

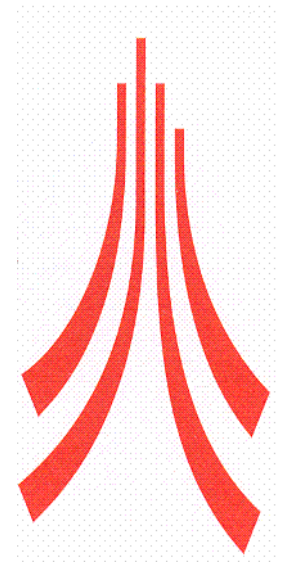
Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the Learning Platform LP+ across Schools in Wolverhampton Local Authority

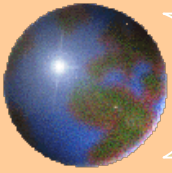
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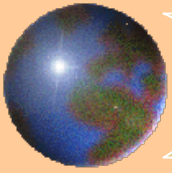
Lancaster University, UK





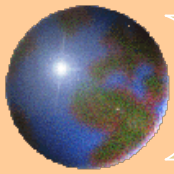
Evidence for the study

- Completed by LA consultants of a grid of implementation details about all schools involved, on two occasions, in November 2008 and in June 2009
- Discussions with key personnel in 22 schools, and observation in a number of classrooms
- Discussions with 5 key personnel in the LA on a number of occasions
- Reviews of relevant documents
- Presentations of websites and uses of LP+



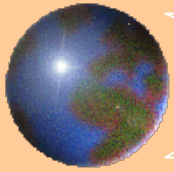
The stage reached by June 2009

- By June 2009 there were 72 LA schools involved in implementation across 6 cohorts
- 37 were judged by LA consultants to be 'very well on' or 'well on' in terms of development
- In 52 schools all teachers used LP+
- There were 6,030 pupil users (increasingly involving users from Years N and R)
- 6 schools provided parental access



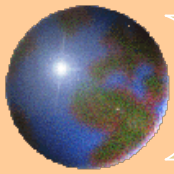
Implementation outcomes

- ❊ Implementation through a phased approach has enabled experiences to be shared with others
- ❊ Appointments of an LA consultant and an LA technical consultant have been crucial to success
- ❊ For schools to develop their thinking and practice has taken up to a year
- ❊ Features of LP+ may differ from those used by some schools, but LP+ is seen as being usable, and having features that offer benefits and advantages to the running of alternative or parallel platforms or facilities



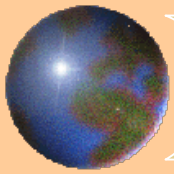
Management outcomes

- Schools involved in early implementation cohorts have established LP+ as a central core functioning unit
- This central position has resulted from inward facing (supporting managers and teachers), and outward facing functionality (supporting pupils and parents)
- Some schools needed to take decisions about the rationalisation of websites and platforms



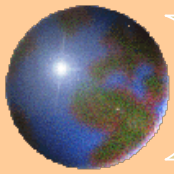
Leading the initiative

- ❖ The roles of setting up a vision and reasonable expectations have been important in leading to positive development
- ❖ Schools have varied in their approaches to structuring aspects of the site to support their needs
- ❖ Understanding what facilities are available (such as filtering), and how these can support needs, have been important



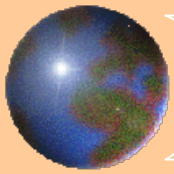
Cost effectiveness and benefits

- ✦ In a two-class entry school, for communications to parents involving black and white photocopies, £33,382.80
- ✦ For communications to staff, £75.00
- ✦ For communications to governors, £45.00
- ✦ For teachers completing weekly and yearly subject plans, £16,524.00
- ✦ For a head teacher reviewing a subject or topic across the school, £100.00
- ✦ For multi-agency reviews, involving one pupil in each year group, £1,125.00
- ✦ For use of the integrated website, £2,500.00
- ✦ This is a total cost saving of £53,751.80
- ✦ Costs associated with refreshing the resources each half term, in the order of £15,120
- ✦ Overall cost benefit associated with all scenarios £38, 631.80



