

Digital Prospectus

An online school prospectus.
Written, directed, produced
and starring the students of
Knowle Park Primary School.



Contents

Introduction

Primary School
Case Studies

Secondary School
Case Studies

Conclusions

Appendix

Digital Prospectus

Key Stage 02
Cross Curricular

Teachers at Knowle Park Primary school aim to make children aware of opportunities beyond what they would experience in their everyday lives. Joe and Andy Dewey (Deputy Head and Year 5 teacher) wanted to apply this ethos to exploring the opportunities digital technology present to pupils. They also wished to support students to develop the digital literacy skills that would enable them to make effective use of those opportunities and understand the corresponding challenges.



The school's management team had already decided they wanted a digital prospectus for the school which would be made available online and in DVD format for prospective parents and students of the school. They decided that it would be in keeping with their values around student participation in school life for students to **create** the prospectus.

Students from Years 5 and 6 would work across the year groups to create the video footage for the digital prospectus. As ICT in the school was traditionally only used in the ICT suite, the teachers were particularly keen to develop this opportunity to support children working **collaboratively** and using ICT around the school.

They wanted to create a project in which children were meaningfully participating and taking responsibility for a project that not only had a real audience but also real outcomes for the school.

Each group of five or six children (of mixed age and ability) was assigned a particular section of the prospectus which became their responsibility.

Joe and Andy worked with each group to carefully to support them in planning, creating and editing a film that contained the information they had all agreed would be essential for a prospective student and parent of the school to know.

Contents

Introduction

Primary School
Case Studies

Secondary School
Case Studies

Conclusions

Appendix

As the school only had one video camera, groups of students had to take it turns to film. Whilst waiting to film, the children had the task of exploring potential places to film around the school and weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of filming there. The teachers supported them to think critically about their audience by considering what content would be relevant and appropriate for a film that was going to be made publicly available. They also decided what kind of film they were going to make; some children chose to act out scenes for which they wrote scripts, others chose a documentary style.

One of the teachers always worked closely with the group whose turn it was to film and used carefully phrased questions to prompt students to think about issues such as considering the background for their filming and whether the audience had enough prior knowledge to understand the content. The students were also supported to collaborate and to develop the functional skills required to use the camera.

At the end of the each session, the students who had been filming shared what they had learnt about the process with the others.



Contents

Introduction

Primary School Case Studies

Secondary School Case Studies

Conclusions

Appendix

Successes and next steps

The students were delighted to be given the opportunity to promote their school. They worked hard to come up with a very clear view of how they wanted their prospectus to be and were clear about its purpose. They wanted it to be entertaining and informative, and they wanted to make people come to their school by showing them their positive experiences.

Most children showed a **critical awareness of their audience:**

“We’re not just saying random things like blah blah blah, we’re thinking hard about which places to film, what people should see, we’re planning it.”

Year 6 student

They also indicated they were developing their **collaboration skills:**

“Working as a team can be hard, we try to listen to each others’ ideas and, then like, combine them.”

Year 5 student

Students learnt the functional skills of operating the camera as well as some film-making skills such as how to minimise background noise and how to communicate the filming process to each other.

In one incident, in order to communicate part of the filming process to their peers, students spontaneously used hand signals to countdown to the start of filming, and called “action!” as filming began. As a result of this, their teacher started an interesting conversation with them about where those ideas had come from, where they had seen people doing that before. Through discussion, he supported them to realise that they were drawing on their **existing knowledge of film culture.**

Filming for the prospectus is still ongoing. Once the filming is complete, the teachers plan to support students in editing their video footage using free, downloadable video editing software.

Through this, teachers can build on the children’s developing understanding and critical thinking around the needs of an audience. During this continuation of work, students will need to develop different skills of collaboration such as supporting each other to learn the functional skills required, as well as making group decisions about how to edit the film.

In future classroom teaching, this work could be built on to continue developing children’s digital literacy skills using different technologies and perhaps allowing the young people a choice of digital media with which to create outputs.