



Linburn Academy Validation Report

Validation Report	
School Name: Linburn Academy	Name of Validator: Jennifer McKay
77 Linburn Road Glasgow G52 4EX United Kingdom	Date of Validation: 05/02/2019
Head Teacher / Principal Name: Mark Beattie	Digital Technology Co-ordinator: Grace Mulholland

This report includes validator's comments based on a review of the online submission and the validation visit.

We are happy to become a mentor school: Yes

- We are happy to share this report with Education Scotland: Yes
- We are happy for Education Scotland to contact us to highlight our practice: Yes
- We are happy to share this report with the local authority: Yes

Leadership and Vision 78%

During my visit to Linburn Academy it was apparent that the school had digital technology at the heart of its learning and teaching. The opportunities that it affords the pupils in the school is immense and the staff use it appropriately to get the very best learning experiences for the pupils. This was also reflected in their Digital Plans as well as their Whole School Improvement Plan.

The Head of school and the Digital Leader of Learning have been very proactive in ensuring that the school is kept abreast of current digital developments whilst ensuring that staff are not overwhelmed by the new technologies. Throughout their 3 year digital journey, so far ,the school has made successful changes to their digital curriculum to benefit staff and pupils.

In general throughout my entire visit it was clear that the staff I spoke to recognised the importance of digital technology in learning and teaching and were clear about the aims of using the various technologies.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	Digital technology is a fully integrated aspect of school and faculty planning	It is clear from the school's Digital Strategy and its Digital Policy included in documentary evidence that digital technology is integrated into school development planning and that targets are set and reviewed.
2	The use of digital technology is informed by evaluating the potential of new and emerging technologies. It is supported through collaboration with educational partners	It is evident that the school has a practical approach to the evaluation of new technologies for educational use and utilises the links that it has with educational partners.
3	The digital technology leader/coordinator proactively leads a team to provide operational support for digitally enhanced learning and teaching throughout the school	The Digital Leader of Learning has demonstrated a proactive approach to the leadership of ICT within the school in order to support learning and teaching with appropriate digital technologies throughout the school.
4	The school facilitates the strategic delivery of CLPL relating to the use of digital technology in accordance with the needs of the school	The school has a very strong strategic plan for delivering appropriate CLPL to all members of staff including teachers and PSAs. Various different ways of delivering CLPL is a strength of the school as it understands the needs of the the staff and their differing levels of digital skills.
5	The innovative, creative and collaborative power of digital technology is aligned to the school curriculum to provide high quality learning experiences	Documentary evidence provided shows that digital technology is being creatively within the school, to enhance the learning experiences of the pupils.
6	The school supports the strategic deployment of digital technology for the inclusion of pupils with additional support needs. It provides guidance to teachers, parents/carers on how assistive and other technologies can personalise support	There is a strategic approach to the use of digital technology to support all the students in the school.
7	The school has a strategic approach to the integration of Internet safety and cyber resilience. This approach is progressive and is supported by engagement with Internet safety agencies	The school provides documentation relating to online safety and cyber resilience including an Internet Policy and Local Authority advice on the use of Social Media. They are also looking to the future roll out of iPads ensuring that the cyber security on these devices will be suitable for their pupils and ensuring that security measures are in place to ensure resilience.
8	The school manages and reviews Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) that promote awareness of the safe, appropriate and positive use of digital technology	At present the school has an Acceptable Use Policy based on Local Authority guidelines and an updated one will be available when the pupils begin to use the new iPads.

Digital Learning and Teaching 73%

Within Linburn Academy digital technologies are being used to their best advantage to enhance digital learning and teaching. Looking forward to the iPad rollout, the school has already been very proactive in exploring how the new devices can be best utilised by the pupils. As some pupils within the school are non-verbal they are looking at ways how the iPads can be further used as a communication aid as well as exploring the apps such as Choice Board Creator, Book Creator, iMovie and Stop Motion, all of which can be adapted using the device's settings to make them more accessible.

The school is also evaluating Seesaw to see if this would be suitable for capturing digital portfolios for the pupils. This has been successful so far in that parents can share pictures with the school of activities that the pupils are undertaking at home, and also see what has been happening in school thus stimulating discussions with the youngsters. I wish the school luck with both their Seesaw evaluation and their iPad roll out, I am sure that they will both be very successful!

