

**CASE STUDY**



**Taking eLearning to a new level!  
Lessons learnt from implementing  
Netmedia's Learning Platform across  
Sheringham Primary School**



**Contact us today to find out how Netmedia can help  
to transform teaching and learning in your school or LA.**

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Netmedia is pleased  
to have been selected as a  
'Becta Learning Platform  
Services Framework Supplier.'



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### 'eLearning' is a priority

Sheringham Primary School is the largest primary school in Norfolk with over 560 pupils, unusual given its rural location. The school is known locally for being a forward-thinking and innovative school and are often used as an exemplar of good practice throughout the Local Authority. Tim Groves, eLearning Manager at the school, quickly saw the potential of using Learning Platforms in schools and has been involved in their use in the authority from the beginning. Mr. Groves took part in a trial involving Netmedia's Learning Platform for the LA starting in November 2005 and his school purchased the Learning Platform for all staff and pupils in September 2006. At the end of the trial, the authority subsequently purchased the Learning Platform for all their primary schools.

Mr. Groves has held his current post of eLearning Manager since September 2006 and no longer holds teaching responsibility for a class. Instead, he takes pupils for a 2 – 3 hour session at least once a fortnight to cover the PPA time for their regular class teacher. During these longer sessions, Mr. Groves introduces the pupils to ICT and in particular the Learning Platform. He feels this set-up enables pupils to develop discrete ICT skills with these skills becoming more integrated and better retained by the pupils. This approach is then consolidated with staff providing ICT opportunities throughout the rest of the curriculum.

### Small steps prove a big success

In preparation for the implementation, Mr. Groves introduced the concept of the Learning Platform to staff at the end of the Summer Term 2006 to make them aware of the forthcoming changes.

When staff returned to school in September, he ran training sessions to enable staff to become familiar with the Learning Platform and how this tool would be used in school.

Staff were first introduced to the *notice board* and *calendar* "Properties" on MyDesktop as these areas were most relevant to their needs and would be adopted quickly.

Staff were required to log-in to the Learning Platform before they could access any other school-related resources and notices, which ensured they adopted the 'log-in' habit very quickly.

Mr. Groves then set-up fortnightly training workshops each focusing on different tasks.

All staff, including the 26 Teaching Assistants (TAs), and all Governors have their own personal log-in to the Learning Platform. The school has personalised areas for each group where they can go to access information. These groups have immediately seen benefits of the Learning Platform: the TAs are able to access resources previously unavailable to them (for example from home) and the Governors feel more involved in the day-to-day life of the school.

The use of the Learning Platform then gained a momentum of its own within the school as different features and uses were discovered and shared. Staff started using the "Properties" both for personal and pupils use. Personal and shared *Files Boxes* have proved valuable for storing resources and documents, while the *Discussion Forums* are extremely popular with the children, even encouraging usually reserved children to participate in class discussions. Recognising the

need to create a visual approach to keep their pupils engaged teachers have utilised the *Text and Image* "Property" in a variety of ways to create a fun and stimulating environment.

### Learning new skills and cultivating responsibility

The Learning Platform is now used by all KS2 pupils with Year 2 having access since Christmas. Pupils have their passwords chosen for them until they reach Year 5 where they are allowed to choose their own. They are also encouraged to personalise their desktop as much as

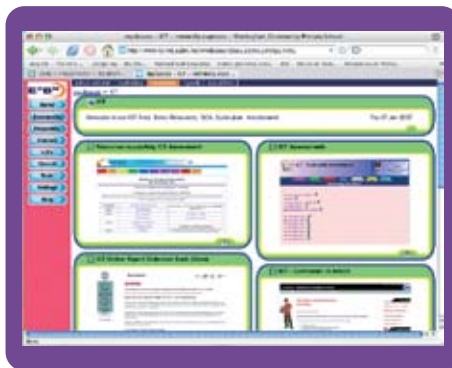
possible, for example, by changing the look and feel and adding links to their favourite websites. The pupils have readily adopted the Learning Platform and the vast majority now log on a daily basis with ease. A large number also log on during out of school hours. Mr. Groves feels one of the main reasons that the pupils have adopted the Learning Platform with such ease is that many of them are visual learners and the Learning Platform has opened up to them areas that they previously found difficult to understand and be involved in.



"The world of digital content" Class



Pupils accessing work in class



The "ICT Area" Class

The Learning Platform has provided many anticipated and unforeseen benefits:

- speaking and listening skills have improved
- a surprising amount of inter-school and peer collaboration has taken place
- it has helped to build the confidence of pupils- particularly those who acted as peer mentors
- learning about codes of access, in particular accepted use of email and the Internet and accepting the responsibility that come with its use
- the opportunity for pupils to make decisions and see the impact of these choices

**In summary implementation of the Learning Platform has improved the use of technology throughout the whole school.**

### Further embedding the Learning Platform

Mr. Groves envisions the Learning Platform as a "one-stop shop" for his school. His next task is to create a resource area for each curriculum subject. For example staff will be able to go to one area within MyClasses and see all the RE related resources available to them. In addition, more school

communication will take place solely through the Learning Platform. Finally, as staff confidence is grows in the use and reliability of the Platform, Mr. Groves will encourage teachers to embed the Learning Platform into their actual teaching, enabling the school to begin to personalise learning for all pupils.

The school has made significant progress in the use of the Learning Platform in the first seven months of use. Mr. Groves summarises: *"The ease of usability of the Netmedia Learning Platform means it is likely that its growth within school will continue and pupils get excited when they know they are going to be working on the LP. A significant obstacle with the implementation of any Learning Platform is that people want to run before they can walk and it is getting them to learn how to use the skills and tools properly before rushing ahead that has been a significant contributor to the success of the Learning Platform within our school."*