



# Learning Hubs Project

Synergy with

## A Curriculum for Excellence

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## Purpose

This document briefly outlines how the Learning Hubs Project, through its proposed one-to-one mobile learning rollout, can assist a Curriculum for Excellence in achieving its goals. It solely provides a high level outline and is in no way intended to provide comprehensive evidence to the synergy between Learning Hubs and a Curriculum for Excellence.

## Synergy

### *Successful Learners*

Successful learners with

- enthusiasm and motivation for learning
- determination to reach high standards of achievement and
- openness to new thinking and ideas

All evidence shows that the correct use of technology within the classroom increases **enjoyment** and **engagement** especially in the type of one-to-one environment that Learning Hubs will provide. Increasing these two important factors will increase the pupils' **motivation to learn** leading to significantly **higher aspirations and ambitions** beyond school.

Recently there has been a massive increase in the appearance of interactive and educational gaming software and this trend is expected to dramatically increase over the coming decade. Learning Hubs provides the gateway to this new way of learning and it will only serve to further increase our pupils' **enthusiasm and motivation for learning**.

Learning Hubs offers mobile learning ('m-learning') which permits informal learning to continue beyond the school gate. The provision of wider learning opportunities and better access to the Internet encourages **self-directional learning skills** which creates an **openness to new thinking, ideas** and ways of learning.

**Learning Hubs** can truly integrate podcasts, blogs, video and audio into the classroom. This will have a significant impact on the communication and learning abilities of many children whose learning styles are more suited to this type of media.

### *Effective contributors with*

- An enterprising attitude
- resilience and
- self-reliance

Children are naturally inquisitive and the Internet provides a simple medium to find answers and explore **new ideas** themselves. This lessens a pupil's need to be 'fed information' making them more **resilient** and less **reliant** on others. Technology provides the perfect environment to encourage and exercise **creative ideas** thereby creating a more **enterprising attitude** which may hopefully serve to rekindle some of Scotland's entrepreneurial spirit.

## Confident individuals with

- self-respect
- a sense of physical, mental and emotional well-being
- secure values and beliefs and
- ambition

Evidence from the many existing one-to-one learning case studies demonstrates that pupils' **confidence** and **self-respect** is raised. The case for this could not be more apparent for some additional support requirement children. Some suffer from the lack of provision of assistive technology whilst those that do possess devices such as Alphasmarts are exposed as being different to their peers. Being made to feel abnormal is enough to strip any child of his or her self-respect which has a massive detrimental effect on their **mental, physical and emotional well-being**.

Below is an actual example of work from a dyslexic primary 7 pupil in Scotland. The hand written work shows an almost illegible ramble before that pupil had the benefit of assistive technology. The typed poem displays a verse from the same child with the help of predictive text on a device such as a learning hub. That poem shows the child's real potential and talent however, that same child (when reaching secondary school) regressed as it singled her out as being different to her peers. This would cause a tremendous amount of mental and emotional strain that would strip anyone of their **self-dignity** and **confidence**. Learning hubs would prevent this from happening and would provide a level playing field for all.

teacher Mis tealer is the name of my teacher,  
 friends Abbeys a mneving. (amazing)  
 Bens ??? ??? ? ? ?  
 Joins pure meto.  
 pal... s a mneving.  
 Heth... s Base (bossu)  
 class I Watch in class Mathr Lawj.  
 ground We took in the ground.

Down the river gliding, sliding  
 Down the river trickling, skipping  
 Over rocks and stones.  
 Bubbling ,plunging ,twisting,swirling,  
 Stirring up the sand.  
 The water finds its way  
 Down the rugged hillside.  
 Water goes up, down, anywhere it  
 wants.  
 It has mighty power  
 It can break through anything.  
 Slowing down as the river bends  
 It crackles and trickles under the  
 bridges  
 As it slides towards the sea.

Projects such **The Wolverhampton Learning2Go Project** (involving PDA's <http://wgfl.wolverhampton.gov.uk/PDASite/index.html> ) shows how to provide properly structured group tasks within the classroom, and beyond. It helps break down a task into component elements, offering each collaborator a worthwhile role in the exercise. This encourages pupils to communicate and express their own **beliefs**, ultimately increasing **self awareness**, **confidence** and **respect for others**.

## ***Responsible citizens with***

- respect for others and
- commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life

Learning Hubs provide the gateway to the Internet allowing access to unbiased news and information from around the world enabling us to understand and feel what life must be like for others in situations very different to our own. The Internet allows us to learn and understand about **different beliefs and cultures** enabling us develop **ethical views of complex issues** and make **informed decisions** on subjects. This transparency allows us to **'develop a knowledge and understanding for the world and Scotland's place in it'**.

A typical example of this might be understanding what life is really like in Baghdad from the eyes of an Iraqi <http://riverbendblog.blogspot.com/> or gaining a different viewpoint from news from the Arab world from an English version of Al-Jazeera <http://english.aljazeera.net/HomePage/>

## ***Conclusions***

Learning Hubs will permit pupils to engage with real, practical or hypothetical problems which connect to the world beyond the classroom. It will provide learning that is not restricted by; subject boundaries, a single learning style or a fixed body of information. It will allow them to coherently communicate ideas, concepts and arguments using different mediums and to present explanations vividly with rich detail. It will also close the chasm between the use of technology in school and 'real life'.

Learning Hubs presents a Curriculum for Excellence with a catalytic opportunity to achieve its ultimate objectives and the perfect platform to ensure its values are embedded at the core of Scottish Learning and Teaching.

## Appendix (i) – Relevant Quotes

### Successful Learners

“Learners are more comfortable engaging in personal or private subject areas using a mobile device than doing so using traditional methods” [Emerging Technologies for Learning’ BECTA ICT Research]

“All the experiments we have reported – and there are many others – point to the possibilities of deepening children’s engagement because they are involved more, and can be challenged more, in ways that they enjoy.” [Emerging Technologies for Learning’ BECTA ICT Research]

### Effective contributors

“ICT is perfect for encouragement of **enterprise** and risk taking. There is not a huge loss if something does go wrong. Generally the kids love to find new ways of doing things”. [Secondary teacher in Learning through ICT, Glasgow City Council, January 2005]

### Confident individuals

“Other findings: A raising of children's **self-esteem**.” [A PDA for every child! Shropshire] <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/innovation-unit/communication/yourcasestudies/738333/>

“With a background of more than 4 years of trialling, research and development, m-learning has helped thousands of learners from all walks of life to develop their skills, **confidence** and **motivation** to learn.” <http://www.m-learning.org/>

Kambouri et al (Feb 2004) studied the use of laptops as a motivational element in persuading learners to develop their basic skills, and found learning with IT improved **confidence**. <http://www.maths4life.org/content.asp?CategoryID=876>

### Responsible citizens

“In theory this use of ICT allows learners access to a wide range of information, opinions and perspectives from around the world that would otherwise be inaccessible” [Literature review in citizenship, technology and learning, by Neil Selwyn; Nesta Futurelab, 2002; p4]”

“It has been found by Savill-Smith and Kent (2003), in a review of the published literature about the use of palmtop computers for learning that palmtop computers can:

- assist students’ **motivation**
- help organisational skills
- **encourage a sense of responsibility**
- help support both independent and collaborative learning”

[From Learning and Skills Development Agency, paper entitled ‘Learning With Mobile Devices, Research and Development’ from a book of papers edited by Jill Attewell and Carol Savill-Smith] <http://www.m-learning.org/docs/Learning%20with%20Mobile%20Devices%20-%20A%20Book%20of%20Papers%20from%20MLEARN%202003.pdf>