

A photograph of several young children in a classroom, looking towards the right. The image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent purple circle. In the top right corner of this circle is a smaller purple circle containing the text 'Include ICT'. The background of the entire page is a solid purple color with several overlapping, semi-transparent purple circles of varying sizes. Some of these circles contain faint, light-colored images: one in the top left shows a computer keyboard, one in the bottom right shows a computer monitor displaying a cartoon character, and another in the middle left shows a close-up of a hand holding a pen over a document.

Include ICT

A good start

Using ICT to enable
social inclusion in
primary schools

Background and introduction

Engaging all pupils in learning

Inclusion, especially social inclusion, is very difficult to measure. Teachers and observers may notice when it is absent, but it is hard to pinpoint what inclusion looks like. It is more than differentiation, more than integrating children with disabilities or learning difficulties into a classroom.

Children come to school with different cultural, social and educational experiences. Some children may not have attained the physical, psychological or behavioural development or maturity to benefit from schooling without additional support. Children may need time to develop motor skills to help with writing, social and emotional competence to deal with being in a large group, additional language support if English is not the home language, and time to foster emergent literacy, possibly in several languages. It is the responsibility of the educational system to identify each child's stage of development, and encourage and support their progression from that point.

Difficult home lives may contribute to such problems as:

- developing trust
- bullying or being bullied
- poor social skills such as turn taking, empathising with others, kindness and politeness. Developing social skills can help children fit in and feel at ease with others.

To help children learn, educators must:

- provide a school environment that acknowledges children's diverse backgrounds
- help children progress through the stages of development as appropriate
- provide community support when necessary.

Different learning styles need to be taken into account by staff when they are teaching and when they are planning, making materials and evaluating lessons. This will ensure that pupils' preferred styles are engaged and learning opportunities maximised. However, other less favoured styles should not be ignored because developing skills in these areas will only benefit the pupils, extending their horizons, and helping to move them on in small steps from where they are to where they need to be.

In May 2003, Education Secretary, Charles Clarke, launched *Fulfilling the Potential*, clarifying the directions in which schools should be moving with ICT and e-learning, and the outcomes they should be seeking. The Government aims to ensure that, for all schools, ICT:

- makes a significant contribution to teaching and learning across all subjects and ages, inside and outside the curriculum
- is used to improve access to learning for pupils with a diverse range of individual needs, including those with special educational needs and disabilities
- is used as a tool for whole-school improvement
- is used as a means of enabling learning to take place more easily beyond the bounds of the formal school organisation and outside the school day – and of enhancing the quality of such experiences
- capabilities are developed as key skills essential for participation in today's society and economy.

About this booklet

This booklet is one in a series of publications called 'Include ICT' that examine the ways in which schools are developing inclusive learning and teaching practices. This booklet looks at social inclusion and attempts to identify some successful strategies from two first schools in Worcestershire. The schools featured are not new schools, nor do they have enormous budgets for lots of leading-edge equipment. Many of the children do not have access to ICT outside the school premises. These schools have been chosen because they are doing interesting things with modest equipment, and the activities they have developed could be replicated in any school.

How to use the materials

The booklet is accompanied by a CD-ROM containing video clips that illustrate the key issues. This CD may be viewed in conjunction with the booklet, if you wish, or the booklet alone may be used.

The material can be used by teachers and teaching assistants as well as senior managers in school and those who train teachers in this area.



Motivation
and readiness are
two of the key factors
that influence successful learning.

Case studies

St George's School and Westlands School

Both schools featured in this case study are in Worcestershire. They are first schools taking pupils from nursery to Year 4. St George's C of E First School is in Redditch, and 42 per cent of the pupils have English as an additional language. Westlands First School is on an estate near Droitwich. It is in a Birmingham overspill area, and has a range of social problems.

The nurture group

Westlands school has a nurture group to support children who might otherwise not cope with mainstream education. These children might need to spend a little longer on pre-reading or early learning activities and have more repetition in the early stages of concept development. They might need to spend time working in smaller groups, dealing with behavioural issues or learning to make sense of the differences between home and school life. Learning support might take place in the classroom or in small withdrawal groups. It includes drill-and-practice spelling programs with speech output to develop and reinforce phonics.

