

Case study: implementing a new curriculum to raise a junior school to an 'outstanding' rating

Client: Ashley Down Junior School, Bristol.

Organisation Profile: Small city-centre junior school.

Client Overview: Ashley Down is a junior school of 230 pupils in Horfield, a community to the north of Bristol City Centre. It is a very highly regarded school both within its community and beyond, and prides itself on its welcoming and nurturing ethos. In April 2009, Ofsted judged the school to be outstanding: "The vast majority of parents and carers think that it offers a very high quality of education for its pupils and they are right."

The Challenge: Ashley Down School has been working with EdisonLearning as part of a small network of primary partners in the locality, using the *EdisonLearning Primary Curriculum* to innovate and transform teaching and learning. The school had identified the curriculum as a key area in which improvement would help raise the overall rating of the school.

The EdisonLearning Solution: *The EdisonLearning Primary Curriculum* is a programme designed to help schools move towards an increasingly integrated, creative and skills-focused approach to learning and teaching. The curriculum is in two distinct parts: an *Integrated Curriculum* that provides ideas and strategies to help teachers motivate and engage pupils in their learning; and a *Core Learning Skills Curriculum* designed to promote a strong learning culture by explicitly and intentionally developing pupils' ability to learn more effectively.

Some schools choose to work on just one aspect of the curriculum, but the group of Bristol schools engaged on a 4-term programme with the support of EdisonLearning advisers to develop both the *Integrated Curriculum* and the *Core Learning Skills Curriculum*. The programme provides the school with resources and planning frameworks to create the building blocks of a new curriculum, and brings the partner schools together to engage in shared training and professional development that in turn helps to bring about lasting changes in classroom practice.



**Excellent materials,
excellent curriculum
model, excellent training
opportunities!**

– Laurence Pitt, Headteacher

Project Outcomes: Ofsted's 'outstanding' judgement provides evidence of the school's excellence in all areas, but the inspectors' judgements on the curriculum are noteworthy. The curriculum is considered to be 'rich and varied', offering a 'stimulating programme of topics in which subjects are linked together'.

The report continues to describe how pupils find learning fun, and parents tell of a transformation in home life, with children 'wanting to explore topics in even more detail at home'. The success of the *Core Learning Skills* approach is also highlighted: "The high levels of these skills for their age mean that the pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education and for their future economic well-being."