primary schools

Becta
British Educational Communications and Technology Agency

School improvement through ICT
Advisory services and support from Becta

a guide for primary school teachers

...transforming the learning experience for children and young people in classrooms across the UK, and creating new opportunities for teachers...

about Becta

Information and communications technology (ICT) is transforming the learning experience for children and young people in classrooms across the UK, and creating new opportunities for teachers to engage and motivate pupils in their care.

Becta is charged by Government to lead the drive for improvement through ICT in the schools sector. Working with the DfES, other government agencies and a range of industry partners, Becta is encouraging and supporting the development of a more coherent and co-ordinated approach, both in policy and practice.

A major priority is to promote the innovative and effective use of ICT in learning and teaching, and to help practitioners and learners exploit to the full the benefits of new technologies.

This guide provides an overview of the support and guidance available to primary school teachers through Becta, and acts as a signpost to other sources of information and advice to help you explore new ways of using ICT in your work.

For further information about Becta:
http://www.becta.org.uk

Enhancing learning and teaching

For pupils, many of whom have become highly familiar with ICT outside the school environment, its use contributes not only to improved attainment, but also to making learning more enjoyable. Evidence also shows that ICT can enhance learners' perceptions of their achievement, thus building confidence and encouraging further learning.

To help practitioners integrate ICT into their teaching to best effect, Becta offers advice in the use of tools, such as PDAs, whiteboards and tablet PCs, and guidance on how their use can boost the learning potential of pupils.

Through Becta, teachers can also explore alternative ways of delivering curricula, and find out more about the potential of new technologies to support and inspire pupils.

The Becta Review 2005: Evidence on the progress of ICT in education provides the most definitive national picture of the current state of ICT in education in schools and in the learning and skills sector.

http://www.becta.org.uk/publications

Extending the boundaries of learning

New technologies are facilitating the development of personalised online learning spaces that will support 'anywhere, any time learning' for every pupil.

Learners will benefit from ready access to their own e-portfolio of work, whether they are in school, the library, in clubs or at home, and from a highly interactive learning experience that is adaptive to their preferences, and to their pace and context of learning.

The development of e-portfolios enables online monitoring and assessment of an individual's progress, as that person moves through school and eventually to college and into the workplace.

E-learning benefits, in particular, those with special social, cognitive or physical needs, as well as those groups that the system may fail, such as travellers. It also opens up new opportunities for schools to extend their traditional reach, removing many of the barriers between learners and teachers, institutions, parents, and the wider community.

Becta has published *'Extending the boundaries of learning'*. Available to order or download from Becta publications **http://www.becta.org.uk/publications**

...a highly interactive learning experience that is adaptive to their preferences, and to their pace and context of learning.

Using ICT to achieve improvement: Becta's self-review framework

To help schools take a more holistic and strategic approach to institutional improvement through ICT, Becta has developed the self-review framework.

An online tool, the self-review framework offers a straightforward route for schools to take to benchmark their current use of ICT against acknowledged best practice, and to create a viable action plan for its future development.

As ICT becomes more firmly embedded across all aspects of a school's operations, teachers can more readily access the tools and resources they need to enhance the learning experience, to plan and monitor progress, and to reduce time spent on classroom management and administration.

By adopting the framework, teachers can review their own personal development needs, and access a pool of information and guidance to help them identify suitable training and development opportunities.

Further information is available at: **http://becta.org.uk/schools/selfreviewframework**

ICT Excellence Awards

The effective use of ICT is now a vital aspect of educational development. This new awards scheme aims to identify and reward schools that are excelling in the use of ICT to support practitioners and learners, and are seeing real improvements in school performance as a result. This is also a unique opportunity for schools to share their knowledge and successes with the wider educational community.

Sponsored by Ramesys and supported by the TES, the ICT Excellence Awards seek to identify and reward exemplary schools across the UK that have transformed aspects of their business through ICT, benefiting their whole community, inside and outside the school building.

There are seven award categories, with each having a sub-category for primary and secondary schools. In addition, a Best School category for both primary and secondary schools will reward those schools that have achieved ICT excellence across their institution. Monetary prizes to go towards ICT equipment or related training will be awarded at a ceremony in November 2006.