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	Digital technology is used to enhance creativity and innovation and to foster independent learning	An example of the use of digital technology provided through my classroom observation included the use of Top Marks - 'Underwater Counting' on the SMART board. This was being used not only for teaching numeracy, but also to emphasize the importance of taking turns to come to the board to complete the activity. Other examples of good practice in the use of digital technologies are evidenced through the documentation provided.
2	Teachers and pupils can articulate how learning has been enhanced through the use of digital technology	The use of digital technologies has had a demonstrable effect on the staff and pupils at Lindurn Academy, in many cases providing an opportunity for communication that would not be possible for many pupils.
4	Teachers use digital technology in their daily teaching to provide learning experiences that support the development of digital skills, positive attitudes and dispositions	From the evidence submitted and during my visit to the school I was able to see how Linburn Academy uses digital technologies, not only to develop a pupil's digital skills but also to support their life skills and positive attitudes towards their peers.
6	The use of digital technology within the school is enhanced and developed through partnerships with educational organisations	Working alongside Langlands and Isobel Mair school has been of great benefit to the staff and pupils at Linburn. In addition, the school also has links with the City of Glasgow College and Cardonald College, where pupils can attend during their last two years at the school.
7	Internet safety and cyber resilience are taught across the curriculum at all levels.	E-Safety is of paramount importance to the school and as such they are ensuring that pupils and also parents are made aware of the need to remain safe whilst using the internet. During my visit the group of parents who attended were provided with a list of links to child friendly websites that focus on staying safe online that they can use at home with their child.
8	Appropriate hardware and software, including assistive technologies, are used to provide additional or differentiated learning for pupils with additional support needs	All students are supported with the use of dedicated equipment and software including Boardmaker Online and Go Talk 9.

School Culture 86%

There is no doubt that there is a strong digital presence throughout the school. The staff and pupils that I spoke to were completely at ease with the digital technologies available to them and the Digital Leader of Learning works hard to ensure that the school keeps up to date with new developments. In discussion with the Head of School and the Digital Leader of Learning it was apparent that they felt that the school had a good digital culture that was being progressively embedded in every class.

Pupils attending the school who would struggle with traditional methods of teaching found alternative pathways using digital technologies and are flourishing as a result.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	Digital technology has a strong presence throughout the school and its value is recognised by staff and pupils	There is a positive culture of digital technologies throughout the school and the value of a balanced approach to the use of different digital technology formats is recognised. The teacher and pupils that I had the opportunity to observe were comfortable with the interactive technology and showed competence in its use.
2	Teachers and pupils can demonstrate the motivational capacity of digital technology	Within Linburn Academy it is evident that the digital technologies in use are being used not only because of their effectiveness, but also because of their motivational impact on pupils.
3	Through its website the school recognises pupil achievements and makes appropriate resources available to pupils and parents	The school website reflects the busy nature of the school environment and provides parents and carers with relevant information for those hoping to send their child to Linburn Academy. Within the website the school's Twitter feed is embedded which highlights all the pupil achievements and provides up to date information for parents/carers and the wider community.
4	The school uses digital technology to facilitate communication with pupils, parents/carers, staff and the wider community	In addition to the school website and Twitter, the school uses Group Call to communicate with parents/carers and the wider community. The school also welcomes parents to come in and try the new technologies available in the school as I saw during my visit. I understand that more opportunities like this are to be organised which will be beneficial to everyone involved.
5	Teachers use digital technology for administration	Teachers use digital technology for planning and storage and for recording attendance, assessments and school reports.
6	The school recognises and celebrates pupil use of digital technology to enhance their own learning	The school recognises achievement in the use of digital technologies through highlighting this on their vibrant and lively Twitter feed and also through the awarding of 'Gold Achievement Awards' to pupils for specific achievements using digital technologies.
7	The school uses digital technology to collaborate with other schools or organisations in local, national or international project work	Linburn Academy works closely with other similar schools, Langlands and Isobel Mair to help staff and pupils to collaborate with one another.

Professional Development 100%

In discussions with the Headteacher and the Digital Leader of Learning it was clear that CPL was an integral part of making the continuation of the school's digital journey possible. Learning opportunities are offered to staff in a variety of ways so that teachers are able to learn at their own pace and embed their new knowledge quickly and effectively in to their teaching.

Within Linburn Academy there is a real sense of a team of teachers and PSAs willing to buy in to the digital vision of the school and while different colleagues are at different stages on the journey, there is a strong sense of the value digital technology adds to learning and teaching.

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1	Staff are provided with opportunities to identify and address their own professional development needs.	All staff including teachers and PSAs are provided with opportunities to identify and address their own professional development needs through discussions with the Digital Leader of Learning.
2	School staff engage in professional development programmes to enhance learning and teaching through the use of digital technology.	All staff at Linburn Academy are provided with a wide range of opportunities to engage in professional development. These include informal drop-in sessions as well as more formal sessions delivered by the Digital Leader of Learning. Staff are also able to attend Local Authority training sessions as appropriate. Members of staff are also working towards accreditation as an Apple Teacher, allowing them to develop their knowledge and skills independently and to be able to share this knowledge with their colleagues.

