CURRICULUM

Hwb+ CASE STUDY   HAFOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Enhancing curriculum based learning with Hwb+.

Hafod primary school is visually stunning. Every wall in the school is painted with characters from children's literature or film, every space big or small houses an engaging display and the school hall even has its own Sistine Chapel on the ceiling.

The environment is symptomatic of the way in which the school views its learners and the wider community and they are keen to point out that the newly arrived Hwb+ will be utilised to the same end.

Hafod is situated in an area of social and economic deprivation in Swansea. The school's population has more than half of its pupils with English as a second language. This is made up mainly of Bengali children, with more recently, an influx of Polish and Lithuanian children. The school currently has 240 children in attendance, ranging from children at the age of two in the "Flying Start" unit to Year 6.

Stuart Whiffin, the newly appointed ICT co-ordinator and year 6 teacher, is leading on Hwb+ in the school. The recent arrival of 20 iPads has been a much needed supplement to the school's existing provision, that comprises of an IWB and laptop and three leased PC's in every classroom and a bookable trolley of sixteen laptops.

The technology is viewed as a vital part of the learning in school, as is the addition of Hwb+.

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Stuart has the support of the school's senior management. They understand the vision for learning through ICT and it is the school's intention to get the ICT mark next school year. Hwb+ will be at the centre of the push for this.believe that involving parents in their child's learning this is fundamental to successful outcomes. The school has won national lottery grants to this end.

Until recently ICT provision at the school has been limited. The school's focus is very much on involving the community in every aspect of school life. They

They have purchased technology to use with parents and this has then been used in school when it's not been required for community use.

Three community based clubs are in operation currently. Parent and pupil club, where pupils share what they have been doing in school with their parents, Learn English for Bengali mothers and the over 60's club. The relationships formed at these clubs are having a positive impact on pupil attitudes to themselves and their community, and it is helping to make learning real for **them**

Stuart sees Hwb+ as crucial to what the school is doing now and what it hopes to do in the future. the already well-established community involvement will be enhanced by Hwb+. the secure areas will enable document sharing, forums for parents and a window into the day-to-day life of the school.

To date every teacher has been trained as have most of the learning support assistants but it is the Year 6 pupils who have been leading the way with Hwb+ in school and in September pupils will lead on building class areas to support the curriculum and areas for administration like calendars and timetables.

Stuart affirms, "Blogging will be a big thing next year. Children currently undertake weekly hand written evaluations (reflections on their learning) for parents to read. In September the plan is transfer these to the blogging tool to become individual digital learning logs".

There are also big plans to use the wiki tool across the project-based curriculum that the school employs. This is building on the exploratory work undertaken this term where year 6 pupils compiled a wiki around their project 'The Wonders of the World.' Some of this learning was driven by the pupils from home – "what do you want to learn next?" was promoted by Stuart, and the children responded to his prompt. Stuart says,

"Approximately 60% of pupils have access at home, some through their parents smart phones. For those children who do not have home access the school runs computer and homework clubs and also the schools iPads are available at lunchtime and after school".

Stuart feels that the availability of Office 365 tools is going to be huge for the school. The fact that the children will have access to industry standard software, from any browser enabled device, is very exciting. Because it mirrors software used in the real World, Stuart feels that it will add to the authenticity of the children's learning and the school believes that Hwb+ will very much be about enhancing the existing curriculum.

The school has a fairly unique curriculum, displayed on a single notice board in the foyer, based around Unicef's Rights of the Child, for which the school have been awarded a level two. A great example of this has been their refugee project. As part of this project a class of Hafod pupils change places with a group of children at another local primary school. Both sets of pupils are treated as refugees in their new school for the day. This has led to some extraordinary work from the children, with discussions showing the empathy the children have with refugees in the real world.

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Hwb+ will enable real time synchronous discussions between the two schools truly enhancing the learning experience. The school makes effective use of QR codes and augmented reality to bring literature and pieces of artwork to life. The technology helps bring learning to alive and Stuart is convinced that this is impacting positively on standards. The fact that the learning is engaging and authentic, based around real world issues that are important to the pupils, is key.

Pupils have also been collaborating with a link school in another part of the city. They have been taking part in a Welsh/English oracy project with children at Casllwchwr primary school and both schools report a rise in standards of spoken language as a result.

Many children at Hafod are sadly involved with external agencies from an early age. The school has early intervention programmes in place, trying to catch potential children at risk early. The "so to do" project in year 3 is an example of what the school is trying to achieve. It is hoped that Hwb+ will be a big part of this work in the near future. Once data protection issues have been ironed out, each child at risk will have their own discussion page on Hwb where staff can update issues in real time for all involved staff to see. The current paper based incident log will be replaced by a digital one. There are also plans for a digital "worry box" to be set up so that pupils can make the school of any issues that are troubling them. To date staff and student perceptions of Hwb+ have been positive. The year six pupils love it and this has convinced Stuart that pupils need to be involved in any roll out. Some staff were initially concerned that Hwb+ was just another of a long line of initiatives, but through a series of staff meetings they were able to see where Hwb+ fitted in with the whole school vision for teaching and learning, and they are onboard. Governors, and particularly parent governors, were very enthusiastic and wanted passwords immediately. They thought it would be good for setting and submitting homework, registering absence and for email.

Stuart offers the following advice to schools not yet up and running with Hwb+. You definitely need someone to lead and push the project and it needs to have the support from the school's senior management. A plan is crucial and it must fit in with the school's existing priorities, otherwise there is a danger that it could be viewed as an "add on". Get all staff involved because it is a whole school teaching and learning technology and wherever possible get the pupils leading.

"When I showed the class wikis for the first time it was the children who said we could do this with them and that …..it was like a light coming on for them." Children are capable of so much more than we often give them credit for and we should run with this.

Stuart is excited about where the school is going next with Hwb+. There are plans to set up a curriculum resource bank for Hafod and then hopefully the other schools in their cluster. The cluster has all bought in to the "Cornerstones Thematic Curriculum" and it makes sense to share resources and content amongst the group of schools.

One of the challenges the school faces on a daily basis is communicating with parents who have English as an additional language. The school plans to translate the letters its sends home into audio files and place these on Hwb+. Parents will then be able to keep up to speed with the information the school is sending out.

The children at school evaluate the school development plan as a matter of course and Stuart is looking forward to using the survey tools in Hwb+ to make this a digital exercise. The same tools will also be used as part of the project based curriculum where pupil views are called for.

The involvement of pupils and their parents in learning, and the wider life of the school, is at the core of the school's beliefs. Hwb+ is proving to be a great tool in moving this desire forward.

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