

News Bytes Special Edition

Mobile Learning Summer 09

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What is bMobLe?

There is so much interest in mobile learning projects using PDAs, Smartphones, Asus EEE pcs and other netbooks etc. that the Curriculum ICT team in conjunction with the Bradford City Learning Centres set up the Bradford Mobile Learning Network (bMobLe). This network is for all (both Secondary and Primary colleagues) who have either started projects or who are interested in starting projects to enable us to share experiences, positive and negative. So far this year we have held two bMobLe meetings and an extremely successful regional conference in February. Two more meetings have been organised for the Summer term.

Thursday 30th April 4:00-5:00pm Challenge CLC Steljes will be conducting a hands-on demonstration their latest powerful suite of applications for XP netbooks.

Monday 29th June 1:00-4:00pm bMobLe in the Park Exact venue to be confirmed. Wild Knowledge will be running a hands-on demonstration using Smartphones and their software product Wildmap. WildMap turns the traditional audio-

tour into a truly multimedia experience by providing Designated Interest Points (DIPs) containing text, images, audio, video and multi-choice questions. This application is ideal for creating field trips, visitor guides, treasure hunts or quiz trails.

For any information about bMobLe and projects we are running in conjunction with the CLCs please visit www.mymobilelearning.com

If you are a silver or gold subscriber school, James Langley or Alan Beecham can be contacted by e-mail to access advice and support as to how to set up a successful mobile learning project:-

james.langley@educationbradford.com
alan.beecham@educationbradford.com

We look forward to seeing you at the next bMobLe meeting.



Why choose mobile learning?

Providing every pupil with one-to-one access to a device that does many different things can extend learning beyond the classroom walls in many different ways. Pictures, sound clips, video, animation and other creative tools open new approaches that meet different learner needs. Linking devices between learners fosters small group collaboration and peer learning while personal ownership of a device has been proven to encourage a greater sense of responsibility. There are currently over 20 mobile projects being run across Bradford LA and this number is growing at a rapid rate. If you are considering a mobile learning project there are a number of things to think about:-

1) What is the specific focus for the project i.e. raising attainment in a subject, retaining pupil numbers, reducing the digital divide and ensuring equitable 24-7 access to computers for pupils etc?

2) Is the wireless infrastructure, internet bandwidth, servers in you school future-proofed enough to add 30+ wireless devices to the system in one go?

3) What funding could your school access - Harnessing Technology Grant, e-Learning Foundation, CLC

projects, Home Access scheme etc? How can the project become sustainable? Could you ask for parental voluntary contributions?

4) What type of device (Smartphone, netbook, PDA etc) and OS (operating system) are you going to use? What applications will work with the different OS? Who will set up the devices in the school? You have to be aware of the total cost of ownership when running a mobile project.

5) How much initial training and support for teachers will be needed? The teacher will need access to the device for a period prior to the project so that they are comfortable with how the device works and how it can be used in and outside of the classroom. They will also become aware of a devices limitations i.e. battery life, where do you save work etc.

There are many more questions that need to be considered when planning a project. If you need any help or advice please contact the bMobLe team (e-mails above). If you are a Curriculum ICT subscriber school, we can organise a visit to a school that is already running a project to see what is possible in the classroom.

Education Bradford ICT Roadshow 2009

This year's ICT Conference and Roadshow is to be held at Future House on Monday 18th May. The theme of this year's conference will be **Content and Creativity**. We have booked the ever popular Doug Dickinson as our keynote speaker who will talk about Creativity in the Curriculum.

The conference will begin with Paul Scott and James Langley outlining the latest developments with the Bradford ICT Scheme of Work and its related issues which will be covered during the day. The opening session will be followed by 18 exhibitors running seminars which will showcase their content software. Delegates will be able to choose which three seminars they wish to attend.

The exhibitors are 2Simple, Birchfield, j2e, Espresso, Primary Games, Sherston/Tag, Softease (Lightbox), KnowledgeBox, Kudlian, Crick, EducationCity, Scran, WildKnowledge, SUMS Online, Rising Stars, Steljes, Immersive Education and Promethean. They will also have a stand in the exhibition hall so you will be able to visit them

during the refreshment breaks.

After a buffet lunch Doug Dickinson will give his talk which will be followed by a 'hands-on' workshop covering creativity. There will be 5 to choose from which will be run by the 3 Bradford CLC's and James Langley and Steve Dale. The conference will end with a plenary and **prize** draw.

The cost for the roadshow is £75 if you are not a Curriculum ICT subscriber school or you are a Bronze subscriber. If you are a Silver or Gold subscriber school, entrance to the roadshow is FREE. To book your place on the roadshow, please visit the home page of www.curriculumict.com and click on register here for the roadshow. If you are attending the event, please remember to book your workshop place by clicking on the agenda and seminar booking links. To register your place on each of the workshops, please click on the orange link. If you do not pre-book your workshops, we cannot guarantee places at the sessions you want to attend on the day. We look forward to seeing you at the conference.



