

Milverton Primary School,
Warwickshire
Tech-Know-How



Challenge

Milverton sought in 2010-11 for a school-wide development of creative learning to be realised through a whole school ICT focus. They condensed this into four main areas: to become an effective learning community, to promote and develop high quality, creative teaching, to develop new skills in staff, which could be applied and transferred across the curriculum and to make the best use of technology to engage and communicate with all their stakeholders. Milverton is deeply committed to creating a school where pupils are equipped to be good learners who are inspired by high quality teaching, fostering individuals' creative thinking skills. Part of Milverton's vision to become an effective learning community is to be a connected school, making the most of all of the technologies available to them to engage and communicate with stakeholders. This idea is supported by targets identified in their SIDP/SEF.



The Feedback

"The children really like ICT, it allows independence and they love the 'magic' of hearing themselves or making and watching films of themselves. All are willing to try new things in ICT, some very eager." Teacher

"I like sharing our films and pictures and listening to our voices. We learnt to do programming and at lunchtime we have been teaching others to do it (peer coaching)." Pupil (Techno Council member).

"Our teacher loves showing us what she has done and pictures she has taken in the lesson.... now we have a whiteboard and before my teacher didn't want one." Pupil

"I was at the bottom of the school regarding my ICT skills. I have always wanted to know how to make a Power Point, now I am doing it regularly in my lesson planning and teaching. I feel so much more confident and am able to encourage the children to use the equipment too. Parents love the films made on the flips which are on the VLE." Teacher

Intervention

Milverton Primary were looking to develop their understanding of how to use ICT within the whole school community to enable it to be used as an inclusive and successful tool, to enhance and stimulate teaching and learning on a variety of levels. They wanted to build on the relationships between staff/pupils/parents/governors and their cluster schools so they could really co-collaborate in developing an exciting/effective learning community, recognising that the use of ICT is integral to this as well as being integral to pupils learning in a technological world.

The previous year's work with Y3/4 had started a hugely significant journey, with the project reflection and evaluation highlighting the need for a change of practice across the whole school in relation to ICT. Therefore the focus of this project became "*How do we enable [all] staff to feel confident enough to embed the everyday use of a range of creative ICT approaches to support children's learning across the curriculum?*"



Part of the project has also involved working on how we share this exploration and our findings across the wider school communities.

During the planning process we refined our thinking further by auditing staff skills, monitoring the use of ICT/VLP by staff and students, and through discussions with our SLT, local authority ICT link, ICT technician, Creative Agent and Lead Practitioner. Building on the good relationships between staff, pupils, parents, governors and our associated cluster schools was essential for a real sense of co-collaboration in order to develop an exciting and effective learning community.

Appropriate CPD for staff was considered crucial in order to achieve the aims as the levels of confidence and competence in ICT across all staff was already acknowledged to be very mixed.

All relevant stakeholders participated in a range of workshops that sought to unpick ICT and identify how/when/who it was used by and how/when it was incorporated in the curriculum at Milverton. The group explored what ICT was and what skills were needed to address and develop confidence and consistency across the school. Alongside this work a 'Techno Council' was set up with a group of 8 pupils from KS2, to advocate for ICT within their classes/KS1

Accordingly the project activity was planned to take place in 2 distinct phases.

- Phase 1 - Autumn term. This phase was used as a time to bring on board all members of staff, initially through an INSET day at the start, continuing with a series of challenges and bespoke CPD sessions during the term. The challenges and small group/individual CPD would allow less confident staff to start to use/explore different technologies/aspects of ICT/applications in their classroom practice in a safe/supportive environment, using hardware/software in new/different ways, whilst at the same time, offering enough challenge for more confident staff, encouraging them to be more experimental in their use of technology, stretching their classroom practice - offering their pupils access to new technologies and applications/using familiar ICT in unfamiliar ways/lessons. The lead creative practitioner was chosen because of his ICT skills/reflective practice and also his knowledge/understanding of where the school was on its ICT journey - this insight was gained from working with the school the previous year. They also knew he'd support as well as challenge all staff to take risks in their learning journeys.

