Dixons Allerton Academy

E-Learning Vision Document

Responsibility for Review: Senior Leadership Team

Statement of Intent

This vision document sets out to establish the principals which will allow e-learning to be successful in the Academy. It sets out a vision for senior leaders, teaching staff and The Bridge Learning Commons. The purpose of this document is to set out principals which will ensure that the purchase and implementation of technology at Dixons Allerton Academy is always focused on ensuring that it allows scholars to achieve their full potential and to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at Dixons Allerton academy.

Signed by:……..

Date:……
(Principal) – Ratified by SLT in November 2014

Signed by:……..

Date:……..
(Chair of Governors) – Ratified by Governors in December 2014

1. Introduction - How should educational technology support the learning of scholars?

1.1. - Technology offers us the potential to enhance or to transform learning for scholars. Against the SAMR (substitution, augmentation, modification and redefinition) model, which is used to judge the effectiveness of educational technology. This policy aims to promote the use of educational technology in a way that modifies and redefines the learning of scholars.

1.2 - We have the potential to let teachers augment lessons or to fully transform the learning of scholars. There should be no prescribed pedagogy for e-learning, but teachers should adopt it into their practice in a way that best meets the learning needs of their scholars. In this way the adoption of educational technology should complement and support teachers in the pursuit of good and outstanding teaching.

2. Staff Support

2.1 - Educational technology and e-learning should never become an additional burden. Staff should feel confident and supported when they implement new technologies into their classroom.

2.2 - High expectations should be established for staff who wish to use educational technology. It should not be a tool that substitutes or augments existing practice but staff should aim to use technology to modify or redefine learning experiences. For example, instead of just using Socrative as a substitute for mini-whiteboards, staff should be encouraged to use the tool to immediately gather and analyse the high quality of information that Socrative can provide about the progress of their class in a lesson, and to actively differentiate and modify their lesson to meet the needs of scholars.

2.3 - Staff should have the right to access support offered by the E-learning Manager in a flexible way that supports their needs, both inside and outside of the classroom. The E-learning Manager should support staff with planning how to integrate educational technology into their lessons and when deploying it.

2.4 - Where the E-learning Manager is not available, staff should be able to rely on post-16 digital leaders to support them with any technical concerns when using educational technology. A range of digital leaders in the lower years should mean that staff feel supported if they

already have a digital leader in their lesson. Digital leaders will be identified by their blue lanyards and personalised identity cards.

2.5 - This policy acknowledges that a number of staff are very proficient, creative and competent when using educational technology in innovative and new ways. It is the duty of the E-learning Manager to support these staff to ensure that their ideas can be easily and smoothly executed and to facilitate the sharing of this good practice with other staff.

3. The purpose of IT equipment and the network infrastructure

3.1 - It is the purpose of all computing equipment deployed within the Academy to have a beneficial effect on learning and teaching. It is the responsibility of the e-learning Manager and the Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning to ensure that technology is deployed by staff and scholars in a way that maximises the learning of scholars. It is the responsibility of the ICT and Networking support staff to maintain this equipment and to ensure that it is technically functional and to configure and maintain the network.

3.2 - All serious modifications to on-site IT equipment, software used, or the network infrastructure should justify how they will improve the ability of teachers to teach and for scholars to learn. Maintenance and optimisation are clearly needed to allow the IT infrastructure to best support staff and scholars and minor modifications should not need to justify themselves in terms of teaching and learning. A serious modification would involve, for example, replacing a piece of software or an online tool that staff use habitually, or changing the Network so that staff have to alter their working practices.

3.3 - Where serious changes to the IT infrastructure of the school are proposed, and about to be implemented, then the IT support staff should do this in consultation with the Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning, Deputy Principal (Curriculum) and the E-learning Manager.

3.4 - Large purchases of IT equipment must be linked to teaching and learning and be approved by the Deputy Principal (Curriculum) and the Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning. They should also be ordered by the Network Manager.

4. The Purpose of the VLE

The VLE was purchased with the intention of assisting teachers to teach and scholars to learn. To this end, the VLE is to become a hub of resources and support for teachers and scholars alike. It should be able to:

4.1 - Meet the learning needs of individual scholars and direct them towards appropriate support to maximise their learning.

4.2 - Be used by teachers to provide resources that scholars can use to learn from independently.

