



# The Primary ICT and E-Learning Co-ordinator's Manual

**James  
Wright**

Book 1:  
A Guide for  
New Subject  
Leaders

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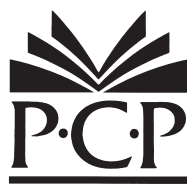
*Book 1: A guide for new subject leaders*



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*Book 1: A guide for new subject leaders*

James Wright



Paul Chapman  
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# Preface

In recent years the traditional position of information and communication technology (ICT) co-ordinator within the primary school setting has expanded and evolved beyond recognition. No longer is it simply a matter of organizing appropriate software and timetabling access to a suite of computers to deliver a discrete curriculum. As ICT has demonstrated its impact upon all areas of the curriculum, school networks need to be effectively managed and resourced, staff need to be trained, pupils need to be guaranteed a technological entitlement. Concurrently the expansion of the Internet has brought with it a host of E-safety concerns that schools need to address such that all ICT and E-learning co-ordinators must possess or develop a long-term strategic view that can steer them through this complex process.

*The Primary ICT and E-learning Co-ordinator's Manual* is a two-volume work that covers all areas of this demanding brief in the form of two distinct 'manuals'. Book 1, 'A guide for new subject leaders', is directed primarily at new subject leaders and details a 33-task schedule of activities spread carefully over the co-ordinator's first year. Book 2, 'A guide for experienced leaders and managers', develops the co-ordinator's journey into the second year but may also be a useful starting point for more experienced leaders and school managers.

Each book follows a group of virtual co-ordinators from various school settings as they are mentored through a systematic series of activities that guide them through the school year. Through their weblog (blog) discussions we witness their development into effective subject leaders as they each attempt to integrate the book's 33 guided tasks and ultimately produce a sustainable strategy for E-learning.


Whilst the co-ordinators in the weblog are fictional characters they are based on the author's real experience of working with hundreds of primary co-ordinators in his advisory work across two local authorities. As Senior Adviser for ICT with Warrington Children's Services, James worked with a wide range of schools in order to develop their strategic leadership of the subject, before moving to Lancashire where he currently works as a school improvement partner and link adviser with strategic responsibility for schools ICT. James previously taught and co-ordinated ICT across the primary age range and has written and developed a wide range of training materials including headteacher and subject leader seminars including 'School Self Evaluation for ICT', 'Assessing Standards in ICT' and 'E-safety and Every Child Matters'. He has supported the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) both as a BECTA 'expert' and in a consultative role upon the local authority self-review framework and is an accredited ICT Mark assessor.

Readers may contact James directly via his companion website at [www.james-wright.org](http://www.james-wright.org) through which co-ordinators may join live blogs supporting the implementation of both manuals.




# Blogging

21st August




#1

Alex





Posts:



Here goes, Hi! I am Alex, hope I've come to the right place? I teach in Greenwich, London. Not sure if I can give the name of the school, perhaps it's best not to, I don't want the parents to see what an idiot their child's teacher is. I am blogging my year. I think it could be therapeutic, in particular the insanely complex task that I have now been presented with despite my better-reasoned judgement.


Apparently I am co-ordinating ICT from September onwards, GREAT! Something else I know nothing about. To be honest it's all a bit of a mess from what I can see, not that I am particularly qualified to judge. Dave, my predecessor, left in a bit of a hurry and hasn't passed on anything that I can see to build on. Half of the kit doesn't work and half of the teachers avoid using ICT whenever they can get away with it. I haven't a clue where to start.






#2


Toby




Posts:




Hi, Alex, Toby here, Swindon. You need to relax, just focus on your class and do what you can with the subject co-ordination. Are you an NQT?






#3


Alex




Posts:




Hi, Toby, I'm tempted to agree. No I'm in my third year actually and I'm getting a TLR (teaching and learning responsibility) allowance for the position with release time so I need to deliver. Julie, (my Head) says she thinks that we should be more E-confident, the kids can run rings around most of the staff to tell you the truth. Don't get me wrong I feel confident in my own ability to use the technology, although I do tend to rely on Microsoft Office a lot (That isn't good, is it?). And I love the interactive whiteboard, well we all do. It's the other stuff, the techie stuff I haven't a clue about – Richard (my boyfriend) says that he will help when he can, but I don't think that's the answer.