Further details can be found at: **http://www.becta.org.uk/excellenceawards**

finding, choosing and using resources

There is a wealth of internet-based resources and applications available to support learning and teaching in primary subjects, and Becta is working with its partner organisations on an ongoing basis to improve both the scope and the quality of the material available.

Some of the resources to be found on the following websites are free of charge; others may be bought with e-learning credits (eLCs).

Communication Aids Project (CAP)

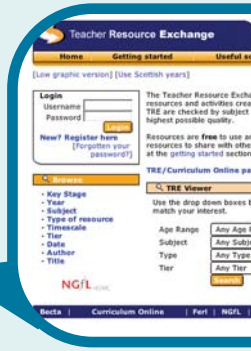
http://www.becta.org.uk/cap
A catalogue of 1,500 ICT resources to support pupils with communication difficulties. Funding for CAP ends in March 2006. However, the website will continue to offer access to a wide range of resources.

Curriculum Online

http://curriculumonline.gov.uk
A portal offering easy, accurate searching through all the thousands of multimedia resources that schools can buy with eLCs.

Teacher Resource Exchange (TRE)

http://tre.ngfl.gov.uk
A moderated database of resources and activities designed to help teachers share best practice and develop ideas.



Inclusion

http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk
An extensive catalogue of resources to support teaching those with individual learning needs.

Becta also produces advice and guidance on the selection of appropriate resources. Some of the leaflets also include examples of good practice. These are available as downloads on the following topics:

- Curriculum Online and e-learning credits (eLCs)
- Primary ICT co-ordination
- Support assistants and ICT
- What are presentation technologies?
- Wireless networks.

http://www.becta.org.uk/publications

Resources to aid subject teaching

Becta also offers, free of charge, comprehensive advice on using web-based resources in a range of curriculum subjects. Publications for the following can be downloaded from the Becta website:

- Art and design
- Design and technology
- Geography
- History
- ICT
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Modern foreign languages
- Music
- RE
- PE
- Science
- Foundation stage.

http://www.becta.org.uk/publications

Best value procurement

So that schools can purchase ICT equipment and services at best value prices. Becta has negotiated a series of procurement framework agreements with a number of suppliers of hardware, software and support services.

Purchasing through these frameworks offers schools several distinct advantages: as well as making significant cost savings on items such as laptops, interactive whiteboards and non-curricular software, schools benefit from the fact that approved suppliers are required to conform to standards set out by Becta, and they are monitored and audited to ensure compliance.

Becta is also working with schools, and with the local authorities, to encourage institutions to aggregate demand and achieve economies of scale.

For information and guidance about the specification and purchase of ICT: **http://www.becta.org.uk/procurement**

Continuing professional development

Evidence suggests that the confidence and the competence of teachers using ICT in subject teaching has risen over the past five years, making it one of the most marked areas of ICT-related improvement over the period.

Becta is supporting this process, devising new models through which the safe and inclusive use of ICT can be embedded, both in initial teacher training courses and in professional development programmes for practitioners.

Becta is also encouraging teachers to become more active within their professional practice communities, and enhance their expertise through peer-to-peer review and support.

Information about professional development opportunities is available from: **http://www.becta.org.uk/schools**

support services

Get direct support from other teachers, advisers and experts through one of Becta's individual support services.

Ask an Expert

This service gives teachers the opportunity to put ICT-related questions to an online panel of experts. Each month, Ask an Expert hosts new themes that focus on ICT in the curriculum.

http://www.becta.org.uk/schools

Online communities

Join one of these online communities and share your views, questions and ideas with colleagues from across the UK. Becta manages a number of communities for teachers and other professionals, which focus on all aspects of ICT in education.

ICT Co-ordinators' Network

This web-based discussion forum provides ICT co-ordinators with a platform to discuss the issues that affect them. It encourages and supports the sharing of ideas, experience and good practice. It also provides a channel for ICT co-ordinators to communicate with Becta and other key organisations.