4.3 - Support teachers with a range of learning and teaching tools that they can deploy in their lessons and for home learning.

4.4 - Generate data that allows teachers to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of scholars.

4.5 - Provide high quality resources that scholars can access independently in order to enhance their learning in any subject.

4.6 - To give scholars a platform in which they can access personalised and suitable learning resources from home.

4.7 - To allow teachers to make Knowledge Building Centres (KBCs) that scholars can access. These centres will allow scholars to autonomously access information and to collaborate and process it in unique and original ways. This will increase the independence, creativity and collaborative skills of our scholars.

4.8 - To provide a CPD resource tool for staff where they can learn about new techniques and teaching methods to improve their practice.

5. The role of The Bridge Learning Commons

5.1 - The Bridge Learning Commons will provide a direct opportunity for scholars to access educational technology that they can use independently. In line with this, scholars can expect to use The Bridge Learning Commons to use devices to access the VLE and educational resources that meet their individual needs.

5.2 - Scholars with public examinations can expect to use The Bridge Learning Commons in vacations to access educational technology that will allow them to revise independently, that will assess their progress and that will help them to make progress in their learning.

6. Enhancing Scholar Collaboration

6.1 - Using the VLE in combination with third party tools (e.g. Google Apps for Education) should allow scholars to collaborate effectively and to work with each other in The Bridge Learning Commons. Outside of The Bridge Learning Commons these tools can also be integrated into lessons by teachers. For example, if a class is writing a piece of creative writing, in English, they can collaborate on a piece of work together. Moreover, scholars can collaborate by collectively writing answers to examination questions.

7. Better Use of Data

7.1 - The VLE, adaptive learning software, and electronic AfL tools will be able to generate a huge amount of information on scholars. The school will be committed to looking at big data solutions that can analyse this data and produce it into meaningful e-learning opportunities that will be automatically offered to scholars via the VLE and by teachers. This data will be provided to teachers so that they can better use data to enhance the progress and learning of scholars.

8. Google Apps for Education

Google Apps for Education (GAFE) is a powerful tool that has a number of benefits over a traditional Word Processing and Office Suite. The e-learning policy is committed to:

8.1 - Ensuring that opportunities are found across the curriculum to allow scholars to use these tools to collaborate effectively and to produce work in a collaborative context.

8.2 - To make use of the flexible feedback tool to allow staff to give high quality, specific feedback to scholars and to give them the freedom and flexibility to respond in their own time.

8.3 - To migrate scholars and staff to GAFE so that it becomes the platform where they work and store their files. This will allow both staff and scholars to flexibly access their work between school and home.

8.4 - To encourage staff to move towards GAFE with more confidence. We are committed to migrating our internal e-mail system to GAFE so that it becomes a platform that staff habitually use.

9. Knowledge Building Centres

9.1 - Knowledge Building Centres (KBCs) will be crucial to the development of the VLE. Knowledge Building Centres are tools where staff can link scholars to a range of high quality resources that scholars can access autonomously. Scholars will use KBCs, to collaborate and collectively analyse knowledge together with the teacher facilitating and supporting scholars.

9.2 - These centres provide an excellent resource that can be used for a lesson, a piece of home learning, or an entire scheme of work.

10.3 - The Bridge will support staff in the development of high quality Knowledge Building Centres in order to ensure that scholars can access high quality resources autonomously.

9.4 - Knowledge Building Centres will help our scholars to become more independent learners by establishing a standardised framework for scholars to analyse and to process information. It will also provide opportunities for scholars to review and analyse content in a range of formats including video, audio, and text.

9.5 - Knowledge Building Centres can also be reviewed by exam classes in the future so that they have access to a learning resource that will aid their revision.

10. Virtual Learning Commons

10.1 - The Virtual Learning Commons will provide staff with an opportunity to access high quality resources from The Bridge without having to leave their own classroom. This will be a resource that will help teachers to teach and scholars to learn. The purpose of the Virtual Learning Commons is to replicate many of the features and expertise offered by the Bridge Learning Commons in any classroom, at home or in school, and at any time. It will be built into the Frog VLE.