#4



Toby




Posts:





---

Well, if it's any help there are a lot of us in a similar position. I think that your blog is a good idea and I'd like to join you. With any luck we'll attract some IT pros and can muster some collective wisdom.




## 24th August


#1



Gambo




Posts:





---


Hi, Alex, hope I'm welcome on your web-board. I am an ICT Adviser and have supported hundreds of primary coordinators just like you. You have to bear in mind that nothing is going to be resolved overnight. You need to take some time to get a clear overview of where you are up to and what you might like to achieve. In particular I suggest that you think in terms of a two- to three-year plan. Spend some time brainstorming everything you need to look at and mark it out over a two- or three-year cycle.




#2



Alex




Posts:




---


Hey. Thanks, Gambo, did angels send you?

That sounds just the sort of advice I need, but how do I know what to include in the plan? How will I know I've not left anything out?




## 25th August


#1



Lisa





Posts:





---

Hi, Alex, Lisa here, I am in a similar position but I've been at it for six months now. I've got nowhere! I do have some web links that may be useful I'd be happy to share with you. Gambo, give me a call or cut me into the loop if you are offering advice. HELP! Lisa is drowning!




#2

Rasp





Posts:




---

Have you guys not got anyone from the local authority who will come in?




#3

Alex





Posts:




---

I have a co-ordinator cluster meeting to attend in October, Shall I wait?




#4

Gambo




Posts:




---


Alex, do attend your cluster group, you need to access any local resources that are available, but if you'd like me to I'm happy to provide you with a term by term plan, a manual for you to discuss. Lisa, you are welcome to use the same. It'll give you something in the background to fall back on, like a safety net.




## 26th August

#1

Lisa





Posts:




---

Count me in.





#2

Toby




Posts:





---


Show us the plan, Gambo. We'll be your guinea pigs.




## 27th August


#1

Gambo




Posts:





---


I'm very happy to help out if you find that useful. I'll establish some goals for the first term starting off easy. I suggest you set yourself the long-term goal of ICT Mark accreditation within two years. Share that with your headteacher, you'll look focused and they'll have something tangible to measure your success against.




## 28th August


#1

Roman





Posts:





---

Hey! Can anyone join in? I like to think I have things under control; I do have a degree in IT and have been co-ordinating for just over a year now. I expect I've covered a lot of the things you are talking about but I like the sound of the ICT Mark. Looking for rapid success.





#2

Gambo




Posts:




---

Roman, my plan runs over two years, maybe you should go straight to year 2. I will set up a second plan on these web-boards but I want to get Alex and Lisa settled first. Have you heard of the BECTA 'ICT in Practice' awards? That might be a more appropriate target for someone like you.

Here is the plan for this term. Let me know what you think. Roman, I'll mail you something direct for year 2.




**Table 1.1** Autumn Term Plan

<b>AUTUMN TERM</b>			
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>DECEMBER</b>
<p><b><u>FACT FINDING</u></b></p> <p>What is available? When was it produced or updated, e.g. ICT Policy, Scheme of Work, Development Plan. Any INSET that took place.</p> <p>Dig out the last Ofsted report. If it was pre-September 05 it will have a subject report for ICT as well as reference to ICT across the curriculum. Any key issues?</p>	<p><b><u>HARDWARE/SOFTWARE AUDIT</u></b></p> <p>Set up your own system for recording the kit that you have. My advice would be to set up a spreadsheet, note where each machine is located, when it was bought, any warranty etc in place. You might also want to include the serial numbers etc. Make sure it is security etched. Often the office may have this info anyway as part of its audit returns.</p> <p>If you are really efficient you'll also note what software is on each machine and tie it in to a licence somewhere.</p> <p>I think you will need to book around 2 half days of release to complete this this term.</p>	<p><b><u>MICROSOFT LICENSING FRAMEWORK</u></b></p> <p>Many schools may haemorrhage money paying for Microsoft licensing – It has proved something of a black art.</p> <p>This is a good early hit to score.</p> <p>Audit your needs and use the BECTA framework to get a best value deal.</p>	
<p><b><u>VISION</u></b></p> <p>What do you want ICT to mean for your school?</p> <p>Put together a vision that will motivate the staff and pupils. (You should find one at the top of your policy to start off with – Does that one actually mean anything to you?)</p>	<p><b><u>STRATEGIC AUDIT, SELF REVIEW FRAMEWORK</u></b></p> <p>You need to get a structured overview of the subject in this first term and you might as well use a national framework to help you to do so. Don't expect to have all the answers at this stage but this will give you the overview and it will begin to produce a sketch development plan. Ideally get someone from the authority to come in for half a day to get you started.</p> <p>I think you will need to book around 3 half days of release to complete this this term.</p>		
<p><b><u>LEADERSHIP</u></b></p> <p>Who is leading the subject? Is it collegiate and does it involve senior management?</p> <p>Get this established it'll help in terms of budget access to staff meetings etc. At least one meeting needed here; it's likely to be after school I'm afraid.</p>	<p><b><u>TECHNICAL SUPPORT AUDIT</u></b></p> <p>Who is supporting your network? What service is being provided? What is it costing? Contact the LA, cluster schools to get a sense of what is available.</p> <p>Above all make sure it's not down to you!</p>	<p><b><u>DISCRETE ICT OVERVIEW</u></b></p> <p>As a discrete subject, what exactly is being taught? How is it being taught? For how long?</p> <p>What about differentiation and progression?</p> <p>This activity is to give you an initial overview of this vital area, to flag up some key issues and gaps in provision. Later in the year I shall chat to you about a more root and branch review of the scheme of work.</p>	


