andy Dickson

The Buckinghamshire final for 2005/6 may have only just taken place but now it's time to start thinking about the 2006/7 Challenge!

The Jaguar Cars Maths in Motion Challenge has now become well established in the calendars of many schools across the UK as a way of engaging children of all ages in an exciting and motivating mathematics based project that is suitable for all ages from 10 upwards.

The Challenge is based on Cambridgeshire Software House's 'Cars Maths in Motion' software and is sponsored by Jaguar, Cambridgeshire Software House, iDesk, Quizdom, Texas Instruments, the TES, Economatics, Swallow Systems and the Specialist Schools Trust.

The Challenge involves students, aged 10 to 16, working together in small teams to design a virtual racing car using mathematics. These teams ultimately compete against each other in an effort to win a series of Grand Prix type races to get through to the National Final. Both boys and girls will rediscover the delights of long division, long multiplication, percentages, the measuring of angles with protractors, ratio and a whole lot more besides. A full list of what is covered can be found on the Challenge website

<http://www.mathschallenge.org.uk>.

The aim of the Challenge is to help raise standards of achievement in mathematics in all schools and to demonstrate that mathematics is not only a useful skill to have but one that can be fun and stand students in good stead throughout life.

The 2006/07 Challenge is open to any school in either the State or Independent sectors. There are three age ranges in the 2005/06 Challenge:

Age Range 1: Any child of Primary School age.

Age Range 2: Any child in years 7, 8 and 9.

Age Range 3: Any child in years 10 and 11.

The Challenge is run through a national network of Lead Centres. The ICT Curriculum Support Team is the Lead Centre for Buckinghamshire LEA Schools.

Each participating school, whether Primary or Secondary, will run a series of internal races to find its own winner who will take part in a Buckinghamshire Regional Heat in March/April 2007. The Buckinghamshire Regional Heat winner will then race with other Regional Heat winners in a knockout round to determine which schools are invited to take part in the National Final in June/July 2007.

A leaflet with information on the Maths Challenge including pricing and an order form for the Cars: Maths in Motion software has been sent to all Buckinghamshire LEA schools. It is also available on ICT Curriculum Support Team's website <http://www.bucksict.org.uk> and on the Jaguar Cars Maths in Motion Challenge section on the Buckinghamshire Grid for Learning website at <http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk/resources/course/view.php?id=127>

Any Buckinghamshire LEA Schools who would like to be involved in the Maths Challenge should contact Andy Dickson, tel. 01296 428402, email adickson@buckscc.gov.uk.

Emerging Technologies for Learning

Becta

This publication covers some emerging technologies and trends that are likely to have an impact on education. The review offers highlights across the broad spectrum of technology developments. It is not a technical document, but should open readers up to some of the possibilities that are developing and the potential for technology to transform our ways of working, learning and interacting over the next three to five years. It features five articles by experts on a variety of technology themes including mobile learning, the ambient web, HCI, social networks and the broadband home.

Copies of this publication can be ordered or downloaded from

http://becta.org.uk/corporate/publications/publications_detail.cfm?show=latest&orderby=title_asc&letter=ALL&pubid=321&cart=

Becta publishes its 2006 Review

Becta

Becta is pleased to announce the publication of its 2006 Review which seeks to establish a picture of technology provision, practice and impact in the schools and learning and skills sector.

A year on from the last Review, there has been noticeable progress in engagement with technology in education. Computer stocks in schools and colleges have increased, and there is faster connectivity and access to the internet. In the school sector there is evidence of a rapid growth in the adoption and use of whole-class display and other supporting technologies. Mobile technologies are set to play an increasingly important role in education, with personal ownership of laptops and mobile phones on the increase.

There has been acceleration in the use of ICT by practitioners, especially in schools, where it has become increasingly the norm for practitioners to prepare and deliver lessons using digital resources. The way in which digital resources are used is crucial to personalised learning. Increased adoption has seen improvements in practitioners' understanding of pedagogy and in the way technology is integrated into use in the classroom and beyond.

