

INSPIRE LEARNING: TRANSFORMATION TO A WORLD CLASS DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

APPENDIX 1:

SUMMARY OF HEAD-TEACHER FEEDBACK FOLLOWING DIGITAL LEARNING DEMONSTRATION, WORKSHOP AND PLENARY DISCUSSION 29 FEBRUARY 2019

I have been looking for some time at what will really transform pedagogy in the classroom to truly equip my children with the necessary skills to thrive in their learning and in the world in which we live today and in the future. Essentially what Curriculum for Excellence sets out to do. Good teaching has always existed...but we do live in a very different world now. So what would make the biggest difference? I have returned on numerous occasions to digital technology as the answer to what my children need. But access to the technology large scale, the infrastructure to support it and the upskilling of staff to use it to transform teaching and learning to make it fit for purpose for the 21st century is something I cannot achieve in my individual schools on our annual budgets. And so I am hugely inspired and excited about this direction of travel for our authority. I know it will transform the quality of learning experience, making it more engaging and equitable, equipping our children with the skills employers and businesses are looking for. I also know it will address our focus on high quality feedback as key to helping children learn more effectively and will strengthen our parents as partners in their children's learning strategy. To have the support centrally to drive forward our improvement agenda in such an inspirational way is not only exciting, but the right thing to do for all our young people. They deserve it.

The challenge for teachers is to prepare young people for a world which doesn't yet exist but is exponentially global and data rich. To access the best opportunities in this world, our young people have to be flexible, creative, confident communicators and able to apply their skills in unfamiliar contexts. The input from the Apple team revealed for head-teachers how technology in the classroom could not only engage and motivate young people with high quality resources but do so meaningfully and in a way which can really accelerate their skills development in the core areas of teamwork, problem solving and creativity. A striking feature of the potential of the apple approach is the way it facilitates the most effective pedagogy, particularly feedback and the modelling of excellent practice. If a teacher can provide real time, high quality feedback and instantaneously share outstanding examples of pupils' work, then the classroom is really transformed in the most critical areas of learning.

This an amazing opportunity to be able to equip our young people better for the constantly changing future. It's gives us a chance for the Borders to be further ahead of the cities and give our children 'the edge' in a competitive employment market.

SBC have not been afforded an achievable opportunity to change the landscape of learning for a long time. We have the chance to further remove the barriers of inequality and deliver on the promise of true access for all in terms of learning, ambition and skills for life.

The monetary investment and belief that SBC are willing to commit to, will go a long way to prove to current, aspiring and foreign teachers that SBC are serious in terms of preparing our young people for the global economy. Exciting times, potentially.

The potential for developing our children's digital literacy is huge. With a commitment to upgrade the communication infrastructure between schools, appropriate and timely support from CGI and a

commitment to offer training support to all school staff, I am confident that this model will have a significant impact on our children's learning, as well as developing staff capacity and capability.

This will promote independent learning, develop pupils' thinking and inspire them to achieve great things. There is huge scope to develop learning, not just in terms of ICT, but throughout the curriculum. Engaging families with learning would also be a great benefit and motivate youngsters to work in collaboration with other family members.

There is a need for teachers from across the Borders, and the country, to meet together to discuss learning, sources of evidence and achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels. This currently presents challenges around class cover, transport costs and travel time. Using this technology teachers could share lessons, a wide range of evidence and hold discussions with colleagues from a wide geographical area. This would directly impact on the standard of teaching and learning and attainment in our schools.

This will positively impact on teacher workload and in reducing bureaucracy, really allowing teachers the time to give effective, timely feedback to children, orally, in a way that is attached to a piece of work, and can be re-visited as often as required. It also allows parents/carers to hear the same feedback being given. Future tasks can be linked to evidence that feedback has been followed and a young person has then achieved their next step.

From a small school perspective, in terms of planning and delivering in multi-composite classes the benefits are huge. Parental engagement will also increase. In this digital age it is really exciting and empowering for classroom teachers.

Current IT provision is insufficient to meet the needs of our school and makes it extremely challenging to ensure our young people are accessing opportunities to develop their digital literacy skills. The proposed package, were it to be implemented at my school, would enhance our capacity to challenge and engage pupils and their families, beyond our wildest dreams.....in a small, rural school like mine, it could be a game changer!

Regardless of the hardware or the type of device, the idea that SBC could be cutting edge for improvements in learning & life outcomes through empowering good teachers to deliver better learning experience.

We will be able to create a culture where every teacher believes they need to embrace change and improve, not because they aren't good enough but because they know they can be better and teach in a smarter, less bureaucratic way.

I would ask all those making critical decisions about the future spending priorities to be bold and non-compromising to ensure high quality resources for our young people. Our young people are our future; by not investing in them we are giving the Borders a limited future. As an educator, as a parent and as a citizen of the Scottish Borders I see the huge potential of our young people. Let SBC be the leading light in the world at being completely committed to making a secure and prosperous future for our young people by enabling them to have global connections and providing them with the skills and opportunities they need to make a positive difference to our world. We ask for you to give us the IT resources to enable us to showcase what Scottish Borders has to offer the world.

SBC have clearly stated that education is its priority. This is an opportunity to demonstrate that commitment. The investment is large, there is no denying that, however the rewards this will reap go far beyond improving teaching and learning, making assessment smarter, improve tracking efficiency

and accuracy (though it will do these things, which is vital), it will improve our young people's life chances in an equitable way and develop the critical life and employability skills to secure a positive future for the Scottish Borders. In my opinion, we cannot delay. Our young people need this essential investment and so does the future of the Scottish Borders. I ask you to be courageous, show the hope and commitment you have for the future and be known (and proud) to be the councillors that are the facilitators of innovation.

This is a very exciting and reassuring proposal from Scottish Borders to enhance the digital skills of our staff and learners. I fully support the proposed move towards I-pad devices due to their ease of use, life-span and reliability. Modern, user friendly technology is key to ensuring our learners have the resources at their fingertips to enhance their digital literacy and computational thinking skills. In addition, this will also provide new opportunities for enhancing many other 21st century skills such as problem-solving, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking.

One of our main attainment gaps is based around pupils who cannot complete homework because they do not have access to technology at home. We envisage pupils who need to complete homework having the opportunity now to work at home or after school in our learning hub on their devices.

A key priority for the school is to close the poverty related attainment gap and this initiative will be transformational because all pupils will have access to the same web based resources allowing them to raise their attainment in all lessons. Young people have amazing research skills and this will allow them to quickly access the knowledge they need to develop their learning at anytime, anywhere.

It will truly embed digital learning and digital literacy into every lesson that young people experience. The key benefit to learning will be that staff can differentiate and personalise lessons in ways that were previously not possible. There is no doubt that this will enrich the curriculum as well and will increase the engagement and motivation in learning, making it more relevant to life outside school.