LLN Feedback from school visits
Thursday and Friday, 20th/21st March 2014

Charlton School and Dothill Primary School
Severn Drive, Wellington, Telford TF1 3LE
Headteacher: Nick Renshaw

The tour of Dothill Primary and Charlton Secondary School highlighted the journey that the schools were taking to raise the level of technology in order to impact upon attainment. There were a number of very interesting initiative that were seen and the staff were evidently keen to use innovative strategies. Some of the high points observed included:

Year 9 pupils doing html programming using Scratch and Excel

An ex-teacher from the school is touring India and blogging with the students. This was seen to be a very powerful experience for the students.

'Padlet' (previously called 'Wallwisher') is used comprehensively (www.padlet.com).
Padlet is a nifty tool that enables users to post comments and ideas to a collaborative virtual board. It is very similar to other sticky-note tools like Realtime Board, SquareLeaf, or Primary Wall. The new feature of Padlet, called Streams, gives the virtual space more structure by arranging posts in chronological order.

Children were working together to show how a server works by using eStream annimation.(http://www.planetestream.co.uk/)

There was and ICT Apprentice who was working at the school and had been very proficient in developing a range of movies using iMovie (http://www.apple.com/uk/mac/imovie)

The school was using ClassDojo as a tracking system and this was going well. (http://www.classdojo.com)
ClassDojo is a classroom tool that helps teachers improve behavior in their classrooms quickly and easily. It also captures and generates data on behavior that teachers can share with parents and administrators. Better learning behaviours, smoother lessons and hassle-free data - and it's free!

There was a sophisticated data information and assessment package that had been developed by the school, using Sharepoint. This looked very interesting - it was being used by staff to retrieve and input a wide range of data on the students.

Windmill Primary School
Beaconsfield, Brookside, Telford, TF3 1LG
Headteacher: Mark Gibbons

The Headteacher indicated that he and the school were on a journey to develop and integrate technology and that this journey had started with his attendance on the EXite Programme (run in partnership with IET). They had some interesting ideas on how to deliver technology in the classrooms...

There was a clear plan for the future role of technology which had been split into three phases. They are focussing on getting the infrastructure in place and upgrading the broadband provision.

Windmill intend locating three plasma screens in classrooms to enable all children to easily see what is being shown or to teach up to three different groups in a room at a time to assist with differentiation. However, they had decided not to go for touch-screens in order to save money.

The school was looking to lease equipment in order to replace aging equipment more quickly.

Windmill used versatile furniture formations to provide flexibility in the classrooms (including the Isis segment tables)

The school had decided not to go for iPads and a reliance upon apps but to focus on material from the internet.

Facebook was being developed for reaching out to families.

They had some exciting plans ahead which included:

Committing to a device for each child

Online access for all children

Randlay Primary and Nursery School
Randlay, Telford TF3 2LR
Headteacher: Bromley Jones

The Headteacher encourages his staff to go for promotion as he is a firm believer in a school that is constantly refreshed with new people. It was evident that his new staff brought a range of new and interesting skills to extend the use of technology in the classroom. The school employed different tools to deliver the curriculum including:

A radio station, run by 21 young DJs. The signal was fed into the playground and to the classrooms. These 21 children were Digital Leaders.

The ICT Suite had just been revamped with touch-screen computers which were proving to be very useful. The children were very proficient in their use.

One class was using a program called Jumpido which uses Kinect to develop maths skills (http://www.jumpido.com/). This required children to move in a specific way in response to a calculation that was on the screen. This is a new product as was in the process of evaluation.

Classrooms were moving away from IWBs and replacing them with touch-screen plasmas.

Randlay was using a company called B60 to develop a school app (http://www.b60apps.co.uk/). This cost about £300 for start-up and then £30 per month.

The schools demonstrated that technology was used effectively and that they were always looking for the next exciting idea. We saw a range of things using a range of products including Lego WeDo, iMovie, Kodu, 2Build (an Early Years pupil record profile program from 2Simple), ChromaKey and Jumpido.

Computing was being developed using Raspberry Pi's and Espresso Coding in order to understand the internal workings of computers and to develop apps.

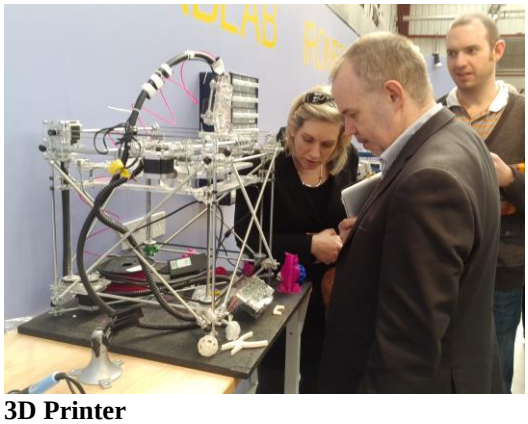
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust
Coach Road, Coalbrookdale, Shropshire TF8 7DQ
Education Manager: Maureen McGregor

The Ironbridge Gorge Museum is an exciting, interactive environment that brings the history of the area and its impact on the industrial revolution to life. This is a great place to visit for adults, families and groups of school children. In addition to furnaces, smelting technology and local artefacts, there is also a hands-on section called Enginuity. In addition to a large room full of technology to experience there are also lecture rooms, a vast engine room and an activity room.

Visiting Enginuity

3D Mapping of a local treasure

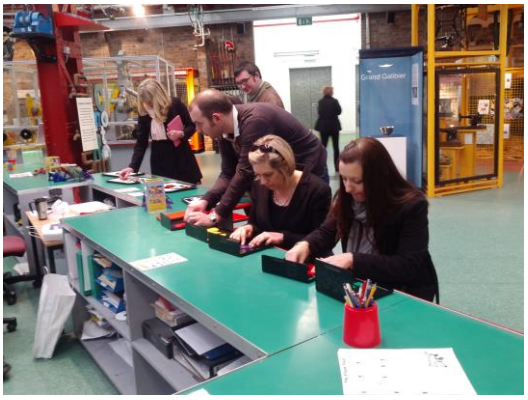
Mapping results leave people shocked



3D Printer

Hands-on Section

Fine examples from the Industrial Revolution



Leading Leaders show their skills

Time was spent developing an App Map of useful apps that can be used to enliven, motivate and inspire children. A great deal of the time was spent actually discussing and demonstrating the apps available but a chart of useful resources was also pulled together.

We will investigate how best to move this project forwards. There is the possibility of some LLN members getting together to work on the project. Interested? Contact Jeff.