



## Booth Wood Primary School

Lightening the load with iPad: Roll out leads to improved mental health and wellbeing for Leicestershire primary teachers

A Leicestershire primary has reported a boost to teachers' mental health and wellbeing following the roll out of a school-wide 1:1 iPad initiative, supplied and supported by Apple Authorised Education Specialist, KRCS.

*“Having iPad has most definitely made a positive change to our teachers' work-life balance. The investment in teaching and learning technology has made staff feel very valued and retention is 100 per cent. We simply don't have staff leaving and student teachers on placements say they think the technology is fantastic and that they really want to work here.*

— Lewis Jenkins, Year 4 Teacher & Computing Coordinator

A Loughborough primary says it's not just the children who are benefitting from having a 1:1 iPad roll out implemented throughout the school. While teachers say they can definitely see progress in pupils across all year groups, and that results have remained high – even throughout the pandemic – they have also noticed an improvement in their own mental health and wellbeing.

Lewis Jenkins, a Year 4 teacher and the school's computing coordinator, says the workload is much less overwhelming following the investment in 1:1 iPad. “When you're taking home around 90 books to mark in an evening, it can seem like a mammoth undertaking,” he says. “However, with iPad, assessment and feedback is so much quicker and easier and, being able to leave personalised feedback for each individual child, is resulting in improved pupil engagement and communication.”



Year 1 teacher, Georgie Murfitt, agrees. “No more books rolling around the boot of my car and trying to find space for them at home with my own children running around,” she says. “It's brilliant!” Lewis says, although some teachers were strong advocates for Microsoft technologies and were a little wary about moving across to Apple, they soon embraced the benefits once they realised how user-friendly it is. “It's just so accessible,” he says. “You just fire it up and all the apps are there ready to use.”

Georgie admits that, at first, she didn't think she would be comfortable with Apple. “But now I'm a real convert!” she says. “It really is extremely user-friendly, and Apple is always upgrading and adapting the technology to make things better and better. It's clear they listen to user feedback and act on it.”

### Getting through lockdown

Because the technology was already in place, Lewis says the Covid lockdown didn't really present much of a challenge to teaching and learning. “It was simply a matter of ‘take your iPads home and carry on!’” he explains. “The technology is seamless and using Zoom for lessons and break out rooms for peer discussions and face-to-face support gave the children all the resources they needed for successful home learning. The whole curriculum was taught using live lessons, so no one missed out. You really would not know pupils had been away from school for any length of time because they were already familiar with the technology so just got on with it. iPad is so much more than just a tablet. We actually call it a ‘digital pencil case’ as we believe it enhances and furthers the lessons and resources pupils can access.”

*“Using the iPad has helped us learn about lots of things. We now know that lots of technology is used all around us and we have recently learnt that systems, such as Amazon Lockers, all work because of technology. The iPad helped us to learn about this because we can access all of our worksheets on there and share our ideas with others!*

— Year 5 pupil



### Personalised learning

The school uses the Showbie platform for learning and assessment which helps teachers manage classroom workflows and increases collaboration and communication with students and parents. It also enables teachers to provide a much more personalised learning experience as it can be adapted to meet every child's needs. “Children with additional needs or, indeed, those who have a greater level of learning, are all catered for,” says Lewis. “For example, we can leave voice notes feedback for children who may not be able to read without the help of an adult. This has resulted in them responding to their feedback much more quickly as they don't need to wait for anyone to help them to access it.”

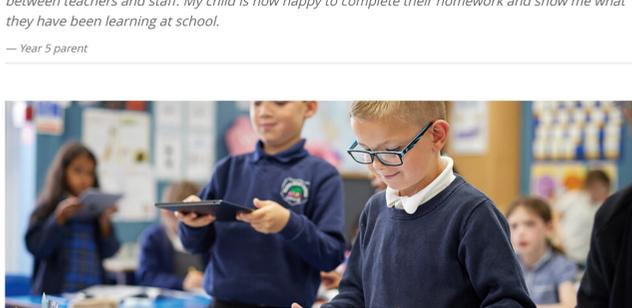
When a Year 6 pupil developed a complex tic disorder, teacher, Jennie Christie, witnessed first-hand how helpful Showbie was in ensuring the child did not miss out. “From being able to write perfectly well, she simply can't any more,” explains Jennie. “However, she can still type and leave verbal comments, so she has been able to record her answers and upload her work. What could have been a very difficult transition, was much less of a challenge because of the technology available. It means she can learn and record the same as her friends around her and we haven't had to hire a member of staff to support her as a scribe.”

