Wirral LEA ICT Strategy

Prior to 1998 Secondary schools in Wirral had access to ICT largely through a networked room of workstations and stand alone machines in various parts of the school. Access to the Internet was limited to usually one workstation and e-mail was just beginning.

In Primary schools there were a few stand alone PC workstations, the majority of computer's were BBCs. At the time the target for many schools was to be able to have one multimedia computer in each classroom.

In September 1998 an LEA ICT Development Plan was formulated in consultation with schools, to enable schools to upgrade and extend facilities and to provide increased access to on-line learning resources, locally, nationally and internationally, through the Internet.

The plan set out to connect, over a four year period, all schools throughout the Borough in a project known as the Wirral Learning Grid.

The ICT plan integrated funding from the National Grid for Learning, Wirral Borough Council and European sources in order to achieve the objectives. The progress that has been made in modernising facilities and developing the skills and confidence of all teachers in using ICT is now bearing fruit and much good practice is evident in schools throughout the Borough. However there is a need to continue the developments to meet the continuing challenge of ICT.

The challenge is;

- To develop an ICT infrastructure across the whole school site, thus extending the ICT network and its services to all areas of the school.

- To develop an integrated school network that provides access to databases and information management systems in order to promote school improvement through access to and analysis of data (assessment manager etc.)

- To simplify and streamline administration activities through the use of ICT (registration, lesson planning, pupil assessment and reports).

- To provide communication and scheduling facilities to all appropriate staff, in order to promote efficient communication and organisation both within school and across the LEA (exchange server, outlook, personal digital assistants, laptops).

- To use ICT to enrich teaching and learning across the entire curriculum (digital resources, presentation / interactive technologies, modelling, CAD/CAM, Managed Learning Environments).

- To deliver a rich and appropriate ICT curriculum (QCA scheme of work for KS 1&2, KS 3 ICT framework, V-GCSE, GCSE, GNVQ, GCE, DiDA etc) in order to increase the number of pupils leaving education with a recognised ICT qualification.

Organising an ICT infrastructure to meet these challenges

The development of an ICT infrastructure across a school site and into classrooms, workshops, laboratories, libraries / resource areas, art studios and offices is the key challenge if the expectations of all teachers and the curriculum needs of pupils are to be met.

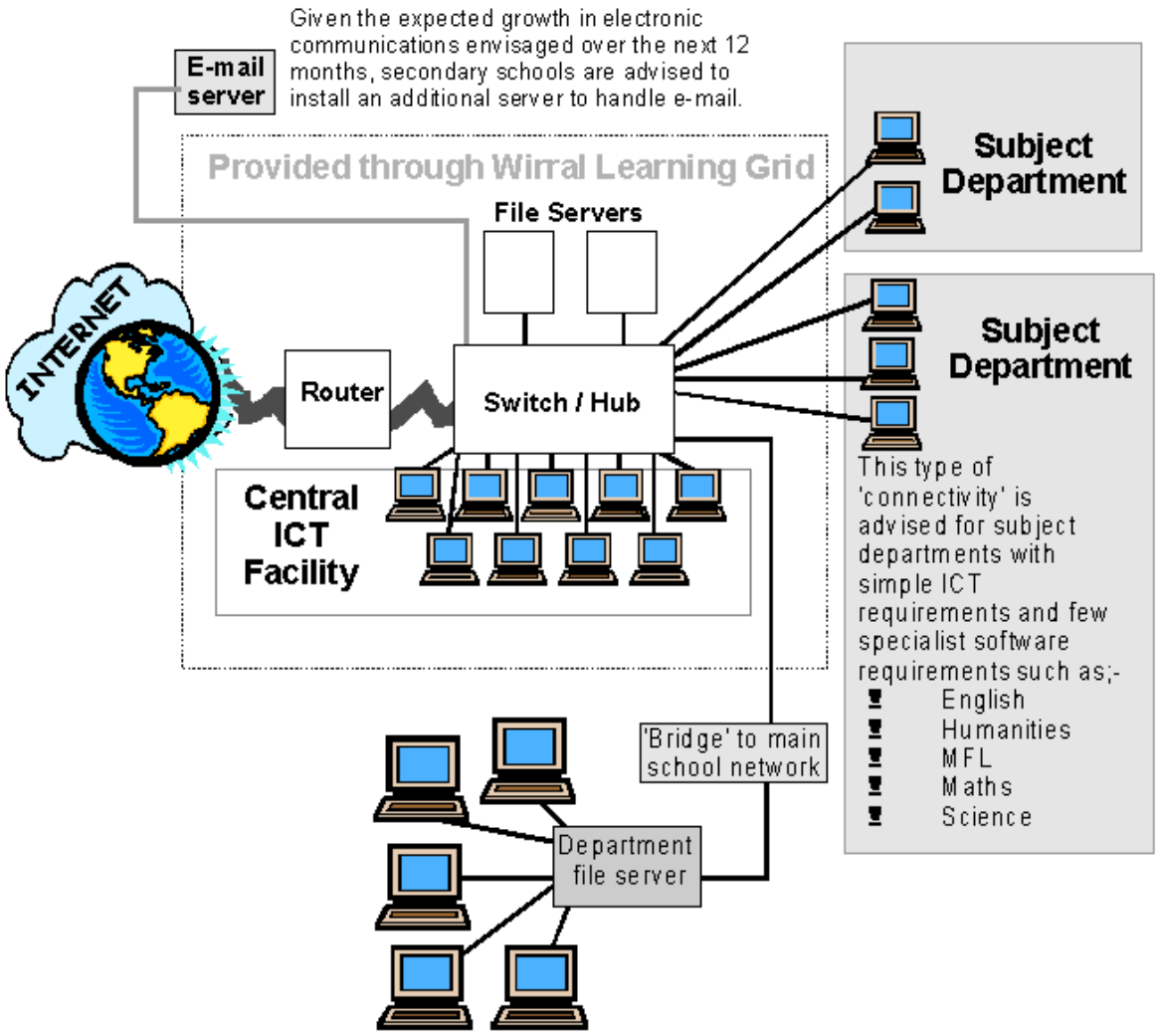
Installing a new network or extending an existing one is an involved technical process all parts of the system; cabling, hubs, switches, routers, firewalls and servers need to be considered.

