Killigrew Primary and Nursery School

School No 455

Using Android Tablets in a Primary School
Updated May 2013

Killigrew Primary and Nursery School is a two form entry school near St. Albans. We first visited this school in December 2012 to look at their use of Android based tablets, which the school purchased in the autumn term of that year.

Their 16 Toshiba AT300-101 tablet computers were purchased for general cross-curricular use in all classes. The school has an extensive PC network, running RM Community Connect 4, which includes an ICT suite as well as laptops for use in classrooms.

When the first version of this case study was published at the beginning of 2013, the tablets were new to the school so it was decided we would revisit the case a few months later to see how the use of these devices had developed.

Date:	8-5-13
Subject Coverage:	Cross Curricular
Key Stages:	EYFS – KS2
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Related Documents & Links:
Website: http://www.killigrew.herts.sch.uk

The Tablet

The Toshiba AT300 tablets used by the school have 16gb of storage and a 10.1" screen. They run Android 4.0 as the operating system. They have forward and rear facing cameras, and the tablets have an SD card slot on the side. Wifi connectivity allows access to the school's filtered internet access. The included Adobe Flash Player allows access to educational websites that the school already uses.

Managing the Devices

The charging of devices is managed by a 'Lapcaddy' charging trolley, and this, together with the tablets, was purchased from Viglen. Set up of each device was carried out manually and currently the school is only using free apps, with no current plans to purchase any as they find their needs met by free offerings. Each device has its own Google account, to access the Google Play store (for apps and content.) Additionally each device has its own email address set up, and this can be used to email work from the tablet if necessary.

A parental control app called 'Kids Place' had been installed which acts as a secure 'desktop' for the children to use. This was originally set up to automatically launch on start up, so that all children would use this interface. However, this is now not used in general, and only applied in

particular instances (perhaps if very young children are using the tablets.) It was felt that as internet access is filtered within school there was no particular need to lock down the tablet operating environment, and it would ultimately be more useful to the children if they became familiar with navigating the standard operating system rather than a modified child-friendly version. Therefore the children are now accessing the tablets through the standard Android 4.0 interface.

The tablets can be connected to standard classroom projectors through the use of an HDMI to VGA adaptor. Whilst use of this facility is not yet widespread across the school, it does offer an easy way to share a tablet's display with the whole class, to demonstrate apps and share work.

Use in Class

Having had the tablets for approximately 6 months, the school reports that some of the most popular use is with flash based websites for learning games, for example *Hit The Button* from Wmnet, and Transum (www.transum.org.) These are used well in Key Stage 2, and are often employed at the beginning of the day as mental maths practice. QR codes are being used as a way of helping pupils access web addresses, particularly longer ones, from the tablet. These codes can be created very quickly and easily by teachers, and by using a simple QR Code scanning app the pupils can scan the code and be immediately taken to the chosen website. The school does point out that not all online Flash activity sites are really designed for access from a tablet, so are not always as easy to use as they would be on a laptop/desktop. Other free maths activities have been installed onto the tablets in the form of Android apps.

The tablets have also been popular as still and video cameras, and the free 'PicsArt' app allows photos to be edited. Media created with the tablets can be transferred to PC by connecting a USB cable from the tablet to the computer, and pupils have become familiar with doing this. The pupil then has access to the relevant folders on the tablet and can download the photographs etc. The built in cameras have also been used for creating stop-motion animations, again using a free app to create these.

The tablets came with an office suite preinstalled, including a word processor with speech-to-text functionality, which may be useful in supporting the learning of children with particular needs. The suite also has spreadsheet and presentation programs. The built-in cameras and voice recorder can be used right across the curriculum, internet research is also readily accessible from the tablets, which are quick to start up and easier to get set up in class than laptops.

Conclusion

The school reports that by giving the teachers and pupils access to a shared set of 16 tablets, use of ICT across the curriculum has increased, and teachers seem happy with the ease of use of the devices. The network manager reports few technical issues, and once the tablets were set up staff have adopted them quickly. The pupils are very keen to use them, as would be expected, and a booking

system is in place as this is a popular resource across the school. There are no current plans to expand the tablet provision, and instead the school intends to further develop the use of the existing set.

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