

e-Update September 2008

Welcome to the 42nd 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 Becta and other information sources. Details on how to subscribe to these can be found at the end of e-Update.

For information on how to subscribe to/ unsubscribe from e-Update, please see the section towards 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.

Briefing Session for New ICT Co-ordinators / Staff with Responsibility for ICT

Mike Woods, ICT Adviser

I am delighted to invite all ICT Co-ordinators / Staff with Responsibility for ICT who have been appointed in the last 12 months, to a briefing session being held at Chartridge Conference Centre on Friday 7th November 2008. This meeting will begin with lunch at 12.30pm (and finish by 3.30pm) and will cover topics such as:

- The role of staff with responsibility for ICT
- Bucks Grid for Learning (BucksGfL)
- Support for ICT in Buckinghamshire schools
- Funding issues
- BucksGfL VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) and BLP (Bucks Learning Portal)
- Recent DCSF initiatives such as "Real Time Reporting" requirements

It will also give colleagues a chance to meet the ICT Curriculum Support Team and discuss ICT issues of common concern within schools. The briefing session (including lunch) is **free** (please see note below) and we would request that those wishing to attend book their place by contacting Karen Fagan at the Teaching and Learning Centre as soon as possible.

The Willow Room at Chartridge Conference Centre can only be accessed by stairs and unfortunately there are no lift facilities. Therefore if you have a query regarding access, please contact Karen Fagan.

This briefing session has proved extremely popular in the past, therefore if you book a place and subsequently have to cancel, can you please inform Karen by 17th October latest so that we may offer your place to another colleague. **Unfortunately, a charge of £30 per person will have to be raised against any school that books a place and then does not attend without previously informing us.** Karen can be contacted on telephone no. 01296 334994 or by email to kafagan@buckscc.gov.uk.

To reserve your place, please reply as soon as possible and by **10th October latest**.

Jaguar Cars Maths in Motion Challenge 2008/9 in Buckinghamshire

Andy Dickson, ICT Consultant

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, the Specialist Schools Trust, Cambridgeshire Software House, iDesk, Quizdom,

Rapid, Alta, Swallow Systems, Rewards4Schools and Wildern School.

The Challenge involves students, aged 10 to 16, working together in small teams to try and set up a race between virtual Grand Prix cars using tried and tested motor racing simulation software. The work needed to do this can be undertaken in a series of maths lessons or as part of a maths club activity - it's up to you! Both boys and girls will become involved in the delights of long division, long multiplication, percentages, scale, 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 2008/09 Challenge is open to any school in either the State or Independent sectors. There are three age ranges in the 2008/09 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 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 knockout round in March 2009. Schools that make it through the knockout round will meet in April 2009 for the Buckinghamshire Final. The Buckinghamshire primary, KS3 and KS4 winners will then race with other LAA winners in the national semi-final knockout round to determine which schools are invited to take part in the National Final in June 2009.

A leaflet with information on the Maths Challenge including pricing and an order form for the Cars: Maths in Motion software is available here:

<http://www.bucksict.org.uk/Teacher%20Resources/CarsMIM.htm>

<http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk/resources/course/view.php?id=127>

Any Buckinghamshire schools who would like to be involved in the Maths Challenge should contact Andy Dickson, tel. 01296 334994, email adickson@buckscc.gov.uk.

Moodle Course Sharing

Geoff Lambrechts, ICT Consultant

We would like to encourage schools to keep an eye on the glossary of courses section of the BucksGfL web site, <http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk/moodlehelp> (section 6) as following our sharing and collaboration policy, new courses are being added for you to download and use.

A big thank you to all schools who have shared courses to date.

Any school that has courses they would like to share with others, please email us with the details, and we will download them for sharing on your behalf.

Microsoft Windows XP lifecycle changes

Becta

Despite the launch of Microsoft Windows Vista, many customers have been reluctant to upgrade from the previous version – Microsoft Windows XP. Vista has a higher minimum required specification to take advantage of many of the improvements in the software. A number of companies, such as Dell, have been offering customers XP on new machines instead of Vista (using downgrade rights for business versions of Vista), despite this operating system now being seven years old.