For any network installation, or extension to an existing network, it is advised that schools should seek specialist advice from professional independent companies or the Authority.

The following diagrams show how the ICT infrastructure across a school site may be extended in order to provide appropriate ICT access for subject departments.

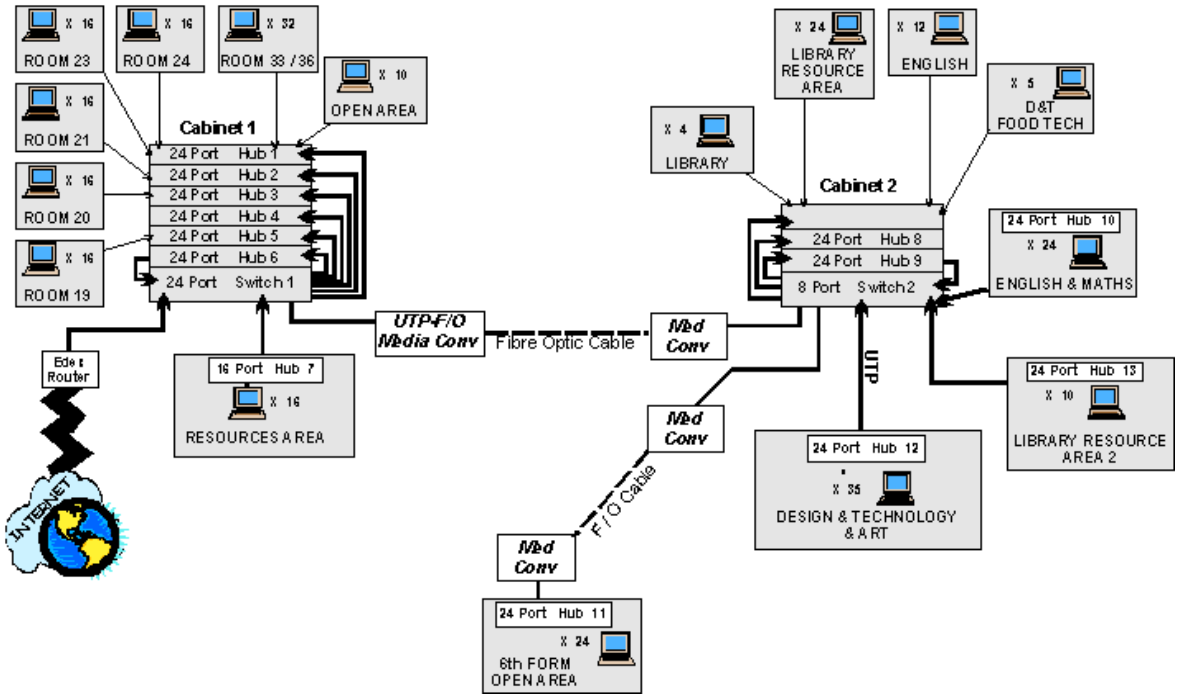
Extending ICT Infrastructure across the curriculum

