



Case studies

9. Ecole Blaise Pascal, Poissy, France

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This is one of 25 case studies produced for STEPS, the Study of the impact of technology in primary schools, to illustrate the impact of ICT, on schools, teachers and learners, and to highlight barriers and enablers to its effective use in the school. Further information can be found at <http://steps.eun.org>.



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1. CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

The Ecole Blaise Pascal is in Poissy, in the 'Académie' (local education authority) of Versailles. Poissy is a commune in the western suburbs of France, 24 km from the centre of Paris, and is home to the Peugeot car factory. The school has many pupils with learning difficulties.

2. EXAMPLE OF PRACTICE

A one hour lesson was observed with a class of 19 pupils. For this lesson, the teacher used an interactive whiteboard to display some pre-prepared text and scanned images from Tom Thumb: the story had previously been studied in class. The children's task was to recreate the story from the images using short, simple sentences. Children wrote their suggestions on their 'ardoise' (an erasable board or slate which pupils write on and hold up to allow the teacher to see their responses) – the laptop set was not available on this occasion otherwise they would have been used. Pupils then write their sentences on the interactive whiteboard using word-processing software.



The children will soon be going on a residential holiday to the countryside, and will continue their work on fairy tales while they are away. They will invent their own tales and present them using multimedia software supplied with the interactive whiteboard (image, text and audio) so that they can be watched like a film.

3. IMPACT, BARRIERS AND ENABLERS

3.1 SCHOOL

ICT DEVELOPMENT PLAN, IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY, ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES AND ATTITUDES

- **Barriers**

- There is no regular evaluation of the impact of ICT on the school as a whole.

- **Enablers**

- The school management has chosen ICT tools to achieve its aim of supporting children with learning difficulties, supporting differentiation and personalised learning in ways that interest and engage the pupils. The headteacher is responsible for administrative matters and is in contact with the regional

inspectorate and the municipality. Another teacher is responsible for pedagogical matters. The school provides a good example of the implementation of regional and national strategies in a local setting.

RESOURCING

- **Enablers**

- Poissy Municipality and the regional inspectorate have a policy to equip each primary school with one interactive whiteboard and an ICT room.
- The school also has a partnership with Apple who have supplied a mobile classroom (set of laptop computers). Specific choices have been made to ensure that the equipment matches the needs of teachers and is fit for purpose. Resources are available for different pedagogical approaches. As an example, children working on group-based projects use word processing or multimedia applications, whereas for individual work in French or mathematics, pupils use software that allows them to work at their own pace and level.
- The school can use co-operative funds to purchase new ICT resources. The money comes from the families: however, they can give what they want and it's not compulsory. If no co-operative funds are available, the school can submit a request to the municipality. Some funding comes from the regional inspectorate also.
- ICT equipment is deployed in a computer room. There are also two interactive whiteboards in classrooms, one of which can be used by any teacher with their class.
- Equipment is not available for community use, but password-protected websites for two classes can be accessed from outside the school.
- Anti-virus software is installed on all computers and the internet feed is filtered.

THE CURRICULUM AND ICT

- **Enablers**

- ICT is used in all subjects, except by four newly qualified teachers.

ASSESSMENT OF ICT AND ICT FOR ASSESSMENT

- **Enablers**

- Software to teach reading (Lectra) includes an application to monitor the progress of each child. In mathematics, children learn using Atout Math but assessment is still paper based.

- The impact of ICT is not formally evaluated, but it is highly visible. Children with behavioural difficulties are able to manage their own learning in the computer room. ICT engages them, and the impact on their motivation is clear to see, particularly when they can begin to see the concrete results of the projects they are working on. As an example, at the beginning of the school year, pupils learnt about different religions. They conducted internet searches, took part in external visits and created topic folders of their work. This project kept their interest for more than two months.

ORGANISATION OF SUPPORT

- **Enablers**
 - Originally the municipality was responsible for the maintenance and technical support of computer equipment, but now teachers fix low level problems themselves. The local ICT adviser can be called upon to resolve more complex problems.

3.2 TEACHERS

ICT AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

- **Impacts**
 - Students' work is stored via an e-portfolio system, which can be accessed by both staff and parents. Parents can check their child's progress and weekly work plans online.
 - Students routinely save samples of their work to their e-portfolio, allowing the range and progression of their work to be assessed in a variety of contexts.
- **Barriers**
 - It does not appear that the school reports or monitors progress in use of ICT other than through the ICT Licence. This presents a lost opportunity to recognise the achievements of both staff and students.
- **Enablers**
 - Teachers use their ICT skills in lessons, but newly qualified teachers don't because they have not yet had any ICT training.
 - There is no school website or virtual learning environment, but two of the teachers have their own websites which they use to provide links to useful websites and resources.
 - School management uses email to contact teachers for administrative matters but there is no electronic contact with other primary schools.

