



Small-scale evaluation series

Identifying Effective Practice 2002–03

About the series

The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) have been working together to develop a body of evidence relating to the impact of information and communications technology (ICT) in education. This joint research and evaluation programme has set up longitudinal studies, managed research, data gathering and analysis exercises, surveys, conferences and workshops, and has established the Becta ICT Research Network¹. The programme has helped firmly embed ICT on the wider educational research agenda.

To further the overall research programme during 2002–03, the DfES funded a number of preliminary, small-scale projects that examined examples of emerging practice with ICT in several areas where evidence was scarce. Becta managed these projects on behalf of the DfES.

In general, the evaluation of these small-scale projects sought to identify effective practice by establishing how ICT made an impact on the performance of teachers and pupils. The process also sought to identify areas for further investigation and larger-scale research and practice.

The 2002–03 evaluations looked at the following five areas:

- Models of online in-service training
- The organisation and use of ICT by leading maths and leading literacy teachers
- The impact of shared lesson planning on teachers' use of the Intel computer microscope
- The organisation and use of ICT in the teaching of modern foreign languages in the primary school
- Models of access to ICT in secondary schools.

The data collection for each of the above projects took place between October 2002 and March 2003, and Becta contracted independent organisations to carry out the research on its behalf.

General outcomes and the nature of the evidence

Because of the limited scale and scope of the projects, the practices highlighted by the evaluations can only be considered representative of those participating. The findings therefore cannot be generalised – they reflect only the issues and concerns of those involved and cannot be held to be representative of the wider school community.

Nonetheless the findings may be indicative, and interesting and valuable observations do arise from the studies. One reason for making the findings of such studies more widely available is

¹ For more information about the ICT Research Network see <http://www.becta.org.uk/research/ictrn>

to support practitioners and advisers who are using, or about to use, ICT to support teaching and learning in similar contexts.

While in pure research terms the outcomes are 'true' only for the group of schools and teachers under study, astute advisers and practitioners will spot emerging practice, or issues about implementation and resourcing that could make the difference between success and failure in their own ICT planning and implementation. What follows is a synopsis of the findings for each area of research.

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