(Concept Diagram)



Where a department has very heavy specialist use, such as Design & Technology, and possibly Art and Music, a departmental file server may be required to store the pupils files of drawings, portfolios of work and compositions. Specialist software applications such as Computer Aided Design and graphic design are usually more memory hungry will also run quicker and more easily using a department file server.

The diagram above illustrates how a school could extend access to ICT for curriculum use. An example of an actual Secondary school network showing how they extended the ICT infrastructure across 16 areas of the school site is shown below.



Connecting the Local Area Network (Cabling and Radio)

The de facto standard is Ethernet, originally designed to run at 10 million bits per second or 10Mbps. New networks now deliver 100 Mbps and 1,000 Mbps or Gigabit Ethernet is becoming increasingly common. These higher speeds are necessary to maximise the use of voice, video and data. Schools should install the highest capacity infrastructure that is available at the time, and that budget allows using the technologies outlined below.

Cabling: Category 5 cabling (also known as UTP – Unshielded Twisted Pair). The principal constraint is that such cables can be a maximum of 100m in length. A key advance in this area is inline power, where IP phones, wireless access points etc can be powered by the same cable that connects them to the network thus reducing the need for a 13amp socket for every device.

Fibre Optic Cabling: Used to interconnect segments of network i.e. Connecting one building to another. It can be overhead or underground and it has the advantage that it is not prone to thunderstorm and other electrical interference.

Radio Link / Radio Bridge: Used to connect outlying buildings i.e. Mobiles to main school. A system consists of a transceiver, which is located in the main school building (range approx. 100 metres), and another transceiver in the outlying building.

Wireless LAN (WLAN): Wireless LAN technology allows PC's, typically laptops / tablet PC's, to connect to the network without having to plug in a cable. Access should be via a wall or ceiling mounted unit or 'access point' which in turn is wired back to the central switching technology. Such technology allows flexible access to networked resources around the building and can be used to bring a computer lab into the classroom, through the addition of a suitably equipped mobile recharging trolley.

Converging Network Technologies

It is now possible to run voice, video and data networks through a common infrastructure and in so doing reduce the amount of cabling, switches etc required. The savings in running a single network can be significant and will be sufficient in many cases to justify these developments in their own right.

Converged voice, video and data applications like IP telephony will however, allow greater interaction between staff, parents and students. Whilst the extended video infrastructure will enhance security and teaching opportunities.

Organising PCs

Schools will need to consider the organisation of the increasing number of PCs that will be required to meet the pupil:computer ratio and to facilitate the additional services outlined in the strategy. In general terms, the following options are available to schools.

1. Client Server Network

2. Peer to Peer network
('Schoolshare' is the RM brand name for this type of system)

3. Laptop machines and Tablet PCs (Radio Linked)

4. Stand alone workstations

The advantages and disadvantages of each method are shown in tables over the following pages and will be considered in light of the specific needs of each school.

Organising ICT Using a Client Server Network

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Provides access to shared resources • Same look and feel to the machine no matter which workstation is used • User profiles can be set providing access to particular software for pupils and for staff. Also access to certain software and information can be restricted. • Fewer, but higher quality printers are needed • Reduced maintenance costs	• New software cannot be easily added unless it has been checked and validated to ensure that it doesn't 'crash' the network. • Costs of small systems can be high but becomes more cost effective if large numbers of workstations are purchased • A server is needed and also cabling, routers and bridges and this also pushes up initial purchase costs. • There may be 'hidden' costs as a network technician will be needed to deal with day-to-day issues such as finding lost passwords, dealing with printer queues,

	adding/removing users, backing up data, fault reporting and call logging, maintaining antivirus protection and assigning 'rights' to individual users.

