

Brookfield Community School take control of ICT

The significant growth in both the breadth and depth of ICT resources is an exciting development in education.

However, for many schools and teachers it also brings the additional challenge of how to manage and control these technology resources.

Today, while the PC to pupil ratio continues to narrow and the ICT environment evolves to become more dynamic and mobile, the challenge for all teachers is to manage this whilst optimising the learning opportunities in the classroom.

When managed correctly, the use of ICT devices in the classroom enriches and enlivens the conventional lessons. At Brookfield Community School, they have found a way to manage a broad array of ICT assets and capabilities and to harness them to deliver an effective and compelling learning environment.

John Pritchett, ICT Head at Brookfield Community School, had a vision of what he wanted in the classroom. He foresaw that the educational benefits of ICT would be enhanced by providing teachers with the ability to take control of classroom computers, refocus the students' attention at a moment's notice, post and launch files on each child's PC, and where appropriate have sight of each child's on-line activity.

“Vision has helped our teachers save time and teach more effectively with technology”

John explains: “In today's multi-media environment it is vital to enrich each student's visual experience to stimulate

their learning. The commitment we expect from children should be reflected in our presentation of their learning experience. Because so much of a students' experience is shaped and surrounded by imagery, highly visual interactive activities have truly become the new currency of learning. However, with this in mind, significant consideration of the learning focus of any learning activity must be given. Wanting our children to be immersed in a digital learning experience and then expecting them to switch, on request, to turn back to face the teacher is naturally, quite a high expectation.”

Brookfield Community School is a Community Comprehensive school with Specialist Sports College status based in Chesterfield. Brookfield strives to be an inclusive school for all its students and has worked hard in recent years to improve the academic performance of all students.

Teach Effectively with Technology

To achieve their vision of a rich visual experience in the classroom while focusing learning, Brookfield chose to use 'Vision6' Classroom Management Software from GenevaLogic.

“Vision6 has certainly helped our teachers save time in the classroom and teach more effectively with technology”, explains John. “It gives our teachers an unprecedented level of management in the classroom and improved interaction with student computers.”

Managing children's focus of attention is a challenge for all teachers. In today's highly visual ICT learning environments this has become even harder to achieve. However, when teachers at Brookfield want their students' attention, they simply lock-down classroom computers from their PC using Vision and instantly unlock them when the discussion has finished.

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Vision6 also enables teachers to display information from the teacher's PC to each student's screen. The majority of the classrooms at Brookfield have interactive whiteboards. However, in some particularly large or long rooms, it can be difficult for all students to see the displayed information. By displaying the presentation on each student's PC everyone has sight of the information wherever they are seated.

"Historically, there were times when I would want the students to work on a specific document or learning activity that was not on the network. I would therefore have to go around the class with a USB stick downloading the information onto each PC," explains John. Today, Vision6 enables him to load a learning resource up on his PC, and then fire this out to each student's PC in one go. Vision6 puts control of the ICT learning environment back in to the hands of the teacher;" summarises John.

Although security was not the initial reason for investing in Vision6, it provides Brookfield with a thumbnail view of each student's PC display, on the teacher's computer. It is very easy to see if any student is off task, or looking at incorrect or inappropriate information. When teachers walk around the classroom to assist students individually, the thumbnail view of all student computers can be displayed on the interactive whiteboard using Vision6. The teacher can simply glance up at the board, at any time, to ensure all the children are on task. "There is also a more positive way of using this functionality", explains John. "When I see a student who is working well on a particularly innovative idea, I can lock in on his or her computer screen and then send this display out to each student's screen."

In secondary education it can be difficult for students to openly show that they do not understand a specific task. Vision6 enables students to post up a notice to the teacher's PC asking for help. While this request is anonymous to the other students, the teacher knows which student has made the request for help.

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Teachers at Brookfield are finding new uses for Vision6 daily. In terms of time savings, the majority of teachers who have pre-planned the lesson activity will have a list of appropriate web sites for the students to access information. These web URLs can be displayed to the class. However, it still involves the children typing in the correct address or file locations successfully. Vision6 helps again, by removing this laborious and error prone task as each site can be pushed out to each student's PC.

John summarises; "It is an incredibly powerful tool. Vision6 simply embodies the efficient way in which we work, keeping our students on task, saving time and keeping them safe."

Benefits of Using Vision

- Keeps students on-task and engaged
- Provides visual display of information
- Saves time in the classroom
- Keep students safe
- Creates a collaborative environment where student work is easily spotlighted and shared



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