

Case Study

Southampton City Council

Southampton City Council (Southampton) has 77 schools and more than 27,000 primary and secondary students. Southampton is on target to have 80% of their schools using an online learning environment in less than a year with direct involvement of students during the implementation.

Selecting Studywiz Learning Environment

Southampton selected Studywiz Learning Environment after a lengthy consultation with schools, utilising Becta's VLE procurement framework. It eclipsed other learning environments because of its vast array of learning tools, and its choice of intuitive interfaces for users across all key stages.

"Wanting to learn, and having the best tools to do so, is now a greater reality than ever," says Daryl Misselbrook, a teacher with ten years experience, who has been appointed as e-Learning Consultant to drive the Studywiz Learning Environment implementation in Southampton.

"Education in Southampton is entering an exciting new era, where learners can collaborate, communicate, and contribute to a media rich, safe, online school community that is provided by Studywiz Learning Environment," he said.

Southampton's decision to select a learning environment now means that teachers have an online component to their classes, and students have 24/7 access to class materials. Parents have a place to view their child's progress online and can also keep updated on school events through Studywiz Learning Environment.

Harnessing the power of teacher advocacy

Southampton has approached adoption and implementation through awareness raising events and training teachers to become Studywiz Learning Environment advocates. As Daryl explains, "In marketing, there is the 'viral' approach to promoting a product, or an idea, and I can see how this works."

"We've become very aware that word gets about. We had a small surge of schools, who expressed their interest for the first time, even though they've not previously been in contact, or attended our launch events. It's clear that teachers had been talking, and that the practical experiences of those who've been trained are being shared across Southampton," he said.

Training teachers to become Studywiz champions

To ensure staff had a good working knowledge of the system, every school was offered one day of Leadership training and half a day of Administration training. A six-day advocate training program was also offered to each school for staff who would be instrumental in implementing Studywiz Learning Environment - two places for each Primary school, and four places for every Secondary school.

The training was held at a central location which gave staff from a range of schools the opportunity to network and exchange ideas. Training was organised so that each advocate group contained either all primary or all secondary staff, enabling the sharing of ideas and best practice between delegates.

For schools that did not immediately sign up, a follow up event was organised for them to learn more about Studywiz Learning Environment from staff and pupils in the early adopter schools. Within the space of two months, these schools had capitalised on their training, and made meteoric progress in using Studywiz Learning Environment within their school communities.

Student involvement key to implementation success

Reflecting on the success in Southampton, Daryl observes that involving children is key to ensuring a smooth and speedy rollout. "Where possible schools would use children as advocates to both present and demonstrate to adults what they could do. This always generates a great response when the kids

show them what they have done, what they love about Studywiz Learning Environment and answer questions,” says Daryl.

“I have advised all along that schools should engage students to train adults and their peers. They are born in an age of web-based technology, and we’ve learnt through experience that they’re guaranteed to facilitate rapid implementation” he ended.

Best practice stories from schools in Southampton.

Mansbridge Primary School

Mansbridge Primary School has 170 pupils. Deputy Head, Kate Vincent, and five enthusiastic pupils lead the Studywiz Learning Environment implementation at their school. Kate attended both the leadership training and shared the advocate training with Headteacher Mark Sheehan. This meant immediate support for implementation from the senior leaders in the school.

Kate trained two pupils in Year 6 to become Studywiz Learning Environment experts, who then trained a further three pupils. These five pupils then trained the rest of the staff, and also taught Year 1 pupils how to send messages safely in Studywiz Learning Environment. Staff quickly recognised that by engaging the pupils there is more dialogue in and out of school.

Kate set up a discussion activity in Studywiz Learning Environment to gauge reactions from the Year 6 pupils about Studywiz Learning Environment. And, here’s what was said:

“We like it because it is safe, and because I can only talk to people in my class”.

“I think Studywiz Learning Environment is cool because you get to learn more at home as well as having fun. The activities are good because they help people learn. You can even save your work to your own eLocker!!!”

“I think Studywiz Learning Environment is amazing because you can learn and have fun at the same time, not like work. Also, you know you won’t be cyber-bullied”.

“I like Studywiz Learning Environment because instead of watching TV, I can go on the computer and go on Studywiz Learning Environment if my mum is not on it, fingers crossed! Anyway, Studywiz Learning Environment is amazing because we can play games to help us learn at home and also in school. Studywiz Learning Environment helps us to learn our times tables and MORE”.

The Year 6 class teacher also contributed to the discussion and said:

“I think Studywiz Learning Environment is great and I am finding it quite addictive. It is fantastic for the children to have a safe and secure platform to email and chat to each other, as well as the opportunity to email their class teacher”.

“Also, it is great to be able to put activities on the site that the children can access both at school and at home. It is extremely supportive to learning because there are so many different things you can do on here to keep the children interested. It will also help with Assessing Pupils’ Progress (APP) evidence especially for reading”.

“Finally, I am really looking forward to the children being able to email me a piece of work which I can mark and annotate and then mail them back again with targets and comments. I’m just hoping that I have the time to do everything I want to do.”

“The implementation of our Studywiz Learning Environment has been so successful that there is now such a demand for it by pupils that laptops are available for use first thing in the morning before school officially begins!”

Oakwood Junior School

Ian Taylor the Head teacher attended the Leadership training and Administrator training. He was very excited about using the Studywiz Learning Environment to:

- Enable staff and pupils to safely share resources
- Create interactive resources
- Extend school beyond the school day
- Communicate with parents/carers

Ian sent two members of staff to the Advocate training, one who described herself as 'an IT geek' and the other who has lots of ideas but not necessarily such good IT skills to complement one another.

Rishab Rajput, one of their Year 6 pupils at Oakwood spoke at the awareness event:

"I think Studywiz Learning Environment is really educational and I actually go on it at home. One of the really good features of Studywiz Learning Environment is the gallery because you can upload photos and you can comment on them. It has a large range of useful activities and games, and it is easy to get to. Another good feature of Studywiz Learning Environment is the messaging feature. Miss Beavill (Year 6 class teacher) puts lots of our work on the computer so the other year groups can look at our work. Miss Beavill said that she would put homework on the computer so our parents will be able to look at our work and say you've done well or you haven't. Two weeks ago it was Anti-bullying Week and some teachers put programmes for us to go on and learn how to use the internet sensibly. So, I think Studywiz Learning Environment is really good and educational website for kids to go on."

Read more about implementation in Southampton schools on the Studywiz blog
<http://blog.studywiz.com>

For further information on Studywiz visit **www.studywiz.com**