Organising ICT Using a Peer-to-Peer Network

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Cost – cheaper to set-up as no server is required and also cabling is simpler and costs are reduced • Simple installation of software • Can share resources ie. Printer and Internet • Can be set up to enable access to work files • Not a big change from a stand alone therefore knowledge and experience can be easily transferred. • Can be configured for groups to use (i.e. a class or teaching group 'log-on')	• Potentially more expensive due to software licensing restrictions • The system can't be administered from one central point (need to visit each individual workstation to carry out day-to-day maintenance tasks. • Does not have secure access to workfiles. Any user can have access to any other users workfiles. • Each individual machine can be different depending on when you purchased it. • The efficiency of transferring data slows dramatically if a large number of machines are attached to a peer-to-peer system. • Cannot be configured for individual use.

Organising ICT Using Laptops / Tablet PCs with Radio Links

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Portable and flexible – use it anywhere. • Can be configured to plug into a network socket. • Can be used in a 'radio network' situation but you will need to buy a plug in card and a transceiver is required in the network room	• Fragile • Disadvantages are same as for peer-to-peer system and stand-alone • Purchase costs are approximately 50% higher than a similar standard PC. • Higher maintenance and support costs • The user can be in a radio blackspot and this can break / lose the connection (data can also be lost when this happens)

Organising ICT Using Stand-Alone Machines

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Flexibility – can be configured to suit specialist use • Can be useful for memory hungry applications e.g. Video editing or authoring and some graphic software and art packages and some of the computer aided design (CAD) applications	• Same as for peer-to-peer system • No sharing of resources is possible (software, access to data, internet) • Needs own scanner and printer unless cables and switched boxes are used to enable access between two stand alones

An Interactive whiteboard and / or LCD projector should be used in combination with the four methods detailed above. Through the use of such equipment ICT can be used as a teaching and learning tool with a whole class or teaching group.

Joint Curriculum and Administration Networks

Schools should consider joining curriculum and administrative networks. This will enable teachers to access and provide information quickly and easily and in so doing help to ease the bureaucratic burden. It also opens up the possibility of personal information systems (electronic diaries, messaging systems etc) across the whole school, not just on certain PC's in designated rooms. Handheld personal digital assistants (PDA's) and Tablet PC's are ideal devices for this sort of activity.

In order to maximise this type of activity schools should think about the use of mail servers (e.g. Microsoft Exchange) to facilitate the planning of meetings and school activities alongside the development of a school Intranet. The Intranet should be a subset of the school website containing information that is available on a school wide basis.

There are obvious concerns about the security of information as much of it is confidential but access can be restricted to certain groups of users across a schoolwide network. Nonetheless there are efficiency gains and financial advantages to having a single network.

Standardisation of versions of common software solutions such as Microsoft Office and attendance tracking software will assist communication across the school and basic data sets can be easily shared to avoid duplication of effort in collecting information.

Removing duplication of technical and software support to maintain the separate networks could lead to savings and the plans for upgrading and replacement of equipment can be rationalised.

Connection of two different networks is likely to provide greater protection from any potential 'hackers' trying to get into the Administration network via the Curriculum Network.

Various connective links may be suitable depending on the type, age and scale of both networks. Schools are advised to seek specialist technical advice from the LEA or independent ICT specialists on the range of appropriate solutions for their specific network arrangement.

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)

The LEA will work in accordance with the principles of the Information Management Strategy to reduce the bureaucratic burden on schools. This will include investigating and where practicable deploying EDI solutions. Typically this will involve utilising the connectivity offered by the Wirral Broadband network.

Topology of ICT Facilities

When considering the layout of ICT facilities schools should consider the different ways that users might need to access ICT.

For example;-

- Independently and predominantly for access to information from Internet and CD-ROM such as might be required in a library.

- Within an open resource area to enable pupils from several nearby classrooms to access software applications, and to search for information from defined sources such as CD-ROM and possibly the Internet.

- As a specialist ICT teaching room mainly for use by one or two teachers to teach classes of pupils discrete ICT. The room may also double as a pre-bookable room on the few occasions during the week when it is not being used for its main specialist purpose.

- Specialist use by subjects such as D&T where a range of computer controlled manufacturing machines, or modelling and testing rigs may also need to be attached to computer workstations.

It is also necessary to consider whether the facilities need to be accessed by a range of different users with very special requirements.

To some extent this will be true of all schools but in some instances a facility may have to be adapted to meet the needs of users who have specific needs in relation to using mouse, switches, joysticks, infra red and voice activated devices to enable them to access software.

They may also need variable height benching and more space around workstations.

Specialist ICT planning services are available from commercial companies, the LEA and companies selling furniture and equipment who may also be able to provide free layout designs that give an impression of how the new facility will look with their equipment in it.

