Harnessing Technology Local Authorities Survey 2008

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Introduction

Background

This report presents the findings of the 2008 Harnessing Technology web survey of local authorities conducted by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) on behalf of the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta). This is a follow-up to the 2007 study, also carried out by NatCen (Sinclair and Mortimer, *Harnessing Technology Local Authorities Survey 2007*).

Becta is responsible to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for the Harnessing Technology e-strategy and a key feature of this work focuses on improving educational institutions' use of technology for learning. This study forms part of Becta's wider Harnessing Technology research strand.

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how local authorities support the use of ICT in schools and how they can best be assisted in doing this. An additional aim of the 2008 survey was to try to measure change and progress among local authorities in their support for the use of ICT in education.

Survey objectives

The survey's aims included attempting to understand the extent to which certain key objectives (listed below) were being achieved:

- Institutions and providers plan and manage technology for learning effectively and sustainably
- Technology-enabled learning environments are secure, supported and interoperable
- There is good use of information to support learner transitions between institutions and sectors.

The survey was conducted from 30 November 2007 to 4 February 2008. Data was collected via an online questionnaire hosted by Gide. The questionnaire was developed jointly by Becta and NatCen and piloting was carried out by NatCen with two directors of children's services.

The questionnaire focused on the following key areas:

- Local authorities' support for ICT in their schools
- The capacity of local authorities to provide this support on an ongoing basis
- Current technology-related policy.

The questionnaire comprised four key modules covering the above points. These modules covered: leadership and policy issues; resources and organisation; support and development; and the role of Becta and the self-review framework.

Survey procedures

Representatives of 153 local authorities (those in England plus Jersey, Guernsey and the Falkland Islands) were invited to take part. The initial contacts for the survey were the directors of children's services in each local authority in England plus their equivalents in Jersey, Guernsey and the Falkland Islands. In many cases, the director of children's services involved, or delegated to, other colleagues in the task of completing the questionnaire or parts of it.

Following an initial advance letter, respondents were sent an email at the start of fieldwork on 30 November 2007 with a link to the questionnaire and a unique access password for their local authority. This was followed by a number of reminders – letters, emails, two rounds of telephone chasing and a round of chasing by Becta staff too. The purpose of the reminders was to try to drive the response rate as high as possible and to maximise the extent of question coverage within responses.

Respondents could access the questionnaire at any time during the fieldwork period and could save their answers to return at another time. This enabled them to find answers that might not be immediately available and to refer the survey, or parts of it, on to colleagues who might be better placed to answer some questions. Respondents could move freely through the questionnaire and were not forced to give an answer to one question before moving on to another. While this had the advantage of avoiding a situation where a respondent might give up, it also meant that it was not possible to check that all relevant questions were answered.

Response rates were higher than for the 2007 survey, reflecting the additional resources devoted to reminding respondents. Calculating a response rate for the survey is complicated. In total, 105 respondents out of the 153 contacted (68 per cent) accessed the survey's 'welcome page', and this would be the highest estimate of response. However, some of these answered no questions, or very few, and these have been discounted. Eighty respondents (52 per cent) reached the final page of the questionnaire and submitted their questionnaire, and this would be the lowest estimate of response.

In determining which partial responses to include as valid cases for analysis, we set a minimum of 10 questions which covered most of the first module of the questionnaire. In practice, nearly all of those who completed this much of the questionnaire went on to answer considerably more questions. In total, 97 cases were included as valid responses for analysis, giving a response rate of 63 per cent.

Interpretation of tables

Weighting has not been applied to the figures presented in this report. The purpose of non-response weighting is to correct for known bias in a dataset. For example, certain groups may be over-represented because they were more likely to respond. Data in this report was checked for bias due to differential response and no evidence of bias was found, meaning that weights were not required. As such, tables and figures in this report show unweighted percentages, means and base sizes.

The following symbols have been used in the tables in this report:

[ ]   to indicate a percentage based on fewer than 50 respondents

•   to indicate a percentage value of less than 0.5 per cent

-        to indicate a percentage value of zero

n/a   to indicate that the answer option was not included in a particular year.

Non-responders have been excluded from the bases of all tables and figures. Respondents who entered the questionnaire but answered fewer than 10 questions have also been excluded.

Answers given by all respondents are taken to reflect the policies of the local authority and not the personal views or opinions of the respondent. The terms 'respondent' (as in 'approximately a quarter of respondents…') and 'local authority' (as in 'the majority of local authorities…') are used interchangeably throughout the report.

The majority of questions that were asked in the 2007 survey were repeated in 2008. The wording of some of these questions was changed in response to policy developments or to improve question clarity.

Where appropriate, tables show the 2007 figures for comparison. Any differences made to the question or answer options which are likely to have a minor effect on comparability with the 2007 data are noted with a table footnote. The 2007 figures have not been included in the table where the question or answer options were amended significantly and thus compromised comparability.

Figures quoted in the text always refer to the 2008 survey unless otherwise stated.

Given that 97 authorities out of the population of 153 were used in the analysis, a finite population correction factor was incorporated in statistical testing procedures for comparing 2007 and 2008 data. The finite population correction factor measures how much extra precision we achieve when the sample size becomes close to the population size. Please note that trend data is generally only reported if the

difference is statistically significant. Findings statistically significant at the 95% confidence level are referred to as 'statistically significant' and at the 99% level as 'highly statistically significant' in the footnote text.

Report structure

The structure of the report follows that of the questionnaire. Therefore, Chapter 2 presents findings on leadership and policy issues relating to the use of ICT in schools, including ICT strategies and the impact of the Government's Every Child Matters agenda. Chapter 3 focuses on the supply of ICT hardware and support to schools as well as ICT funding. Chapter 4 examines how different aspects of ICT usage in schools are monitored as well as the support and training provided by the local authority. Finally, Chapter 5 looks at local authorities' awareness of, and views on, Becta and the self-review framework, as well as general suggestions for ways in which the use of ICT in education could be improved.

1   Overview of results

1.1   General overview

The increased level of response to the 2008 survey sets a positive backdrop for this report. The higher response also means that the results reported are more robust. The findings suggest that the majority of local authorities that responded to the survey were continuing to remain genuinely engaged with their local schools over the use of ICT in teaching and learning and were working closely with the schools to support ICT use.

Recent government initiatives, such as Computers for Pupils and learning platform funding, have put local authorities at the forefront of the ICT agenda. This report has therefore focused on any progress highlighted by the trend data.

Overall, the general picture has changed little. This is not surprising given that the 2008 study was launched less than a year after the 2007 fieldwork closed. There was some evidence to suggest retrograde steps and some signs of progress. The area of the technical support provided to schools by local authorities has seen the most progress; learning platforms, for example, are being rolled out to more schools in local authorities' remits.

Becta continues to be well regarded and is considered helpful by the majority of local authorities. Indeed, the findings suggest that local authorities are becoming more aware about the type of support that Becta can provide.

1.2   Strategies on ICT use

All local authorities had a written strategy on ICT use in schools or were preparing one. Almost all local authorities with a strategy in place involved at least some schools in drawing it up. Nearly all local authorities reviewed (or planned to review) their strategy on a systematic basis. In terms of frequency of review, the proportion of authorities reviewing their strategy on an annual basis or more often decreased from about half in 2007 to a third in 2008.

The contents of local authorities' strategies on ICT use in schools were strongly influenced by national priorities and initiatives, particularly the Every School Connected strategy, learning platforms and the provision of e-portfolios. The proportion of local authorities incorporating the Computers for Pupils initiative or e-assessment national priorities into their strategies decreased between 2007 and 2008.

1.3   Every Child Matters agenda

There were mixed views regarding the impact of the Every Child Matters agenda on local authorities' capacity to provide ICT support to schools. This finding may part explain why only 40% of local authorities with an ICT strategy in place combined this strategy with Every Child Matters or the Children and Young People's Plan. While around a half of authorities felt that the Every Child Matters agenda had a broadly positive impact on their provision of ICT support, about a third felt it made no difference and 12% commented that it had a negative impact on the authority's capacity to provide support. Almost all local authorities were either using or planned to integrate a ContactPoint database for the collection of Every Child Matters indicator data from schools.

1.4   Support for headteachers and schools

The level of support and provision for the professional development and training of headteachers in the use of ICT shifted between 2007 and 2008. There was an increase in the proportion of headteachers that had their continuing professional development (CPD) needs assessed, but a decrease in the availability of formal training or CPD opportunities to them.

1.5   Technical support for schools

Early trend data indicates that the most progress has centred on the increased level of technical support provided to schools by local authorities.

The proportion of local authorities mainly responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the provision of technical support services for schools increased between 2007 and 2008, representing a shift away from shared responsibility with the schools.

Furthermore, the use of a single management information system (rather than multiple compatible systems) within schools increased significantly between 2007 and 2008.

Again, as in 2007, the findings suggest that most authorities were closely involved in supporting, enabling and advising on the use of digital resources for teaching and learning in schools. All authorities provided at least some level of support and/or advice on e-safety and e-security issues.

1.6   Learning platforms

A recurring theme throughout the report is the key role that learning platforms have in supporting progress. They are nearly always incorporated in a local authority's ICT strategy and have been identified as a way for teachers to share digital learning

resources among each other, and are also mentioned as a method to provide online support to 14- to 19-year-olds.

The findings show that the availability of learning platforms had increased between 2007 and 2008. Furthermore, the implementation of learning platforms was identified by respondents as a general way to improve ICT use in schools. The continued roll-out of learning platforms could also add value to the Government's home access strategy, by focusing home computer use towards educational purposes.

1.7   Views on Becta

Local authorities responding to the 2008 survey were more aware of the support Becta offered in relation to the use of ICT in education than in 2007. Indeed, the proportion of authorities that used Becta frameworks to procure ICT resources increased between 2007 and 2008 from 78% to 89%. Respondents also mentioned Becta's self-review framework as a tool to help improve ICT in education.

All authorities made use of Becta's support, particularly in the fields of ICT leadership, the self-review framework and e-safety.

Local authorities have become more likely to express an opinion about Becta. This may reflect the increased level of contact local authorities had with the agency since the 2007 survey. The general message is that the agency continues to be well regarded, helpful and a positive force in the development of ICT in education.

2 Leadership and policy

This chapter presents findings on leadership and policy issues relating to the use of ICT in schools. Firstly, the chapter looks at ICT visions and strategies that are in place at the local authority. It then explores elements of policy and types of school that are prioritised under the ICT strategy or vision. The chapter concludes by looking at the impact of the Government's Every Child Matters agenda on the way in which support is provided to schools.

2.1 Vision and strategy

2.1.1 Formulation of strategy

Respondents were asked whether the local authority had a written[1] strategy or vision in place for the use of ICT in schools (hereafter referred to simply as strategy)[2]. As Table 2.1 shows, three-quarters of local authorities reported having a strategy in place, with the remaining quarter not having one. Generally, these figures were similar in 2007. However, the proportion that said the strategy was not written by the local authority increased from 1 per cent in 2007 to 7 per cent in 2008[3].

Sixty-eight per cent said the strategy was written by the local authority. A quarter reported that they did not have a strategy in place but indicated that one was being planned.

Table 2.1: Whether a written strategy was in place for the use of ICT in schools

	2007 %	2008 %
Yes, but it was not written by the local authority	1	7
Yes, and it was written by the local authority	73	68
No, but it was being planned/prepared	24	25
No, and it was not being planned/prepared	1	-
Base	*74*	*96*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, one respondent did not answer this question.

