



Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

an essential guide for School Governors



Dear Chair of Governors

ICT has a unique position within schools today in the drive to raise standards and support learning. After staffing, the provision and sustainability of ICT equipment and services has become the most expensive item on most schools' annual budget. In 2004 the only ring-fenced funding for schools, whether primary or secondary, relates to the provision of ICT equipment and services. Recent ministerial announcements regarding the flexibility to use capital funding for ICT purchases where the school feels appropriate emphasise the contribution that ICT can make to learning. In addition, every school is receiving a fixed sum for the purchase of educational computer software from a government catalogue of curriculum-aligned material (Curriculum Online – COL). Following four years with an emphasis on 'boxes' and 'wires' there is now a coherent move towards encouraging effective ICT usage by all staff and students.



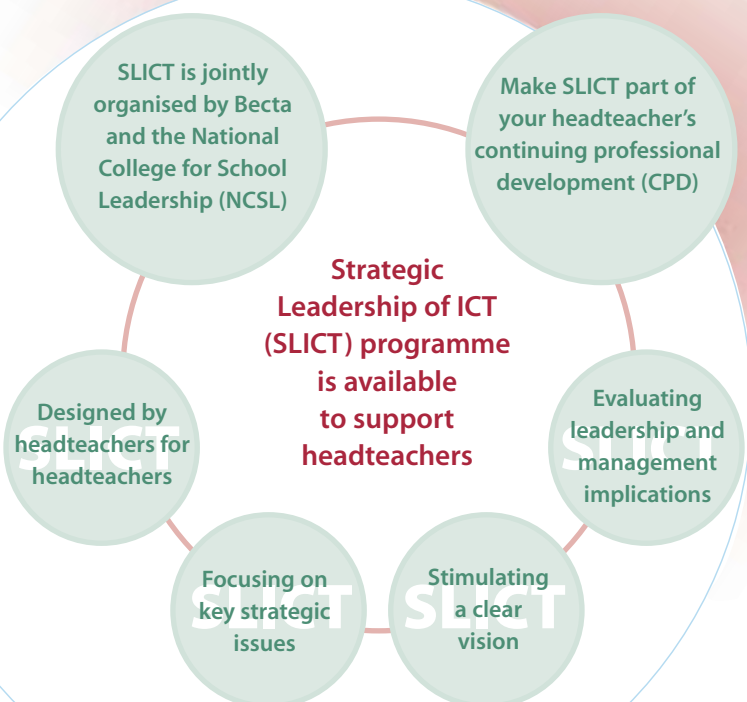
The DfES has commissioned Becta to produce a series of ten six-page guides to be published monthly from mid 2004. Each will also be available on Becta's website [<http://www.becta.org.uk/schools/leaders>].

Each pamphlet will provide specific information on an aspect of ICT, together with suggested routes that individual governors can follow to find additional help. This first document is focused on you as the Chair of Governors and we hope that you will sign up for the entire series to maintain your personal overview of ICT development. We recommend you distribute further copies to individual members of the governing body or to a particular committee. As shapers of strategic direction and as a 'critical friend' to headteachers and their senior management team (SMT), governors need

both to understand the potential of ICT as an enabler of whole-school improvement and also to realise where ICT is an appropriate solution and where it is not. In many schools ICT has previously been seen as a curriculum subject only, whereas now ICT should be seen as having a much more all-encompassing position within education. Your school may already have an ICT governor who has been supporting the subject ICT. There is now an opportunity and a need to have an e-learning governor with a much broader ICT portfolio.

Almost all government policy documents directed at education – green and white papers, and consultative material – involve ICT as a major constituent and/or delivery platform for ensuring educational success.

It is essential that members of a school's governing body are aware of the influences that ICT is having on the school development/improvement plan. This goes beyond ensuring value for money in computer hardware purchases and network installations. The main focus must be encouraging teaching and non-teaching staff to follow professional development courses to adopt, adapt and improve their use of ICT to help raise standards in their own subject areas. ICT can make a big contribution to the efficiency of school administrative procedures, including assessment, and to the school's leadership and management. The Government is encouraging schools to consider their view of e-confidence, and governing bodies need an overview of local and national ICT developments in order to aid the school in deciding which parts of the e-confidence vision might support their drive to raise standards.



Content for the guides

Policy and projects

This guide will cover:

- information on current policy directions and background on ICT in Schools and National Grid for Learning (NGfL) developments
- updates on ICT in Schools issues, including the Government's e-learning vision, and the progress so far of the national workforce agreement/remodelling project.

