

Fordbank Primary Sharing Practice Visit

24th September 2024

Introduction

Schools were asked to share their digital practice via an online form. Following this, a visit to the school was arranged to discuss in more detail and to assess the initial impact of this work. We were interested in answering the following questions:

- What changes did you make to your practice?
- What was the impact of these changes on learner outcomes?
- What were the enablers that allowed you to change practice?
- What barriers limited practice change?

[@FordbankPS](#) wanted to share how they are using micro:bits as part of a wider Young STEM Leaders initiative to enhance learning, teaching and assessment across the curriculum.

What changes did you make to your practice?

The cluster initiative gave staff the opportunity, during an InService day arranged with the SSERC trained staff from across the cluster, to see how other schools across the cluster were using micro:bits. This led to the school setting up a Digital Committee for learners from P1 – P7, in addition, to the Young STEM Leaders group. Both the Young STEM Leaders and the Digital Committee have supported other classes in [using the micro:bits](#) as part of the Computing Science curriculum, including coding lights for Hallowe'en and Christmas events. A [lunchtime code club](#) was set up to further develop learner skills and enthusiasm for coding. Links were made with STEM through a Lego Explore project and the Royal Navy came to the school to showcase using Spheros in computing science.

These changes allowed the school to share practice from learner to learner and learner to staff.

What was the impact of these changes on learner outcomes?

The learners were very engaged when using the micro:bits. They used the [micro:bit website](#) and [Make Code](#) to discover new ways to use the micro:bits, such as compasses to use outside, [coding secret messages](#) and pedometers. The Young STEM Leaders gained confidence when presenting what they had learned at assemblies and when teaching other classes how to use the micro:bits. All learners needed to have resilience when using the micro:bits and problem-solve how to make these work.

What were the enablers that allowed you to change practice?

The Young STEM leaders are critical in driving forward changes in practice. Dedicated time is set aside for working and planning with the learners to ensure they are extending the learning that is taking place in classes. Coding tutorials from the [micro:bit website](#) builds the capacity of both learners and staff. Obtaining additional funding via a grant from the Institute of Physics, enabled the school to purchase more resources that can be linked to the micro:bits. This feeds into the wider planning and organisation for the Science days throughout the school.

Teachers showing each other how to use the micro:bits gave staff confidence to try it for themselves.

What barriers limited practice change?

The main barrier was staff confidence in using the tools but using STEM and Digital Leaders as an extra support for both learners and staff has helped to mitigate this.

Conclusion

The introduction of these tools has had a positive impact on learner engagement and developing skills for the future.

The school's next steps are to apply for additional funding to build their stock of coding tools and to raise awareness of how these could be used across the curriculum.