- Parents and pupils can send email to one class teacher, but tend not to use this facility.

ICT AS A TOOL TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

- **Enablers**
 - ICT is used for all administrative and management tasks.

THE PEDAGOGICAL ROLE OF ICT TO IMPROVE LEARNING AND TEACHING

- **Enablers**
 - ICT has changed teachers' methodologies, and the relationship between teachers and learners. The teacher no longer teaches from the front: as pupils are more independent and in control of the ICT application, teachers have to work with them. This transition from teacher at the front to teacher at the side has been difficult for some teachers, and so in-service pedagogical training has been offered.
 - The interactive whiteboard allows the teacher to spend more time with the pupils as many of the resources can be prepared in advance. Lessons also have a different rhythm: the elements of the lesson flow better and faster.
 - ICT can make teaching more authentic, interactive, deeper and varied.
 - Teachers prefer using the interactive whiteboard and the computer room. They use Lectra and Atout Math, as well as the internet and word-processing software.
 - Teachers do not currently use ICT to create digital-learning resources.

ICT SKILLS

- **Enablers**
 - The 'certificat informatique et internet' (C2i) is the national certification for teachers' digital competence. However, most teachers lack ICT confidence. They worry about managing a whole class in the computer room even if they are competent users of ICT to prepare lessons. Some teachers do not like giving pupils the autonomy that ICT offers.
 - In the school, three of the nine teachers use the computer room with their pupils.
 - At present there are no organised staff discussions about the pedagogical use of ICT, just individual reflections.

PARTICIPATION, MOTIVATION, CONFIDENCE AND PERFORMANCE

- **Enablers**

- Teachers are motivated to use ICT because it impacts on the pupils.
- Some are e-confident, but others aren't. The teaching methods of e-confident teachers are influenced by their use of ICT. ICT helps them develop their pedagogical approach in lessons, and the resources they produce are of a quality that would not be possible without ICT. However, they recognise that they will require further training if they are to exploit the full potential of ICT.

3.3 LEARNERS

ICT SKILLS

- **Enablers**

- At school, pupils are taught with the interactive whiteboard, in the computer room and using subject-specific and office software. ICT is used in all subjects. At home, the only resources they can access are the links to useful websites given to them by their teachers.
- The 'brevet informatique et internet' (B2i) is the national certification for students' digital competence from primary to end of secondary school education. Pupil competences are assessed using ICT applications or paper.
- Older children use instant messaging for personal discussions outside of school.
- There is a constant drive to develop pupils' ICT skills. Pupils are more than capable of choosing and using appropriate ICT tools to complete specific tasks and activities, and provide help to each other.
- At this level there is no critical attitude towards online content. Pupils become more aware of the risks and learn about plagiarism and copyright as they get older.
- Pupils are beginning to work collaboratively to create web content, and use search engines to access regional, national and European resources, such as local, Municipality and European websites.

MOTIVATION, PARTICIPATION AND CONFIDENCE

- **Enablers**

- Pupils are confident with ICT: even if they do not know how to do something, they try anyway.

- They are motivated by the interactive whiteboard and the mobile classroom (laptop set), and are attracted to new things.
- Some pupils use the class website and follow the links, even during school holidays.
- Sixty per cent of children have a computer at home. Boys, in particular, use the computer for playing games.
- Children seem to prefer learning with ICT and enjoy using it at school.

PARTICIPATION IN ALL ASPECTS OF SCHOOL LIFE: ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, PERSONAL

- **Enablers**
 - ICT is used in many ways: it is used for group and individual work, to increase the learning pace, and to stimulate creativity. Resources are colourful and attractive, and help to engage pupils in their learning. The variety of document types available means that pupils do not get bored.
 - Pupils use subject-specific software for learning French and mathematics.
 - There is evidence of progression using ICT at an individual pupil level, thanks to their motivation to succeed individually. Software tracks progress, enabling pupils to immediately see their improvement.

4. REFERENCES

- **Sources:**
 - Interviews with teachers and lesson observations.
- **Further information:**
 - Co-operative fund (www.prepaclasse.net/fichiers/cooperative.html).