

# Using ICT in the Foundation Stage – Wolverhampton LA E-mobile projects

## Overview

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The Foundation Stage Pilot project is part of a larger learning project in schools in Wolverhampton known as Learning2Go. The Learning2Go partnership is currently the largest collaborative mobile learning project for pupils in the UK. The project, co-ordinated by Wolverhampton City Council, provides a pedagogical lead and shows how mobile learning devices can be used to give students access to 'anywhere, anytime' learning.

This project has allowed us to look at the potential for using mobile devices within birth-to-three and the Foundation Stage to engage parents and children in the recording of their child's learning journey. This has built on and developed from an existing project PICL (Parents Involved in Children's Learning) where parents recorded their child's learning journey using a paper scrap book. The use of the multimedia functions within a PDA has allowed the parents to record the learning both in and out of the learning setting electronically.

The parents have been supported by the Children's Centre staff, many of whom have recently completed the SHARE (National Family Learning Programme focusing on literacy and numeracy) training programme. The journeys recorded by the parents have fed into the quality assurance scheme within the Children's Centre and used within the schools self evaluation process. This has given the parents a sense of involvement and purpose for their work. The learning journey will also feed into the child's reception year encouraging parents to remain involved in their child's learning and encouraging a learning culture within the family.

### Main findings

- Parents reported a greater understanding of their children's learning journey.
- Parents had become more confident users of ICT.
- Staff have a greater awareness of children's learning outside the centre.
- Accessibility – no user reported accessibility problems around screen size and one parent declared a slight visual and hearing impairment.
- Children as young as two years of age were able to draw on screen with little difficulty in using the stylus although parents did report that the device was too large for the children to hold with ease.
- Mobile devices work well as a non-threatening introduction to ICT and to 24/7 learning for parents.
- The benefits are primarily the mobility and the instantaneous access to multimedia.

### Obstacles to progress

- Lack of suitable 'off the shelf' content for mobile devices to use within the Foundation Stage.
- Camera and video were not of a high enough quality.
- Amount of support required was greater than anticipated.
- For further in-depth work, video or camera or sustained input other ICT sources are required.

## Key priorities

- To roll the project out to other children's centres across the city, sharing good practice learned from the current small scale project.
- To work with software developers to create more learning materials for foundation stage.
- To work with developers to create an assessment tool to run on a PDA.
- To work with various agencies to create e-books to help/assist with developing parenting skills and encouraging parents to read to their children.

## Annex: examples of how impact has been measured

### Practitioners' confidence, ECERS, progress

Because we were targeting parents in the centre the ECERS was not appropriate. We therefore devised other ways to measure the impact; analysis and examples are attached.

#### Personal PDA skills and uses

5 completed

For each of the following please mark from 1-10 to indicate your level of competence with that particular programme. The numbers roughly correspond to:

1. I don't know what this is.
3. I know what this is but have never used it.
5. I have used this occasionally but need more training to be fully competent.
7. I have used this quite a lot but need more training to be fully competent.
10. I use this regularly, confidently and competently.

	Level of competence at beginning of project	Level of competence at end of project
Navigating around the Today screen to applications	16	35
Inputting text in Pocket Word with the on-screen keyboard	15	25
Inputting text with transcriber	22	31
Naming and saving my files, using folders	17	27
Copying deleting files – organising my PDA	23	31
Using the diary/calendar	23	26
Using the camera	28	41
Using the video	19	30
Entering text on images	14	30