## 29th August

#1


Lisa



Posts:




Oh My God! That is for one term?




#2

Alex




Posts:




Gambo, thanks so much for the time etc. you have put into that, it must have taken ages. It does sort of confirm what I feared about everything that is involved in co-ordinating this subject. To be honest at first I felt sick but this morning I went through it again and I believe that it is doable! I'm going to give it a go.

I'd really appreciate your support but feel very vulnerable should you suddenly disappear, but I guess I'm willing to take a chance. Anything is a bonus I suppose.




#3


Lisa



Posts:




There just seems such a lot of strategy etc. to get around that I don't feel equipped for. And the leadership stuff, well I'm only just out of my probationary year! Still I'm in if you are, Alex?




## 30th August

#1


Rasp




Posts:



That looks reasonable to me. To be honest I work in a high school but that's the sort of overview I should recommend to either sector. So, Gambo, are you going to tell us more about yourself?




**31st August**




#1

Gambo




Posts:



Nothing to tell, Rasp.

Lisa, if you are interested in the programme I'll break it down into weekly units. It looks a lot written down together but 16 weeks is a long time, you should stop putting yourselves down though. This is a serious position you have taken on and if you have no subject leader experience then it's a good chance to cut your teeth in school policy, health and safety, staff training, finance, as well as providing opportunities to work with governors and parents. From the outset I should make this clear to your headteacher, you will need release time and you may be eligible for a TLR pay allowance, although they may need some convincing of this.

Have a restful weekend.



# Chapter 1 • September

## 3rd September

### Week 1, Task 1 – Fact Finding and Creating a Subject Leader File


The first task for any co-ordinator is to assemble a subject leader file if one has not been provided. This is going to be your bible, something you can take along to meetings and show to the head-teacher, even to the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) to demonstrate how the subject is managed and, more importantly, is led. Keep an electronic version also, you might as well learn to think and work digitally if you are not already.

Assembling this folder is going to provide you with your first opportunity to scratch the surface of the subject and to find out what has gone on before. There are a number of formats that you may wish to follow, including any that you may have used previously or that are preferred by the school. However, given that there is now a national 'road-map' for ICT development, it makes sense to adopt this from the outset. Therefore I recommend that you arrange your documentation in line with the BECTA self-review framework categories. Therefore, set up the following sections and collate any existing documentation within this format.


- 1 Leadership and Management
- 2 Curriculum
- 3 Learning and Teaching
- 4 Assessment
- 5 Professional Development
- 6 Extended Opportunities for Learning
- 7 Resources
- 8 Impact on Pupil Outcomes.

In the front of the folder make a list of the documents and note when they were last updated. Try to get everything that you find into this system; if there is a lot of existing paperwork around the school, set up a filing system that replicates these categories. Above all try to do it this week, as it is a great way to take control of the strategy in your first week and to avoid simply getting bogged down in cables and machinery.


## 4th September

#1

Alex




Posts:




---


Hey, you'll be pleased to hear that I've started my folder, Gambo; actually I am quite good with files so this should prove quite easy. I have also set up folders on my laptop for each of the sections as you suggested, but I've already been hassled by one of the teachers about providing ink for her printer. I think that most of the staff are trying to give me a bit of breathing space but what do I do if the whole system stops whilst waiting for me to get my act together?