### Results

Internal data suggests iPad has made a significant impact throughout the school, with results improving year on year. “Booth Wood is in the top 10% for attainment and top 5% for progress across the country,” says Lewis. “Our children are more future-ready using Apple technology and we believe it will help them to be successful in their future life. They leave school with a passion for life-long learning, the intelligence to succeed and the skills to tackle the challenges of life and work.”

*“The iPads have helped our children to continue to learn and also improved the communication between teachers and staff. My child is now happy to complete their homework and show me what they have been learning at school.*

— Year 5 parent



Lewis says engagement is up and pupils have fun in class while they are developing their skills. “We used to do reams of times tables on paper,” he says. “But now we have a great choice of fun apps for maths and spelling which are quick and easy to access and not a second is wasted. Year 4 had to sit a times tables test at the end of last year and the results definitely showed a drastic improvement in the children's ability.”

*“My iPad helps me to work because I am able to share my thinking with my friends and edit work together. We have been able to create presentations on Keynote to share our work, research and ideas and we have just finished making our end of year Keynote to show what we have learnt during our time at Booth Wood.*

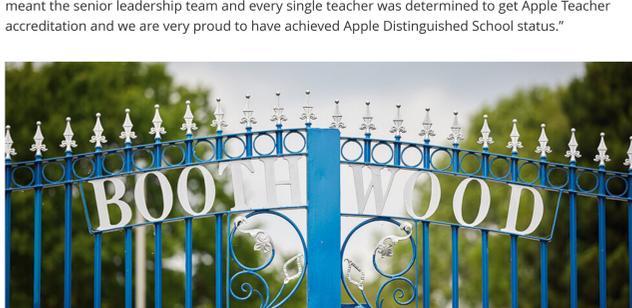
— Year 6 pupil

Another area which has seen improvement is handwriting. The school uses the Kaligo writing and spelling app which was initially meant as a source of further improving pupils' handwriting. “It has become a big part of our digital pencil case,” says Lewis. “Pupils use the Kaligo stylus in all lessons so that their handwriting continues to develop and be easily read on the digital platform. It has definitely enabled children to take a deeper interest in writing as they are able to combine technology and handwriting together.”



### An Apple Distinguished School

Booth Wood became an Apple Distinguished School in 2021 and Lewis says the whole school came together to help achieve the accreditation. “Our head teacher, Julie Harvey, has always had the vision of using technology to improve teaching and learning and to reduce teacher workload,” he says. “She is always striving to be at the forefront of education and give our children the very best opportunities for the future she can, and she has fed this vision down through the school. This meant the senior leadership team and every single teacher was determined to get Apple Teacher accreditation and we are very proud to have achieved Apple Distinguished School status.”



### Support from KRCS

Lewis says the team at KRCS have been extremely helpful and easy to work with from the very beginning. “When we first began looking to improve teaching and learning through new technologies, KRCS came highly recommended to us by other teachers and schools,” he says. “They listened to our needs and suggested tailored hardware and software solutions. We were also impressed by the training on offer. Not just to teachers, but to support staff too, which has really given them a better understanding of how the technology is used. Glyn at KRCS suggested we visit a school in Bolton where he was a guest speaker at an event and Jennie and I went along to see how they were implementing Apple technologies, which was a massive help. Without Glyn's guidance, we wouldn't have had a clue how to access another school's experience.”

Lewis says the school did have some concerns about infrastructure in the early stages of the roll out. “We originally had iPad across Year 6 only, so going from just 30 iPad to over 200 was a little daunting,” he says, “but KRCS worked closely with us to make sure all the background technology was in place ready to support the roll out and it was practically seamless. I have since built up a very close relationship with Glyn and Chris at KRCS and I always get a really quick response if I need any help or guidance.”

*“In summary, iPad has totally transformed teaching and learning and noticeably lightened teacher workload, meaning more time can be spent teaching and building relationships with pupils rather than carrying out administrative tasks. Implementing Apple technology throughout the school really was the best decision ever. We've been here years and none of us are planning on going anywhere!*

— Lewis, Georgie, and Jennie – teachers at Booth Wood