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Helmdon County Primary School
Northamptonshire

Looking to the Future with Espresso

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~Ms. Sue Blackburn, Headteacher of Helmdon County Primary School

Helmdon County Primary School

Looking to the Future with Espresso

Recently appointed Headteacher of Helmdon County Primary School, Sue Blackburn, describes how Espresso has been introduced into all areas of the curriculum.



Helmdon County Primary School is a community school that draws the majority of its pupils from the rural village in which it is situated and from neighbouring hamlets. Some pupils travel from the nearby town of Brackley.

Our school is smaller than average with 130 pupils from 4 to 11 years of age. We are proud to have a school that is actively supported by parents and the local community, both of which played a significant role in the creation of the school's ICT suite.

Setting the scene

**Helmdon County Primary School
Station Road
Helmdon
Nr Brackley
Northamptonshire
NN13 5QT**

Head teacher: Sue Blackburn
ICT co-ordinator: Sue Blackburn
Tel: 01295 768126
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Website: www.helmdon.com

Number of pupils: 130
Number of teachers: 7

Espresso products within the school:
Espresso for Primary Schools

The school began subscribing to Espresso as part of a pilot project in January 2001. We were approached by Northampton LEA to subscribe as part of a scheme for local schools. We really could not refuse to be a pilot school for such an innovative service. Because of the standard of the training and the way the pupils have reacted so positively to the resource, we have recently become full subscribers to Espresso.

We believe Helmdon Primary School is a good school with many strengths. Pupils reach high standards and achieve well above the expected levels by the time they leave the school, especially in English, Science and Maths. We strive to provide opportunities for all pupils to access a broad and balanced curriculum, paying particular attention to creating opportunities to develop the Arts and PE. Espresso certainly plays an important role in maintaining these high standards. *The amount of pressure put on teachers these days means that a service that encompasses so much of the curriculum is essential.* However with such an extensive range of material, teachers did find Espresso a bit daunting at first. It took a while for

us to realise that Espresso is so easy to use and can provide much of what is needed to teach many areas of the curriculum. Constrictions on time can mean that we have not found enough time to get acquainted with the resource, but *the excellent training offered by Espresso has enabled us to persuade even the most IT phobic teachers to utilise the resource in their lessons.*

Teachers' general consensus about Espresso is that *the more they use it and get used to it, the more they want to use it*. Increased confidence has resulted in Espresso being used in all areas of the curriculum and exploring more inventive ways of using its range of services. *Espresso has made the staff more aware about the potential of ICT* and widened their views as to what can be taught using computers. ICT does not have to be confined to an ICT suite, it is both practical and sensible to involve the use of ICT in all areas of the curriculum, and Espresso has helped us realise this. Teachers go to the ICT suite to access specific Espresso resources and tools and their time in the suite has become more targeted. We have recently installed computers in our new library area and our Key Stage 1 classroom. Cabling work has extended our use of Espresso to these key areas as we all value this resource and will use it to support lessons across the curriculum in the classroom.



Look and Find Corby

Based on a local study of the town, the Look and Find Corby 'Your Espresso' aims to help local children develop a pride in their local community and to aid the development of investigative and research skills.

The module has been produced by Espresso in conjunction with Northampton LEA and includes photographs, archive material, carefully researched websites and stimulating activities involving local features such as Rockingham Castle, Kirby Hall and the medieval church. Local people were interviewed about their recollections of Corby and people who worked in the steelworks tell their stories of how they came to live in the area and how it has grown and developed.

Sue Cordwell, Head Teacher, Rockingham Primary School, Corby, said of the resource, "We are thrilled with the 'Look and Find Corby' resource. It is a totally unique teaching tool that local pupils will love because it is about their community. It also illustrates why Corby used to be, and still is, a town to be proud of."



Espresso has made the staff more aware about the potential of ICT and widened their views as to what can be taught using computers. ICT does not have to be confined to an ICT suite, it is both practical and sensible to involve the use of ICT in all areas of the curriculum, and Espresso has helped us realise this.

**Sue Blackburn, Head Teacher,
Helmdon County Primary School**

The key to engaging both teachers and pupils has been enjoyment. *Using Espresso is enjoyable and this has helped increase confidence.* The video footage is engaging and is always accompanied by educational facts that the children absorb. Coupling entertaining visuals with educational activities has proved to be very effective. The children love researching news items and *we have seen marked improvements in the pupils' achievement in subjects such as numeracy and science.* We have also noticed an increase in the enthusiasm of the children when using the Espresso service. They are learning whilst enjoying themselves and *we have seen a remarkable improvement in the amount the pupils do know and want to know about the world and issues in the news.*



Northamptonshire LEA

Ofsted's report praised the county council's strong commitment to education, highlighting the growth in spending on education and the high proportion of spending money delegated directly to schools.

The report says that the county's senior councilors, chief executive and managers have provided clear leadership, with strong commitment to working with schools and a determination to raise standards.

The LEA aims to make cost-effective use of existing ICT infrastructure to enhance learning gains for all and use ICT to raise educational standards in literacy and numeracy. Northamptonshire wants to create an environment where all staff and pupils can use ICT competently and confidently.

Seventeen schools in Northamptonshire currently subscribe to the Espresso service. This includes the EAZ in Corby which comprises 9 primary schools.

Sarah Graham, now a deputy head and formerly an ICT Advisor says, "Espresso supports effective and appropriate use of ICT in teaching and learning. Resources are available in a safe, managed learning environment – readily accessible for the teacher and pupil."

Contact us today for a free in-school demonstration:

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