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[1] The term 'drafted', which was used in the 2007 survey, was replaced with 'written' in the 2008 answer options.

[2] In the Harnessing Technology Schools Survey of 2007, 98 per cent of primary schools and 91 per cent of secondary schools had a written strategy for ICT. Nearly all headteachers (94 per cent primary, 83 per cent secondary) said that the local authority had provided information and advice that influenced the school's e-learning strategy.

[3] The increase from 1 per cent to 7 per cent is highly statistically significant.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Local authorities with a strategy in place were asked to identify the national priorities that were incorporated within it.

All local authorities reported that the strategy incorporated the Every School Connected broadband initiative (Table 2.2). Nearly all reported that the strategy incorporated learning platforms (97 per cent) and an online learning space for every child (96 per cent), while 90 per cent reported that it incorporated internet safety. The same proportion (71 per cent) indicated that the strategy incorporated the Building Schools for the Future programme and access to the National Education Network.

The most notable changes between 2007 and 2008 were the decreases in the proportion of authorities that incorporated the Computers for Pupils initiative (from 64 per cent to 50 per cent[4]) and e-assessment priorities (58 per cent to 43 per cent[5]).

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[4] The decrease from 64 per cent to 50 per cent is highly statistically significant.

[5] The decrease from 58 per cent to 43 per cent is highly statistically significant.

Table 2.2: National priorities incorporated within strategy

	2007 %	2008 %
Every School Connected	98	100
Learning platforms	95	97
An online learning space for every child/e-portfolio	91	96
Internet safety[1]	n/a	90
Building Schools for the Future	62	71
Access to the National Education Network[1]	n/a	71
Single sign-on[1]	n/a	64
Universal access to technology for learners at home	55	57
Computers for Pupils	64	50
Interoperability standards[1]	n/a	49
E-assessment	58	43
Narrowing the Gap[1]	n/a	40
Primary Capital Programme[1]	n/a	35
One School Pathfinders[1]	n/a	14
None	-	-
Base	*55*	*72*

Base: All respondents reporting that a strategy was in place for the use of ICT in schools.

[1] New answer option added in 2008.

Percentages sum to more than 100 as respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

In 2008 a new question was asked of those local authorities reporting that they had an ICT strategy in place, in order to establish whether this strategy was part of Every Child Matters/Children and Young People's Plan or stand-alone.

Forty per cent of local authorities reported that the strategy formed part of Every Child Matters/Children and Young People's Plan, that is, they had no separate document outlining their educational ICT strategy. Sixty per cent said that they had a 'stand-alone' ICT strategic document.

Local authorities reporting that they had an ICT strategy in place were asked whether schools in their area had been actively involved in formulating this strategy.

Just over a quarter of local authorities (26 per cent) reported that all or most schools in their area had been actively involved in this process (Table 2.3). It was most common for local authorities to report that some schools had been involved, with 30 per cent saying that it was mainly schools selected by the local authority that had participated in the process and 37 per cent saying that it was mainly schools that had volunteered to take part. The general picture is that the majority of local authorities (93 per cent) reported that schools in their area had been involved in this process of strategy formulation to some extent.

Table 2.3: Whether schools were actively involved in formulating strategy

	2007 **%**	**2008** **%**
Yes, all or most schools	27	26
Yes, some schools, ie (mainly) schools selected for this process	42	30
Yes, some schools, ie (mainly) schools that volunteered to participate	29	37
No	2	7
Base	*55*	*70*

Base: All respondents reporting that a strategy was in place for the use of ICT in schools.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

2.1.2 Review of strategy

Eighty-nine per cent of local authorities indicated that their strategy for the use of ICT in schools was reviewed on a systematic basis (Table 2.4).

Around a third of local authorities (32 per cent) said that their strategy was reviewed on at least an annual basis, while similar proportions reported that it was scheduled to be reviewed once every 1-2 years (30 per cent) or 2-5 years (27 per cent). Ten per cent of local authorities had not yet finalised their review system.

The proportion of authorities reviewing their strategy on an annual basis or more often decreased from 47 per cent in 2007 to 32 per cent in 2008[6].

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[6] The decrease from 47 per cent to 32 per cent is highly statistically significant.

Table 2.4: Whether strategy was reviewed on a systematic basis

	2008 %	2008 %
Reviewed on a systematic basis	93	89
On an annual basis or more often	47	32
Every 1-2 years	22	30
Every 2-5 years	22	27
Less often than once every five years[1]	2	n/a
Review system not (yet) finalised[2]	n/a	10
It is not reviewed systematically	7	1
Base	*55*	*71*

Base: All respondents reporting that a strategy was in place for the use of ICT in schools.

[1] Answer option removed in 2008.

[2] New answer option added in 2008.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

2.1.3 Aspects of strategy

Local authorities reporting that they reviewed their strategy systematically were asked to rate the importance of monitoring and evaluating four aspects of strategy during the review process:

- Whether planned activities are being realised (timely and as agreed)
- The extent to which the activities are effective in achieving their objectives
- The extent to which the effects of the activities contribute to the local authority's vision
- How cost-effective are the planned activities being implemented.

All respondents considered the monitoring and evaluating of all four aspects to be important (either 'fairly' or 'very').

The proportion of respondents reporting that 'implementation' was a very important aspect of strategy to evaluate increased from 80 per cent in 2007 to 92 per cent in 2008[7] (Table 2.5). Conversely, the proportion that considered 'impact' to be a very important aspect decreased from 92 per cent in 2007 to 83 per cent in 2008[8].

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[7] The increase from 80 per cent to 92 per cent is highly statistically significant.

[8] The decrease from 92 per cent to 83 per cent is statistically significant.

Of these four aspects of strategy, the cost-effectiveness of planned activities was rated the least important.

Table 2.5: Rating of importance of monitoring/evaluating aspects of strategy during review process[1]

	2007 Very important %	2008 Very important %
Implementation – whether planned activities are being realised (timely and as agreed)	80	92
Effectiveness – the extent to which the activities are effective in achieving their objectives	88	87
Impact – the extent to which the effects of the activities contribute to your vision	92	83
Efficiency – how cost-effective are the planned activities being implemented	56	62
Base	*50*	*63*

Base: All respondents reporting that a strategy was in place for the use of ICT in schools and the strategy was reviewed systematically.

[1] Please note that answer options 'Fairly important', 'Neither important nor unimportant', 'Not very important' and 'Not at all important' are not shown.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

2.1.4 Strategy for safeguarding children online

In 2008, a new question was asked about whether the local authority had a written vision or strategy for the safeguarding of children online. Just under a quarter (23 per cent) currently had an online safeguarding strategy for children, while two-thirds (67 per cent) reported that a strategy was in development (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6: Whether local authority has a written vision/strategy for the safeguarding of children online

	2008 %
Yes	23
No	11
In development	67
Base	*93*

Base: All respondents answering.

Four respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

2.1.5 Strategic Leadership of ICT programme

Almost all local authorities (99 per cent) actively encouraged headteachers to participate in the Strategic Leadership of ICT programme delivered by the National College for School Leadership (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Whether headteachers are encouraged to participate in the Strategic Leadership of ICT programme

	2008 %
Yes, all headteachers	66
Yes, mainly headteachers who volunteer	31
Yes, mainly headteachers selected by the local authority	2
No	1
Base	*95*

Base: All respondents answering.

Answer options amended in 2008 so figures not comparable with 2007.

Two respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

2.1.6 School improvement partners

Respondents were asked whether the work of school improvement partners – which aim to help the school's leadership evaluate its performance, identify priorities for improvement and plan effective change – had been valuable in supporting the use of ICT in schools in their local authority (Table 2.8).

Respondents' views on the work of school improvement partners were evenly divided, with 32 per cent considering them to be valuable, 35 per cent not valuable, while 33 per cent could not assess. However, these views were more favourable than in 2007 when only 19 per cent of respondents found the work of school improvement partners to be valuable[9].

Table 2.8: Extent to which school improvement partners have been valuable in supporting the use of ICT in schools

	2007 %	**2008 %**
Very valuable	5	9
Quite valuable	14	23
Not very valuable	31	23
Not at all valuable	5	12
Cannot assess	45	33
Base	*74*	*94*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, three respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Of the 33 respondents reporting that the work of school improvement partners was not valuable, 27 suggested that lack of specialist knowledge was a reason and 25 considered lack of time/competing interests to be a factor.

2.2   Policy priorities

2.2.1 Prioritised elements of strategy

Local authorities with a written strategy for ICT in schools were asked to identify up to three elements that had been given priority in their strategy from the list shown in Table 2.9.

Seventy-two per cent identified 'personalising learning by means of ICT' and just over half (55 per cent) identified 'ICT supporting pedagogical innovations' as priorities. In 41 per cent of cases, 'using ICT to support inclusion of learners' was identified as a priority. About a third of local authorities considered that 'online safety' and 'using ICT for educational administration' were priorities (34 per cent and 32 per cent respectively). Overall, the strategy elements that local authorities prioritised were broadly similar in 2008 compared with 2007. However, the proportion of

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[9] The increase from 19 per cent to 32 per cent is highly statistically significant.

respondents identifying online safety as a priority increased from 23 per cent in 2007 to 34 per cent in 2008[10].

Table 2.9: Elements given priority in strategy

	2007 %	2008 %
Personalising learning by means of ICT	66	72
ICT supporting pedagogical innovations	51	55
Using ICT to support inclusion of learners	45	41
Online safety (e-safety)/provisions for safe use of the internet	23	34
Using ICT for educational administration (eg management information systems)	42	32
School staff professional development in using ICT	23	24
ICT skills development for learners	8	11
Bridging the digital divide	9	8
Teacher time-saving/teacher productive time	8	7
Using ICT resources for sharing data for child protection	11	3
System security	4	1
Other	9	7
None	-	-
Base	*53*	*71*

Base: All respondents reporting that a strategy was in place for the use of ICT in schools.

In 2008, one respondent did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

2.2.2 Areas prioritised for ICT support

Respondents were asked to identify, from a list, the single most important factor in prioritising ICT support in their local authority.

The phase or type of schools (for example, foundation, nursery/early years, primary, middle, secondary, special/PRU) was considered to be the most important factor (Table 2.10).

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[10] The increase from 23 per cent to 34 per cent is statistically significant.

However, as in 2007, the majority of respondents (61 per cent) reported that the most important factor for their local authority was something not listed ('other'). When asked to specify these other factors, many of these respondents said that the varying needs of individual schools was the most important consideration. A few respondents cited the Becta self-review framework as a tool to target support and identify need. Five local authorities reported that ICT support was based on service-level agreements with the schools. Seven per cent of respondents said that there was no single most important factor in prioritising ICT support.

There was a significant increase in the proportion of respondents identifying 'level of socio-economic deprivation/free school meals' as the most important factor in prioritising ICT support, increasing from 3 per cent in 2007 to 9 per cent in 2008[11].

Table 2.10: Single most important factor in prioritising ICT support in local authority

	2007 %	**2008 %**
Phase or type[1]	17	22
Level of socio-economic deprivation/free school meals	3	9
Geographical location	-	1
Other	61	61
None	19	7
Base	*70*	*94*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Answer option amended in 2008 to clarify phase or type of schools (eg foundation, nursery/early years, primary, middle stage, secondary, special/PRU).

In 2008, three respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Respondents reporting that phase of schooling was the single most important factor in prioritising ICT support were asked to identify the school type which was the main recipient of ICT support in their local authority. Of the 21 respondents that were asked this question, 18 reported that primary schools were the main recipients and three reported that secondary schools were the main recipients.

