



The Computers for Pupils (CfP) initiative is a £60 million, 2-year DCfS programme aimed at helping some of the most disadvantaged secondary school children improve their education and life skills by putting a computer into the home.

The aim is to motivate pupils to learn, help develop key ICT and life skills and give them the same opportunities and experiences as their peers. The whole family, school and wider community can also benefit through increased involvement of parents in their child's education and better communication between the school and home.

In 2007/2008 the Stockton-on-Tees local authority received funding to provide 700 laptops for pupils attending 14 secondary schools in their area.

### **Home use of computer requires different approach to e-safety**

Although the CfP initiative offers a great opportunity to tackle educational disadvantage it needs to be approached with safeguards in place, as Ian Ithurralde, E-learning Co-ordinator for Stockton explained. "We wanted to achieve an environment that was as safe as possible for the students who would be receiving these laptops, understanding that no solution can guarantee 100% protection against inappropriate content, online threats and misuse. As the laptops would be used predominantly in the home, the usual school-based safeguards for protecting them against these things were not applicable. We knew we had to take different approach."

Stockton looked at a range of solutions but eventually decided to implement the e-safe education Managed Service solution for the 700 laptops, to sit alongside the Becta approved filtering they were deploying. "We made this choice for a number of reasons", said Ian. "It could provide a good degree of protection, including monitoring of potential grooming and cyber-bullying activity, cover for online and offline use and the blocking of inappropriate images.

"Additionally, unlike some other solutions, it could proactively encourage students to adhere to our Home School Agreement (HSA) covering acceptable use. This meant that over time we would be able to consider allowing access to a range of Web 2.0 tools which students would traditionally be blocked from using." Ian added.



*"Currently most of the elements of what is termed Web 2.0 are blocked by the filtering software. But, we believe that with the e-safe education Managed Service in place and the encouragement students receive via the system to behave responsibly, we may be able to consider allowing access to some of these tools in the future."*

*Jayne Palmer  
Children's Services*

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## **Monitoring and proactive management**

“We decided to go with a managed service rather than the more traditional approach because we were mindful of the additional workload which this initiative would involve for schools”, said Ian. “Perhaps more importantly, school staff did not have the same level of expertise that the e-Safe Education staff had in the detailed forensic analysis of the results.” The e-safe education managed service enables the transgression data received from the monitoring solution to be managed on a proactive basis. It is delivered through professional Digital Forensic examiners, typically ex-law enforcement officers, specialists in identifying illegal transgressions, grooming and predator activities. The facility provides rapid monitoring and reporting for the most serious issues and regular reports of more general transgressions of the users and devices within the CfP scheme.

It provides the school’s e-safety Officer with regular and timely reports summarising transgressions of the CfP Home School Agreement by device name cross-referenced against the system’s serial number and MAC address should the Hardware Inventory facility be utilised. If a major issue arises, transgression data can be professionally assessed and the relevant advice be communicated back to the school’s e-safety Officer, Child Protection Officer or Head Teacher.”

## **Amending inappropriate behaviour**

The rollout of the laptops with the e-safe education solution installed and underpinned by the managed service started in September 2008, with e-safe education consultants working closely with Ian and the schools across the borough. “e-safe education’s partnership with us is very important to the progress of this initiative”, said Ian. “They have worked with us to solve the issues we have discovered such as getting everything to work over a 3G Network connection. In addition their advice and knowledge helped us build up our expertise in this area internally.”

The solution is designed to amend inappropriate behaviour as it occurs. This makes it possible to define intervention strategies that encourage positive use. This positive behaviour modification can help to encourage the responsible use of ICT resources, not only for the CfP scheme but across all ICT use.

As part of the service the schools in the district receive a monthly bulletin from e-Safe Education that highlights the major issues with regard to online threats. “Some of the schools are even using this bulletin in their morning assembly to alert all their students to the issues”, said Ian.

The solution was installed in the School in 2006 and backed up by an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that was sent to all parents.

## **Flexible process to provide year-round cover**

To ensure that serious incidents can be acted on at all times, during school holidays any transgressions are reported to the Children’s Services department of the authority. Jayne Palmer of Children’s Services said, “As well as providing cover during school holidays for all students, we also have a number of looked after children on the CfP scheme. e-safe education can provide us with a regular overview for these children in order that we can monitor their activity.”

Commenting on future plans Ian said, “Currently most of the elements of what is termed Web 2.0 are blocked by the filtering software. But, we believe that with the e-safe education Managed Service in place and the encouragement students receive via the system to behave responsibly we may be able to consider allowing access to some of these tools in the future.”