XP was officially withdrawn from general sale on June 30th 2008 but Microsoft have announced that manufacturers of small, low-powered ultra-portable PCs will be allowed to install it until at least June 2010. This reflects the growing market for that kind of device and the unsuitability of Vista for this kind of device. For normal customers Microsoft will support XP with paid support, patches and updates until 2014.

<http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/features/2008/apr08/04-03xpeos.mspx>

Ictopus – September's Lessons2go

Ictopus

Ictopus (ICT online primary user support) is a support service for primary education. Anyone can sign up for the service (free of charge) and will then receive each week a six page printable magazine and a set of activity suggestions. There will also be a regular newsletter or e-bulletin. These resources (and more) will be archived on the ictopus website <http://www.ictopus.org.uk> where there will also be access to classroom activities and a variety of other resources and projects. Ictopus builds on the Becta Direct2U service and also the legacy of MAPE (Micros and Primary Education).

Login first then download the activities from <http://www.ictopus.org.uk/index.php?sec=1&sub=2&pg=2>

The first two weeks lessons are based on online strategy games. They give a chance to encourage the children to acquire strategies to succeed in the games. This is also intended as an opportunity to assess thinking and speaking skills. Although there will be activities allocated to each age group, it may be worth looking at other activities to see if they can be adapted to your needs.

Available from 9th September 2008

This week we have activities for the following age groups:

3-5: Strategy games - Pairs

6-7: Strategy games Connect 4

8-9: Strategy games Nine Mens Morris

10-11: Strategy games - Quarto and Qubic

Available from 16th September 2008

This week we have activities for the following age groups:

3-5: I spy living things

6-7: Maths Four in a row

8-9: Science Friction

10-11: RE The meaning of life

Available from 24th September 2008

This week we have activities for the following age groups:

5-6: Geography Plan view Quiz

7-8: D & T Building the strongest box

9-10: English - Onomatopoeia sequences

If you have used a good idea which incorporates the use of computers into your lessons, please think about sharing them with the rest of the ictopus group. Send your lesson to us using the contact us link on the website.

Government says technology in learning is no longer optional

DCSF, DIUS and Becta launch Harnessing Technology: Next Generation Learning strategy.

Becta

Learners of all ages need the chance to use technology to support their learning said Jim Knight MP, Department for Children, Schools and Families, as he launched the revised Harnessing Technology Strategy today.

Harnessing Technology 2008 was launched to senior leaders in education and skills at the ICT for Education conference in Birmingham following an extensive consultation with education and skills professionals.

Becta, the government body for technology in learning, was tasked with updating the strategy on behalf of the Department for Children Schools and Families, and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills.

The revised strategy sets out a commitment to ensuring every school, college, university or training provider is 'technology confident', placing particular emphasis on achieving this through engagement with learners and parents and the professional development of teachers and trainers. Becta is now tasked with leading and working with education and skills providers, Government and national partners to ensure this ambitious strategy is delivered by 2014.

Jim Knight, Schools Minister, said:

"We are already one of the leading countries in the world for the use of technology in learning. But the pace of development in technology has been staggering over the last three years – in how it is used by young people, schools, communities and businesses.

"Becta's Harnessing Technology: Next Generation Learning Strategy published today reflects our huge ambitions for the country. We want every educational institution to harness technology's potential, every teacher and student to use it confidently. Children and young people must have access to high-quality technology to enhance their studies – be it at home or in school."

Since the strategy for using technology in learning was first published by DfES in 2005, there have been significant developments in both the technology and education sectors. Over 85% of households with families now have access to broadband, compared with only 8% of households five years ago. Three quarters of 11- to 16-year-olds use social networking sites and 90% use MSN or email.