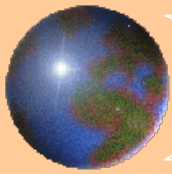
Supporting reluctant writers

- ✦ Pupils, especially older pupils, go onto the site at home
- ✦ Some children send in homework – teachers say they would not have done it otherwise
- ✦ It is felt that the reluctant writers and communicators engage with work on the learning platform because of the 'anonymity of communication'
- ✦ Pupils can choose where to communicate (outside a classroom where there is greater anonymity possible), they have freedom of what to communicate about, and may well share feelings with the family
- ✦ A lead co-ordinator found the facilities supported perhaps 6 out of 30 pupils
- ✦ They tended to be boys - often both reluctant writers and communicators
- ✦ The teacher also gave them more responsibility –taking and handling pictures, for uploading, and handling the website



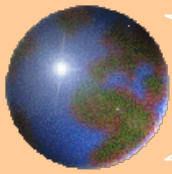
Using online discussions

- ⊕ Discussions allowed pupils to write an opinion
- ⊕ Handle different opinions
- ⊕ Reason when challenged
- ⊕ Be less aggressive than they might be in face-to-face discussions, which would tend to be taken more personally
- ⊕ Respond more easily to written material
- ⊕ Accept written comments more objectively and less emotionally
- ⊕ Take time in reading, thinking, and then responding
- ⊕ Have more time to think about a reference
- ⊕ Respond in their own way, rather than backing down as they might in class



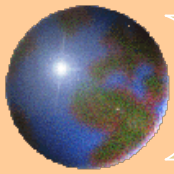
Supporting nursery age children

- ✦ The whole school has taken on use of the learning platform
- ✦ In nursery classes parents engage with LP+ and involve their children in using resources
- ✦ In classes with older children the children are involved directly
- ✦ When sessions on LP+ are run at school, proportionately more nursery parents take part
- ✦ Pictures of activities with children are put onto LP+, and parents and children can see these at home
- ✦ It is populated with words of songs
- ✦ Sets of words that can be printed off
- ✦ Weblinks to songs so that parents can hear them
- ✦ Children can find a song on the platform, and can play it
- ✦ Flashcards are on the site, they can be printed off, cut up, and used by parents with their children at home



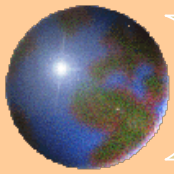
Safe online communication

- ⊕ Teachers use LP+ to support learning tasks, including use of email
- ⊕ Use with pupils was trialled with a Year 6 pupil class
- ⊕ Use has now been extended to Years 2 and 6
- ⊕ Parents are now accessing LP+ with their children
- ⊕ Email is used a lot by pupils – it is safe and there is no inappropriate email for them to access
- ⊕ Although many pupils used MSN previously, they have welcomed the chance to move to use of the LP+ email system
- ⊕ They like it more, and they feel it is safe
- ⊕ Parents had to agree to use before children could access the system at home
- ⊕ The school gained 100% commitment from the parents - there is usually less commitment from parents for other events



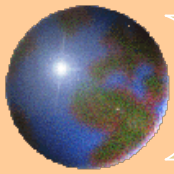
Enhancing parental engagement

- ✦ Every class has a class page to access at home
- ✦ One teacher set up the system, found the technical issues and shared experiences with other staff
- ✦ Open Days were run for parents and carers (6 open sessions, involving a demonstration and hands-on access)
- ✦ The school produced a booklet that went home – to explain how the system worked, and what it could do
- ✦ Teachers update sites weekly
- ✦ Learning links are changed on the site each term
- ✦ Parents can access subject and topic links to be covered in school a term ahead
- ✦ They have access to homework a week ahead
- ✦ This maintains their interest in the site
- ✦ Parents say they 'love it', it's supportive, and gives them ideas



Imagery, video and parents

- ✦ Class sites now have photographs of pupils, announcements, calendars, discussions, and surveys
- ✦ A Year 1 teacher creates videos, of special events - a Nativity production and events on 'Ireland Day'
- ✦ These videos can be shared with parents and others at home
- ✦ The children do the recording, which is put into MS MovieMaker, and uploaded onto the site
- ✦ The teacher created the final form of the video and uploaded it
- ✦ She found it easy to do (it took about one hour at home)
- ✦ The video provides opportunities for pupils to review activities
- ✦ They can reflect on experiences and gain ideas
- ✦ The activity demonstrated involvement, ownership and engagement
- ✦ The teacher said it pupils of different abilities and attitudes were involved, writing and participating



My thanks

- ✦ To the LA, the officers and consultants involved
- ✦ The schools, head teachers, lead co-ordinators and pupils involved
- ✦ To LP+, for their interest and support