All respondents were then asked to select the main reason for focusing support on the specific school type (that is, phase, geographical location, deprivation or other reason) that they previously mentioned. About a quarter (23 per cent) reported

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[11] The increase from 3 per cent to 9 per cent is highly statistically significant.

educational weakness in the sector and 18 per cent relative weakness in the management or use of ICT, while nearly half (45 per cent) cited 'other' reasons. Of the 38 respondents that reported other reasons, many, again, reported that the specific needs of individual schools were the key consideration when focusing support on specific schools types. Reasons given for focusing support on the specific school types were 'scarcity of resources', 'national and local policy' and 'raising standards'.

Respondents were asked to identify up to five curriculum areas that received the highest priority when deploying the local authority's ICT support (across all educational phases). Mathematics (87 per cent), English (86 per cent) and ICT (77 per cent) were prioritised most by local authorities (Table 2.11). Sixty-two per cent of local authorities reported that science was prioritised.

The prioritisation of curriculum areas for ICT support in 2008 was broadly similar to that in 2007, with the exceptions of ICT and design and technology, both of which fell in priority (85 per cent to 77 per cent[12] and 29 per cent to 6 per cent[13] respectively). However, the addition of three additional subjects to the answer option list in 2008 may have affected comparability.

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[12] The decrease from 85 per cent to 77 per cent is statistically significant.

[13] The decrease from 29 per cent to 6 per cent is highly statistically significant.

Table 2.11: Curriculum areas with highest priority for ICT support

	2007 %	2008 %
Mathematics	89	87
English	83	86
ICT	85	77
Science	59	62
Modern foreign languages	21	22
Design and technology	29	6
Citizenship education[1]	n/a	6
Geography	6	4
Art[1]	n/a	4
Music[1]	n/a	3
History	2	1
Physical education	3	-
Religious education	-	-
Base	*66*	*77*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] New answer option added in 2008.

In 2008, 20 respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

For each curriculum area identified as a priority, respondents were asked to select a reason from the following list:

- Evidence says ICT is most effective/valuable in this subject
- For this subject, most ICT resources (for example, educational software) are available
- In this subject, there are most weaknesses in schools' achievement
- This subject is nationally prioritised/part of a national initiative
- Other reason.

Respondents tended to report that the national prioritisation of a subject was the main reason for it being prioritised for ICT support by their local authority. This answer was chosen as the main reason by 71 per cent of respondents who identified English as a priority, for 67 per cent of those choosing mathematics, 54 per cent of those choosing science and 42 per cent of those choosing ICT.

Table 2.12: Main reason for selecting curriculum area as a priority[1]

	Evidence says ICT most effective/ valuable	Most ICT resources available	Weaknesses in schools' achievement	Nationally prioritised/ national initiative	Other	*Base*
Maths	9%	3%	12%	67%	9%	*67*
Science	[15%]	[6%]	[8%]	[54%]	[17%]	*48*
English	6%	-	14%	71%	9%	*66*
ICT	20%	8%	12%	42%	17%	*59*

Base: Respondents identifying subject area as 'highest priority'.

[1] Please note that percentages for answer options geography, history, religious education, physical education, citizenship education, music, art, and design and technology are not shown in the table due to small base sizes.

Percentages in this table should be read horizontally.

2.2.3 National policy initiatives

About three-quarters of local authorities reported evaluating at least one national policy initiative. Half of the local authorities indicated that the Computers for Pupils (52 per cent) and Building Schools for the Future (52 per cent) initiatives were being evaluated (Figure 2.1). Smaller proportions were evaluating the Hands On Support (26 per cent, down from 38 per cent in 2007) and Schools Whiteboard Expansion projects (21 per cent, down from 32 per cent in 2007)[14].

Twenty-three per cent of local authorities said they were not evaluating any of the named initiatives.

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[14] These differences are highly statistically significant.

Figure 2.1: National policy initiatives being evaluated by the local authority
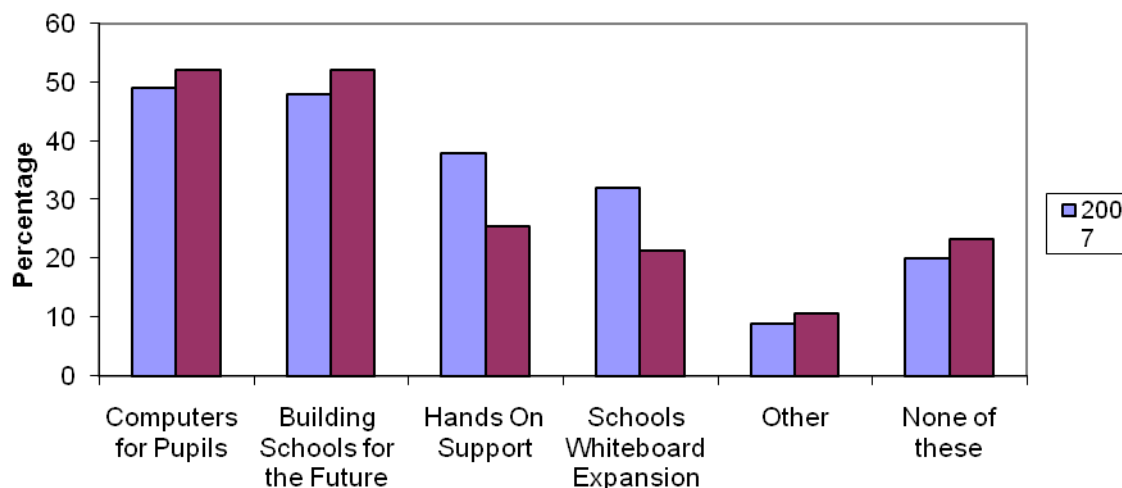
Base: All respondents answering (2007 = 69, 2008 = 94).

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

2.3 Every Child Matters agenda

Every Child Matters is a government programme for a national framework to support the 'joining up' of children's services to improve the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The five key aspects of its agenda are:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being.

Respondents were asked to assess to which two aspects of the agenda ICT made the greatest contribution.

Local authorities felt ICT could make the most important contribution to the 'enjoy and achieve' aspect of the agenda, with 89 per cent selecting it as either the most important or second most important (Figure 2.2). This corresponds closely with the 2007 data where 90 per cent selected it as the most or second most important.

Local authorities considered that ICT was least able to make an important contribution to the 'be healthy' aspect of the agenda, with no respondents selecting it

as the most important aspect and only 1 per cent selecting it as the second most important.

Figure 2.2: Aspects of the Every Child Matters agenda to which ICT made the greatest contribution
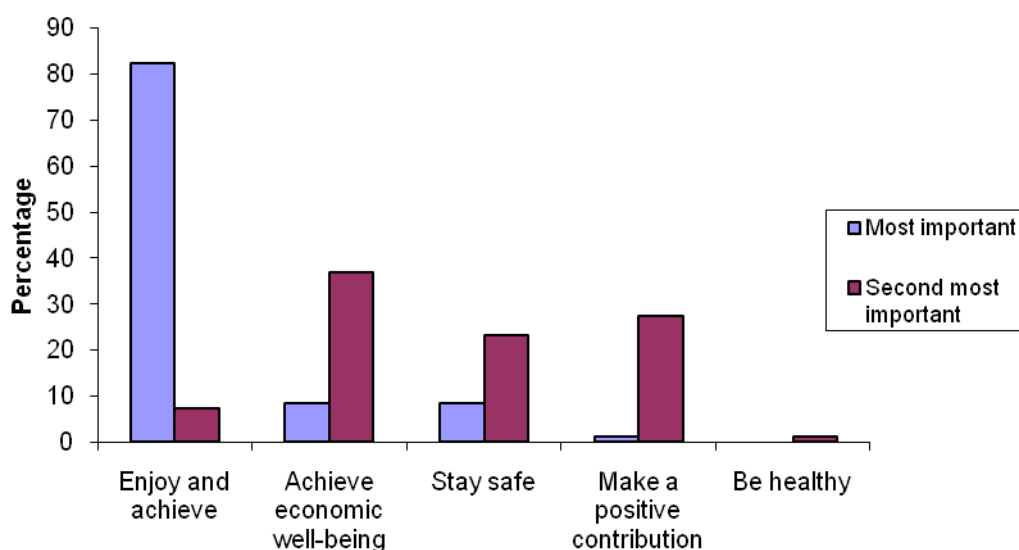
Base: All respondents answering (95).

Local authorities were asked to assess the impact that the Every Child Matters agenda has had on their capacity to provide ICT support to schools (Table 2.13). Over half (53 per cent) of respondents reported that there had been a positive impact (either small or large) and 12 per cent felt there had been a negative impact (either small or large) on their capacity to provide ICT support. Just over a third (35 per cent) felt that there had been no impact. These views were very similar to those given in 2007.

Table 2.13: Impact of Every Child Matters agenda on local authority's capacity to provide ICT support to schools[1]

	2007 %	2008 %
A large positive effect[2]	12	17
A small positive effect	37	36
No effect	40	35
A small negative effect	9	9
A large negative effect[2]	1	3
Base	*67*	*94*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Minor amendments to question wording made in 2008.

[2] The term 'significant' was replaced with 'large' in 2008.

In 2008, three respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Respondents were asked whether their local authority had a fully operational database for the collection of Every Child Matters indicator data from schools. Just under a fifth of local authorities (18 per cent) reported that they had such a database (Table 2.14). In 2007, 24 per cent of local authorities gave this answer.

Seventy-five per cent of local authorities reported that they did not have such a database at present but planning was underway for one. A small minority (7 per cent) said that they did not have one and no such plans were in place to implement one.

Table 2.14: Whether local authority has a fully operational ContactPoint database for the collection of Every Child Matters indicator data from schools[1]

	2007 %	2008 %
Yes	24	18
No, but we are planning for this	71	75
No, and this is not being planned	5	7
Base	*63*	*89*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] In 2007, the question did not specify a ContactPoint database.

In 2008, eight respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

2.4　Summary

Key findings

There is evidence to suggest a continued commitment among local authorities, in consultation with schools, to develop and implement an ICT strategy.

The theme of personalising learning through ICT is supported by the continued incorporation of learning platforms within local authorities' strategies.

- Three-quarters of local authorities reported having a written strategy in place for the use of ICT in schools.
- Among local authorities with a strategy in place, all local authorities reported that the strategy incorporated the Every School Connected broadband initiative. Almost all reported that the strategy also incorporated learning platforms (97 per cent) and an online learning space for every child (96 per cent), while nine in ten reported that it incorporated internet safety.
- Forty per cent of local authorities with a strategy in place reported that this strategy formed part of Every Child Matters/Children and Young People's Plan while 60 per cent said that it was 'stand-alone'.
- A large majority of local authorities with a strategy in place (93 per cent) reported that at least some schools in their area had been actively involved in formulating the strategy.
- Nearly all local authorities (99 per cent) indicated that their strategy for the use of ICT in schools was reviewed on a systematic basis or was scheduled to be reviewed.
- The proportion of respondents reporting the work of school improvement partners to be valuable increased from 19 per cent in 2007 to 32 per cent in 2008.
- Among local authorities with a strategy in place, 72 per cent identified 'personalising learning by means of ICT' and 55 per cent identified 'ICT supporting pedagogical innovations' as priorities.
- Mathematics (87 per cent), English (86 per cent) and ICT (77 per cent) were prioritised most frequently by local authorities deploying ICT support resources. The national prioritisation of a subject was the main reason for it being prioritised for ICT support by local authorities.
- Over half of the local authorities were evaluating Computers for Pupils (52 per cent) and Building Schools for the Future (52 per cent) initiatives.