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3	CLPL activities are underpinned by accurate and robust review processes that focus on improving teachers' pedagogical competence in using digital technology.	The school ensures that any CLPL provision is evaluated by the attendees to ensure that it has had an appropriate impact on their teaching with digital technologies. Evidence provided as part of this award also highlights this.
4	The school encourages teachers to be innovative and pupils to be self-directed so that they share ideas within and beyond the school and demonstrate cyber resilience in their approach to digital technology.	Discussions with the Head of School and the Digital Leader of Learning demonstrated to me that staff are encouraged to use new technologies within the school and that online safety is of paramount importance.
5	The school promotes the development of 'digital champions' to support staff and share good practice with other schools.	The school has a CLPL collegiate each week where teachers can support each other and share ideas and good practice with one another.
6	Professional learning helps to overcome barriers to the development, deployment and evaluation of digital technology in learning and teaching.	In the course of discussions with the Digital Leader of Learning it was evident that training provided in a range of digital technologies has enhanced the learning environment for students. In evidence submitted it was highlighted that there have been obstacles caused by SMART boards being inaccessible in classrooms with multiple pupils with wheelchairs. This was addressed and the issue overcome by repositioning the boards with space for wheelchairs in front of them. Furthermore, problems with pupils being unable to hold the iPads was overcome through the use of Easy Grip cases on each tablet to allow for a more secure grip.

Resources and Infrastructure 100%

Linburn Academy has worked hard to ensure that there is equitable access to digital technologies throughout the school. With the provision of desktop computers and iPads pupils are able to learn at their own pace using the most appropriate hardware and software available to them.

The school has spent a considerable amount of time working to ensure that specific resources such as See - Saw are appropriate to the needs of the pupils as well as ensuring that the iPad resources that will be available after the roll out will be of the most benefit to the pupils in the school.

Teachers in the school also recognise the educational value of ICT resources and use these effectively. They make good use of the resources available and seek opportunities to keep up-to-date with digital technologies to support learning. I do, however, recognise that the school moves forward with caution and deploys technology with purpose whilst ensuring that staff are confident with the an ever changing digital world.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	The school makes available appropriate hardware to staff and pupils	The school currently provides staff and pupils with access to desktop computers, printers and a SMARTboard in each of the 5 classrooms. iPads are also available for use but at the moment aren't on a 1-1 basis for the whole teaching day. However, Linburn Academy is part of Glasgow City Council iPad roll out with teachers getting their device in June 2019 and pupils follow on a 1-1 basis 3-6 months later.
2	Hardware is deployed throughout the school in such a way as to maximise opportunities for learning and to promote independent learning	Evidence submitted as part of the award indicates that access to IT hardware is regular, improves learning opportunities and is motivational for the pupils. The use of the greenscreen was also highlighted as particularly inspiring for the youngsters who could both film and see themselves in a wide range of different situations.
3	Hardware and software is deployed in ways that support equity and equality of access, opportunity and outcome	There is a school-wide programme in place ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the hardware and software resources provided which is evidenced through the School Improvement Plan and The Digital Policy.

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4	Appropriate content rich software and productivity tools that support learning are provided for staff and pupils	The pupils at Linburn Academy have access to a range of appropriate software to support their learning. As many pupils have complex learning needs software must be easily accessible and differentiated to allow for the young people to have the best learning experience possible.
5	The school makes online learning environments available to support teaching and learning	The school makes use of Glow to support teaching and learning. During discussions, the Digital Leader of Learning highlighted their use of Office 365 and other relevant apps available through the online environment.
6	The school is fully compliant with all software licencing requirements	Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with software licensing regulations.
8	The Internet is available for use by all faculties either through cabled devices or Wi-Fi. Wireless access points are placed in such a way as to maximise coverage	Linburn Academy is a small school of 5 classes and benefits from easy access to the internet through cabled desktop computers as well as Wi-Fi access points.

General Recommendations:

Linburn Academy is a forward thinking secondary school that provides a wide range of different digital learning experiences for their pupils. The school's planning displays strategic projection and cognisance that young people now learn better in a digital environment. Throughout the school pupils are able to access a wide range of hardware and software to enhance their learning and develop their life skills.

It is, therefore, my recommendation that Linburn Academy has achieved the Digital Schools Award (Scotland).

Possible next steps could include the use of VR Headsets which provide an excellent learning resource for young people to explore places that they would not normally be able to and the range of experiences open to them, these need not be expensive as there is a wide range currently on the market. In addition the school may wish to consider looking at developing the school newsletter using Microsoft Sway which would further enhance and strengthen the digital communications with parents.

Signed



Jennifer McKay
External validator

