



partnerships for schools
building schools for the future

This case study looks at how the BSF ICT Managed Service is being rolled out across all secondary schools in Lambeth - in some cases prior to BSF rebuilding/refurbishment.

Lambeth was shortlisted for the 'Innovation in ICT' category in the *Excellence in BSF Awards 2008*.

Key project information

Local authority: London Borough of Lambeth

Project: BSF Managed Service

Project cost: £4.8m

Project timetable: From spring 2009 a BSF Managed Service (or transitional service) will be in place in all secondary schools in Lambeth

The ICT Managed Service in Lambeth

Project description

Lambeth's Managed ICT Service has its roots in the 2005 project known as LCLP (Lambeth Connected Learning Project). In 2007 it grew to encompass Lambeth BSF Wave 2 schools, and plans are under way for a BSF or BSF transitional service to be operational in all Lambeth secondary schools, with all schools moving to an enhanced BSF service level once building works are complete.

The aims of the project are:

- to provide an innovative managed service which uses existing and new technologies to make significant educational gains. In particular, to offer flexibility in terms of where, when and how young people learn.
- to provide a service which is accessible to, and exceeds the expectations, of students, parents, teachers and the wider community.
- to ensure that new infrastructure and technology is supported by high-quality training opportunities.
- to make personalised learning opportunities available 24 hours a day.

Training and inclusion issues

ICT is a key enabler of personalised learning in Lambeth, allowing the curriculum offer to be matched to the needs of the learner, helping to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, learning to research information on an individual or collaborative basis.

Central to personalised learning is the development of a tailored Lambeth ICT Managed Learning Environment (MLE) within the BSF programme. The MLE provides a range of communication tools for creative and social interaction and is seen as key to enabling collaborations in school, across and beyond the borough. Already MLE usage figures are very high, which the local authority believes is the result of innovative high quality training. In the Elmgreen School, a BSF Wave 2 school, which opened on a temporary site with 180 students and one year group (Year 7) in 2007, thousands of page views were recorded on the MLE June alone, representing a 30% increase in usage over a three month period.

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All children in Lambeth secondary schools will have access to personal online learning spaces through a managed learning platform by April 2009. This is supported through Lambeth's E-learning Foundation, a charity which is raising funds and coordinating the supply of home access devices, particularly mini-books, as part of the Computers for Pupils programme which is managed by Lambeth's BSF team.

The BSF Managed Service is making a significant contribution to inclusion by adapting hardware and using specialist software to meet the needs of SEN students. There is a wide provision of E learning content to supplement available tailored specifically for SEN purposes.

Lambeth is planning a series of ICT accelerator camps to give both parents and pupils access to a level two ICT course outside of school hours in 2009. Parental engagement is an active driver for improvement and Lambeth will use ICT to maximise the information available to parents. Current parental gateways, such as that available at Dunraven School, will be developed further in 2009 to provide even greater parental access and involvement.

Communication and stakeholder engagement

Good communication - about what the ICT Managed Service is, how it can be used and by whom, and what training opportunities are available is - is a vital part of Lambeth's BSF project. All schools appoint an ICT Project Director and there are termly meetings to share learning and optimise development. Monthly Service review meetings are chaired by a school representative and are hosted by a different school every month. This process has meant the schools can take an active role as implementers of ICT in the BSF programme. Additionally, there are yearly meetings with student and local authority representatives in all project schools to discuss their use of ICT.

As new schools prepare to come into the managed service, engagement work with teachers and students is carried out by the local authority and ICT provider, RM, to identify needs and wants and consider how good use of ICT will influence teaching and learning, and therefore the building design.

A good example of this approach is the work carried out at The Michael Tippett School. Michael Tippett is a school for students with profound and multiple, and/or severe, learning difficulties. A programme of staff professional development in ICT has contributed to early establishment of good practice. In particular staff development has been embedded in classroom practice, supporting teachers as they learn skills and evolve new ways of working.

Student and staff usage of the learning platform has increased significantly in the last year and digital key performance indicators are evidence to this. Staff responses to training and CPD have been and continue to be positive and indicate an approach which meets each individual school needs.

School project directors are positive about the impact on students, and believe that it is challenging them to achieve more through the use of new technologies such as Mini-books and the learning platform. The European Pedagogical Licence for teachers will further extend the added value of the managed service and deliver new opportunities for staff qualifications.

An MLE steering group, comprised of teachers, local authority officers and RM, has been established which has focused on the range of technology required to support the 14 -19 agenda, and also to provide a platform for London-wide sharing of resources and good practice.

Strong partnership working: the example of Elm Court School

The success of the managed service is built on a strong communication plan and good relationships. Schools, RM and external consultants work together with an open approach based on continuous improvement. This is exemplified by the high quality Educational Design Consultancy at Elm Court, a BSF Wave 2 School for students with mild SEN and behavioural needs. The Education Design consultancy has involved the local authority, the school and RM in devising a more flexible approach to ICT, using mobile technologies, to structure a student centred project-based approach to teaching and learning. Furthermore a specialist SEN consultant was brought in by RM to assess how the students educational needs can be incorporated into the service provided for Elm Court.

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Sustainability

The use of RM Ecoquiet computers, which use the equivalent power of a light bulb, and extensive thin client networking in the next “refresh”, will significantly lower the carbon footprint.

Ecoquiets have been configured to shut down when not in use and server rooms are modified to ensure lowest power usage. Issues with network devices can be solved remotely rather than a network engineer travelling to the site. Local Area Network technology allows machines to be switched on and off when engaged in management activity.

The BSF managed service is making significant gains in value for money through the use of innovative technologies such as thin client (where a networked computer depends primarily on the central server for processing activities), open source software and small mini-book devices. “Soft” services, such as educational consultancy and support, continue to offer Lambeth outstanding value for money.

Key contact

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Further information

BSF news, information about schools in the borough, as well as information for the market about the next phase of BSF in Lambeth is available at: www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/EducationLearning/BSF/