10.2 - The Virtual Learning Commons should be a resource that staff can access and utilise to meet their needs in a lesson, or to support their scholars. It should focus on supporting staff when they are carrying out research with scholars. The Virtual Learning Commons will provide tutorials on gathering suitable resources, using the advanced search features of search engines, demonstrating the range of online resources that staff and scholars can access, and it will link to resources that allow teachers to guide their scholars when analysing and synthesising research.

10.3 - It will advise scholars on how to revise and research to encourage scholars to become more independent. The Virtual Learning Commons will contain a research and revision section that will guide scholars on carrying out research independently and when managing their own time to revise effectively. This will support scholars who are about to undertake examinations and it will support scholars when they are directed by their teacher to carry out research.

10.4 - The purpose of the Virtual Learning Commons will be to replicate the high quality experience of carrying out research in The Bridge in any classroom in the school. This will help to increase the information literacy skills of scholars, and the ability of teachers to promote information literacy skills.

11. The Responsible Use of Educational Technology

11.1 - It is imperative that we teach scholars and teachers how to use many of these tools responsibly and safely. If scholars are collaborating on a Google Document they should respect the work of others and respectfully edit and improve the work of others in a sensitive manner.

11.2 - Scholars should know to stay on task when they are using a particular app, or when they are navigating a knowledge building centre on Frog. Scholars should see educational technology as a tool to use in their learning, and not as a distraction.

11.3 - Scholars should also know how to use tools responsibly. If they are using a tool which has the capacity to communicate with people outside the classroom they should constantly be aware of when this is inappropriate and when it could present a danger to themselves and to other scholars. Acceptable use of tools that allow scholars to communicate is outlined in the e-safety policy in a way that should allow scholars to learn and communicate safely.

11.4 - If a member of staff wishes to access an educational resource that may possess potential risks of contacting people outside of school, for example, Skype in the Classroom or Twitter, then the educational benefits must be weighed up against the potential risks by the e-safety committee, e-learning Manager, and the child protection lead. Staff members who wish to use these tools must be trained and be made aware of the potential risks so that they can adapt their teaching to educate scholars about the safe use of these tools. Specific detail on the acceptable use, and appeal procedure, for risk assessing the use of social media and electronic communication for use with scholars is covered in the e-safety policy.

11.5 - This policy recognises that social media can be used positively in education. For example, podcasts, Skype in the Classroom, Twitter, and YouTube can all be used in an educational

context to maximise the learning, engagement, independence and communication skills of scholars. It is important that e-safety awareness is good amongst staff so that we can ensure that these tools are used safely and in ways that benefit the learning of scholars. We must ensure that technical safeguards and school procedures also govern the acceptable and safe use of these tools. This is outlined in more depth in the e-safety policy.

Case Studies

The following fictional case studies show where we would like our scholars, teachers, and parents to deploy educational technology.

Bilal - Key Stage 4 - (Year 11)

Bilal is a Year 11 scholar who is approaching his terminal GCSE exams. In order to help him to revise he logs on to the VLE. When he logs in, the Year 11 control panel identifies his strengths, weaknesses and recommends areas where he needs to focus. The VLE has already tested Bilal and knows where he needs to improve. He is now able to access a range of Knowledge Building Centres that will help him to make progress. Bilal spends his morning independently mastering simultaneous equations in maths, and how the heart works for science. Bilal then attempts a Biology past paper that he sends to his Science class teacher over the VLE. The teacher is able to send the paper back with useful feedback for improvement to Bilal to help him to improve. Later that week, when Bilal arrives in school for a history revision session, his teacher gives him an iPad and Bilal loads up the Socrative app. All scholars take a quiz which immediately identifies which key events he has not grasped before the exam. The teacher immediately differentiates for his needs and teaches him the exact topics that he needs to focus on.

Throughout his time in school Bilal used The Bridge Learning Commons to access resources that he needed before and after school. Before school he arrived early enough to access a laptop that he could rely on. At home he has to share his computer with two of his other siblings and he found that arriving early at school gave him the dedicated computer time that he needed to make the most of his education. Throughout his time at school he relied on the VLE to find out his homework, to complete it, and to access additional courses on areas that he found interesting. Bilal had an interest in electrical engineering and was able, before and after school, to access lessons on the VLE that supported this hobby. Resources were provided to him in The Bridge that allowed him to practice and refine the skills that he was trying to develop independently.