Doug Dickinson
Keynote Speaker

Linux vs WinXP Home

Two trends in the world of technology are making a big splash in education: web applications and netbooks. There are many tasks that used to require software that you can now do from inside of your web browser. These sites and services are called web applications. They are sometimes called webware because they are like software but stored on the Internet instead of on a computer's hard drive. Web apps are great for students and teachers because they are usually free and do not require software to be installed. Because they run in a web browser, web apps are cross-platform, so it doesn't matter if you are running Windows, Macintosh, or Linux operating systems. Because web apps and their data are stored online, students and teachers can access the apps and data from anywhere (this is called cloud computing). Teachers and students can access web apps on any school computer and also their computers at home. Some web apps even give access on mobile devices. Another bonus: web apps tend to facilitate online sharing and collaboration.

When a school is considering a mobile project, one very important consideration is which OS (operating system) should they choose? There are pros and cons for each operating system and these are outlined below.



Linux is an open source operating system. This means that the programming code behind the software is openly available to the public so that people can develop the software themselves. This means that open source software is free. As a result there are many different "flavours" of Linux e.g.

Ubuntu, Edubuntu, Xandros to name just a few. On all of these Linux netbooks, open source software is the norm, therefore making the netbook much cheaper to buy. A Linux based netbook normally retails between £140-£200 depending on the screen size, battery life, build quality etc. As mentioned previously, a lot of software is now becoming web based - free applications include google docs, virtual Earth, pbwiki etc. There are also some excellent online

applications available through subscription. These include Sums Online, j2e, Honeycomb and 2Simple are now developing some excellent online applications.

The two drawbacks that we have found when launching mobile projects with Linux devices is that the teachers at the schools involved are often nervous about using a new operating system and it does take a while to recognise the full potential of these devices. In 2 of the Bradford projects, the schools have swapped from a Linux based device to Windows XP Home for a number of reasons:-

- 1) The teachers feel a lot more comfortable when using a Windows OS.
- 2) If a school has a site license for a Windows based piece of software, it can be easily installed and will work seamlessly with the netbook on the majority of occasions.
- 3) If the project is an ownership model i.e. the devices are taken home by the students, the devices could be accessed by other members of the pupil's family. E-safety training for pupils and parents is therefore essential when considering a project. We are currently researching the best monitoring and reporting systems for netbooks. If a device is compromised i.e. additional unlicensed software is installed at home for example, there has to be a solution to quickly reinstall a clean image. This is straight forward on a Windows XP device. It is possible to do this on a Linux device, but it takes a lot of research.

- 4) There are currently no classroom management solutions for Linux that can take control of the netbooks, hand out files, collect files etc that we know of. There are a number of Windows solutions available - an excellent example is SMART Synchroneyes.



For any further advice on choice of device, OS, wireless infrastructure etc, please e-mail james.langley@educationbradford.com

E-Learning Foundation Charity

The e-Learning Foundation aims to reduce the effect of this "Digital Divide". They work with schools, parents and other stakeholders to ensure that all children have access to digital technologies, when and where they need them, both at home and at school.

The e-Learning Foundation has 3 core principles which include; Equity of access, Sustainability & Home use.

Equity of access

Equity of access is one where every child in a given cohort has exactly the same opportunity to have access to the school's technology, at home as well as in the classroom, regardless their parents contributions.

Sustainability

Local sustainability is vital, and the engagement of parents who make small donations, normally collected monthly, to the school e-learning programme ensures that the school can replace equipment when and if required. Sustainability also ensures expansion of the project over a number of years.

The e-Learning Foundation is able to personally guide your school through the process of parental engagement. We can even help by collecting the parents donations (should they choose to use direct debit/ credit card).

Home Use

Schools have a key role to play in developing effective home-school links so that students can continue to benefit from school based support and resources when working at home. The e-Learning Foundation supports schools that accept this role and are willing to engage with their families to achieve equity of access at home as well as at school.

Those schools in Bradford wishing to explore the opportunities of 1:1 universal home – schools should be affiliated to the e-Learning Foundation to receive help, advice and support to run their own project.

Contact Sue Waller (School Liaison Manager, North) by email sue@e-learning foundation.com or mobile on 0782 684 4705.



E-Safety - Social Networking Advice

Facebook, Myspace, Bebo and Twitter An advisory note for school employees

Cases involving inappropriate use of various social networking sites peer-to-peer applications are being referred to HR on a weekly basis. A number of these cases have resulted in disciplinary action being taken.

School Senior Leadership may wish to provide this advice to staff either by announcement or in written form so that staff are clear that material posted on these sites applications that may have an impact on the school or on the employee's professional reputation may be considered as disciplinary matters by the school.

Advice:

A number of cases have been reported to Education Bradford involving staff posting inappropriate written material and images on Social Networking Sites peer-to-peer Internet applications, including Facebook, Myspace, Bebo and Twitter. Teachers and associate staff who

participate in these sites, posting comments etc peer-to-peer activity need to be aware that any material that they post on-line should be consistent with their professional status and their employment at their school. Any material which may come to light that could be deemed as harmful to the reputation and interests of the school, its staff and pupils could be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

Please note:

Staff do not have permission to publish or make personal use of photographic images taken at school, or on school activities away from school, which show pupils.