- Phase 2 - Spring term. This phase was much more classroom based, involving other creative practitioners who weren't ICT specialists, chosen because their skill-sets fitted in with areas staff/children wanted to explore in the context of aspects of the NC their year groups were covering, with their work used in combination with the ICT focus that pupils and staff had identified. Areas worked on included Music and traditional stories, sand sculpture, landscape painting and Journalism. Sharing took place in the form of knowledge/skills/outcomes.



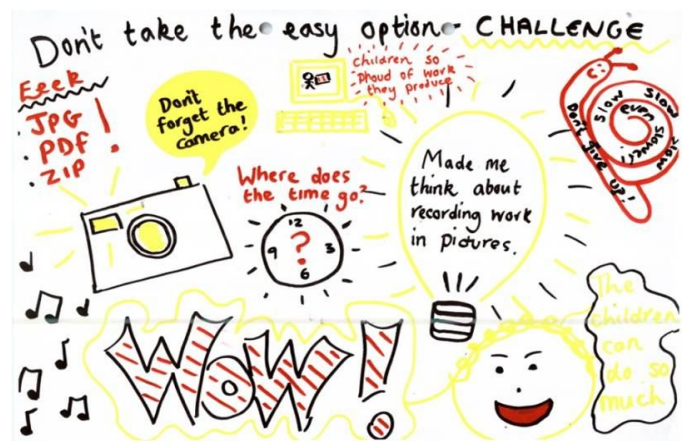
The 'challenges' allowed staff time to play/practise/develop their skills:

- Sharing/Teamwork
- Using different ICT skills- sound, image, multimedia and how these underpin the curriculum through planning
- Engagement and motivation of children in their learning and their improved attainment
- Reflection and Evaluation (with the expectation they would record evidence and document the learning journey)

The final challenges were very creative and encouraged more engagement from the wider school community with more parents/family/community members engaging with the school through actual visits, celebration events, visiting the VLP, reading the Y5/6 and Y3/4 Blogs. The school found that the children shared their new creative ICT skills in home-learning tasks and in publishing and creating amazing ICT presentations. Work was posted on the school blog and invited and received comments from parents and the wider community (from other cluster schools).

Impact

There has been a definite impact on and improvement in some children's attainment, especially in their engagement when using ICT and creative use of ICT in literacy activities. Boys have demonstrated enjoying writing more especially when using 2simple software or splash. Pupils have clearly demonstrated questioning and inquisitive minds while using ICT. They have shown positive attitudes and confidence with ICT. In Reception the teacher used lots of new software (2simple) to engage her reluctant writers and utilised the interactive Whiteboard for children to explore mark-making.



Children now feel they have a good range of basic ICT skills - they can use cameras, flip cameras, easi speak microphones and associated software. All children now have access to the VLE and

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workshops have taken place for some KS1 parents to support their children's learning using this at home. They have developed existing skills or learnt new skills using new software -podium, paint, photo editor, photo story, 2 Simple, and other applications. Children have developed a more consistent approach to learning new skills and knowledge, practising and refining these and they've found new confidence when accessing a wider range of ICT in different subjects, setting their own challenges and working independently. This is evident through technical confidence, the production of physical and virtual work and through the pupil/teacher/practitioner evaluation of the project.

An unexpected outcome was that the ability of the younger children in EY and KS1 and their knowledge and skills has been proved considerable, and it is understood this will have continued impact as they move up through the school and staff will constantly have to sustain and learn new skills in ICT to keep up to date with the pupils.

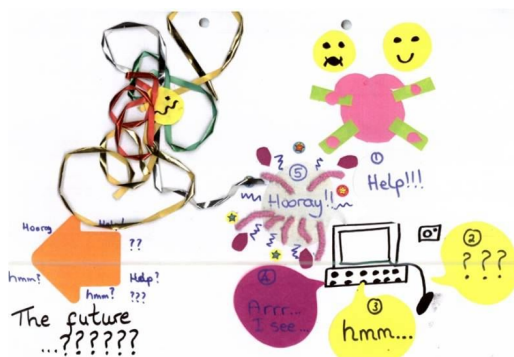
Teacher assessment of ICT skills, particularly in infants recorded outcomes in class books, is evidence of higher attainment by children.