Junaid (Bilal's Father)

Earlier in the year Bilal's father, Junaid, was really worried about Bilal's progress. He thought that Bilal was doing well from the Year 10 parents evening but he got a push notification sent to

his phone that Bilal's teachers were concerned that he was struggling in Maths. The push notification was really helpful because it automatically pushed a list of resources that Bilal could use to progress.

One evening, Junaid sat down with Bilal to show him all of the resources on the VLE that he should be using. The expectations from both school and home were clear, informed and in line with what Bilal's teachers need him to work on.

Key Stage 3 - (Year 7)

Sana is a Year 7 scholar, she is hesitant about starting her time at Dixons Allerton Academy. SHe has an encouraging start in maths where her teacher greets her at the door and she sees laptops on all tables, Sana logs into MathsPathway and, after an automated assessment, the computer generates a scheme of work that will allow Sana to make the most progress in her studies. Sana works through the scheme of work and through a combination of computer and teacher intervention makes great progress in Maths. Sana realises that when she is stuck the computer instantly helps her to overcome her weakness. After the computer support Sana still is struggling to add fractions so her teacher takes her to one side to clarify Sana's misconceptions. The combination of a subject knowledge expert and advanced assessment systems provide Sana with an outstanding education in Maths.

After the lesson, Sana goes to her first Geography lesson. The lesson is on map skills and starts very traditionally with a starter carried out in books and then the teacher explains that the scholars are going to improve their map skills. The lesson does not use technology until the teacher decides to see if scholars have met the first objective of being able to 'recognise a four figure grid reference'. Scholars then all take a small quiz on Socrative which instantly identifies which scholars have met the objective and which have not. Sana met the objective so she is given more challenging work. However, the scholars who struggled are all given extra support and resources to recognise the four figure grid reference. For Sana's homework she has been asked to create her own map online and to send it to her teacher on the VLE. Sana has a VLE user guide and attended a session about it during induction. However, now that she is at the school she would like to see the VLE and how it works.

In English Sana's first lesson is on writing in the first person. Sana uses an iPad again, but this time she starts Google Apps for Education with her fellow scholars. The teacher outlines what good collaboration looks like and how to write in the first person. Sana's team finishes and then the teacher stops the class and asks them to look at the board. The teacher has Sana instantly

project her team's work to the interactive whiteboard using mirroring. Then the teacher has scholars discuss how it meets the success criteria and how it could be improved against the success criteria. Scholars go back and redraft their work in order to improve it. Then the teacher stops the scholars and discusses the work again. This time, scholars explain how they have improved their work.

After Sana has eaten her lunch she goes with a group of her new friends to The Bridge Learning Commons. While she is there she takes a laptop out and decides to explore the school's VLE. While she is there she is shown by a Digital Leader how to login to the VLE and how it works. Sana remembers some of this from induction but she finds a friendly older scholar is able to communicate this to her very well in an informal session when she is relaxed. Sana liked the induction session, but now she can ask all of the questions that she was afraid to ask in a hall filled with strangers and new scholars.

Sana's last lesson is PE. Even before the end of the day the school knows Sana's exact needs in maths, has assessed and given her feedback in Geography and Sana has used technology to effectively critique the work of others in a collaborative group exercise. Now Sana goes into PE where she will learn effective warm up routines in the Sports Hall. The teacher explains that her iPad will monitor how scholars perform. The teacher stops and then projects her iPad to the screen. Sana notices that the teacher has been using an app called 'Coach's Eye'. Sana struggled with warm up routines but the teacher is able to replay, in slow motion, and with clear angle lines, how her new friend Nimrah has mastered the technique. The teacher then shows some scholars, including Sana, how they are making mistakes by playing video feedback on the whiteboard, in slow motion, and using angle lines. Now Sana tries the warm up routines again and realises that she now knows how to achieve them. All scholars are asked to assess each other using 'Coach's Eye'. Scholars are given an iPad each to record and reflect on the progress of others. Using the app scholars are able to offer precise and accurate feedback on how each scholar could improve.

