



Effects of ICT on Personalised Learning

Report on an international visit (TIPD Report - Westminster Academy School)

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Conference:

Our group comprised two secondary teachers from Westminster Academy, London. The group leader, Assistant Principal of WA in charge of Global citizenship, is currently applying for academy to get the International School Award. The group members had already established the link with ZS Lupacova School in Prague and had planned the aims and intended outcomes of the visit. Both members were already competent users of ICT in their classrooms, e.g. Interactive White Board, Active Studio; Personal laptops; Projectors; Digital cameras and Visualizers.

First two days we attended the conference run by MirandaNet, "ICT Towards Personalised Learning and Etopia Project" where several UK schools presented their findings how different ICT resources had changed their students' learning styles and raised their achievements including the reluctant learners. The main researches were presented on the following software programmes and ICT equipments:

Inspiration- mind mapping software

Digital Blue- Animation Software

Moodle- personalised learning software

Portable computer, camera, recorder

On the other hand it was a valuable opportunity to share our school's good practice with other UK schools how using ICT promotes students' personalised learning. (PP Presentation: 'WA Prague.')

Digital Blue and **Inspiration** Softwares were identified particularly suitable for the students in WA. The majority of them are of different background, with EAL and SEN needs, so it was felt that mind mapping software would help them to develop thinking/analytical skills necessary for understanding more complex/abstract concepts. Digital Blue Software would be ideal in our Integrated Curriculum across KS3. It will develop students' RSA (Royal Society of Arts) competences in five main areas:

School Visit:

During our week long visit to the school, we were able to establish a link person at the school who will lead on all other future collaborative projects. We went into classes and talked to students about their work and the work that they had prepared for us on the topic of Etopia. It was fascinating to see how much work they had put in and the fact that they were all trying to communicate in English (some very well!!!). This inspired us to reciprocate the favour.

Our observations with regards to the comparison between the two schools were that both schools did use ICT in lessons although we realised that we used much more of it and so did our students. There were only 9 interactive boards in the school and although we did see students use them successfully, it did point to us that we were in a very enviable position where every teacher had a laptop and every classroom had 6 computers at the back to the class + 5 ICT suits.

One example of where we could learn from our Czech friends is in the overall care and presentation around the school. The atmosphere was very calm and there were a lot of examples of children's work on the walls, many of it done using ICT.

When we talked to the young people, they were very keen on maintaining and improving the email contact and working towards projects together. The teachers were also very positive and responsive and we felt that there was a lot of scope for collaborative projects using ICT (Etopia project related work).

The headmaster was very much interested in the idea of videoconferencing and this gave us a lot of buzz since we felt that there is a lot of potential in making strong links between two schools of a very different cultural identity and variety.

EVALUATION: Intended Outcomes of the visit:

- Equip participants with skills, knowledge and understanding to lead improvements in using ICT in the classroom to raise attainment in both UK and Czech schools.
- Implementation of different strategies of good practice observed in Czech school.
- Planning of collaborative ICT projects to enhance student personalised learning.
- Increased use of emails and internet between students and teachers in both schools.
- Building on existing links between the two schools.

Dissemination Proposals:

1. School wide report on the conference and invitation to all staff to get involved in any of the proposed projects at a staff meeting.- MBA and ABJ (April 2007)
2. Application of intent to the British Council of gaining intermediate International School Award- ABJ (March 2007) INTENDED OUTCOME: International School Award (ISA)

3. School wide audit of international activities in preparation for applying for ISA in a staff meeting- ABJ (April 2007) INTENDED OUTCOME: ISA Award
4. Project 1- E-link- students to continue emailing each others and ABj and MBa to ensure the increase in the email links post visit (March 2007 onwards)
5. Project 2- Inspiration- concept/mind map software to be installed in the school and used in lessons. ABJ/MBA to carry out insets to interested groups (March/April 2007). INTENDED OUTCOME: students publishing and exchanging mind maps on ETOPIA website.
6. Project 3 -Digital Blue- animation software to be purchased. MBA/ABJ to carry out insets to interested groups (March/April 2007). INTENDED OUTCOME: students producing animation on different themes, e.g. my culture and identity. Students work to be exchanged with the work by students from Ravensbourne School, UK and all works published on the ETOPIA website.
7. Project 4- Comenius Project ABJ to apply for the 'Preparatory visit' this year between our school and our Czech link school (End of March 2007)INTENDED OUTCOME: Full 3 year partnership programme with our Czech link school and another school in Europe
8. Project 5- ETOPIA- ABj and MBa involve Art, Modern Languages and Humanities departments. INTENDED OUTCOME: producing work with children around this topic (April 2007 onwards)
9. Project 6- Patchwork- Through our Integrated Curriculum in Year 8 (Theme' All the places in the world'), ABj and MBa to involve other members of the team (4 other teachers). INTENDED OUTCOME: produce work on this topic on Etopia website.
10. Our success and future projects featured in the Guardian newspaper (see link: <http://education.guardian.co.uk/elearning/story/0,,2037510,00.html>) and is also going to be in the MirandaNet and World Ecitizens newsletter (1800 loads a day)