

# Thundersley Junior School

In this case study we explore the ways in which Thundersley Junior School has built on their involvement in the Becta award winning KS2-3 Transfer Project and developed their own KS1-2 project using E-folio (the local name for Netmedia's personalised learning environment).

Following on from the KS2-3 transfer project, Thundersley have developed their own KS1-2 project using E-folio. Year 2 pupils from Thundersley Infants, who are due to attend the Juniors in September, have all been given E-folio accounts early, so they can get to grips with their desktops. They are partnered up with their year 5 shared reading partners as email pals and send regular messages across the playground electronically! This has several benefits. As well as the early development of email skills the children have an older contact in the school before they arrive. They feel part of the junior school community straight away.

Teachers used some time on the day to 'play' with their desktops and share ideas and comments with their classes. It was an opportunity for teacher and pupils to learn alongside each other.

## What Next?

Thundersley Junior School have since re-subscribed to E-folio and, as a school, have been using it independently of the project. They have been working especially creatively with the email facility.

Andrew Withams, ICT Co-ordinator and County Leading ICT Teacher, has now rolled out the desktop to all pupils, with children using E-folio both at home and at school. Approximately 50% of pupils asked said that they regularly use E-folio from home and school. About 75% of the pupils said they had used E-folio from home at some time. Everyone uses it regularly in school.

The pupils have been using their email function to keep in contact with an ex-Thundersley pupil who recently emigrated to Canada. The children have enjoyed being able to easily keep in contact with their friend and 'chat' about the things they are doing.



## The main advantages of using E-folio:

No matter where their next school is, their new teacher can view previous work provided they have access to the Internet. For Thundersley Juniors this could mean KS1-2 or KS2-3.

It is a safe way for children to keep in touch with old school friends as it is a closed system, i.e. email settings enable a school to choose who its pupils can communicate with.

*"You can talk safely outside of chatrooms and use it at home to send and check mail."*

Year 6 pupil

*"You can email your friends. Sometimes use it for homework and sometimes for fun.!"*

Year 6 pupil

The Essex E-Folio Project team are joint winners of the BECTA ICT in Practice Awards 2005 for Innovation and Change.

## In the beginning...

Thundersley Junior School initially began working with the E-folio desktop through the KS2-3 Transfer Project. The pupils produced a PowerPoint presentation which they uploaded to their personal area of E-folio. It was then ready and waiting for them, on arrival at secondary school in September, to be valued and developed. E-folio seemed to capture the children's imaginations.

Teachers from Thundersley Junior School undertook training so they had an understanding of what the desktop could offer and the potential for using it within their school. Initially, they wanted to work with year 6 pupils and used the desktop as part of the project.

Kay Meager one of the county ICT advisors visited the school for a day to introduce the children to their E-folio desktops. The school had three classes of year 6 pupils and each class was really keen to work with the desktop. "The children received the desktop very well and got to grips with sending emails very quickly. They enjoyed adding content and building their own home page, that reflected the things that they found interesting. The pupils seemed keen to use E-folio from home and many contacted us through the 'Mail the Mouse' property to give us their thoughts and to share jokes and favourite websites'