Connectivity – The Internet and Broadband

The Internet has become a key resource for schools however ISDN access is no longer sufficient. Broadband gives concurrent access to all PC's in a school. It also enables schools to access emerging video technologies.

Once connected to Broadband schools will be able to be part of all the future e-learning activities that will take place within Wirral whilst also benefiting from national developments.

This means that schools will be able to;

- Take part in online courses and events that are being developed by the City Learning Centres
- Share the resources that are held by the libraries and museums in Wirral
- Undertake multimedia collaborative projects with other schools
- Collaborate with others through the use of video conferencing
- Enjoy a fast and reliable connection to the Internet
- Access the Curriculum Online project that the DfES is currently developing

Even given the improved speed that Broadband delivers schools should use a caching server. Such a device stores frequently requested information on its hard disks and it is possible to instruct these devices to 'collect' information ahead of a lesson. Cache Engines significantly improve the performance of Internet connections and are a highly desirable addition to a schools network. They can also be used to deliver a variety of services to schools, email and remote user access for example.

Remote User Access

Broadband also brings with it the real possibility of 'anytime anywhere' learning. Schools will wish to enable pupils to continue to work on documents they started earlier in the day in school, when they are at home in the evening or at weekends. There is also an increasing need to use ICT to facilitate greater cooperation between schools. It maybe for example that a group of students work remotely across numerous sites, using video conferencing sessions and virtual / managed learning environments to support and guide their studies, only meeting up occasionally for face to face workshops.

Schools will also wish to allow parents to view specific information about their child's performance and progress. This more sensitive data can be accessed through web portal technologies / virtual learning environments or by using secure connection protocols.

Protecting the School Network

A prime concern for a school is to protect sensitive data whilst enabling appropriate access to users of the network.

All schools will have a firewall when they connect to the Broadband network, the firewall will limit access between the networks and in simple terms outlines who can access what resources on each of the networks.

Schools will also need to install and regularly update virus protection software that ideally will not only scan hard disks for malicious activity but will also scan emails when they enter / leave the school network.

Internet Policy

The World Wide Web (WWW) is unregulated. Anyone can set-up a website containing whatever information they choose and they can publish it to a worldwide and rapidly expanding audience.

Concerns quite rightly exist about the availability of offensive material on the Internet and the fact that it can be accessed, copied and distributed in other forms either as a hard copy print or electronically.

The main issues for teachers and Headteachers in using the Internet in school is how to protect children from ;-

- Being exposed to unacceptable materials (e.g. pornographic, violent, extremist literature)
- Encountering inappropriate messages (e.g. harassing, demanding, belligerent contacts)
- Arranging contacts and meetings (potential exploitation and physical dangers)
- Inadvertently providing personal information whilst on-line which could be sufficient to put them in danger.

Children can be protected in large measure from these threats by;-

- Using a filtering product on the school site or by using a pre-filtered service.
- Education and training

All Wirral Schools are actively involved in preparing pupils to use the Internet safely and effectively through giving advice, tips and demonstrations. Pupils need to be taught to become critical users of the Internet just as with any other information source. They need to be taught to think and to question the reliability, validity and bias of the information they access.

For example, 'is the information true', 'how do you know', 'can you check where it has come from'. These essential skills in 'interacting with information and data' are embodied in the National Schemes of Work and through the advice offered by the DfES through their Superhighway Safety website http://www.safety.ngfl.gov.uk/.

It is essential to communicate the potential dangers in using the Internet to pupils but they need to be stated in a positive way.

Other means of protecting children are:

Signed Contracts: An example of a contract is included in the document, 'Guidance for Schools in Producing an Internet and Electronic Mail Policy'.

Copies of the document are available for schools to see and also to download from the Wirral Learning Grid website at: www.wirral-mbc.gov.uk

Using e-mail

The National Curriculum stresses the importance of exchanging and sharing information. E-mail can have a valuable role in developing language, communication and social skills in real contexts.

Electronic communication is becoming an essential part of many people's lives. As more homes become connected children are becoming increasingly confident and competent in using tools such as e-mail on a regular basis.

Schools may wish to develop e-mail projects to motivate reluctant learners and to develop spelling and grammar skills in order to send e-mail messages to their peers.

Or work together in imaginative and creative ways to help pupils make the transition from Primary to Secondary school. In projects of this nature pupils could work collaboratively with 'pen-pals' to exchange information about the new school.

In many cases it will be more appropriate to use a group email address for a class or group of pupils.

