

# Newsletter

October 2003



northern ireland  
elearning  
partnership

*This newsletter is provided for those interested in the early stages of the development of elearning in the education service in Northern Ireland. Further information from [info@elearningfutures.com](mailto:info@elearningfutures.com)*

## In issue five:

- **Project Evaluation Reports**
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### Project Evaluation Reports

The NieL Annual Report and the **six** pilot summaries are now available on the website: [www.elearningfutures.com](http://www.elearningfutures.com)

### BECTa evaluated:

1. Effective and Elearning
2. Supporting Professional Development online in RTU
3. Supporting Professional Development online in SEELB
4. Schools of Thought
5. Developing capacity for eLearning in Ulster University
6. GCSE ICT online

The **Annual Report** draws from each of the summaries and is presented in five major chapters:

1. What is eLearning and why is it significant at this time?
2. Northern Ireland's eLearning context.
3. What is the evidence of the effectiveness and limitations of eLearning?
4. What does research elsewhere tell us?
5. What are the challenges to deliver these opportunities?

### The NOF Programme ... Summary report now available on [www.elearningfutures.com](http://www.elearningfutures.com)

In 1998, £10.8 million of Lottery funds were allocated to support training in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) for teachers and school librarians in Northern Ireland. The main aim of the programme was to raise the standard of pupils' achievement by developing the expertise of serving teachers and school librarians in the use of ICT. The training was additional to existing provision for ICT and was not designed to replace it. An important principle was to increase the ICT expertise of serving teachers to the level now expected of all newly qualified teachers.

#### What the participants said ...

*This has been the biggest change in the curriculum in recent years. It has been the best use of time and has resulted in teachers becoming more confident and more competent in the use of ICT in the classroom. (Primary teacher)*

*The programme has been a great confidence builder ... there is a great sense of partnership between pupil and teacher. In this situation the teacher is not necessarily the expert... the programme has helped staff in their professional development and it has also helped the overall unity of the staff. (Primary teacher)*

*This programme has inspired and ignited teachers. (Post-primary teacher)*

*...a psychological barrier has been crossed which leaves the path open to continuing professional development. (ELB adviser)*

*These comments have been taken from the summary of the full report, which is based on a wide body of quality assurance evidence collected over the lifetime of the programme.*

*Both NOF reports are available on [www.elearningfutures.com](http://www.elearningfutures.com)*

**Ciaran Bradley:** European Schools Technology Innovation Centre (ESTIC) Manager

Ciaran took up the role of ESTIC Manager with Microsoft in August 2003.

ESTIC was created as a result of a recent Memorandum of Understanding agreed between C2K and Microsoft (Issue 2, Dec '02), which seeks, among other things to look at innovative technology in practice within Northern Ireland schools. While Ciaran is sponsored by Microsoft, the majority of his time will be spent working within the C2K project, looking at a number of pilots which will establish a European Centre of excellence, referencing the work in local schools.



Initially working with the ET Strategy, particularly the eLearning partnership, on some early collaboration projects, ESTIC will also pilot the "Innovative Teachers Programme" as part Microsoft's "Partners in Learning Programme" to be launched later in the year. Additionally, the ESTIC Manager will work with the Northern Ireland e Learning partnership. Together we will endeavour to understand the European synergies and opportunities for the wider education community. We will look at future technologies that can be mutually beneficial to the local community and Microsoft.

### Granada Learning Team in Northern Ireland



Granada Learning's team of consultants in Northern Ireland supporting C2k has recently expanded to four with the addition of Norma Perceval-Price and Lisa Brown. Norma and Lisa have joined the team to provide a support service for Special Schools. Both have left teaching posts in special schools to join the team and bring with them considerable expertise in the use of ICT to support the education of pupils with special needs. Norma and Lisa will build on the work of the existing consultants, Mary Mallon and Alastair Crease who cover primary and post primary education respectively.

The aim of all four consultants is to **provide the best possible support for the education community in Northern Ireland** in the use of the Granada Learning software provided by C2k. Indeed, Lisa and Norma additionally support all the special needs software provided in the Special Needs Schoolbox from a range of publishers. The role of the consultants includes working in partnership with the Education and Library Boards, CCEA, teacher training institutions and also through the Northern Ireland E-Learning Partnership. Some examples of support provided include in-school training courses, assistance with CASS INSET days, the support and development of inter-board projects and working with the educational bodies in order to meet strategic educational goals. The team is there to help and welcomes [contact](#) from anyone interested in the support that can be provided.