#2

Lisa




Posts:




---


You have to be firm, Alex that is so not your responsibility. I actually have a teaching assistant who looks after all the printers now. Haven't they heard of Workforce Reform?

I've now completely revisited my co-ordinator file also. I'm going to start afresh with your system, Gambo, as you seem to know what you are doing but please don't desert us!




#3

Alex




Posts:




---


Hi Lisa, It's great having you along and I shall stand firm. I should be very interested to learn how I go about getting my own teaching assistant?




## 5th September

#1

Gambo





Posts:




---

Alex, it's important when steering any initiative not to allow events to distract you from your main agenda. I intended examining the whole issue of leadership within ICT with you, and from the outset should recommend that you establish chains of responsibility that will help you to manage and lead the development of the subject.




#2

Toby





Posts:




---

I've tweaked my file a little, I am backdating the review dates etc. as well it's quite an eye opener, a lot of the material is way out of date, and I mean years out of date. Gambo, I actually enjoy messing around with the equipment and have half a day to do so, do I have to give it up?




#3


Roman




Posts:




Good call, Toby. I'm with you; the best part of the week is when I get to play with the server.




## 6th September

#1


Tess




Posts:




Roman, are you in the right job? Sounds like you are escaping class.




#2


Roman




Posts:




Tess, I just enjoy the break. Variety is the spice of life you know.




## 7th September

#1


Gambo



Posts:



In my experience every school is unique, but you have to ask yourself why you are given release time and whether it's good value for you to be doing the technician's job. There is plenty of strategic business for you to attend to, I should review this especially if I were your headteacher.



## ***10th September***

### **Week 2, Task 2 – Vision**

Hopefully you have already been thinking about this and may have found an existing 'vision' for E-learning within your current ICT policy. There are going to be a wide variety of meetings and contexts within which you will need to 'sell' your ideas. There may be opposition from some quarters – staff, parents – as to where all of this technology is leading and you will need some strongly held core beliefs to draw upon. That is why it is worth spending a little time now putting your vision together.

In principle you need to decide how ICT can engage learners and enhance teaching and learning within your school.

Here is one example:

At \*\*\*\*\* we recognize and value the use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool for both children and adults and seek to encourage pupils to become autonomous and independent in its use. We aim to develop a whole school approach to ICT that ensures continuity and progression and which develops the following core beliefs:

- 1 We believe that the rapid development of technology in the home, the workplace and the wider community has had and will continue to have an immense impact on the lives of individuals. Children need to develop a variety of ICT skills, which allow them to harness the power of technology and use it both purposefully and appropriately.
- 2 We believe that ICT is an important medium for learning and study at all educational levels and that through the effective use of ICT pupils and adults may enhance and extend learning opportunities and provide a powerful and motivating means to improve attainment in all curriculum areas.
- 3 We believe that the effective use of ICT allows pupils to communicate their ideas in a creative manner that reaches out beyond the classroom and which carries with it ethical implications and consequences.

The school ICT network is not only important for the children but for all learners at the school, including staff, governors and parents. As an essential skill for life I believe that school facilities have to serve that purpose. Hence, as the debate regarding the need for schools to retain an ICT suite is raised against the expansion of mobile equipment, I remain a supporter of the suite for exactly that purpose. I use this as an example of the vision directly impacting upon practice, strategy and actions.

Take a little time to formulate your ideas at this early stage before you are engulfed by the practicalities of managing the subject. Use your vision statement to encapsulate your core values. You may wish to emphasize the inclusive use of ICT, or the manner in which it promotes different styles of learning. Alternatively you may wish to talk about its balanced and effective use as a deterrent for overuse. Talk to colleagues so that you are not out on a limb; the school's ICT vision should mesh closely with its broader values and ethos.

Also now is a good time to develop your grasp of where E-learning is going. Begin to read around your subject and sample the thoughts of some leading writers in the field such as Marc Prensky or Alan November. Marc Prensky: 'Don't bother me Mom, I'm Learning' is rapidly becoming a formative ICT document ([www.marcprensky.com](http://www.marcprensky.com)): as is also Alan November's 'Empowering Students with Technology' ([www.novemberlearning.com](http://www.novemberlearning.com)). Take time to develop your own views about where the technological revolution is ultimately going to lead.