Whilst E-mail has a key role in distance learning (and some pupils who must temporarily study away from school, for example in hospital or at home, use it to access familiar content and maintain contact with their teachers) it is only part of the suite of applications that form part of a virtual / managed learning environment.

Purchasing Equipment

Schools should consider the following when Purchasing ICT Equipment

- What are you trying to achieve in the long term (Please note: 5 years is considered very long term in relation to ICT as the technology is developing so rapidly). For example, you may decide to purchase a file server initially and add workstations on to grow your network.

- Consider more than the initial purchase price – a bargain may not be everything it appears to be

- Support Issues – are you able to support this type of equipment in terms of staff expertise (would extra training be required), maintenance (does your current maintenance contract cover this new purchase or will you need to modify it or change your provider)

- Consider the impact of bringing in new equipment in terms of how it fits with existing equipment, staff expertise and pupil use of ICT.

- Ask for advice – the LEA and BECTa are a good source of independent advice for comparing products.

- Consider leasing, with leasing you can get more equipment and with some leasing agreements you can change the equipment every 3 – 4 years so that you are not left with outdated equipment which costs more to maintain.

- With outright purchase the spend is a one-off and may be suitable for schools that cannot commit to future spend. The major disadvantage of outright purchase is that you will need to find a large sum of money in the future to upgrade and replace ICT equipment.

Maintaining ICT

When comparing service contracts from different companies and the LEA, schools will;

- Look at details such as the speed of response to problems, whether there are restrictions to the number of times engineers and technicians can be called out for site visits and at what point schools will need to pay for extra visits.

- Look for restrictions on the amount or type of applications that can be installed in any one year. A very flexible arrangement to have software applications installed

whenever you want can be extremely expensive but some schools may require this sort of flexibility.

An attractive compromise would be to select a service that provides an 'on site' technician one day a week / fortnight. This would give schools the flexibility to direct the technician to carry out installations or repairs as and when they are required.

Generally, the longer the contract, for example a 3 year contract, the cheaper it will be. This is because it is always cheaper to a company to maintain products in Year 1, in Year 2 usually more equipment is purchased by a school and in Year 3 equipment is ageing and is more likely to break down. Any company offering a 3 year contract will in effect be averaging the costs and spreading them across the years to arrive at the figure they quote to you.

School ICT Development Plans

Whilst a separate ICT development plan is no longer a requirement, ICT developments should feature in the school development / improvement plan. The Plan needs to describe the strategic direction that will be taken throughout the school to develop ICT. Three key aspects of ICT need to be reflected in the plan;

1. The development of ICT as a subject
2. The use of ICT in delivering the rest of the curriculum
3. The use of ICT for information management.

The plan is a whole school document and it will be shaped by discussion with the Headteacher, staff and Governors.

The ICT section of the plan needs to convey some essential pieces of information;-

- Vision of ICT for the school; How do you want ICT to be used in your school to support teaching and learning and to raise standards? How much has already been achieved and how does the plan build on previous achievements in terms of equipment, staff confidence and competence in using ICT and pupil attainment. Your vision can help to define the aims and objectives of the plan.

- Success Criteria: How will you know if your vision has been achieved. What specific outcomes will you look for to show that the all the planning, use of funding, training, and installation of equipment have impacted on teaching and learning.

- Strategies: What specific actions do you need to take to achieve each of the success criteria. To be successful may take several small steps over the whole four-year period. Try to place the actions into a logical sequence taking account of any constraints and opportunities that you know will arise i.e. Installation of major equipment occurring in a particular year, known staff changes etc.

- Monitoring: Who will monitor and review progress towards achieving the success criteria. How will this be done and when. How will progress be reported to Governors, parents and all staff.

- Resources: How will you use the Government and LEA funding provided to you through the ICT in Schools grant to achieve your plans. Are you intending to put additional funds towards undertaking the various actions in your plan. Are you clear about which of the various funding streams can be used to pay for each specific elements of your plan.

The LEA ICT Development Plan 2005 – 2006

The purpose of the LEA ICT Development Plan is:-

To improve the provision and use of ICT in schools, enhance learning opportunities and raise standards and facilitate effective management and communication.

The Authority seeks to do this by;-

- Ensuring that every school achieves the national baseline level of provision (outlined below).
- Encouraging and supporting innovation in schools already at or beyond the ICT baseline.
- Enabling high speed access to the Internet and Council Intranet through the development of broadband connections.
- Providing access by Wirral schools to high quality digital content through the Wirral Learning Grid, North West Learning Grid, National Interconnect Network and other providers.
- Providing appropriate ICT curriculum and technical advice and support to schools under buy back arrangements.
- Enabling all schools to procure high quality ICT training for technology use, delivery of the curriculum and management of the work of the school.