While learning platforms exist in FE colleges, their adoption is less extensive in schools. As a result their use to support more open and accessible provision and enhanced learner support are at an early stage. Technical and professional practice issues remain a challenge if progress is to be made in this area.

The embedding of technology will need to be nurtured if progress is to be maintained. System-wide interventions are required to ensure that technology is sustainable and affordable, and that the considerable variation between institutions in the level and quality of ICT provision is addressed. In particular, variations in institutional readiness and capability must be overcome if the education sector is to achieve maximum value from technology investment.

Commenting on the 2006 Review, Vanessa Pittard, Director of Evidence and evaluation said: "Technology has an immensely valuable role to play in education. The Becta Review helps us understand the issues and challenges in ensuring technology makes a positive difference to learners."

The Becta Review 2006 is available to download or order from

http://becta.org.uk/corporate/publications/publications_detail.cfm?show=latest&orderby=title_asc&letter=ALL&pubid=330&cart=

Award of Becta's ICT Mark exceeds 500

Becta

With just a few days to spare, Becta's prestigious ICT Mark has broken its launch target. Over 500 schools throughout the country now proudly possess the mark which is awarded to schools for their exemplary use of ICT.

The ICT Mark is available to those schools that have successfully completed Becta's self-review framework and is externally assessed by an accredited assessor. The framework is broken down into sections which can be undertaken in stages. There are five performance descriptors and to be awarded the ICT Mark, a school must demonstrate it is consistent in its approach to ICT and has reached the agreed national level.

Although the ICT Mark was only launched earlier this year, the volume of over 500 awards recognises school achievement both during the pilot scheme period and its forerunner, the Naacemark.

Commenting on the achievement of the first 500 ICT Marks awarded, Philippa Lee, Becta's Head of institutional frameworks said: "The award of an ICT Mark is recognition that a school has successfully embedded ICT across the whole school. It is clear evidence of good practice which a school should proudly promote."

Further details:

ICT Mark: http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=lp&catcode= le_im_02

Becta's self-review framework: http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=lp&catcode= le_sr_02

Software purchase support

Becta

The additional support Becta offers to users of its Software Licensing Framework (<http://procurementtools.becta.org.uk/>) has encouraged schools to purchase more than £10m worth of software in the last six months. Both school and local authority purchasers have used the on-line quotation

form to get the best price and most appropriate software for their needs. The quotation form can be completed using everyday language and Becta's authorised suppliers will respond with their best price for the requested software licences. Some local authorities have added quotation form links to their own web sites in order to allow schools to take advantage of the software savings themselves. Suppliers like the simplicity of the quotation form and customers enjoy the savings it creates. If you are a school or local authority that requires additional help or advice to purchase from the framework, please contact: malcolm.edmonds@becta.org.uk.

Sustaining ICT: Managing ICT Costs in Schools report

Becta

The Managing ICT Costs in Schools report & summary have now been published and are available to order or download from <http://becta.org.uk/corporate/publications/index.cfm>. They are based on the results of a series of projects conducted between 2002 and 2005 and provide a useful insight into constituent ICT costs in schools. The report examines how, in a changing context, school leaders can get the best value from existing technology and staff skills while identifying sustainable arrangements for the future. Strategic financial planning to sustain ICT is essential to the Resources element of Becta's self-review framework and something all schools should accommodate in their ICT development plans.

For more information about the Managing ICT Costs report, please contact nia.sutton@becta.org.uk.

ICT Investment Planner

Becta

Becta's ICT Investment Planner has now completed its pilot at more than 40 schools across ten local authorities and received very positive feedback. The planner gives schools a much better understanding of their total cost of ownership (TCO) of ICT and highlights how ICT value and cost change over time. Workshops and presentations for local authorities intending to use the planner with their schools are continuing throughout the summer term, providing many, particularly primary schools, with a sound basis for planning future ICT investments.