- With regard to the five key aspects of the Government's Every Child Matters agenda, local authorities felt they could make the most important contribution to the 'enjoy and achieve' aspect.
- Regarding the impact of the Every Child Matters agenda on their capacity to provide ICT support to schools, over half of local authorities (53 per cent) felt there had been a positive impact.
- The majority of local authorities (93 per cent) either had, or were planning to get, a ContactPoint operational database for the collection of Every Child Matters indicator data from schools.

3   Resources and organisation

This chapter focuses on the supply of ICT hardware and support to schools, as well as ICT funding. It begins by looking at the organisation of technical support at the local authority, managed services provision agreements and learning platforms. The chapter then moves on to look at the procurement of ICT equipment before finally looking at funding streams.

3.1   Organisation

3.1.1   Responsibility for technical support/advice

Responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring the provision of technical support services was shared between the local authority and schools in a third (32 per cent) of local authorities (Table 3.1). Among the remaining local authorities, schools were as likely as local authorities to be responsible (either mainly or wholly) for these tasks (27 per cent and 28 per cent respectively), indicating a fairly even split of responsibility. The proportion of local authorities mainly responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the provision of technical support services increased from 14 per cent in 2007 to 28 per cent in 2008[15], representing a shift away from shared responsibility with schools.

Table 3.1: Responsibility for co-ordinating/monitoring the provision of technical support services

	2007 %	2008 %
The local authority is mainly or wholly responsible	14	28
The schools are mainly or wholly responsible	29	27
Responsibility is shared between the local authority and the schools	47	32
A private sector provider under managed services contract is responsible	6	5
Other	4	7
Base	*70*	*96*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, one respondent did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

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[15] The increase from 14 per cent to 28 per cent is highly statistically significant.

3.1.2 Management information systems

Ninety-one per cent of local authorities reported that their management information systems (MIS) were integrated with the systems in their schools (Table 3.2). Forty per cent had a single system that everyone used and just over half (51 per cent) reported that several compatible systems were used.

In 2007, 28 per cent of authorities reported that a single MIS system everyone used had been introduced across all of its schools. This had increased to 40 per cent[16] in 2008. Conversely, there was a decrease in the proportion of authorities that used multiple compatible MIS systems, from 62 per cent in 2007 to 51 per cent in 2008[17].

Nine per cent of local authorities did not have MIS systems integrated with the systems of its schools.

Table 3.2: Whether local authority's management information systems are integrated with the systems of its schools

	2007 %	**2008 %**
Yes, there is a single system everyone uses	28	40
Yes, there are several systems, but they are compatible (enable data to be exchanged)	62	51
No	10	9
Base	*69*	*95*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, two respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

3.1.3 Managed services provision

A managed services provision is an arrangement by which ICT resources are provided with full service, including technical support and maintenance. Respondents were asked to indicate the local authority's position on this type of provision for ICT resources in schools (Table 3.3). Twenty-one per cent arranged them for their schools, 33 per cent recommended them to schools but did not provide them, and 43 per cent left this decision to the schools themselves.

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[16] The increase from 28 per cent to 40 per cent is highly statistically significant.

[17] The decrease from 62 per cent to 51 per cent is statistically significant.

Table 3.3: Local authority's position on managed services provision for ICT resources in schools

	2007 %	**2008 %**
We arrange this provision for our schools	19	21
We recommend this to our schools	31	33
We leave this entirely to the discretion of the schools	50	43
We do not recommend this/advise against it	-	3
Base	*68*	*95*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, two respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

3.1.4 Learning platforms

The term 'learning platform' describes a broad range of ICT systems used to deliver and support learning. These systems can be accessed either from school/college or remotely. Local authorities are responsible for the implementation of learning platforms for schools in their area.

The Government's e-strategy set the expectation that:

- by spring 2008 every pupil should have access to a personalised online learning space with the potential to support an e-portfolio (provided by their local authority)
- by 2010 every school should have integrated learning and management systems (a comprehensive suite of learning platform technologies)[18].

Evidence suggests that learner home access to technology impacts negatively on attainment if not used for educational purposes (Fuchs and Woessmann 2005). The success of home access initiatives may therefore partly depend on the universal implementation of learning platforms and the integration of learning/teaching with home access.

Local authorities varied in their use of learning platforms for schools (Figure 3.1). Nearly half (48 per cent) reported that they ran a learning platform for all of their

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[18] Taken from the Becta website [http://localauthorities.becta.org.uk].

schools, while 28 per cent reported that they ran a learning platform for at least some of their schools.

This trend data illustrates progress with the implementation of learning platform systems in line with the Government's e-strategy. In 2007, 37 per cent of authorities ran learning platforms in all the schools in their remit. This increased to 48 per cent in 2008[19]. Conversely, the proportion of authorities reporting that they did not run a learning platform declined from 26 per cent in 2007 to 14 per cent in 2008[20]. The overall picture is one of a shift towards local authority provision of learning platforms to more schools.

Figure 3.1: Whether local authority runs a learning platform for its schools[1]
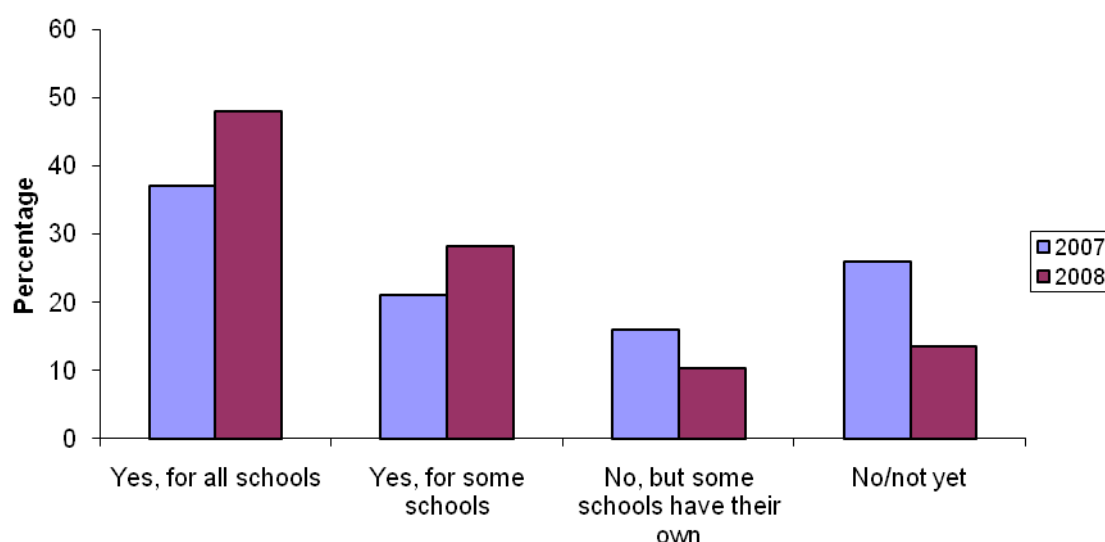
Base: All respondents answering (96).

[1] In 2007, the term 'integrated learning platform' was used.

3.1.5 Curriculum advisers and ICT strategy managers

Local authorities were asked whether they had a designated ICT curriculum adviser and strategy manager and, if so, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) posts for each job title.

The vast majority of local authorities reported having a designated ICT curriculum adviser (88 per cent), with nearly three-quarters (74 per cent) saying they had at least one FTE post (Table 3.4). Local authorities were slightly less likely to report

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[19] The increase from 37 per cent to 48 per cent is statistically significant.

[20] The decrease from 26 per cent to 14 per cent is highly statistically significant.

having an ICT strategy manager, although 82 per cent said they had someone in this role.

These results are broadly similar to the 2007 figures (not shown). However, the proportion of authorities that reported they did not have a designated ICT curriculum adviser increased from 6 per cent in 2007 to 12 per cent in 2008[21].

Table 3.4: Whether local authority has a designated ICT curriculum adviser/ICT strategy manager

	No/none	**Yes – less than one FTE**	**Yes – one FTE**	**Yes – more than one FTE**	*Base*
ICT curriculum adviser	12%	14%	41%	33%	*92*
ICT strategy manager	18%	19%	56%	7%	*88*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, five respondents did not answer part a (re ICT curriculum adviser) and nine respondents did answer part b (re ICT strategy manager).

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Percentages in this table should be read horizontally.

3.2   Procurement

All local authorities were asked to indicate the proportion of schools in their area for which they offered to procure hardware, software and connectivity resources. Nearly all local authorities (99 per cent) provided a procurement service for at least some schools wishing to purchase connectivity (Table 3.5).

Thirty-two per cent of local authorities did not offer a hardware procurement service and 28 per cent did not offer to procure software.

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[21] The increase from 6 per cent to 12 per cent is statistically significant.

Table 3.5: Whether local authority offers to procure ICT resources on behalf of schools

	Yes – for all/most schools	Yes – for some schools	No	*Base*
ICT equipment (hardware)	41%	27%	32%	*94*
Digital learning resources (software)	40%	32%	28%	*94*
Connectivity	93%	6%	1%	*95*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, three respondents did not answer part a or b (re ICT equipment and digital learning resources) and two respondents did answer part c (re connectivity).

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Note that percentages in this table should be read horizontally.

Respondents were then asked to specify the frameworks that they used when running ICT procurement competitions and were allowed to select more than one category (as local authorities can use more than one framework). The overwhelming majority of local authorities used Becta frameworks (89 per cent), while regional broadband consortium (69 per cent) and 'own procurement' frameworks (54 per cent) were both commonly used by local authorities (Table 3.6).

Overall, there was an increase in the use of these frameworks to procure ICT resources on behalf of schools. The proportion of authorities that used Becta frameworks increased between 2007 and 2008[22]. Furthermore, the use of regional broadband consortium frameworks and Office of Government Commerce frameworks increased between 2007 and 2008[23].

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[22] The difference between 78 per cent in 2007 and 89 per cent in 2008 is highly statistically significant.

[23] These increases are highly statistically significant.

Table 3.6: Frameworks used to conduct ICT procurement competitions[1]

	2007 %	2008 %
Becta frameworks	78	89
Regional broadband consortium frameworks	54	69
Own procurement framework	54	54
Office of Government Commerce frameworks	24	36
Regional buying consortium frameworks	32	26
Other	7	6
None of these	-	2
Base	*68*	*95*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Minor amendments made to wording and order of answer options in 2008.

In 2008, two respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Local authorities reporting that they used Becta frameworks to conduct ICT procurement competitions were asked what proportion of their ICT spend was procured using Becta frameworks. For direct spend (that is, the spend the local authority controls itself), the majority (68 per cent) procured less than half of their ICT spend using Becta procurement frameworks. Similarly, for local authority including schools spend, three-quarters (76 per cent) of local authorities spent less than half of the relevant ICT budget using Becta frameworks.

Table 3.7: Proportion of local authority ICT spend procured using Becta frameworks by type of spend

	None	Less than half	Around half	More than half	*Base*
Local authority direct spend	15%	68%	9%	9%	*80*
Local authority including schools spend	6%	76%	10%	8%	*79*

Base: Respondents reporting they used Becta frameworks to conduct ICT procurement competitions.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Percentages in this table should be read horizontally.