About Harnessing Technology: Next Generation Learning

This new cross-sector strategy aims to ensure technology supports improvements to services across the education and skills sector, but the strategy also identifies five particular areas for development:

- Promote a clear learner entitlement working in particular to enable disadvantaged learners to use technology effectively, safely and purposefully
- Put in place universal access to powerful learning tools, content and support for family and informal learning
- Help to secure better teaching by exploiting the benefits of technology to provide professional tools and support for teaching
- Develop a system-wide national digital infrastructure that supports personal ownership and environmental sustainability
- Mobilising leadership at all levels of the system through nationally recognised, innovative technology leadership networks.

Harnessing Technology: Next Generation Learning Strategy - summary (PDF)

<http://publications.becta.org.uk/download.cfm?resID=37346>

Full document <http://publications.becta.org.uk/download.cfm?resID=37348>

Full press release [Press release](http://news.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=37361&page=1658&catID=1633)

<http://news.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=37361&page=1658&catID=1633>

NASA images

Becta

Working with the Internet Archive, NASA has opened its full image, audio and video archive for public use. In addition to a simple interactive timeline, images are categorised under five headings:

- Universe
- Solar System
- Earth
- Aeronautics
- Astronauts.

The resource is huge, including over 30,000 shuttle-related images, 27,000 for the solar system and 8,000 for the universe. Images are tagged, so searching for 'horsehead nebula' produced 48 results.

NASA are making the content available without licence: 'The NASA imagery offered on NASAIMAGES.ORG is generally not copyrighted. You may use this NASA imagery for educational or informational purposes, including photo collections, textbooks, public exhibits and Internet Web pages (personal or otherwise).'

Other useful resources includes Microsoft Research's Worldwide Telescope and Google's sky map, Google Sky.

NASA images <http://nasaimages.org>

WorldWide Telescope <http://www.worldwidetelescope.org>

Google Sky <http://www.google.com/sky>

Firefox breaks download records

Becta

Microsoft's Internet Explorer dominates the web browser market, but alternatives such as Mozilla's Firefox have strong followings. The latest version of Firefox, version 3, has been released and over 8 million downloads were recorded in the first 24 hours. This new version includes an updated layout engine and increases that standards compatibility of the software. Firefox is free and easily extensible – many users install add-ons such as local dictionaries, ad-blockers and utility software such as IRC and FTP clients.

Analysts estimate that Internet Explorer is slowly losing ground to other browsers, dropping one percent over May to 73.8%. Firefox has grown to 18.4%, showing the huge lead Microsoft has.

<http://www.techworld.com/applications/news/index.cfm?newsID=101655&pagtype=all>
<http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/>

Subscribing/ Unsubscribing to e-Update

Teachers in Buckinghamshire schools that are connected to BucksGfL Broadband can receive e-Update by email to their BucksGfL email address.

To subscribe:

1. Visit the BucksGfL website <http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk>.
2. Click on the **Login** link in the top right corner.
3. Login using your BucksGfL username and password (your BucksGfL username is the first part of your BucksGfL email address i.e. the bit before the @. Your password is the same as for your email).
4. In the Course Categories section on the main page, click on **ICT**, then click on **e-Update**.
5. You will be asked if you would like to enrol on the e-Update course. Choose **Yes**.

Once you are enrolled, you will be emailed each edition of e-Update to your BucksGfL email address when they are posted on the BucksGfL website.

Note: If you don't wish to use your BucksGfL email address or don't have one (i.e. your school is not connected to BucksGfL Broadband or you are outside Buckinghamshire) then e-Update will still be available to you. However, you will have to download it from the Buckinghamshire ICT Curriculum Support Team's website at <http://www.bucksict.org.uk/e-update/> or the Buckinghamshire Grid for Learning website at <http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk/resources/course/view.php?id=126>

To unsubscribe:

6. Visit the BucksGfL website <http://www.bucksgfl.org.uk>.
 7. Click on the **Login** link in the top right corner.
 8. Login using your BucksGfL username and password (your BucksGfL username is the first part of your BucksGfL email address i.e. the bit before the @. Your password is the same as for your email).
 9. In the Course Categories section on the main page, click on **ICT**, then click on **e-Update**.
 10. On the left, click on the **Unenrol me from e-Update**.
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To subscribe to the various publications, click here: [Becta Schools Subscription Services](#)

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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