For more information and contact details, please visit <http://c2kschoolbox.granada-learning.com>



**Alan November Proudly Presents**  
**Building Learning Communities**  
Empowering Teaching and Learning  
and  
Leveraging Technology Conference



**Boston 2003**



### 'Top of the Class' Teachers Travel to Boston

A group of school principals, teachers and classroom assistants headed off to Boston this summer under the auspices of the Regional Training Unit (RTU) to develop further their teaching and leadership skills and enrich their knowledge of educational technology. Together they attended Alan November's summer school 'Building Learning Communities'.

A small number of Principals in the second year of their appointment, and who had applied to attend the conference as part of RTU's International dimension, were accompanied by the Education Technology 'laureate' prize winners and regional winners of the Teaching Awards 2002, (Plato Awards). The party was led by RTU and supported by ET Strategy staff.

Participants from the Northern Ireland group presented three of the sessions and all agreed that it was a worthwhile experience ... **one that they would like to repeat!**

**David Knox** commented; 'The quality of input at the conference, like the accommodation and hospitality was of a high standard. It was refreshing to hear alternative, educational perspectives from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean and it was motivational to listen to a number of inspirational leaders, who were passionate about learning. And what a relief it was to discover that this was not a conference for technocrats or for 'techno-teachers'! It was about learning in the classroom, outside the classroom and across boundaries, national and international. It was about sharing knowledge, ideas, and insights between teachers and learners, adults and children, parents and teachers, schools and the wider community: industrial, commercial and political.'

**Mary O'Kane** wrote 'I have already disseminated some of the information to staff in school amid howls of disbelief (Kids, canines and constructivism) and genuine awe (Managing change while maintaining visions of excellence!). So many of the small tips that I picked up are being put into our ICT policy. I genuinely feel that the experience was extremely beneficial.'

**Terry Laverty** made the point that ....'The conference has, among other things, challenged my thinking on the very purpose of education at a time when N. Ireland education is at the crossroads. Important decisions have to be made in regard to issues such as Selection and Curriculum Review. The cornerstone, for me, is the challenge of integrating ICT within communities to allow a pedagogical shift towards a more progressive approach to learning and teaching.'



**Tom McCully** said 'The Building Learning Communities Conference was both informative and enjoyable. The presenters were not just expert in their fields but were entertaining in their deliveries. The knowledge imparted by each of them - Alan November, Mark Standley and Meg Ormiston was enlightening and challenging. It has already challenged me to look at the degree to which we have allowed ET to impact on teaching and learning. For the first time I began to appreciate that the changes required in these processes are transforming rather than merely enhancing.'

Further information about the trip is available from **Byron Evans at RTU** ... and next year's July conference has already been announced on [www.anovember.com](http://www.anovember.com)

## Events

### **Beyond the Exam: Innovative Approaches to Learning and Assessment**

19-20 November 2003, Watershed Media Centre, Bristol

A two-day conference exploring whether digital technologies can revolutionise our approach to assessment, enabling us to encourage and measure the full range of complex skills required for the digital age and to develop a system that fully supports learning. Covering issues such as technological support for assessment, peer and formative assessment, examinations policy and the politics of assessment, this conference provides the first coherent debate on how to shift our thinking of assessment beyond the exam hall. Contact details <http://www.nestafuturelab.org/events/>

futurelab

### **BETT 2004, 7-10 January, Olympia, London**

BETT is the annual international event that encourages and extends effective use of ICT in education. It is suitable for head teachers and senior management, policy makers and teaching practitioners in primary, secondary, further and special education establishments. Sign up at [www.bett.co.uk](http://www.bett.co.uk) and go along to see thousands of educational software, hardware, online, multimedia and IT support products and services on display.



### **North of England Education Conference 7 - 9 January 2004 Waterfront Hall**

The conference theme 'Education in a Pluralist Society' is one of practical relevance to all people in the Islands of Great Britain and Ireland. We have become multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-faith societies, and, over the three days, high profile national and international keynote speakers, seminar leaders, educationalists and politicians will address the conference on how the education service should react in this highly sensitive environment. [www.neec2004.org](http://www.neec2004.org)