The 10 respondents that reported that they did not use Becta frameworks to conduct ICT procurement competitions were asked why they did not. Nine respondents indicated that Becta frameworks were not their preferred option. One respondent did not understand how to use the Becta frameworks.

Respondents were asked which Becta frameworks they anticipated using in the next 12 months. Just over half (52 per cent) reported that they would use the Learning Platform Services Framework and 44 per cent the Infrastructure Services Framework (Table 3.8). Approximately a quarter planned to use the Software Licensing Framework (28 per cent) and Consultancy Framework (26 per cent) in the next 12 months.

Table 3.8: Which Becta frameworks local authority anticipates using in the next 12 months

	2008 %
Learning Platform Services Framework	52
Infrastructure Services Framework	44
Software Licensing Framework	28
Consultancy Framework	26
None of these	19
Base	*93*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, four respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

3.3   Funding streams

3.3.1   Importance of funding streams

Local authorities were asked to indicate the importance of a number of funding streams in supporting the use of ICT in schools with regard to their total spending in this area. For each funding stream they were asked to evaluate its importance at present as well as their expectation of its importance in 1-2 years' time.

With the exception of EC subsidies and EC funding, all listed funding sources were considered to be important at present as well as in 1-2 years' time (Table 3.9).

Standards funding was considered the most important current source of funding with almost all respondents (96 per cent) saying it was 'very' or 'moderately' important. Approximately three-quarters considered the central local authority budget (74 per cent) and buy-back (76 per cent) to be either 'very' or 'moderately' important.

Broadly similar levels of importance were expected for the listed funding sources in 1-2 years' time.

Ten respondents cited other sources of funding, of which five mentioned the Building Schools for the Future programme.

The proportion of authorities that reported central local authority budgets were a very important current source of funding increased from 34 per cent in 2007 to 51 per cent in 2008[24]. Similarly, the proportion expecting that the central local authority budget would be a very important source of funding in 1-2 years' time increased from 32 per cent in 2007 to 51 per cent in 2008[25].

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[24] The increase from 34 per cent to 51 per cent is highly statistically significant.

[25] The increase from 32 per cent to 51 per cent is highly statistically significant.

Table 3.9: Importance of different funding streams in supporting the use of ICT in schools[1]

	Very important source of funding	Moderately important source of funding	*Base*
Central local authority budget			
Current[2]	51%	23%	*91*
In 1-2 years	51%	17%	*90*
Standards funding			
Current[2]	92%	4%	*92*
In 1-2 years	82%	9%	*91*
Buy-back			
Current[2]	52%	24%	*92*
In 1-2 years	63%	20%	*90*
EC subsidies/EC funding			
Current[2]	4%	2%	*81*
In 1-2 years	3%	5%	*77*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Note that percentages for answer options 'Source of funding of limited importance', 'Insignificant/nil' and 'Cannot assess' are not shown.

[2] The term 'present' was replaced with 'current' in 2008.

Numbers of respondents not answering: 'Central local authority budget' – 6/7, 'Standards funding' – 5/6, 'Buy-back' – 5/7, 'EC subsidies/EC funding' – 16/20.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

3.3.2 Capacity to support schools

Taking all factors into account, respondents were asked whether their overall capacity to support schools in using ICT was higher or lower compared with two years ago.

The same proportion reported that their capacity was higher (31 per cent) and lower (31 per cent) than two years ago (Table 3.10). These results are broadly similar to the 2007 figures.

Table 3.10: Whether overall capacity to support schools in using ICT was higher or lower than two years ago[1]

	2007 %	2008 %
Higher	29	31
Roughly the same	38	38
Lower	33	31
Base	*66*	*94*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Minor amendments made to question wording in 2008.

In 2008, three respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

If the local authority's capacity had changed compared with two years ago, respondents were asked the reasons why from a list of possible explanations.

Where capacity was higher than two years ago (in 28 local authorities), the main reasons were:

- schools' demand for ICT support (22 mentions)
- (increased) DCSF finances/funding (20 mentions)
- organisational changes in the local authority (16 mentions).

Where capacity was lower than two years ago (in 36 local authorities), the main reasons were:

- (reduced) DCSF finances/funding (28 mentions)
- organisational changes in the local authority (22 mentions).

3.4   Summary

> **Key findings**
>
> The significant increase in the proportion of local authorities that ran learning platforms between 2007 and 2008 supports local authorities' reported commitment to implementation and personalising learning through ICT.

- There has been a shift away from shared responsibility between local authorities and schools for technical support to main local authority control. Overall, there was a fairly even split of responsibility with a third of authorities sharing responsibility, a third having main or sole control and a third leaving main or sole control to their schools.

- Ninety-one per cent of local authorities reported that their management information systems (MIS) were integrated with the systems in their schools. The proportion of local authorities with a single MIS system that everyone used increased from 28 per cent in 2007 to 40 per cent in 2008.

- Local authorities were split with regard to their position on managed services provision: 21 per cent arranged them for their schools, 33 per cent recommended them to schools but did not provide them, and 43 per cent left this decision to the schools themselves.

- There has been a shift towards local authority provision of learning platforms and an increase in the level of their implementation.

- Eighty-eight per cent of schools reported that they had a designated ICT curriculum adviser and 82 per cent reported having an ICT strategy manager.

- Practically all (99 per cent) local authorities provided a procurement service for at least some schools wishing to purchase connectivity; 32 per cent of local authorities did not offer a hardware procurement service and 28 per cent did not offer to procure digital learning resources (software).

- Becta frameworks were the frameworks most commonly used for running ICT procurement competitions; the proportion of authorities using them increased from 78 per cent in 2007 to 89 per cent in 2008.

- The proportion of local authorities reporting that their central budget was a very important source of funding currently and/or expected to be in the next 1-2 years increased significantly between 2007 and 2008.

- The same proportion (31 per cent) of local authorities reported that their overall capacity to support schools in using ICT was higher than two years ago as those that felt it was lower.

4 Support and development

This chapter examines how different aspects of ICT usage in schools are monitored as well as the support and training provided by the local authority. Firstly, it looks at formal processes in place to monitor ICT standards as well as local authorities' views on the importance of monitoring different aspects of ICT usage. It then moves on to examine the provision of training and assessment for school staff. Next, the chapter looks at the provision of services designed to enhance e-safety and e-security, before finally looking at the means by which local authorities communicate with their schools.

4.1 Monitoring

4.1.1 Importance of monitoring aspects of ICT usage in schools

Respondents were asked to rank the relative importance of monitoring aspects of ICT usage in schools.

Clearly ranked as the most important aspect, with nearly all respondents (88 per cent) selecting it, was 'use of ICT for learning and teaching' (Table 4.1). The aspect of ICT usage considered the second most important was 'use of ICT for management and administration in schools' (42 per cent). The aspects to monitor identified as important by fewest respondents were the 'use of ICT for learner assessment' and 'use of ICT for inclusive practice/mainstreaming of SEN learners'. Overall, the areas that local authorities prioritised remained broadly similar in 2008 compared with 2007.

Table 4.1: Importance of monitoring aspects of ICT usage in schools

	Most important %	Second most important %
Use of ICT for learning and teaching	88	11
Use of ICT for management and administration in schools	2	42
E-safety	8	22
Use of ICT for learner assessment	1	15
Use of ICT for inclusive practice/ mainstreaming of SEN learners	-	8
Base	*92*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, four respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

4.1.2 Monitoring ICT standards in schools

Local authorities were asked to identify the formal processes in place to monitor ICT standards in schools. Over eight in ten local authorities reported that that they reviewed Ofsted inspection data (84 per cent) and that ICT advisers visited schools (82 per cent) (Table 4.2). Fifty-nine per cent reported that they reviewed Ofsted self-evaluation forms, and 55 per cent that they reviewed feedback from school improvement partners on the use of ICT in schools. All of the specified options listed were selected by at least half of the respondents.

These figures are broadly similar to the 2007 results.

Table 4.2: Formal processes in place to monitor ICT standards in schools

	2007 %	**2008 %**
Review of Ofsted inspection data	87	84
ICT advisers visit schools	88	82
Review of Ofsted self-evaluation form	54	59
Review of feedback from school improvement partners on the use of ICT in schools	64	55
Local supported self-evaluation[1]	n/a	54
Review of ICT sections in school improvement plans	46	51
Other formal process	35	13
None	1	3
Base	*69*	*91*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] New answer option added in 2008.

In 2008, six respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

4.1.3 Monitoring broadband bandwidth in schools

Eighty-five per cent of local authorities reported that a formal system was in place to monitor levels of use of broadband bandwidth by schools, while the majority of those who did not had plans to establish one (11 per cent). A small minority (4 per cent) reported that they did not have such a system and there were currently no plans to establish one.

These figures are similar to the 2007 results.

4.2   Support and continuing professional development

4.2.1   Provision of training and continuing professional development

Respondents were asked to select the description that came closest to the provision made in their local authority for training and continuing professional development (CPD) in using ICT in education.

Ninety-one per cent of local authorities indicated that they offered some type of formal training or CPD opportunities (Table 4.3).

Forty-three per cent of local authorities offered formal training on the basis of its own policy priorities and a third offered formal training as requested by headteachers (31 per cent).

The proportion of local authorities that offered individualised formal training opportunities decreased from 36 per cent in 2007 to 16 per cent in 2008[26], which may in part explain why the availability of formal training or CPD opportunities decreased from 97 per cent in 2007 to 91 per cent [27] in 2008.

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[26] The decrease from 36 per cent to 16 per cent is highly statistically significant.

[27] The decrease from 97 per cent to 91 per cent is highly statistically significant.

Table 4.3: Best description of the provision of training and CPD in using ICT in schools at local authority

	2007 %	2008 %
The local authority offers individualised formal training/CPD opportunities on the basis of a systematic assessment of needs	36	16
The local authority offers formal training/CPD opportunities on the basis of its own (policy) priorities	35	43
The local authority offers formal training/CPD opportunities as requested by headteachers	26	31
The local authority does not offer any formal training and/or CPD opportunities	3	9
Any other[1]	n/a	1
Base	*66*	*89*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] New answer option added in 2008.

In 2008, eight respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

4.2.2 Prioritisation of skills in the professional development of headteachers

Respondents were asked to identify, from a list of five ICT skills, the ones that were prioritised as most important and second most important when considering the professional development of headteachers (Table 4.4).

Strategic skills were considered the most important by over three-quarters of respondents (78 per cent). Similar proportions reported that pedagogical skills (27 per cent), management of standards (28 per cent) and management of information (25 per cent) were the second most important priority in the professional development of headteachers.

Table 4.4: ICT skills that are most important/second most important in the professional development of headteachers

	Most important (%)	Second most important (%)
Strategic (ICT leadership skills)	78	7
Pedagogical (teaching with ICT)	14	27
Management of standards and performance	7	28
Management of information/knowledge management	1	25
Management of resources (financial monitoring and reporting)	-	13
Other	-	-
Base	*92*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

Five respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

4.2.3 Assessment of headteachers' CPD needs

Respondents were asked to report how headteachers' CPD needs in the field of ICT were assessed.

In 2008, 93 per cent of respondents indicated that these needs were assessed in some way, a small but statistically significant increase from 84 per cent in 2007[28] (Table 4.5). This may in part explain why the proportion of headteachers assessing their own needs increased from 64 per cent in 2007 to 80 per cent in 2008[29].

The proportions of those assessed in other ways remained similar to the figures for 2007: 9 per cent reported that the local authority assessed these needs and a small minority (2 per cent) indicated that they were assessed by an external organisation.

