Support for learning at home

Dear colleagues

Existing partnership

You will recall that the Education Commission has a partnership with Anspear which enables us to deliver the Firm Foundations app to all Foundation Governors. We are about to enter the third year of that partnership which has seen many more governors trained than previously. Moving to an online mode of delivering training has turned out to be timely given the pandemic.

In an informal discussion with George Pearson, the CEO, who spoke at our conference last year, I was wrestling with the moral question of how to support disadvantaged learners. George reminded me that parts of the former Pearson Publishing back catalogue is available through the same technology, *Nimbl*, that supports Firm Foundations. We have set up a pilot project with St Thomas More Comprehensive in Eltham which we've called 'Devices for DAPs'. We were lucky to have a donation from a benefactor to pay for the project. We are seeking further benefaction to fund an extension of this project to two of the primaries close by.

KCSP has also bought into the project by purchasing licences for 100 disadvantaged pupils in some of their more socio-economically challenging schools. In these projects, the licences for the software come fully loaded onto Android devices for which George has a very cost-effective supply chain. This means that disadvantaged pupils not only get their own device to take home but they get meaningful learning activities to undertake on the device.

An offer

With all conflicts of interest noted, George is willing to make the software available instantly, or to support schools to buy in more of these devices, dependant on a large enough order. In short if we were to make this a co-ordinated Diocesan strategy, the price can be driven down further.

Basically, any user gets access to an age-appropriate, core curriculum set of tools and resources to facilitate their learning. Not only are these tools content-rich but they are supported by tried and tested digital activities which are conducted offline on the machine. What this means is that the pupil does not need a broadband connection to access the learning opportunities – they just need the offline software. However, once back in school, the machine uploads the outcomes of their work/study to a central database enabling teachers to review the work and check the progress. Schools that already have enough devices for each pupil need only purchase the software. There are a number of levels at which this could operate.

Ofsted
Should Ofsted start to inspect the quality of online learning – or teaching! – this would provide your school with compelling back end data that would demonstrate engagement, participation and progress.

A concrete proposal
If you are at all interested do let me know and we can try to set something up. For expressions of interest, please email Claire Williams (clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk) indicating which, if any, of these options the school might wish to pursue:

If it helps…

Please print this page, complete it, scan or photograph it and send it to Claire adding any necessary contact details.

	Option	Yes/no
1	A supply of fully loaded (with the Nimbl system and Pearson Publishing Back Catalogue) Android tablets. These come with a case and keyboard to help develop keyboard skills as well as a touch screen. The price of these will vary depending on the size of order we can make. Indicatively each unit costs approximately £120 with all the licencing	
2	If you are interested in option 1, please indicate in the box how many devices you would be interested in purchasing	
3	Software licences for all your disadvantaged pupils – These are downloaded through a web interface which is controlled by an appointed person at the school	
4	If you are interested in option 3, please indicate in the box how many licences you would be interested in purchasing	
5	Software licences for all your pupils	
6	If you are interested in option 5, please indicated in the box how many licences you would be interested in purchasing	
7	At very little additional cost per licence, Anspear can also supply a version of the product for parents which enables them to support their child's learning. Please tick the box if you would be interested in this additional benefit	

Yours sincerely,

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