Strategies for achieving the Targets and Performance measures.

1. How the LEA will use ICT to raise educational standards

The Authority is committed to raising standards in ICT through a programme of increasing young people's and staff's access to technology. This will provide all young people and staff with opportunities to develop the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that are required to make the best use of future employment and learning opportunities in the region. The Borough Council seeks to match the DfES Standards Fund grant 'ICT in Schools' to enable the maximum allocation to be drawn down and used for the benefit of all young people in Wirral schools.

The grant will be distributed to individual schools, according to greatest need, to enable them to increase their ICT resources and achieve the national target for computer : pupil ratios, and provide appropriate connectivity to school networks.

The Authority will discuss the implications of the computer:pupil ratio target with individual schools, advise and assist them in the development of specifications and consult with them on any proposals for brokering purchase with suppliers. Included with this allocation is an amount for each school to enable them to secure and improve on current levels of Internet connectivity and to enable them to achieve their plans for ICT.

Progress towards achieving the national standards for ICT in Primary Schools will be identified by numbers attaining levels 2 and 4 at the end of KS1 and KS2. In addition OFSTED reports on Primary schools will be monitored to identify an increase in the number of schools with ICT as a strength of the school and similarly a decline in the number of schools with ICT as an area for development.

In Secondary schools progress in achieving the national standards will be identified by the number of pupils attaining Level 5+ at KS3 using existing national data collection procedures. KS4 national standards will be identified by the number of pupils attaining levels A* - C compared to benchmark information and the number of pupils leaving school with a nationally recognised ICT qualification.

TARGETS:

- All Wirral Primary Schools to have a computer : pupil ratio of 1:8
- All Wirral Secondary Schools and Special Schools to have a computer : pupil ratio of 1:5
- To raise standards of attainment in ICT throughout the Borough to enable all schools to achieve standards inline with English, maths and science
- To ensure all young people leave school with ICT qualifications in line with the national target.

2. How the LEA will co-ordinate investment in ICT with meeting the professional development needs of teachers and staff in schools.

The Authority has a strong tradition of investing in the continuing professional development of teachers and recognises the strong link between the provision of good quality in-service training for teachers and the high standards of attainment by pupils. The Authority will seek to meet the professional development needs of teachers through the following strategies;-

- Ensure that the 'Hands on Support' programme is delivered effectively within Wirral schools by making linkages to the Primary and Secondary Strategies.

- LEA ICT training will continue to be directed, under service level arrangements, to deliver courses to develop confidence and competence of education professionals in aspects that support and enhance the above national strategies.

TARGETS:

- Enhance the ICT skills of all staff involved with children and develop their confidence and competence to enable them to use ICT to deliver the National Curriculum in all subject areas.

3. How the LEA will advise and support schools in integrating the use of ICT for school management and administration purposes.

The Local Authority will adopt protocols for electronic communication between the Department and schools and the Local Authority and national government organisations such as DfES, QCA, TTA, LGA etc.

Due consideration of the national 'Information Management Strategy' (IMS) will be given when establishing national data sets and exchanging information electronically with schools.

An appropriate training programme will be developed to meet the needs of Education Department staff for whom electronic communication with schools and Government Agencies, and council wide collaboration is essential to their role.

Primary Schools as a minimum should have <u>one</u> networked computer with an Internet connection for management and administration.

Secondary schools should have as a minimum <u>three</u> computers to provide access to the management information system (with appropriate security to prevent unauthorised use) and to provide immediate Internet access for the senior management and administration teams.

TARGETS

- To use electronic communication with all schools for general administration purposes and the collection of data.

- All Primary schools to have a minimum of one networked computer with reliable Internet access for management and administration.

- All Secondary schools, to have a minimum of three networked computers to provide access to the management information system to enable the senior management and administration teams to have immediate Internet access.

- To provide an appropriate advice and training programme to enable all employees to use electronic communications effectively.

4. How the LEA supports and promotes community use of ICT facilities.

The Authority has undertaken initiatives in partnership with schools, libraries, The Laird Foundation and Further Education to bridge the 'digital divide' within the community to enable all who wish to access technology to be able to do so. In a previous LEA ICT Development Plan the Wirral Learning Grid project 1998 – 2001 laid the foundations of the Authority's commitment through a programme of equipping telematics centres across Wirral with facilities to provide Internet access and training to the community.