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[28] The decrease from 93 per cent to 84 per cent is statistically significant.

[29] The increase from 64 per cent to 80 per cent is highly statistically significant.

Table 4.5: How headteachers' CPD needs in the field of ICT are assessed

	2007 %	**2008 %**
Assessed in some way	84	93
Headteachers assess their own needs	64	80
Assessed by the local authority	10	9
Assessed by an external organisation	3	2
Other	7	2
They are not assessed	15	7
Base	*67*	*90*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, seven respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

4.2.4 Advice and services provided to schools

Almost all local authorities (99 per cent) provided schools with advice about their ICT infrastructure (Table 4.6). While it was most common for this information to be supplied on request (61 per cent), 38 per cent provided it to all schools systematically[30]. These figures are very similar to those for 2007.

Table 4.6: Whether local authority provides schools with advice about their ICT infrastructure

	2007 %	**2008 %**
Yes, systematically to all schools	37	38
Yes, on request	60	61
No, but we employ an external organisation for this purpose	3	1
Not at all	-	-
Base	*68*	*93*

Base: All respondents answering

In 2008, four respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

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[30] Just over half of primary schools and a quarter of secondary schools obtained advice about designing their school's ICT infrastructure from the local authority (*E-learning in Schools Study*, 2006).

Respondents were asked whether their local authority provided an 'area-wide e-portfolio system for learners to record their progress'. About a third of local authorities currently had such a system for all learners (30 per cent), and a further 12 per cent did for some (Figure 4.1). The other local authorities planned to introduce a system during the current academic year (26 per cent in 2007/08) or the following academic year (28 per cent in 2008/09).

Again, there appears to have been progress in the extent of implementation of an area-wide e-portfolio system for learners. The proportion of authorities supporting this system for all learners increased from 21 per cent in 2007 to nearly a third (30 per cent) in 2008[31], complementing the Government's e-strategy.

Figure 4.1: Whether local authority supports an area-wide e-portfolio system for learners to record their progress
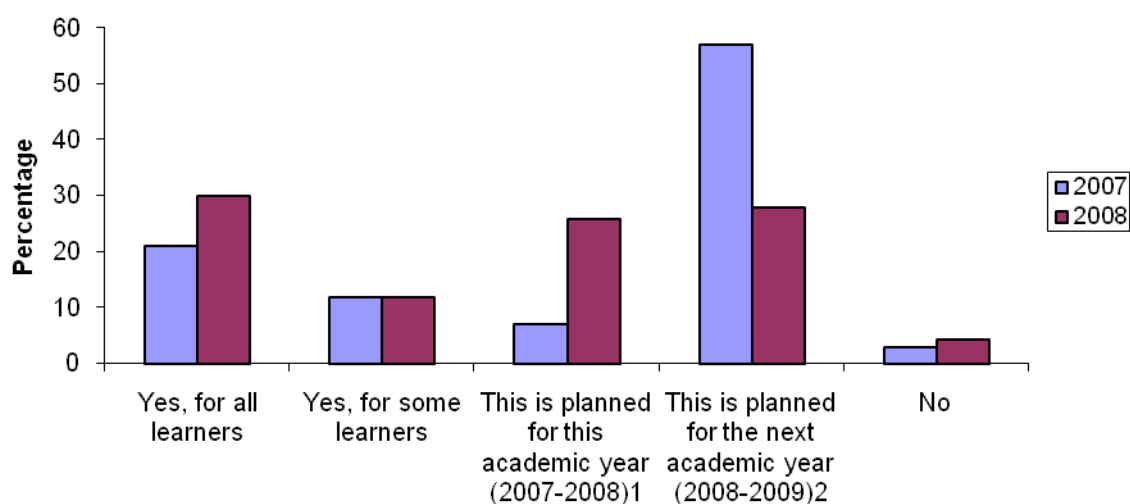
Base: All respondents answering (2007 = 68, 2008 = 93).

[1] Answer option referenced 2006-2007 in 2007 questionnaire.

[2] Answer option referenced 2007-2008 in 2007 questionnaire.

Nearly all (99 per cent) local authorities reported that they provided advice or recommendations to subject teachers on digital resources for use in the curriculum.

In the majority of cases (62 per cent), such advice was provided for some subject areas only; in 37 per cent of cases, however, this advice was provided for all subject areas (Table 4.7). These figures are almost identical to those for 2007.

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[31] The difference between 21 per cent and 30 per cent is statistically significant.

Table 4.7: Whether local authority provides advice or recommendations to subject teachers on digital resources for use in the curriculum

	2007 %	2008 %
Yes, for all curriculum subject areas	37	37
Yes, for at least some curriculum subject areas	63	62
No	-	1
Base	*67*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, five respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Ninety-six per cent of local authorities enabled teachers to share digital learning resources in some way. Of these, around a third (36 per cent) shared digital learning resources via a repository, just over half (52 per cent) via a website, and 10 per cent via CD-ROMs (Table 4.8).

Of the 27 respondents (or 29 per cent of responses to this question) that answered that digital learning resources were shared 'another way' to the listed answer options, 12 reported that this was via learning platforms.

Table 4.8: Whether local authority enables teachers to share digital learning resources among each other

	2008 %
Yes, via a repository	36
Yes, via a website	52
Yes, via CD-ROMs	10
Yes, another way	29
No[1]	4
Base	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Exclusive code.

In 2008, five respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Eighty-seven per cent of local authorities provided online support to 14- to 19-year-olds. The main ways this support was provided was through online prospectuses (60 per cent) and online pathways/career advice (52 per cent)[32]. Of the 13 respondents that replied 'another way', a few reported that support would be provided through a learning platform.

Table 4.9: Whether local authority provides online support for 14- to 19-year-olds

	2007 %	2008 %
Through access to online prospectuses	54	60
Through online pathways/career advice	40	52
Through online courses	22	14
Through online peer-to-peer support[1]	n/a	12
Another way	25	15
None of these	19	13
Base	*63*	*86*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] New answer option added in 2008.

In 2008, 11 respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Respondents were asked how, if at all, the local authority promoted the use of ICT for hard-to-reach learners, including those with special educational needs/learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Two-thirds of local authorities (67 per cent) promoted the use of ICT for these groups by providing expertise (Table 4.10). Half said they provided equipment, 38 per cent said they provided specialised software, and 35 per cent said they provided dedicated funding. In general, responses were similar in 2007 and 2008 except for the increase in dedicated funding from 19 per cent in 2007 to 35 per cent in 2008. (Note that the answer option 'providing dedicated funding' was listed as 'providing earmarked funds' in 2007. This may have had an effect on the number of responses.)

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[32] There was a statistically significant increase in the use of online pathways from 40 per cent in 2007 to 52 per cent in 2008.

Table 4.10: How does the local authority promote the use of ICT for hard-to-reach learners/learning difficulties and/or disabilities[1]

	2007 %	2008 %
Providing expertise	70	67
Providing equipment	47	50
Providing specialised software	42	38
Providing earmarked funds[2]/dedicated funding[3]	19	35
Providing other resources[2]/Any other[3]	34	16
Not at all	11	6
Base	*64*	*88*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Question wording amended in 2008.

[2] Answer option in 2007.

[3] Answer option in 2008.

In 2008, nine respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Respondents were asked whether the local authority ran any schemes besides the Computers for Pupils initiative to support the provision of ICT resources to learners at home. In 2008, 28 per cent of local authorities ran such schemes, compared with 31 per cent in 2007.

4.3 E-safety and e-security

All local authorities provided services for enhancing e-safety and e-security. The services most commonly provided were filters[33] for internet/email content (94 per cent), guidelines for safe internet browsing (92 per cent) and policies for the acceptable use of ICT (92 per cent) (Table 4.11).

Provisions against theft of ICT hardware were the least commonly used measure from this list (29 per cent).

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[33] Three-quarters of primary schools and half of secondary schools purchase content filtering through the local authority (*E-learning in Schools Study*, 2007).

Table 4.11: Services provided by the local authority for enhancing e-safety/ e-security

	2007 %	2008 %
Filters for internet and/or email content[1]	-	94
Guidelines for safe internet browsing[2]	88	92
Policies on acceptable use of ICT[1]	-	92
E-safety training/awareness-raising[1]	-	87
Authority-wide security/firewalls for all schools	87	84
Advice on network security/firewalls	68	76
Provisions against theft of ICT hardware	29	29
Other	22	15
None	-	-
Base	*69*	*93*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] New answer option added in 2008.

[2] Answer option amended in 2008 to 'Guidelines for safe use of digital technologies'.

In 2008, four respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Local authorities were asked to identify the ways in which e-safety advice from Becta publications and the Becta website were promoted by their local authority. All respondents indicated that such advice was promoted in one or more of the ways listed in Table 4.12.

Nearly all local authorities (96 per cent) reported that schools in the authority were 'alerted to the existence of the material'. Around four-fifths used the advice 'to inform the writing of the local authority's policy and advice to schools' (83 per cent) or for 'training/courses and other continuing professional development run by the local authority' (80 per cent).

Nine per cent of respondents reported that Becta's e-safety advice was promoted in ways other than those listed. When prompted, many of these respondents reported that the advice was disseminated at conferences or through the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Table 4.12: Ways in which Becta's e-safety advice is used/promoted in local authority

	2007 %	2008 %
Schools in the local authority are alerted to the existence of the material	91	96
To inform the writing of the local authority's policy and advice to schools	76	83
Used on training/courses and other continuing professional development run by the local authority	74	80
Other	7	9
The local authority is not aware of/familiar with Becta's role in this area	3	-
None	1	-
Base	*68*	*93*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, four respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

4.4   Communication

Respondents were asked to identify the types of media that their local authority used to communicate with schools for the following purposes:

- To share effective ICT practice among schools
- To disseminate best practice from external sources
- To generally communicate with schools about ICT
- Inform about digital learning resources.

Local authorities tended to use a range of methods to communicate with schools.

Websites/intranet were the media most commonly used for these purposes, while email was also a popular mode of contact (Table 4.13). Video conferencing was the medium least used (11 per cent or less for all purposes).

Table 4.13: Purpose and types of media that the local authority uses in communicating with schools

	Website/ intranet	Email	Electronic newsletter	Learning platform	Video conferencing	*Base*
Share effective ICT practice among schools	78%	67%	53%	60%	11%	*91*
Disseminate best practice from external sources	79%	52%	46%	53%	2%	*89*
Generally communicate with schools about ICT	81%	82%	56%	33%	3%	*93*
Inform about digital learning resources	78%	73%	47%	40%	1%	*90*

Base: All respondents answering.

Numbers not answering: 'Share effective ICT practice among schools' – 6, 'Disseminate best practice from external sources' – 8, 'Generally communicate with schools about ICT' – 4, 'Inform about digital learning resources' – 7.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Almost all local authorities (97 per cent) reported that they convened a school leader group or network to discuss ICT development and best practice. On the whole, these were physical meetings (95 per cent). However, in a small proportion of cases (2 per cent), they were virtual meetings.

Table 4.14: Whether local authority convenes a school leader group/network to discuss ICT development and best practice

	2007 %	2008 %
Yes, physical meetings	91	95
Yes, virtual meetings	4	2
No, we do not have the resources to do this	4	3
No, this is not a priority	-	-
Base	*68*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, five respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

4.5   Summary

> **Key findings**
>
> There has been little change in how different aspects of ICT usage in schools are monitored between 2007 and 2008.
>
> In contrast to local authorities' progress with the provision of a personalised learning space for pupils, there was a decrease in individualised professional development training opportunities available to staff between 2007 and 2008.
>
> The increase in proportion of local authorities supporting the e-portfolio system between 2007 and 2008 suggests that their reported commitment to personalised learning is being realised.

