



Riverside Primary School Validation Report

Validation Report	
School Name: Riverside Primary School	Name of Validator: Alan Yeoman
Forest Road Stirling Stirling Stirling FK8 1UJ United Kingdom	Date of Validation: 06/09/2019
Head Teacher / Principal Name: Kay Robertson	Digital Technology Co-ordinator: Kirsty Lockhart
School SEED Number: 5725429	

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 **100%**

Riverside Primary school has a clearly stated vision for supporting its pupils in their use of digital technology for learning and for preparing them for life in the 21st Century. The vision is driven by a strong team led by Jamie McKay and Kirsty Lockhart. Together they have embedded digital technologies in the psyche of the staff and although there was little opportunity to speak to them, it was clear from their pupils, that learning was infused with digital technologies from the planning stages through to assessment, evaluation and progression. The range of software programmes that have been deployed and developed shows that there is an acute awareness of the support digital technology can have for learning in contexts other than the classroom and our conversation demonstrated that there was consistency of approach throughout the school. The school is acutely aware of the benefits of collaboration with others and they have exploited opportunities to build partnerships with cluster schools and the local community.

Strategically, I got a strong sense that the school's journey is vibrant, visionary and supported by staff, parents and of course, pupils. They make good use of GLOW for storing and retrieving work and links with parents through the school website and See-Saw help cement home-school relationships.

The School has a good and clear Acceptable Use Policy in place and this is supported by all teachers through prominent visual displays as well as lesson plans.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	The distinctive contribution of digital learning and teaching is integrated into the whole school vision and the School Development Plan.	Digital Technologies are clearly embedded in the School Improvement Plan, this has led to huge leaps forward in terms of the teachers and learners use of ICT with the selection of appropriate software and websites along with various collaborative projects.
2	The digital learning and teaching strategy is approved by the local authority and is informed by wider research of the regional/national guidance, advice and information.	As with all Stirling schools the SIP has been approved by the Local Authority.
3	The digital learning and teaching leader/coordinator has a proactive, operational and evaluative role in supporting learners' digital capability and teachers' pedagogical deployment of digital technology.	The coordinator attends regular meetings and disseminates information to all staff. There are CPD sessions as part of staff meetings as well as drop in sessions.
5	The strategy supports digital learning and teaching CLPL in a range of formal and informal contexts including whole-school teaching, peer-to-peer learning, the use of external organisations/personnel and formal training.	All staff have attended a variety of CPD opportunities with a focus on digital technologies. These have tended to be on a "needs be" basis rather than structure approach fully aligned to the school development plan.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
8	The digital learning and teaching strategy supports the inclusion of learners with additional support needs and provides guidance on the use of assistive and other technologies for their support.	There is clear guidance on the use of digital technologies to support learners with additional needs.

Use of Digital Technology to Deliver the Curriculum 70%

The validation visit included visits to several classes and gave me the opportunity to talk to pupils. They each gave me an insight into their involvement with digital technology for learning. Taking the visit as a whole, it is clear that their learning is infused with age-appropriate applications.

From these observations it is clear teachers throughout the school are making effective use of a range of digital technologies in a variety of contexts and with the individual needs of pupils in mind. The maturity of the pupils I spoke to demonstrated confidence in setting up, maintaining and evaluating digital technologies for their own learning. In the most noteworthy cases, their 'digital maturity' was remarkable.

The children were able to articulate clearly why they were using the particular software applications and demonstrated awareness of the advantages in using the range of software they were exposed to. In no cases did I sense anything other than real enthusiasm for learning and for engaging in the range of activities they had been given.

It was clear from the conversation with the teachers and pupils that the use of technology for learning and teaching is the classroom norm. Although the focus of the conversations was on digital applications, I have no doubt that classes are a dynamic mix of digital and non-digital learning.

I got a clear indication from pupils and from teachers that digital technologies were deployed to support a range of learning formats including collaborative learning, independent learning, home-based learning, mentoring (younger pupils) and for reflecting on progression. The added breadth of the pupils' experiences demonstrates the most effective deployment of digital technologies.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	Digital technologies are a central consideration in all areas of the curriculum and its assessment, at all levels.	I saw many examples of digital technologies being used across the school, the focus was on development of ICT skills rather than utilising technologies across the curriculum.
2	Digital technologies are used to enhance and extend learning experiences and to foster independent learning within and beyond the school.	Riverside have developed an Imagination Station which is used to encourage independent and extended learning which along with the lunch time clubs provide some opportunities to extend the pupils' learning.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
3	Digital technologies have a demonstrable impact on learning. Learners and teachers can articulate how learning has been enhanced.	As part of my visit I was able to speak to the pupils, they were able to tell me, and in some cases show me, how they had used digital technologies and explain why they had selected a particular tool to complete a task.
6	Assistive Technologies and appropriate software/apps are deployed across all age groups in ways that provide additional and/or differentiated learning for students with additional support needs.	During my tour of the school it was clear that technology was being personalised to suit individual needs. This ranges from simple changes in font size or back ground colour to more advanced features like voice to text.