Throughout the project staff have been applying their new learning and skills directly to their classroom practice. They recognise how 'modernised' learning impacts on and benefits pupils as it brings the curriculum into the 21st century, developing skills that the children will need in later life. Staff have used their creative ICT skills to present the children's work in staff meetings (in an end of half term staff 'show & tell' meeting), and in assemblies and presentations to parents.

One downside was that not all TAs felt equally involved in creative learning by and with their teacher partners, as different contractual hours for TAs presented a challenge for staff to involve them as they wished.

Staff recognise they have developed new skills/ideas/knowledge/understanding, practiced and refined their learning, set self-challenges which have stretched their ability out of old comfort zones, experimented with new ideas/techniques and technology and shared expertise/ideas through continued discussion/CPD. This has been evidenced through more sharing at meetings and changed ways of planning. Staff now demonstrate a can do attitude towards using ICT in everyday classroom practice, evidenced through SLT observations, changes in attitudes and the confident use of appropriate ICT and technology in everyday planning and lessons. In turn they recognised the importance of enabling children to shape/co-construct their learning to maximise children's interest and potential.



The INSET day unpicked what individuals thought 'creativity' and 'ICT' meant to them, and gave everyone involved a better, shared understanding. This greatly helped the work as afterwards everyone had a greater awareness of different aspects of creativity, that it isn't just, singing, dancing or drawing etc and that ICT has much wider uses than simply what is taught in the ICT suite at school. Practitioners contributed with their good balance of skills, including deep knowledge of ICT and more arts based creative skills. A side effect of this was that having more male role models in school was seen as very beneficial.

Sustainability

Key to the sustainability of this approach is the change of practice that is coming about in relation to the use of ICT as an inclusive/successful tool used to enhance/stimulate/embed creative teaching/learning on a variety of levels. Ongoing, not one-off CPD is considered by SLT to be essential to bridge gaps/ensure equality of access to ICT for all staff and pupils. Staff acknowledge the culture of the school encouraging opportunities for developing creativity/learning have been part of the change process; they're equally clear recent engagement with Creative Partnerships has enabled them in a sustained way to witness/test/discover for themselves, how, beginning with children's interests and then making learning more open-ended, can generate greater ownership, engagement and so lead to improved learning. ICT has been the ideal context to develop this awareness across the school but this has not been confined to ICT.

The school have committed to fund further project work with the Creative Practitioner who did most of this project with them, to continue the developments. One TA has taken on responsibility to support ICT curriculum leader and staff in the development of ICT across the whole school. Two afternoons have been designated to technical support, maintenance of resources and working with children.

Areas for future further development include:

- sustaining the use of image, sound and film
- looking at the skills in ICT curriculum that staff/pupils still need support in - control and monitoring, simulation and modelling, data logging
- better monitoring of outcomes of pupil ICT learning



Part of the larger vision to become an effective learning community is through becoming a connected school, making the most of the technologies they've got to engage/communicate with stakeholders, and this work is being developed through the cluster project the school is engaged with as part of its legacy work. Alongside this a Collaboration Council has been set up as part of a whole school project with two other schools in the North Leamington cluster - Telford Infants and Brookhurst Primary school. Work is shared within this group as an example of how to develop best practice in other schools.

The school believes this project has started to move them on significantly in their overall aim, and this has been evidenced during sharing sessions with cluster school colleagues and with the school ICT governor - Maggie Wagstaff who commented "*I was well impressed*".

ICT has a continually developing role in education, meaning that busy teachers cannot always keep up with or focus on particular developments in this area. This project has invested in the school staff and their CPD as they are the ones who will now take on new tasks with new confidence with several generations of pupils to come.

In 2011-12 the focus of ICT will be E-safety to review what exists now the children are so active in ICT and using it to present work and communicate with the wider community etc. The school will also be looking at how ICT can support the raising in attainment in writing and reading at Milverton.