"Initiatives and the role of training"

The drive to introduce mobile devises into the curriculum is ever increasing. The manufacturers of such devices are continually stressing the teaching benefits to staff and the educational benefits for students.

We have embarked upon this journey and are delighted with the transformation we are seeing. It is not a case that it is intended to replace traditionally successful methods of delivery. Certainly not. It is more about adding another very useful resource for staff and students to utilise.

We opted for iPads. Not because we are especially Apple driven. Far from it. We have a Mac suite for specialist media, photography and art software, but we also have 6 PC suites and PCs in every classroom. The reason we were attracted to the iPad was because of the importance Apple place on learning, training and CPD.

The success of our mobile device implementation is largely due to the significant training programme that we have committed to. The training was aimed at 3 specific groups.
The first group we targeted was our teaching staff. This was to ensure that they were well informed of the learning potential of digital technology in the classroom, as well as give them first-hand experience of experimenting and discussing where and when iPads could be used to support student learning.

The second group we decided to include in the training programme were parents. Part of the rationale behind this was the desire to inform parents about how digital technology would support their child in the classroom. The emphasis was that an iPad is no more than an additional resource which can be used to support student learning. The presentations we made to parents showcased a variety of uses which have the potential to transform learning at school as well as at home. Parents continue to ask for more training!

The third group, and probably the least needy of training are students as they have grown up with this technology all around them. They show no fear, they embrace digital technology as an integral part of their social and learning environment and see no boundaries. In fact, we are already seeing students showing staff of other interesting ways of incorporating digital technology in the classroom – this is something we are looking to develop further with the introduction of Student Digital Leaders, as we see the potential of students learning from students; and we shouldn't forget that this is an ideal area where teachers can learn from students. It also offers the opportunity of giving students greater responsibility for their own learning.

We continue to review this exciting journey, but one thing we can already see, is the excitement from all those who have undertaken the training. Again, this highlights to me the importance of training and CPD, not just for the implementation of mobile devices, but for all developments that have an impact in the classroom.

If you would like any more information how Doha College has implemented mobile devices please contact Mark Leppard via the following email; seniorexec@dohacollege.com