School Culture 75%

Although digital technology at Riverside Primary School has developed recently, a culture in which digital technology has become an accepted part of the teaching and learning environment had been developed. The groups of children I spoke to were representative of their peers and showed enthusiasm for the range of activities applications they had available to them in the school. The structure for CLPL has ensured that with the two digital technology coordinators at the 'helm' there is consistency of approach across the year groups and that there is progression from one year to the next.

While it was difficult in a short visit to assess the extent to which all teachers infused digital technologies into their teaching, it was evident that the trajectory is positive, supportive and developmental and that the culture can only grow. The motivational advantages of digital learning were clearly evident from the pupils and from the conversations with teachers.

From these conversations, digital technology was evident at all stages and from the policy statements and tables presented, it is clear that there is an overt commitment to continuing support for technology-infused teaching and learning. Riverside Primary School is ensuring that it is taking full advantage of the potential of digital technology for its pupils.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	There is evidence of a strong digital technology presence throughout the school.	Riverside Primary School is progressing well on it's digital journey, there is clear evidence that digital technologies are present throughout the school and the role of Jamie and Kirsty has been instrumental in this.
2	Teachers and learners demonstrate the motivational capacity of digital technologies	Thorough discussions with the pupils it was evident that the motivational capacity of digital technologies were being utilised across the curriculum.
5	Teachers use digital technologies in their own planning and administration.	Riverside Primary staff are making use of digital technologies to record their planning and tracking. This has cut down on workload and ensures all staff have ready access to the required information.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
7	The school uses a range of digital solutions to collaborate with other schools or organisations in local, national or international project work.	Riverside Primary School fully recognise the benefits of collaboration and utilise Glow for meetings and training opportunities and have worked closely with other schools.

Professional Development 74%

Riverside Primary is well supported by the local authority who provide support and training, Further support is available from the ICT Coordinators who have access to local forums where ideas, resources and support material is shared.

The school has a clear and thoughtful approach to e-safety at all levels.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	The digital learning and teaching strategy facilitates professional development in, about and through digital technologies	CPD is available to all staff in a variety of formats: peer support, ICT coordinator support, Local Authority organised events. These opportunities tend to be on a needs basis rather than linked to the School Development Plan. I am confident that as staff skills and confidence increases future CPD will be more directed.
3	Teachers are encouraged to be innovative and self-directed learners by exploring new ideas in digitally enhanced learning and teaching.	CPD is available to staff in a number of different formats: peer to peer support, through links developed across the cluster and the local authority.
5	There is an ethos of self and collaborative review, supported by systematic review processes that focus on improvement in teacher competence in digital technologies	Jamie and Kirsty have supported staff with their professional development, providing opportunities for learning both in house and across the cluster schools.
6	Teachers are confident in the safe, secure and appropriate integration of digital technologies in their daily teaching. Learning and teaching is in line with the Internet Safety and Cyber Resilience curriculum.	While there was little opportunity to talk to teaching staff through discussions with the pupils it was clear that they were fully aware of the importance of e-safety and how to stay safe online.
7	The school keeps abreast of developments in technological, professional practice and the curriculum in relation to digital technologies Staff are aware of their professional development needs in relation to digital learning and teaching	Jamie MacKay is fully aware of developments and shares this with staff as part of meetings, in-service days and ongoing CLPL.

Resources and Infrastructure 74%

It was clear from conversations with teachers and pupils that Riverside Primary School makes use of a wide range of software, devices and platforms.

There is a willingness to take on new applications and technologies and, where successful, allow these to become part of the mainstream development for the school. There is a commendable willingness on the part of the SMT and the teaching staff to assess the efficacy of software and other resources and to decide on its use accordingly. Such discernment is commendable.

I was able to discern, particularly from the pupils, a range of ideas and applications related to their digital learning and this was evident at all the stages I visited. It was clear to me that Riverside pupils 'enjoy' a variety of activities involving technology in their day-to-day learning.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
---	------------	---------------------

General Recommendations:

Riverside Primary School is a Digital Learning school!

I completed the validation impressed with the maturity, capability and understanding among the pupils about the role of digital technology in their learning. The leadership of the ICT coordinators and that of the headteacher has been instrumental in steering the vision for the school.

Riverside Primary school is clearly on a strong and purposeful digital journey where children are taught how to be safe online and where they learn to see the benefits of digitally enhanced teaching and learning. I wish the school well in this journey and I have no hesitation if recommending them for the Digital Schools Award.

Signed



Alan Yeoman

External validator

