

Glencoats Primary Sharing Practice Visit

7th November 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?

Glencoats PS wanted to share how they had used their Digital Leaders to introduce Scratch Jr to a range of classes to enhance computing science activities.

What changes did you make to your practice?

Our Digital Leaders were trained in how to use Scratch Jr, an app that was already available on the iPads. They were then able to deliver sessions in other classes, demonstrating how the app can be used. The Digital Leaders planned the activities that they would deliver in these classes.

The Digital Leaders spoke to the whole class and the teacher before delivering the session. This meant that the class teacher was happy for the session to go ahead as it was the pupils who were delivering it. An activity was chosen by the Digital Leaders, who then demonstrated to small groups at a time how to use Scratch Jr on the iPads.

What was the impact of these changes on learner outcomes?

The feedback from this session was very positive, from both the teachers and the children. The Digital Leaders felt confident in delivering the session and want to do more sessions using Scratch Jr and other apps. They felt that they were in a position of leadership.

The staff also felt confident to use the app again in their own classes. They have delivered different activities and have upskilled the learners. The children have also gained confidence, both in using the app and working independently. The Digital Leaders have recognised that they have developed their skills, and this has helped to build their self-esteem, alongside the positive feedback from the staff.

What were the enablers that allowed you to change practice?

The Digital Leaders were enthusiastic and willing to learn how to use the new apps. The staff were also willing to take part in the sessions, and this was made easier by the learners leading the activities. We had enough devices available to carry out the activities, which also helped.

What barriers limited practice change?

The devices had to be shared across a small group, which meant that not everyone had access to them at the same time. The staff were initially uncertain about how the sessions would work, but this was offset by the positive feedback from the learners. The time for meeting with the learners prior to the sessions had to

be negotiated carefully with their class teachers, and the timetable for going to classes had to be arranged at particular times.

Some of the learners were initially lacking in confidence, but this grew once they had worked with the app and understood what it was all about. Some learners were more of a challenge than others when it came to going into classes and working with other children. Staff confidence in computing science can be a barrier, however, once the learners showed them how to use the app, they felt more confident in trying activities themselves.

Conclusion

The implementation of the Digital Leaders program, focusing on teaching Scratch Jr to other classes, has yielded positive results. It has demonstrably increased:

- **Learner Confidence:** Both the Digital Leaders and the learners they worked with gained confidence in using digital tools and in their own abilities.
- **Staff Confidence:** Teachers felt more confident in using the Scratch Jr app after observing the Digital Leaders, fostering a greater willingness to integrate technology into their lessons.
- **Leadership Skills:** The Digital Leaders developed valuable leadership and communication skills.
- **Engagement:** The program successfully engaged learners in active learning and peer-to-peer teaching.

Despite some initial challenges, such as device sharing and scheduling, the program's overall impact has been highly beneficial.

Overall, the changes implemented have resulted in more creative and engaging learning experiences for learners. Continued professional development, strong leadership support, and addressing staff confidence are crucial for further enhancing the effective use of iPads in the classroom.

Recommendations

Based on the evaluation, here are some recommendations for future implementation and expansion of the Digital Leaders program:

- **Expand App Training:**
 - Continue to train Digital Leaders on a variety of educational apps, expanding their expertise and the range of skills they can share.
 - Continue to introduce new applications to the staff, through the digital leaders.
- **Continued Professional Development:** Encourage and support ongoing professional development opportunities for staff on iPad usage and new innovations.
- **Showcase Success Stories:** Share successful examples of iPad integration to inspire and motivate other staff members, as well as recognising and celebrating the achievements of the Digital Leaders through school assemblies, newsletters, etc. This will boost their morale and encourage continued participation.
- **Regular Evaluation:** Regularly evaluate the impact of iPad usage on pupil learning and adjust practices based on the findings.