

e-Learning Foundation Projects Take Gold At Handheld Learning Awards 2008

Primary schools utilise the power of handheld technology in education

October 20th 2008: Two projects set up with the help of grants from the e-Learning Foundation, the only national charity working to close the digital divide for schoolchildren in the UK, have won their categories at the inaugural Handheld Learning Awards 2008.

Wilsden Primary School, Bradford, which was nominated by the e-Learning Foundation as an exemplary e-learning project, harnessing the power of handheld technology, has won the Primary Innovation Award. Chris Young, head teacher at Dean Bank Primary School, Durham, took Primary Practitioner Award. Dean Bank Primary also runs a handheld project initiated with aid from the e-Learning Foundation. Both awards were sponsored by Slitherine.

The introduction of EDAs at Wilsden Primary School has been seen as a 'pioneering move' by both senior managers and staff. Children have reported that the devices have helped them significantly in their studies both in school and at home. Wilsden Primary School also uses the e-Learning Foundation's innovative Donation Management System (DMS) which has been designed to take the administration burden off schools running their own local charity and parental donation scheme by managing it centrally for them.

"The school community has worked very hard to make our e-learning project a success," commented Bob Quartermain, head teacher at Wilsden Primary School. "The parents and governors were key elements in establishing the initiative along with the vital support of the e-Learning Foundation".

"The financial contribution, advice and guidance available from the e-Learning Foundation was important in providing the school with the encouragement and confidence to go forward with the project," added Quartermain.

Quartermain went on to spotlight the importance of the award to the school. " It is a fantastic accolade that adds to the considerable feeling of achievement received from the notable improvements in children's learning, confidence and IT skills".

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Chris Young of Dean Bank Primary School, Durham and his team have tirelessly led a project which shows the effective use of mobile technology to promote learning for pupils from less affluent backgrounds. The project has now been running for three years.

“It is fantastic news when any of our projects receive national recognition in this way,” commented Valerie Thompson, chief executive of the e-Learning Foundation. “They both highlight in their own unique way the impact e-learning, both in school and at home, can have on the learning experience and self-improvement of children in their studies”.

“Both Wilsden and Dean Bank Primary underline the importance of the Foundation’s work in supporting projects in UK schools, providing disadvantaged children with home access to learning technologies and ensuring they do not suffer educationally because of the digital divide”, added Thompson.

The Handheld Learning Awards 2008 took place at a glittering awards ceremony in Central London this month.

Despite living in a digital age, where technology is part of everyday life, an astonishing 1.35 million ** school age children in the UK live in a household with no computer and a staggering 2.77 million do not have Internet access either. Over 30% of these children come from single parent households, many whom live in very deprived communities.

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Notes for Editors:

** Figures taken from the National Statistics Family Spending Survey 06-07

About the e-Learning Foundation

The e-Learning Foundation was launched in 2001, to ensure that every schoolchild in the UK should have home access to learning technologies when and where they want to learn.

The Foundation, a registered charity, aims to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all children, irrespective of their background, can have the same access to technology for learning at home as their better off peers. The estimated cost of this runs into £billions, so unlikely to be provided by Government alone.

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The Foundation is funded through the public, private and third sector in the form of Government grants, commercial sponsorship, grants and donations.

Interviews available on request. PR Contact: Jan Howells at the e-Learning Foundation on 01932 796036 or e-mail jan@e-learningfoundation.co.uk