Vision

This guide will concentrate on stimulating governors and enabling them to contribute to or review the development of an agreed vision for learning and teaching and for the whole school.

The e-confident school

'e-confidence' has been identified as a major focus for the ongoing use and development of ICT in schools in 2004–2005. So what is 'e-confidence' and how can you ensure your school is making the most of developments in this area? This guide will illustrate, with case

study material from schools across England, what 'e-confidence' looks like on the ground, and how to move towards it. It will cover:

- whole-school improvement and development – the breadth of new technologies and their potential for raising standards
- how the introduction of different presentation technologies – wireless, interactive whiteboards, handheld computers – can have a strategic effect on school development.

Learning and teaching

This guide will explore effective learning and teaching strategies involving ICT for different key stages. Classroom case study material will demonstrate the appropriate use of ICT especially in meeting special educational needs.

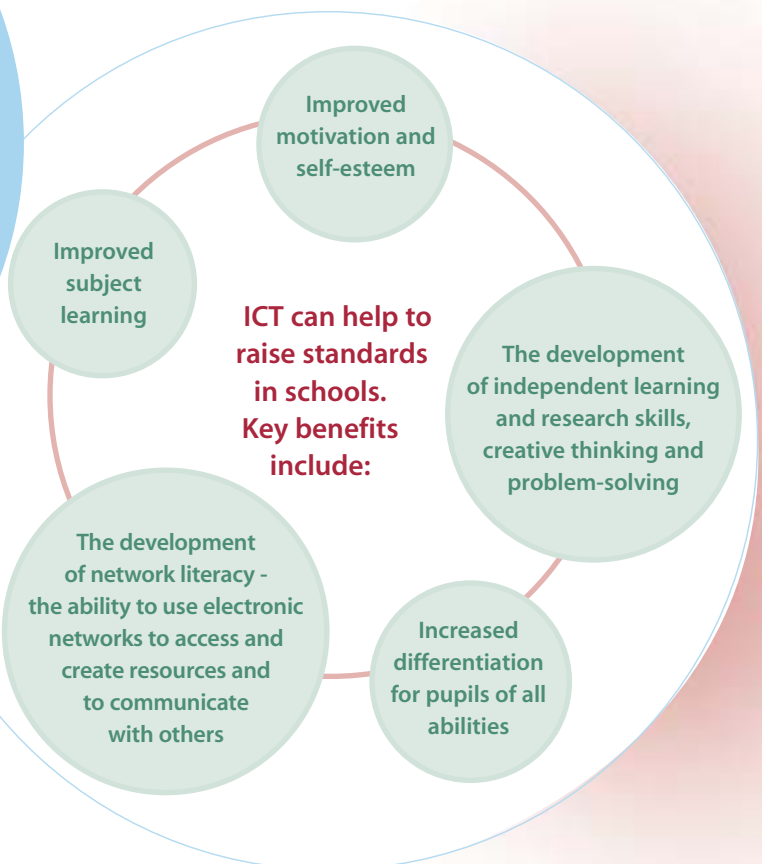
Administrative roles and responsibilities

This guide will demonstrate how the appropriate use of ICT can assist in the day-to-day management of the school. This will include up-to-date information on areas like e-registration, financial planning, monitoring and management across the school and will help school leaders to make informed decisions.

What is the ICT responsibility of the Governing Body?

- Knowledge of the support ICT can offer both staff and students in curriculum subjects. In particular how ICT can improve learning opportunities for pupils
- Strategic thinking on procurement of ICT and its implementation in the school
- Awareness of the potential contribution of ICT to the running of the school

ICT can help to raise standards in schools. Key benefits include:





Assessment

This guide will concentrate on how ICT can help with monitoring and assessment. It will indicate how you can use data to improve pupil performance, assess pupils' progress, explain differences and your expectations of pupils and compare your school's national results, interpret changes and make comparisons. Use of such information can assist in determining how to drive up pupil attainment across the school.

Infrastructure

This guide will provide a review of school infrastructure, wider networking issues and an introduction to the range of ICT tools available. It will include advice on the procurement process, total cost of ownership (TCO) issues, network standards, broadband and technical support.

Using ICT to drive whole-school improvement

This guide will demonstrate that ICT has the potential to act as a catalyst in raising pupil motivation and improving pupil behaviour, in enhancing communication both within and between schools and in leading to improvements for teachers, school managers and parents.

Professional development

This will cover development for governors, headteachers and all school staff. As well as describing the opportunities for staff development across the school, it will suggest how ICT can help governors to be more effective and detail the training opportunities available.