When Sana goes home, she logs into the VLE, she instantly thinks that it is time to get to know how things work in the school a little better. Sana watches some introduction videos by older scholars that help her to get to know the school better. Sana then navigates the VLE and completes her Geography home learning. After she has finished she notices on her control panel that the VLE has identified her needs in Maths from earlier. Keen to impress her new teacher she attempts some exercises on Maths Pathway that allow her to learn how to multiply fractions. Sana wants to make a good impression and is keen to arrive in school to her next lesson with a new set of skills that she can show off.

Sara (Sana's Mother)

Sana shares her work with her parent who also has access to Sana's data through the parent portal. Data on Sana's progress is fed to Sana's mother's phone at regular points throughout the year which ensures that she stays up to date.

Later in the year Sara noticed that Sana's progress in Maths was slower than normal. This allowed her to have a clear conversation about Sana about her progress and where she is struggling. Sara used the VLE to contact the school who arranged a meeting with Sana's Maths teacher. The teacher, scholar and parent had a conversation about the progress of Sana in Maths and discussed her recent work. After identifying clear barriers in Sana's learning, all parties planned actions that would help Sana to make progress.

Sana's mother appreciates the ability to stay in contact with the progress and overall behaviour statistics of her daughter. It reassures her about how Sana is progressing in school and makes her feel that she has a constant line of communication with the school.

Harris (Year 12)

Harris is a Year 12 scholar studying History, Finance, and Sport.

In class, Harris finds that he is able to collaborate with his peers producing work in all of his subjects using Google Apps for Education. This is integrated into his studies when it is appropriate. For example, when examining how to write an effective essay in History his teacher allows him to co-write an essay with a more able peer in real time. Storing documents on Google Apps for Education allows scholars to examine, in detail, the work of all of their peers to compare their work and to offer peer assessment to everyone in the class.

Harris enjoys the fact that he can seamlessly access his Google Apps for Education work anywhere. He started writing a document in his ICT lesson and was able to use his phone to work on it on his bus ride home. He was then able to finish the document on his computer when he arrived home. His teacher can see his work and provide feedback to Harris at any time.

Moreover, in all of his subjects, QR codes allow him to access a range of high quality devices on his mobile phone instantly and in real time. These have all been provided to Harris by his teachers and he uses them to support his studies.

In the Bridge Learning Commons Harris takes out a laptop that he can rely on to study. Harris uses the laptop for a long time to complete and research for his Business Studies lesson. He struggled to grasp some concepts in his lesson so he relies on Knowledge Building Centres on the VLE to provide him with tutorials to learn the content that he struggled with at his own pace.

Harris appreciates the flexibility and high quality resources that e-learning provides him to enhance his studies. But, most importantly, it makes his life easier and offers him timely feedback.

Teacher

Keith came into school and after starting his computer he logged on and accessed the VLE. On one page he can, and see a live twitter feed of key events happening around the school alongside his e-mails. After reading the twitter feed he realised that he forgot to fill in a staff questionnaire. It was really helpful for Keith to have everything in one place. After filling in the questionnaire, he then designed a Socrative quiz for his Year 7s to see exactly what they knew and what they didn't know about the struggle of candidates for the English throne in 1066.

During the next lesson he taught Year 7 and saw, from Socrative, that many scholars were confused about the Battle of Stamford Bridge. He had some prepared worksheets that he gave to these scholars while other scholars were moved on to study the Battle of Hastings in greater depth.

He then went to teach Year 12. The scholars had already submitted their essays on the VLE, using Google Apps for Education, and Keith had provided them with comments throughout their essay to improve their work. When scholars entered they took out laptops and began redrafting their work while Keith explained any comments that scholars were not familiar with. Scholars then went on to redraft their work.

In the afternoon, Keith created a Knowledge Building Centre on the VLE. Using a combination of videos from YouTube and websites he put together a source pack for scholars to analyse in their own time and then sent it to his Year 13 class to complete before the next lesson. The scholars came to his lesson well prepared to study Malcolm X and his contribution to the Civil Rights Movement. Keith also recorded his own video explaining the perspectives of different historians on the Civil Rights Movement.

At the end of the day, Keith logged into the VLE to mark his Year 8 class' home learning. They had all produced individual presentations for the next lesson on the causes of World War 2. Keith annotated the presentations with extra information that would improve the outcomes of scholars when they came to deliver the presentations.

Keith likes the VLE because it encourages scholars to work independently and it allows him to provide his classes with useful feedback both inside and outside of the classroom.