



Birchwood School Reflective Summary for Milestone 6

2011 eLearning Focus

1. Continue to develop teacher capability through professional learning opportunities
2. Develop an eLearning team within our school to focus on sustainability
3. Maintain a high standard of resources

How?

1. Continue to develop teacher capability through professional learning opportunities

During 2011 we have continued to provide professional learning opportunities through school and cluster events. All staff have had the opportunity to take part in the Genius Cafe, Kids Can Film Festival, John Parsons presentations, blogging meetings, IWB training (teachers with IWB's), iPad training and Curriculum Conference as well as taking part in informal discussions as issues/needs come up.

At the beginning of the year all new teachers were offered the chance to attend a meeting to look at the basics of working within our school server and using the available resources. During the year we have locked our Shared Folder so students can't access teacher folders. This has highlighted the need for revisiting the Shared Folder throughout the year to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of how this works. Ensuring teachers focus on saving correctly with their class will develop their individual skills and keep the Shared Folder well managed.

The eLearning Lead Teacher is released 0.1 this year. This time has been used to manage resources, trouble shoot problems (IWB breakdowns etc), investigate, purchase and set up iPads, plan professional learning opportunities and work to meet cluster requirements.

2. Develop an eLearning team within our school to focus on sustainability

Our new eLearning Team met during Term 4 to reflect on the year and look forward to 2012. The two new members have only been at our school for one year and have expressed an interest in working within the team and school to promote eLearning with our staff and students. These teachers have ideas about extending the skills of our students and providing leadership opportunities for our experts with links to the Genius Cafe model. Continuing our links with the other schools in the cluster is an ongoing focus for 2012. The team has identified goals for 2012 that may have started during 2011 and will carry beyond this timeframe.

3. Maintain a high standard of resources

The school purchased 15 iPads in Term 3. We initially gave one to each teacher to 'play' with and investigate how they could use it in the classroom. We set up two pods of six at the beginning of Term 4 that move around the school based on a timetable. Our extra iPads are with the Principal, used in the moderate needs programme and the eLearning lead teacher. Some of our older laptops are starting to need either repair or replacement. The team has discussed investigating leasing options and purchase options for 2012 and beyond. This will be an ongoing focus for the team next year. Rather than purchasing additional IWB's in the future the team is looking at buying ActivInspire products such as the Learner Response Systems to use with our boards. As well as maintaining the resources we need to ensure our teachers have the skills to use them effectively. Allowing for professional learning opportunities within the budget will support this.

At the beginning of the year we surveyed a group of our students about their use of computers and other technologies in their learning. They could select from very often, often, sometimes and hardly ever. The results showed that when asked if they use a computer in their learning the highest percentage of student answered **very often**. When students were asked if they use other technologies in their learning the highest percentage of students answered **sometimes**. When asked the same two questions in Term 4 the results showed that when asked if they use a computer in their learning the highest percentage of student answered **very often**. When students were asked if they use other technologies in their learning the highest percentage of students answered **very often**. The change in response reflects the introduction of iPads and the access the students have to these. Continuing to increase access and effective use is a focus during 2012.

We have continued to look at inquiry within our school and have tried a model by Kath Murdoch that was introduced by our principal and had been used by another staff member successfully. The school will continue to work with this model in 2012.

Where to next?

When our team met during Term 4 we came up with some next steps for the end of the year and into 2012 +

- Classroom Laptops - replacement plan as discussed above
- Run a Genius Cafe within our school - This will offer student leadership opportunities and maintain a high level and relevant set of skills both within our student group and teaching staff. This will also offer an opportunity for teacher aides and other non-teaching staff to up skill based on their needs. We also see this format as an opportunity to get parents involved in a non-threatening environment. For example we can advertise that the Genius Cafe is running before or after school for parents to come along and learn about adding comments to blogs.

- Investigate Student Management Systems and Learning Management Systems that suit our school.
- Professional Learning opportunities that are needs based for our staff. They can be run both school wide and within syndicates. Surveying staff early in Term 1 to identify these needs will help these discussions be made.
- The school currently have some older desktops that are not used stored in our tech suite. The team will investigate how these can be used, what their capabilities are, and promote this with staff to raise awareness of this resource.
- Developing a student friendly user agreement is a priority for the end of 2011 so teachers can share this as part of their beginning of the year programme in 2012. Developing how we teach, promote and discuss digital citizenship within our school is an ongoing process.