- Use of ICT for learning and teaching was ranked by 88 per cent of respondents as the most important aspect of ICT usage in schools to monitor.
- Eighty-five per cent reported that a formal system was in place to monitor levels of use of broadband bandwidth by schools.
- The proportion of local authorities that offered formal training or continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities decreased slightly from 97 per cent in 2007 to 91 per cent in 2008.
- In 2008, 93 per cent reported that headteachers' CPD needs in the field of ICT were assessed in some way, an increase from 85 per cent in 2007.
- Almost all local authorities (99 per cent) provided schools with advice about their ICT infrastructure. It was most common for this information to be supplied on request (61 per cent).
- Almost a third (30 per cent) of local authorities provided an area-wide e-portfolio system for learners to record their progress for all learners and a further 12 per cent did for some learners. Most others (54 per cent) had plans to introduce such a system.
- Nearly all local authorities (99 per cent) provided advice or recommendations to subject teachers on digital resources for use in the curriculum.
- Ninety-six per cent of local authorities enabled teachers to share digital learning resources among each other in some way (for example, via a learning resource repository or website).
- Eighty-seven per cent of local authorities provided online support for 14- to 19-year-olds.

- All local authorities reported providing services for enhancing e-safety and e-security.
- Websites/intranet and email were the most commonly used tools to communicate with schools for a range of purposes.
- Almost all local authorities (97 per cent) reported that they convened a school leader group or network to discuss ICT development and best practice.

5   Becta and the self-review framework

This chapter looks at local authorities' awareness of, and views on, Becta and the self-review framework. Firstly, it examines respondents' awareness of the services provided by Becta and areas in which Becta's services could be helpful to them. Next the chapter looks at views on the self-review framework. Lastly, it looks at respondents' general suggestions for ways in which the use of ICT in education could be improved.

5.1   Becta

5.1.1   Services provided by Becta

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they were aware of the support that Becta could provide for them (Figure 5.1).

Nearly all local authorities (99 per cent) had some knowledge ('precisely' or 'more or less') of the support available. The proportion of respondents with only limited knowledge decreased from 6 per cent in 2007 to 1 per cent [34] in 2008.

Figure 5.1: Extent to which respondent is aware of the support Becta can provide
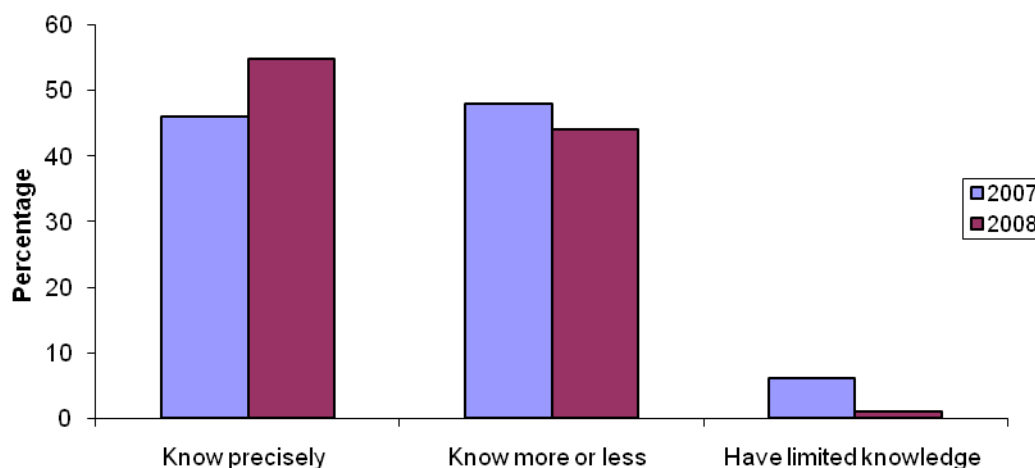
Base: All respondents answering (2007 = 69, 2008 = 93).

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[34] The decrease from 6 per cent to 1 per cent is highly statistically significant.

All respondents identified areas in which Becta's services could be helpful to their local authority. Furthermore, for each area listed, the majority of respondents felt Becta's services would be helpful. Overall, the most popular areas identified in 2008 were similar to those mentioned in 2007 (Table 5.1). Around nine in ten reported that Becta's services could be helpful in the field of ICT leadership/self-review framework (93 per cent) and e-safety (90 per cent). However, the proportion of respondents that identified emerging technologies as an area in which Becta's services could be helpful to their local authority decreased from 84 per cent in 2007 to 70 per cent in 2008[35]. There was also a decrease in the proportion of respondents that felt Becta could be helpful in providing advice on digital resources[36].

Table 5.1: Areas in which Becta's services could be helpful to the local authority

	2007 %	2008 %
ICT leadership/self-review framework	88	93
E-safety	88	90
Emerging technologies	84	70
Dissemination of effective practice (research findings)	78	70
Procurement	66	65
Learning and teaching	65	65
Technical support/advice (including on infrastructure)	57	52
Advice on digital resources	60	40
ICT and inclusion[1]	n/a	42
Other	13	4
None of these	-	-
Base	*68*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] New answer option added in 2008.

In 2008, five respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

[35] The decrease from 84 per cent to 70 per cent is highly statistically significant.

[36] The decrease from 60 per cent in 2007 to 40 per cent in 2008 is highly statistically significant.

5.1.2 Past experience with Becta

All respondents reported having had some interaction with Becta in the past year. Nearly all (97 per cent) reported having had 'considerable' or 'some' interaction.

There was a statistically significant decrease in the proportion of local authorities that reported they had 'very little' or 'no 'interaction with Becta in the past year[37].

Respondents reporting that they had interacted with Becta in the past year were asked to select the category which best described what they would say about the agency in a conversation with colleagues. Responses tended to be positive towards Becta, with a just over a quarter (27 per cent) reporting they would be positive without being asked and a further 47 per cent saying they would be positive if asked. Only 8 per cent said they would be critical if asked and 2 per cent said they would be critical without being asked. The remaining 15 per cent had neutral feelings.

Table 5.2: What respondent would say about Becta in conversation with colleagues

	2007 %	2008 %
Would be positive about Becta without being asked	19	27
Would be positive about Becta if asked	53	47
Would be neutral toward Becta	24	15
Would be critical about Becta if asked	4	8
Would be critical about Becta without needing to be asked	-	2
Base	*68*	*91*

Base: Respondents reporting that they had interacted with Becta in the past year.

In 2008, six respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

5.1.3 Communicating with Becta

Local authorities most commonly reported that email was (or would be) their preferred mode of communication with Becta (62 per cent) (Table 5.3). About a quarter (23 per cent) preferred face-to-face communication and 13 per cent favoured communication via the Becta website. These results are broadly similar to those in the 2007 survey.

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[37] The decrease from 14 per cent in 2007 to 3 per cent in 2008 is highly statistically significant.

Table 5.3: Preferred mode of communication with Becta

	2007 %	**2008 %**
Email	64	62
Face-to-face	19	23
Website	10	13
Telephone	4	2
Mail	1	-
Other	1	-
Base	*69*	*91*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, six respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

5.2   The self-review framework

The self-review framework offers a route for assessing and improving schools' use of ICT. Respondents were asked how effective they thought the self-review framework was 'as a tool for assessing standards of ICT leadership and use in schools'. Nearly all (96 per cent) felt the self-review framework had been either 'very' or 'fairly' effective in this respect.

Table 5.4: Effectiveness of self-review framework as a tool for assessing standards of ICT leadership and use in schools

	2007 %	**2007 %**
Very effective	53	58
Fairly effective	40	38
Not very effective	1	2
Not effective at all	-	1
Cannot assess	6	1
Base	*68*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

In 2008, five respondents did not answer this question.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Nearly all local authorities (96 per cent) reported actively promoting the participation of schools in the self-review framework. The vast majority of local authorities (93 per cent) also said that they provided support for participating schools.

5.3   Suggestions for improvements in ICT use in schools

Respondents were asked how the use of ICT in education could be improved within schools in the local authority. In all, 73 respondents answered this question. Responses were allocated to the broad subject categories outlined above. Table 5.5 shows the proportion of respondents giving comments under these categories.

The most frequently recurring theme was that of increasing co-ordination and consistency in the approach within and between the local authority, schools and government. In a number of cases, it was considered that this could be achieved through the use of Becta's self-review framework. An example of this was illustrated by one respondent who suggested that improvements could be made through 'increasing the number of schools participating in Becta's self-evaluation framework'.

The general issue of funding was raised by just over a quarter of respondents, with one in ten specifically identifying a need for dedicated or ring-fenced funding[38].

Some respondents reported that the use of ICT in education could be improved through changing the way in which schools currently use and perceive ICT. In one instance, a respondent reported that 'some schools still see the use of ICT as a frill and not a necessity'. Another reported that 'greater awareness of the pivotal role of ICT in other subject areas' would lead to improvements.

In 2008, two additional recurring themes were identified: the integration of learning platforms and increased ICT staff resource and skills development. One respondent suggested that ICT in education could be improved through 'widespread successful implementation of an appropriate learning platform'. Others suggested that the creation/appointment of an ICT-in-education advisory post would be beneficial. In one example, a respondent suggested that increasing the capacity of the local authority to support ICT improvement could be met by 'more training for existing personnel and additional and different posts'.

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[38] Note that the increasing importance of the central local authority budget for supporting the use of ICT in schools is highlighted in Table 3.9.

Table 5.5: Suggestions for improving use of ICT in education within schools in the local authority

	2007 %	2008 %
Increased co-ordination/consistency	24	37
Increased funding (other than dedicated/ring-fenced)	17	18
ICT staff resources/skills development[1]	n/a	18
Changing way in which schools use/perceive ICT	20	14
Integration of learning platforms[1]	n/a	14
Dedicated/ring-fenced funding	13	10
Other	n/a	12
Base	*54*	*73*

Base: All respondents answering.

Note that in some cases a respondent's answer touched on more than one of the themes, so respondents may have been counted under more than one category.

In a few cases, a respondent's answer did not touch on any of the outlined themes and has been included in the 'other' category.

[1] New answer option added to codeframe in 2008.

5.4   Summary

Key findings

Overall, the findings suggest that the profile of Becta has improved. Local authorities were more aware and made increased use of the support Becta offered in 2008 compared with 2007.

- All respondents had some knowledge of the support available from Becta. The proportion of respondents with only limited knowledge decreased from 6 per cent in 2007 to 1 per cent in 2008.
- All respondents identified areas in which Becta's services could be helpful to their local authority, with 93 per cent reporting that they could be helpful in the field of ICT leadership and the self-review framework.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73 per cent) reported that they would be positive about Becta in conversation with colleagues. One-tenth said they would be critical.
- Nearly all local authorities (96 per cent) felt the self-review framework had been either 'very' or 'fairly' effective as a tool for assessing standards of ICT leadership and use in schools.
- Nearly all local authorities (96 per cent) reported actively promoting the participation of schools in the self-review framework. The vast majority of local authorities also said that they provided support for participating schools (93 per cent).
- Over a third of suggestions for improvements in the use of ICT in education cited increased co-ordination and consistency within and between the local authority, schools and government. Increased funding, including ring-fenced funding, was also reported by 28 per cent of respondents.