Additionally, staff are advised that it is inappropriate to have on-line relationships with pupils (except where appropriate within family relationships) or to allow pupils access to their own personal peer-to-peer pages. Similarly accessing pupils' personal pages is discouraged as this may cross the professional boundary that should be maintained between staff and pupils.

Advice provided by Education Bradford HR - 22 April 2009

Teachers and associate staff who participate in these sites, posting comments etc peer-to-peer activity need to be aware that any material that they post on-line should be consistent with their professional status and their employment at the school.

Why is it important to have a good internet connection?

The internet is a powerful tool when used with HHL (Handheld Learning) Devices. Web 2.0 technologies have opened up new opportunities for cross curricular creative teaching and learning such as blogging and podcasting. Content such as the school VLE and programs such as Education City can enable personalised learning when used effectively. All these are ideal for using with HHL devices and all rely heavily on a good internet connection.

Education Bradford and the 3 Bradford CLCs therefore recommend that a 10mb internet connection is the minimum requirement for schools introducing and developing whole class / school netbook projects. Future CLC netbook projects will require a 10mb connection in order to qualify for funding from the CLCs.

We acknowledge that schools need bandwidth appropriate to their particular circumstances and needs. BECTA guidelines state that typically, all primary schools should be connected at a minimum of 2 Mbps and that all connections should be 'symmetric' i.e. the same speed in either direction. Monitoring on the Bradford Learning Network shows that most schools are already far exceeding this, especially when pupils are connecting their devices simultaneously in the classroom.

We envisage that schools increase in HHL devices and use of web technologies will grow extensively over the next 2 years and we therefore encourage schools to think long term about their internet connectivity.



Wyke Secondary - Handheld Learning Case Study

Wyke's original mobile project started in April 2007 when for the summer term, staff who volunteered to be part of the project were trained in the use of Glofish smart phones which were provided for the whole of the Year 7 intake which started in September 2007. During that 2007 summer term the opportunity was taken to set up and test a robust wireless network accessible from all parts of the school. For these handheld devices an 'ownership' model was used which relied upon students bringing their devices to school each day charged and ready to use. The very high mobility rate of the student population together with some technical issues led to this project not being as successful as anticipated.

Nevertheless during the Autumn Term 2008 the next phase of their mobile project meant that Wyke took delivery of nearly 100 Acer Aspire Net books. These are school based and will be charged from 'charging pods' which hold 16 machines each (as

soon as the manufacturer supplies the pods).

The netbooks are based in the humanities and English departments. The humanities based machines have been used extensively in:
 RE – eg Webquest and use of Glogster for a project on Ghandi
 Geography – eg Writing frames were used to look at tourism types together with population spreadsheets
 History – eg Newsroom activity about D-Day
 English – eg Webquests about Shakespeare

More work is planned using the handheld devices to set up a GPS based history trail through Wyke Village.

There have still been some technical issues, particularly to do with the machines retaining the IP address but these are being resolved. Students are completing work and then saving it to their space on the school's VLE. This enables access to their work from any machine with internet access and means the machines do not have to be connected to the school's network.



Primary Teaching and Learning Consultant (Curriculum ICT) required

Closing Date: 14th May 2009

Interviews: 21st & 22nd May

Can you...

- Demonstrate experience and expertise in leading ICT in a primary school.
- Demonstrate good knowledge of developments in ICT as a tool for learning and teaching.
- Show that you are willing to work flexibly in a commercial environment
- Show that you can influence people to effect change

We can offer...

- A varied and challenging role
- Training and personal development opportunities
- Enthusiastic and supportive team

For further information or to request an application pack please contact Tina Housley on 01274 385844 or email tina.housley@educationbradford.com

Teaching and Learning Consultant (ICT) Soulbury Scale 9

Free Prize Draw

Congratulations to High Craggs Primary School and Brackenhill Primary School, they entered last term's prize draw and won themselves an Easispeak microphone each.

If you have read this newsletter you are eligible to enter a free prize draw. The prizes this issue include a digital camera and a KSI metal detector.

To enter the free prize draw all you have to do is reply to the newsletter by e-mail:-

(james.langley@educationbradford.com) with the text - Prize Draw please - Your School Name.

Only one entry will be accepted per school.

We will e-mail you to confirm if your school is a winner.

Curriculum ICT Team Newsletter

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Our Curriculum ICT Team is committed to supporting schools to help pupils reach their potential in all the National Curriculum subjects which they study and in which they use ICT. The services we can provide are:-

- in-service training sessions for schools on a variety of issues including:- effective use of interactive whiteboards, digital animation, creative use of ICT across the curriculum, effective use of new online content, podcasting etc
- work in schools modelling effective ICT teaching both in their own and other's classrooms
- work with ICT co-ordinators and help them develop their role effectively
- liaise with Curriculum co-ordinators within schools to promote the development of ICT across the curriculum