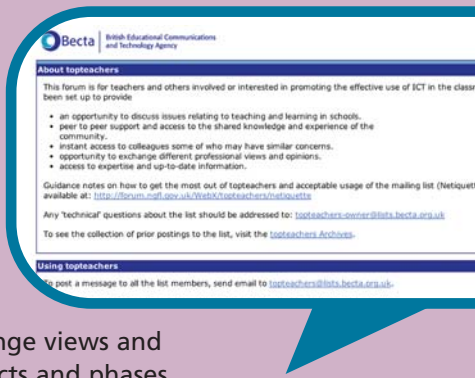
http://www.becta.org.uk/schools

Inclusion online communities

Established 10 years ago, Senco-forum supports special educational needs co-ordinators. Since then, other communities have been formed to cover other areas, including learners with a wide range of disabilities, children in pupil referral units and those for whom English is an additional language. All Becta's inclusion online communities provide a supportive environment for the peer exchange of advice and information.

http://www.becta.org.uk/inclusiononlinecommunities

Teachers Online Project discussion forum (topteachers)



Topteachers is an email discussion list where teachers can discuss issues relating to the effective use of ICT in the classroom. Teachers can use the list for peer-to-peer support and instant access to colleagues throughout the country to exchange views and share information across all subjects and phases.

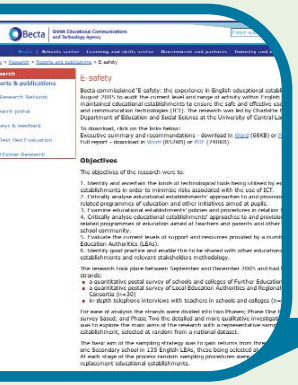
http://lists.becta.org.uk/mailman/listinfo/topteachers

every child matters

E-safety

The emergence of interactive communications technologies is raising new issues for all those concerned with the safety and well-being of children and young people, and Becta is actively promoting increased awareness of the issue of e-safety to educationalists and practitioners across the schools sector.

Becta has been working with the DfES since 1998 providing guidance to schools and to LEAs on all aspects of security: **http://www.becta.org.uk/schools/esafety**



E-safety: The experience in English educational establishments: The results of recent Becta-commissioned research auditing the current level and range of activity within English state-maintained educational establishments to ensure the safe and effective use of ICT.

http://www.becta.org.uk/research/reports/esafetyaudit

Safeguarding children in a digital world: Developing a strategic approach to e-safety: Provides a strategic overview of e-safety issues relevant to policy makers, and outlines a model for a co-ordinated approach by key stakeholders.

http://www.becta.org.uk/publications

E-safety: Provides guidance for schools on developing appropriate policies and procedures to ensure safe use of communications technologies by the children and young people in their care.

http://www.becta.org.uk/publications

Primary phase:

To help teachers educate younger children on how to stay safe on the internet, Becta, the DfES and QCA have developed the Internet Proficiency Scheme for Key Stage 2 pupils. A supporting website called Cybercafé [**http://www.gridclub.com/cybercafe**] is the scheme's online home, and is intended for use by both teachers and pupils.

Home Office guidance: a wealth of guidance is also available from:
http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk

Inclusion and special needs

The use of ICT is proving especially valuable in engaging learners with individual needs, and Becta has produced a series of information sheets designed to assist both classroom teachers and school managers intending to develop their own practice in this respect. Each sheet is accompanied by a CD containing video clips illustrating best practice.

http://www.becta.org.uk/publications

Guidance for those seeking a solution appropriate to the requirements of their school is available from:
http://www.becta.org.uk/cap
Funding for CAP ends in March 2006. However, the website will contine to offer access to a wide range of resources.

A comprehensive set of resources to support teaching professionals is available from the Inclusion website:
http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk

Becta's schools website provides advice and information, and holds an extensive catalogue of resources to support teaching professionals and others in meeting learners' individual learning needs.

http://www.becta.org.uk/schools

All Becta publications can be downloaded from the website

www.becta.org.uk/publications

There is also the facility to order printed versions of some publications.

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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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