Leaders Stories

Anna Fitchett - eLearning Lead Teacher

- During the year staff have been able to attend blogging meetings after school to learn new skills, discuss problems and work on classroom blogs in a supportive environment. This proved very successful and resulted in a number of class blogs being started and actively used by classrooms. The next step for blogging in our school is getting the blogs in the hands of the students rather than teachers and get parents involved in commenting so we can start online conversations about the learning happening in classrooms.
- Using the IWB in an effective way to enhance student learning is an ongoing focus. Continuing to discuss how other teachers within our school are using it and meeting to share new ideas supports this. Setting up good trouble shooting steps for when the equipment is not working as it should so staff can fix problems independently is a task to be completed by the end of 2011. Sharing this with the other teachers using the IWB's and ensuring it is clear and effective is the next step.
- The team has two new members in it and both were new teachers to Birchwood School this year. One is an experienced teacher and the other a beginning teacher. They both demonstrate strength and enthusiasm for eLearning and have great ideas about getting the students involved in leadership opportunities. They will work well with the current team who have both been involved for a longer period of time. The team has a range of strengths that will work together well.
- Developing my understanding of digital citizenship has been an ongoing focus during the year. It has now moved to how we can effectively share this with our learners. This has also merged into our student user agreement and how effective this is. Do the students understand what they are signing at the beginning of the year and do our teachers understand it well enough to model best practice and

enforce it if required? Developing a student friendly version that is displayed, referred to and signed on a regular basis is a current task. Sharing this document as part of the beginning of the year/establishing your classroom programme is the goal. This document will need to be reviewed after it has been used by students and teachers to ensure it is effective.

- The biggest challenge for the end of the year is leaving these projects to be carried on effectively by other teachers as I am taking leave during 2012. Effectively communicating where we are and not overwhelming teachers with workload is important so these projects aren't left in the too hard basket. Making sure teachers feel like they do have the skills to trouble shoot problems they meet dealing with eLearning independently or with support from other teachers is another focus.

Chris Herrick - Principal

- 'Growing Leaders' was not only a goal from within the eLearning Contract but also a strategic goal for our school. Through the eLearning Contract we have grown leaders and leadership from our Lead Teacher, to our classroom teachers to our students. Our Lead Teacher has competently steered and resourced this development and has worked with stakeholders in a variety of ways, relevant to their individual needs and stage of development. Individual leaders from within our school are beginning to emerge and with our Lead Teacher being on leave for 2012, this will ensure the sustainability of this development.
- Engaging learners - in some ways has been the most obvious outcome from our involvement in the eLearning Contract. Research tells us that this aspect is particularly important if learning is to be sustained in a way which empowers individuals to take control of their own learning, now and in the future.
- The eLearning Team have recently met to consider issues relating to sustainability and to plan for development in 2012. It was obvious from this meeting that the 'stage is set' for a planned transition to a new lead teacher and for the embedding stage of this development to be continued.
- For our school the development of eLearning through the ICT Contract has been relevant and timely. The connection with the development of the Birchwood School Curriculum has meant that eLearning can be integrated into our curriculum which



has ensured that it is not seen as an 'add on', but as an integral part of the planning process for teaching and learning at Birchwood School.

- The development of Class Blogs has involved most teachers and the quality of professional learning provided by our Lead Teacher has ensured that this development would not only be successful, but purposeful. This development has formed an important link between school and home and has allowed teachers to not only showcase their practice and their programmes, but to communicate on a range of issues as fundamental as providing the weekly homework. For our school this has introduced the internet as an effective communication tool and link with children's learning and will lead comfortably to the introduction of LMS (Learning Management Systems) in 2012. On a recent school based 'walk through', one teacher demonstrated how she had made laptops available to parents before school to view and comment on the classes blog as a response to the feedback from parents that many did either not have access to a computer or that the speed of their connection was not sufficient (dial-up vs broadband). This was expanded to allow individual children from the class (Year 2 and 3) to 'teach' their parents how to manage and navigate the class blog. What a wonderful opportunity for these children and their parents. This development leads very comfortably to the 'Genius Cafe' planned for 2012 in our school for our parents. An opportunity for parents to see and use the tools and be taught by their children.
- The Board of Trustees are to be congratulated for their fore sight and confidence in supporting the eLearning initiatives with capital expenditure totally \$51,000 in 2010 and the purchase of two iPad pods in 2011. This has resulted in the school being well resourced with ICT tools which includes laptops in classrooms, Interactive Whiteboards in four classrooms and two pods of iPads for shared use. Each class also has at least one camera. I have been thrilled with the evidence of the use of the tools throughout the school in a variety of ways.
- Cybersafety is also an area that we are well aware of, and we are in the process of reviewing what we already have in place and how it can be improved in order to make it more relevant and 'user friendly' for our learners and their families.
- Sustainability is the next challenge for all of the schools in our cluster and I fully support the initiative to continue with Lead Teachers and for schools to provide for these teachers to meet at least once a term as a cluster and to take on their own momentum based on the needs of our schools as part of a learning community.