This development plan seeks to build on earlier experiences and the Authority will continue to provide advice, guidance, co-ordination and encouragement to all Wirral schools to enable them to maximise the use of their ICT resources for identified groups within the community.

TARGETS:

- Continue in consultation with schools, to seek ways of bridging the 'digital divide' in Wirral by making ICT facilities available for use out of school hours by pupils and for community purposes.

5. The LEA policy for acceptable use of the Internet and e-mail.

The Authority drafted a policy for acceptable use of the Internet and e-mail in March 2000. Details of LEA advice and guidance on Internet and e-mail is included in the document, "ICT Curriculum Advice and Guidance" published by Wirral LEA in September 2000. This document has since been updated inline with the development of local and regional Broadband network. A copy of the policy and the advice and guidance document is available on the Wirral Learning Grid internet site at the following address;- www.wirral-mbc.gov.uk

All Wirral schools have in place an acceptable use policy for Internet and e-mail.

TARGET:

- To review regularly, and update as appropriate the advice and guidance provided to Wirral schools in relation to the risks associated with Internet and e-mail use.

6. The LEA audit of levels of equipment, connection to the Internet and INSET.

The Authority plans to distribute funding according to need to ensure that all schools are able to meet the national baseline targets.

The Local Authority has developed a local broadband network and will offer advice and guidance to enable schools to access the services that this network offers.

The Local Authority will review with schools through the process of negotiation for Service Level Agreements of Technical ICT Services, the procedures for reporting faults and monitoring, in order that reliable, high speed Internet access is secured for all schools.

Schools should provide email access for all teachers in all schools and 50% of pupils in all schools.

TARGETS

- To distribute funding to enable all schools to meet the minimum baseline of provision.
- All schools to have a fast and reliable high speed Internet connection with increasing numbers of schools connected by broadband 100% by 2006.
- 100% of all teachers and 50% of all pupils to have an e-mail address.

7. How the LEA intends to manage, develop and sustain ICT provision.

The Local authority will encourage prioritisation to ensure the increasing integral use of ICT in all of its functions and those of the schools through;

- A move to electronic communication for all relevant school functions.
- Development of the Wirral Borough Council Intranet for on-line access to all departments.
- Implementation of the Wirral Broadband Strategy and access to further digital content provided / developed in collaboration with partners.
- Renewal of ICT Infrastructure and connectivity.

Schools will be required to consider in their budgets the issue of sustainability and renewal of ICT infrastructure. This issue will be relevant to the identification of best value when purchasing ICT resources through consideration of the additional costs of maintenance and servicing agreements.

Disposal of redundant ICT Equipment

Schools are advised to consult Wirral Borough Council Technical Support services to ensure that all redundant equipment is disposed of in an environmentally friendly way.

8. How the LEA will use Funding and Resources to Achieve the Targets

To address targets 1, 2 and 3 of the LEA ICT Development Plan the LEA allocation for Standards Fund – 'ICT in Schools' grant will be devolved to schools. Allocation will be based on the NOR and the audit of school equipment levels.

LEA ICT training (and dissemination events) to be made available to schools under service level agreements.

Repairs, maintenance and technical support for information communication systems is already in place in schools through an established service agreement with a provider.

The LEA are able to retain part of the 'ICT in Schools' funding. This will be used to fund the post of ICT Adviser, and to provide staff to manage and monitor the use of the funding to raise standards.

Details of the national and local ICT targets are included in Appendix A

LEA ICT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Targets and performance measures

- All Wirral Primary Schools to have a computer : pupil ratio of 1:8
- All Wirral Secondary Schools and Special Schools to have a computer : pupil ratio of 1:5
- All schools to have a fast and reliable high speed Internet connection with increasing numbers connected by broadband
- 100% of teachers and 50% of pupils to have an e-mail address
- To increase the number of pupils leaving school with accredited qualifications in ICT
- Enhance the ICT skills of all teachers and develop their confidence and competence to enable them to use ICT to deliver the National Curriculum in all subject areas.

- To use where possible electronic communication with all schools for general administration purposes, the collection of data and communication and support of the curriculum

- To raise attainment in ICT throughout the Borough to enable all schools to achieve the national standard for the Key Stage

- Curriculum support for ICT will focus on work in classrooms using identified ICT teachers to demonstrate best practice.