Appendix A

Additional analysis

This appended analysis explores the relationship between key questionnaire variables and local authority-level demographic indicators. The purpose of this is to investigate whether there is any relationship between certain local authority demographic characteristics and:

- sharing digital learning resources
- provision of learning platforms for schools
- operating a ContactPoint database
- support for the provision of ICT resources to learners at home.

The following local authority demographic indicators have been used:

- Number of learners in the local authority
- Percentage of learners eligible for free school meals in the local authority
- Region (North, Centre and South)[39].

The percentage of learners eligible for free schools meals acts as a proxy measure for social deprivation.

In order to allow for meaningful analysis with the small sample size (97 local authorities), local authorities were divided into three approximately equal-sized groups for the demographic indicators. These groupings are based on trying to achieve a balance between the relative sizes of sub-groups, rather than on a particular policy-related basis.

Please note that statistical tests are unreliable on samples of this size and have not been carried out. This means we are unable to say whether differences between estimates are statistically significant.

Percentages are shown inside square brackets if the base size is less than 50. In this appendix, we have also shown percentages when the base is less than 30. Percentages calculated on a base of less than 30 should be treated with caution.

With this in mind it is also important to note that the survey achieved a reasonable response rate (63 per cent) and 97 local authorities (out of a total of 153) were included as valid responses for analysis.

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[39] See table at the end of Appendix A for information on which local authorities have been included in each regional group.

Sharing digital learning resources

A greater proportion of local authorities in the Centre and South regions enabled teachers to share digital learning resources in some way compared with those in the North (100 per cent and 98 per cent compared with 90 per cent respectively).

However, authorities in the North were more likely than those in the South to share digital learning resources via a repository (47 per cent compared with 28 per cent).

Whether local authority enables teachers to share digital learning resources among each other by region

	North	Centre	South	Total (counts)
Yes, via a repository	14	6	13	33
Yes, via a website	15	8	25	48
Yes, via CD-ROMs	5	4	-	9
Yes, another way	7	7	13	27
No[1]	3	-	1	4
				Total (percentages)
Yes, via a repository	[47]	[38]	[28]	36
Yes, via a website	[50]	[50]	[54]	52
Yes, via CD-ROMs	[17]	[25]	[-]	10
Yes, another way	[23]	[44]	[28]	29
No[1]	[10]	[-]	[2]	4
Base	*[30]*	*[16]*	*[46]*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Exclusive code.

In 2008, five respondents did not answer this question.

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Provision of learning platforms

The 2008 data shows that, unlike in 2007, the likelihood of a local authority running a learning platform for all or some of its schools did not increase as the number of learners in the local authority increased.

There was an increase in the proportion of smaller local authorities (with up to 30,000 learners) that ran a learning platform for some or all of its schools from 44 per cent in 2007 to 72 per cent in 2008.

Local authorities with fewer than 30,000 learners were more likely than the mid-size authorities (with between 30,001 and 48,000 learners) to provide a learning platform for all of its schools. However, this difference disappears if you take into account authorities that provide a learning platform for at least some schools.

Whether local authority runs a learning platform for its schools by number of learners in local authority[1]

	Up to 30,000 learners	30,001 to 48,000 learners	48,001+ learners	Total (counts)
Yes, for all schools	17	12	17	46
Yes, for some schools	4	13	10	27
No, but some schools have their own	5	2	3	10
No/Not yet	3	4	5	12
				Total (percentages)
Yes, for all schools	[59]	[39]	[49]	48
Yes, for some schools	[14]	[42]	[29]	28
No, but some schools have their own	[17]	[6]	[9]	11
No/Not yet	[10]	[13]	[14]	13
Base[2]	*[29]*	*[31]*	*[35]*	*95*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] In 2007, the term 'integrated learning platform' was used.

[2] Demographic data was not available for one local authority and this case is therefore excluded from the base.

As we found in the 2007 survey, more deprived local authorities – as measured by the percentage of pupils eligible for free schools meals (FSM) – were most likely to provide a learning platform for schools.

Among local authorities with high FSM eligibility, 88 per cent reported that learning platforms were provided for at least some schools. Levels of learning platform provision were similar for those local authorities those with medium FSM eligibility

(82 per cent) but fell to 65 per cent for the least deprived local authorities (with low FSM eligibility).

Whether local authority runs a learning platform for its schools by percentage of learners eligible for free school meals[1]

	Low (<11%) FSM eligibility	Medium (11.01% to 18%) FSM eligibility	High (>18.01%) FSM eligibility	Total (counts)
Yes, for all schools	17	16	13	46
Yes, for some schools	7	12	8	27
No, but some schools have their own	6	3	1	10
No/Not yet	7	3	2	12
				Total (percentages)
Yes, for all schools	[46]	[47]	[54]	48
Yes, for some schools	[19]	[35]	[33]	28
No, but some schools have their own	[16]	[9]	[4]	11
No/Not yet	[19]	[9]	[8]	13
Base[2]	*[37]*	*[34]*	*[24]*	*95*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] In 2007, the term 'integrated learning platform' was used.

[2] Demographic data was not available for one local authority and this case is therefore excluded from the base.

Operating a ContactPoint database

Local authorities in the North region were most likely to report having a fully operational ContactPoint database, compared with those in the Centre and South (28 per cent compared with 13 per cent and 14 per cent respectively).

Whether local authority has a fully operational ContactPoint database for the collection of Every Child Matters indicator data from schools by region[1]

	North	Centre	South	Total (counts)
Yes	8	2	6	16
No, but we are planning for this	21	12	34	67
No, and this is not being planned	0	2	3	5
				Total (percentages)
Yes	[28]	[13]	[14]	18
No, but we are planning for this	[72]	[75]	[79]	76
No, and this is not being planned	[-]	[13]	[7]	6
Base[2]	*[29]*	*[16]*	*[43]*	*88*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] In 2007, the question did not specify a 'ContactPoint' database.

[2] Demographic data was not available for one local authority and this case is therefore excluded from the base.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

The least deprived local authorities (with less than 11 per cent levels of FSM eligibility) were more likely to report that they had a fully operational ContactPoint database compared with the most deprived local authorities (with over 18 per cent levels of FSM eligibility).

Whether local authority has a fully operational ContactPoint database for the collection of Every Child Matters indicator data from schools by percentage of learners eligible for free school meals[1]

	Low (<11%) FSM eligibility	Medium (11.01% to 18%) FSM eligibility	High (>18.01%) FSM eligibility	Total (counts)
Yes	8	6	2	16
No, but we are planning for this	26	23	18	67
No, and this is not being planned	2	2	1	5
				Total (percentages)
Yes	[22]	[19]	[10]	18
No, but we are planning for this	[72]	[74]	[86]	76
No, and this is not being planned	[6]	[6]	[5]	6
Base[2]	*[36]*	*[31]*	*[21]*	*88*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] In 2007, the question did not specify a 'ContactPoint' database.

[2] Demographic data was not available for one local authority and this case is therefore excluded from the base.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Support for the provision of ICT resources to learners at home

More deprived local authorities (with higher levels of FSM eligibility) were most likely to report that they ran a scheme to support the provision of ICT resources to learners at home (besides the Computers for Pupils initiative).

Among local authorities with high FSM eligibility, 43 per cent reported running such schemes. This compared with 24 per cent of local authorities with medium FSM eligibility and 22 per cent of local authorities with low FSM eligibility.

Whether local authority runs scheme to support the provision of ICT resources to learners at home by region by percentage of learners eligible for free school meals[1]

	Low (<11%) FSM eligibility	Medium (11.01% to 18%) FSM eligibility	High (>18.01%) FSM eligibility	Total (counts)
Yes	8	8	10	26
No	28	25	13	66
				Total (percentages)
Yes	[22]	[24]	[43]	28
No	[78]	[76]	[57]	72
Base	*[36]*	*[33]*	*[23]*	*92*

Base: All respondents answering.

[1] Excluding the Computers for Pupils initiative.

As with all tables, percentages have been calculated from the responding base.

Local authority by region

North	Centre	South
Barnsley	Bedfordshire	Barking and Dagenham
Blackburn with Darwen	Birmingham	Barnet
Blackpool	Cambridgeshire	Bath and North East Somerset
Bolton	Coventry	Bexley
Bradford	Derby	Bournemouth
Bury	Derbyshire	Bracknell Forest
Calderdale	Dudley	Brent
Cheshire	Essex	Brighton and Hove
Cumbria	Herefordshire	Bristol, City of
Darlington	Hertfordshire	Bromley
Doncaster	Leicester	Buckinghamshire
Durham	Leicestershire	Camden
East Riding of Yorkshire	Lincolnshire	City of London
Gateshead	Luton	Cornwall
Halton	Norfolk	Croydon
Hartlepool	Northamptonshire	Devon
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	Nottingham	Dorset
Kirklees	Nottinghamshire	Ealing
Knowsley	Peterborough	East Sussex
Lancashire	Rutland	Enfield
Leeds	Sandwell	Gloucestershire
Liverpool	Shropshire	Greenwich
Manchester	Solihull	Hackney
Middlesbrough	Southend-on-Sea	Hammersmith and Fulham
Newcastle Upon Tyne	Staffordshire	Hampshire
North East Lincolnshire	Stoke-on-Trent	Haringey
North Lincolnshire	Suffolk	Harrow
North Tyneside	Telford and Wrekin	Havering
North Yorkshire	Thurrock	Hillingdon

Northumberland	Walsall	Hounslow
Oldham	Warwickshire	Isle of Wight
Redcar and Cleveland	Wolverhampton	Isles of Scilly
Rochdale	Worcestershire	Islington
Rotherham		Kensington and Chelsea
Salford		Kent
Sefton		Kingston Upon Thames
Sheffield		Lambeth
South Tyneside		Lewisham
St Helens		Medway
Stockport		Merton
Stockton-on-Tees		Milton Keynes
Sunderland		Newham
Tameside		North Somerset
Trafford		Oxfordshire
Wakefield		Plymouth
Warrington		Poole
Wigan		Portsmouth
Wirral		Reading
York		Redbridge
		Richmond Upon Thames
		Slough
		Somerset
		South Gloucestershire
		Southampton
		Southwark
		Surrey
		Sutton
		Swindon
		Torbay
		Tower Hamlets
		Waltham Forest
		Wandsworth

		West Berkshire
		West Sussex
		Westminster
		Wiltshire
		Windsor and Maidenhead
		Wokingham

Note that demographic data was not available for three local authorities.

Appendix B

Glossary

Digital learning resources

Digital learning resources include digitised information sources such as documents and presentations and extend to interactive and multimedia tools and resources enhancing the learning experience with images, sound, animation and feedback. Digital learning resources can be simple assets such as images, movies and text, or the combination of these in content objects.

Learning platform

This term describes a broad range of ICT systems used to deliver and support learning. These systems can be accessed either from school/college or remotely. A learning platform can be made up of a range of resources that work together to provide communication, assessment, content delivery, tracking and learning management.

E-portfolio

An e-portfolio is part of a personal online space, where learners can store their work, record their achievements and access personal course timetables.

Firewall

A network firewall protects a computer network from unauthorised access. Network firewalls may be hardware devices, software programs, or a combination of the two.

Managed services provision

An arrangement in which ICT resources are provided with full service, including technical support and maintenance.

Management information system

A management information system (MIS) is composed of tools and processes for allowing data management, input and output. These database-driven systems have been implemented to replace paper-based record-keeping systems to improve access to, and management of, school and pupil information. MIS systems must be able to securely hold pupil details along with other institution educational information to enable learning management and management reporting.

References

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