Safety and protection

This will feature materials on internet safety and proficiency both for pupils and for staff. There will also be information and guidance on the legal implications for schools and governing bodies of data protection and copyright.

This first publication has been directed to the Chair of Governors as the focal point of the governing body within your school. Please email governorguides@becta.org.uk to express your interest in receiving the whole series. In your email please use the subject title 'Governor Guide Series' and in the main body of the email please provide us with your details, as requested on the detachable form. If you prefer, you may fill in the form opposite and return it by post or fax to Becta.

Order form

Please return to:

Governor Support
Governor Guides
Becta
Millburn Hill Road
Science Park
Coventry CV4 7JJ

Order form

I am interested in receiving the whole series of Governor guides.

To order **free** printed copies please fill out this form and send it to the address overleaf or fax it to us on **024 7641 1418**.

An asterisk (*) denotes a mandatory field.

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Role: Chair

Other (please specify)

* School name (in full):

* DfES number of school:

* LEA number (eg Warwickshire 937):

(The school secretary/clerk to governors can supply DfES/LEA numbers if you do not know them.)

* Number of copies required:

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Email address of Governor if you wish to receive email information from Becta (block capitals, please):

Becta may wish in the future to send you information about other Becta activities and services that may be of interest to you. If you would like to receive these, please tick this box

Your feedback is valuable to us. Please comment on this publication and suggest possible publications for the future:

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Thank you

Useful information

Where can you go on the internet for further help regarding ICT?

Your own LEA ICT team, particularly the ICT adviser, should be your first contact for planning, funding and training advice. Your LEA Governor Training section may be able to direct you to support.

Becta

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

Becta is the Government's lead agency for ICT in education.

Curriculum Online

<http://www.curriculumonline.gov.uk>

DfES Curriculum Online gives access to a wide range of digital and multimedia learning materials to support teaching across the curriculum. Some are free or can be purchased using e-learning credits.

National College for School Leadership's Strategic Leadership of ICT (NCSL SLICT) course

<http://www.ncsl.org.uk/slict>

This national programme has been developed to help headteachers focus on their strategic role in leading ICT in their schools.

DfES Governonet

<http://www.governonet.co.uk>

This key information resource for school governors includes all relevant DfES material, such as consultations and guidance. Links to local education authorities (LEAs) can be found via the LEA Websites Links article

<http://www.governonet.co.uk/leaslinks>

GovernorLine

<http://www.governoyourschool.co.uk/governorline.htm>

For any general enquiries relating to school governance you can contact GovernorLine on 08000 722181. This free advice line offers information and support to governors across all aspects of school life.

Govern your School

http://www.governoyourschool.co.uk/about_this_site.htm

This general site for governors is designed to help you keep abreast of educational developments.

National Governors' Council (NGC)

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

This association represents school governing bodies.

National Association of Governors and Managers (NAGM)

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

This is an independent association for school governors.

Association of Governing Bodies of Independent Schools

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

This body representing governors of independent schools is the result of a merger between the Governing Bodies Association and the Governing Bodies of Girls Schools Association.

Information for School and College Governors

<http://www.governors.fsnet.co.uk>

This is an advice service for governors of schools.

Inclusion

Inclusion is a cross-curricular issue with huge implications for schools to consider, so schools need up-to-date information on legislation and current issues concerning inclusion. ICT can offer a range of opportunities for supporting inclusive practices and whole-school solutions, as well as having the potential to reduce exclusion and support all learners.

The Inclusion website [<http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk/>] has a catalogue of resources to support individual learning needs for teaching professionals, governors, parents, carers and learners. Resources for those using ICT in an inclusive approach to education include publications, software, equipment and online information.

Becta's Communication Aids Project (CAP) [<http://www.becta.org.uk/cap>] is designed to help students with significant communication difficulties and, in particular, to give support to those who have difficulty in understanding language, communicating orally and using written communication.

Research

Becta's evidence and research work can be divided into five main areas:

- longitudinal studies
- data analysis
- adding value to secondary sources
- planned interventions
- awards, fieldwork and online forums.

Becta encourages the transfer of knowledge between teachers and schools. Our research network allows the research community to connect with teachers and policy makers. Our awards schemes help to identify models of excellent practice and use these to promote better practice more widely.

For more information, visit the Becta research website [<http://www.becta.org.uk/research/>] or email us [research@becta.org.uk].

department for
education and skills

Department for Education and Skills (DfES)

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British Educational Communications
and Technology Agency

Becta is the Government's key partner in the strategic development and delivery of its information and communications technology (ICT) and e-learning strategy for the schools and the learning and skills sectors.

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