More information on the ICT Investment Planner is available at

http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=pr&catcode=ss_to_pr_su_03&rid=10964

More information on TCO is available at

http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=pr&catcode=ss_to_pr_su_03&rid=9650

For more information about the ICT Investment Planner or to discuss a possible workshop or presentation please contact nia.sutton@becta.org.uk.

Evaluating ICT

Becta

Becta's Institutional Infrastructure Matrix (see

http://matrix.becta.org.uk/GMATRIX_4050132_38249838/1148470364817/rebrand/matrix/index.cfm?matrix=118&forcenew=yes) is an online self-evaluation tool designed to help schools plan and achieve their vision for ICT. The statements are based on the requirements of Becta's functional specification (see

http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=lp&catcode=le_pp_po_03&rid=11280) and have been designed to provide users with an effective action plan and increase the functionality of their ICT infrastructure. Use of the Institutional Infrastructure Matrix should help schools progress through the Resources element of the self-review framework.

For more information, please contact kate.white@becta.org.uk.

Secondary News

Wanted: ways to engage young people with IT

Becta

How can we make 14-19 year olds see beyond the surface of their iPods and appreciate IT for the exciting subject it is? To address this problem, the British Computer Society (BCS) brought together a group of education, business and government experts.

To find out more read the news story on the BCS website:

<http://www.bcs.org/server.php?show=ConWebDoc.4427>.

For the full report 'Computing/IT as a subject for 16-19 year olds' go to:

<http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/1619.pdf>.

Articles and case studies

Becta

Using wikis in schools: a case study

This case study by Lyndsay Grant on the Futurelab website explores the potential uses of wikis as learning tools in schools.

<http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=17587>

Using NLN Materials to enhance the teaching of cultural and environmental issues

The study involved the use of the NLN Unit 'The Effects of Cultural and Environmental Issues on Development - 12 to 18 years' with a group studying on the National Diploma in Health Studies.

<http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=17065>

Introducing ICT into vocational hair and beauty courses at Coleg Morgannwg

This case study charts the growth and development of ICT and associated virtual learning environment (VLE) based resources to support learning in the Hair and Beauty Department at Coleg Morgannwg.

<http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=17099>

Guidance on using consultants

This article takes a look at the Becta publication 'Transforming learning and teaching through ICT: Guidance on using consultants' and the Supported Strategy Implementation Service.

<http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=17590>

Improving the accessibility of your website - new W3C guidance

This document provides guidance for fixing accessibility barriers in existing websites.

<http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=17479>

Websites of the Month

GCSE Bitesize - Quiz Fish - Ages 14-16

Download a desktop Quiz Fish that will help you with your revision.

URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/quizfish/>

BBC Schools learning resources for home and school

The new improved Schools website now contains new A-Z topic lists, links to audio revision guides and more.

URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/>

Visual Math Learning

This site features an online tutorial for pre-algebra students that is rich in visual media content. It is an excellent resource for parents and educators of students at the middle-school level. Access to the tutorial requires no fee or registration.

URL: <http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=13311>

Flashvalley - e-learning components - Flash tutorials

Flashvalley is an online Flash resource that provides components for e-learning, Flash articles, templates and free tutorials to learn Flash.

URL: <http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=16866>

Subscription Details

Becta/ ICT Advice

To subscribe to the various publications, click here:

http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=il&catcode=nwsltr_index

ICTSN

ICTSN membership is available to organisations that provide support to schools. Schools are therefore not eligible for membership. Information about ICTSN can be found at <http://www.becta.org.uk/ictsn/index.cfm>.

RM

To subscribe to the various RM newsletters, visit the RM website at <http://www.rm.com/Security/Login/FormsLogin.asp> and register. If you are already registered, log in and go to *Email Subscriptions* in *My Account*.

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