

We-Learn

St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Stockingford, Nuneaton

"We are using the We-Learn equipment and content across the whole curriculum for Key Stage 2 subjects. We had an excellent introduction to the benefits of We-Learn and implemented it very quickly. The use of the Tablet PC is a revelation: being wireless it allows the teachers to be completely mobile in the classroom, which enables and encourages the pupils to participate more actively in the lessons. The freedom of movement that the Tablet brings also means that staff can keep the pace of the lessons brisk if they wish and being able to walk around the classroom helps them to monitor group dynamics more easily, without distracting from the focus of the lesson." Pat Durham, ICT Co-ordinator and We-Learn Lead Teacher



Introduction of We-Learn equipment

The school was one of two primaries which took part in the consultation phase of We-Learn in



February 2004 through what was then known as the PFI 'Teacher Toolkit' project. St Paul's helped to shape We-Learn during the consultation phase and subsequent Limited Service Pilot, which involved 12 primary and 3 secondary schools. We-Learn is now used to offer staff new approaches to teaching and learning through access to high-quality digital resources,

Tablet PCs and projector equipment. St Paul's staff knew that computers and digital technology were part of everyday life for their pupils and saw the We-Learn project as a way of making sure that the school had access to the most up-to-date resources.

We-Learn in action

Year 5 and 6 teachers are using We-Learn across history, numeracy and literacy lessons for planning, preparation, teaching and learning. We-Learn has helped to increase the availability and use of online and ICT resources in the school and has influenced ICT provision and the decision to invest in We-Learn for Years 3 and 4. The new ICT capability has had a positive impact on children, who are motivated and have increased focus through the use of digital resources, which stimulates both collaboration skills and confidence levels. The Easiteach software for the whiteboards allows teachers to create resources which all the pupils can see easily and which allows staff to model situations, exercises and learning points in a variety of ways to appeal to different learning styles.

About the school

St Paul's Primary School has two classes per year group and serves 442 students aged 4-11, plus 26 nursery age children. 80 pupils have special education needs.

The 16 teachers and 15 teaching assistants have high levels of ICT knowledge and the 2002 Ofsted report commented on the good use that staff make of laptops during lessons. All teachers have their own laptop, encouraging them to use ICT to enhance teaching and learning and to raise standards of achievement. Staff use We-Learn in all subjects with Years 5 and 6 and have recently chosen the solution for Years 3 and 4.

Pupils' comments: "This is really cool! They never had anything as good as this at my old school!"

Considerations

St Paul's has a firm commitment to ICT and identified further use of information and communication technology as a priority area in its strategic planning in 2002, so was keen to take part in the Teacher Toolkit pilot. Teachers are gaining confidence in the use of the new digital materials, and will soon be able to edit and update lesson plans and develop a list of preferred resources; this will permit more time to be spent on using the materials for teaching and learning.

"It quickly became apparent that the toolkits had the potential to improve the quality of learning and teaching in our school. Therefore, when we had our new classrooms built for our Year 3 and 4 classes, it was important to us that we incorporated the toolkits into these classrooms. All the teachers and pupils in Key Stage 2 now benefit from using this technology and I can see the impact that it is having," Chris Plant, Headteacher, St Paul's.

Benefits

- ❑ The wireless Tablet PC allows teachers to be completely mobile in the classroom, facilitating and encouraging greater pupil interaction with the teachers and technology than previously
- ❑ The Tablet PC is more visible and flexible than traditional PCs or laptops
- ❑ Staff can model concepts such as division, proportion, multiplication in a variety of ways, to appeal to different learning styles
- ❑ Pupils are more motivated than previously and concentration levels have improved.
- ❑ We-Learn can be used to complement traditional methods of teaching and learning
- ❑ Provides ready made resources for Year 5 and 6 as well as 'bite size'/modular teaching materials
- ❑ Availability of high quality resources on the We-Learn portal allows pupils to become anytime/any place independent learners
- ❑ We-Learn offers a variety of resources from one portal making it easier for staff to find new teaching materials

Tips

- Allow plenty of time for staff to plan and prepare resources during the learning curve
- Consider the 'digital divide' – research how many of your pupils have computers at home and how many have Internet access. Plan how you will cater for children who do not have out-of-school computer facilities.



Next Steps

St Paul's vision is of a learning environment where all staff have a high level of competence and confidence in ICT to enhance teaching and learning and to raise standards of achievement. We-Learn has made SMT and teachers more aware of the use of ICT in the classroom and this has positively influenced the design of classrooms in the new extension to the school and ensured that provision of ICT equipment is

considered at the planning stage. The innovative 'teaching walls' used in the We-Learn classrooms have been replicated in the new teaching spaces to ensure that all pupils have an unrestricted view of the projector screen and teacher's whiteboard.

The school aims to support children's learning through access to high quality and appropriate teaching resources. Increased use of ICT is a priority area in the school's strategic planning and Easiteach and interactive whiteboards have recently been introduced to Year 1 and SEN rooms. The forward-thinking school is now planning to use other interactive technology such as handheld devices with its special educational needs students, to make group work more effective and to stimulate discussions.