Effective uses of ICT

ICT is multisensory. Children can read a story or listen to stories, they can interact with the text to make things happen on screen and reinforce learning. Crick Software has produced 'clicker books' that support literacy work, bringing together pictures, words and sound. The clicker books may be used by a single child or projected onto a whiteboard for a group. Viewing the story on the huge screen of the interactive whiteboard can help focus attention, regardless of learning style.

Simple fun activities such as designing, printing and colouring in a monster can help children practise their English as well as reinforcing core vocabulary such as numbers, colours, and parts of the body. ICT provides support for language learning and decision making. Programs that provide opportunities for going over vocabulary and spellings in different contexts can be valuable.

Pixie is a small robot which can be used in family learning, for numeracy or for language development. At St George's School, it has been used with a small group, guided by a classroom assistant, to sequence the events of a story.

A creative approach has been taken by Westlands School to teaching symmetry. The children create a design on the computer, print it on special paper and then iron the resulting transfer onto a T-shirt which they can take home. This brings together art and maths in a way that motivates some youngsters.

Some children may speak very little English when starting school, especially where this is not their first language, while others may be quite fluent in two or three languages. Multilingual software lets such children hear their home language in the classroom, and promotes self-esteem. Alphabet Soup, a program from 2Simple Software, is one of the few programs which features community languages including Punjabi, Bengali and Chinese. Children appreciate the humour, colour and sound in English and their home languages and the software helps them to develop transferable literacy skills.

ICT skills training for adults

Parents get online too. At St George's School, the LEA offers basic computer skills training for adults one afternoon a week. This gives parents a chance to build their skills and confidence to support their children. Not only do they understand more clearly what their children are doing at school, but the classes also give them skills that will help them in the workplace.



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Key issues

If you are reading this booklet in conjunction with viewing the video clips on the CD, you may wish to watch the videos now, to see how they illustrate the points below.

- **Help children to develop social skills**

Talking, turn taking and social skills are as important as formal learning. At Westlands School, children in the nurture group are encouraged to develop social skills by sharing breakfast together. ICT also has a role, helping to motivate the children and giving them the belief that they will succeed.

- **Offer learning support**

ICT-based activities can keep children on task for longer, and give them positive feedback. ICT is never judgemental and offers opportunities both to have several tries at the same task and reinforce learning.

- **Multisensory approaches reinforce learning**

Multisensory learning is an instructional approach that combines auditory, visual, and sometimes also tactile elements into a learning task. Many pupils learn better using one or more particular senses rather than others. They may be visual or kinaesthetic learners rather than auditory learners. Multisensory software and interactive whiteboards enable children to learn through their preferred style while still helping to develop other sensory skills.

- **Access to language**

Some children are multilingual and this should be encouraged along with an awareness of the range of cultures in the world. Children need to be able to process language and to communicate in English if they are to make headway with their education. ICT offers opportunities to develop language skills and can also support multilingual children.

- **Use active learning to involve children**

 - Younger pupils**

 - Most young children model the world through play, as with the Pixie robot, but some do not have the opportunity to play at home. Play activities, which may or may not include the use of ICT, can help with motor skills and physical development as well as being fun.

 - Older pupils**

 - Many children need to be actively engaged in their learning. They would switch off if they had to sit and listen to the teacher for extended periods. ICT enables them to interact with materials in a way which will maximise concentration and learning.

- **Get parents involved**

By offering support to parents, such as basic ICT skills training, schools can increase the amount of help and encouragement available to children at home.



**To start this
CD-ROM:**

Place in CD-ROM drive. The CD should start automatically. If it does not: PC users should double click the 'My computer' icon and then double click on the CD-ROM drive icon. Mac users should double click the CD-ROM icon, then double click on the icon marked 'Include ICT A good start'

Further help

Becta – Digital divide discussion paper April 2001

<http://www.becta.org.uk/research/research.cfm?section=1&id=529>

Becta – *Achieving universal access*; internet policy recommendations to the UK Government

<http://www.becta.org.uk/research/research.cfm?id=2604>

Crick Software

<http://www.cricksoft.com/uk>

DfES – *Fulfilling the potential*

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ictinschools/publications/publication.cfm?publicationid=45>

Inclusion website

<http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk>

2Simple Software

<http://www.2simple.com>

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Millburn Hill Road,
Science Park,
Coventry, CV4 7JJ

Tel: 024 7641 6994

Fax: 024 7641 1418

Email: becta@becta.org.uk

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

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