



One of the largest education technology projects in the world providing a safe and educational online environment for every pupil, teacher and parent in Northern Ireland."



The Classroom 2000 (C2k) initiative was put in place by the Government of Northern Ireland as part of its Education Technology strategy. The C2k project has brought Northern Ireland's 1,245 schools into the information age by equipping all pupils and teachers with secure email addresses, safe Internet access and a connection to a wide range of educational resources. The project also allows parents to see what their children are working on, help them with homework and track their progress at school.

Benefits for Teachers, Pupils and Parents

C2k has delivered many benefits for Northern Ireland. Pupils now have access to email and the Internet from their first day at primary school and so are growing up with the vital IT skills which are needed in today's economy. As well as being able to communicate and work with other pupils across the province via email, text and video conferencing, C2k also provides pupils with access to a wide range of digital material that helps them with their school work. Some of this material comes from their own schools, some is supplied centrally by the C2k project and some is accessible from sources such as the BBC and online libraries.

For teachers, C2k provides the ability to access a range of teaching materials from across the world as well as a forum for sharing ideas and best practice. They are also able to monitor pupils' progress more effectively and to deliver lessons online so that pupils can catch-up outside of school hours.

As well as benefiting pupils and teachers, the C2k project also allows parents to become more involved in their children's education. Parents are able to access the system securely from their home, local library, or anywhere that has Internet access. This allows parents to see what their child's homework is, and what resources are available to help them. They can also check how their child is progressing at school by looking at online assessments.

Building a Safe and Secure Environment Online

With over 375,000 pupils and teachers using the system, C2k is one of the largest education technology projects in the world. The project is built on a network, made up of a spider's web of fibre optic cable, copper phone lines and radio technology, which connects all of Northern Ireland's schools to a central Data Centre in Belfast.

At the peak time of day on the system (between 2pm and 3pm), the network processes over 3,500 connections to the Internet pages every second. The system filters each of these connections to ensure that there is no online bullying and no access to unsuitable web sites.

Successful Partnership for a Unique Project

The C2k organisation chose Hewlett-Packard (HP) to plan, design and implement the IT infrastructure for the project. The Data Centre at the heart of the C2k network is run by a team of 35 staff from HP, alongside members of C2k's technical team. This co-location of staff reinforces the strong partnership built-up between both parties and their commitment to ongoing success.

Speaking about the project, Roy Beattie, Classroom 2000's Integration Director said, "The C2k project is a unique requirement and there are elements of the project for which there are no standards in today's world. We have been dependent on a lot of emerging technology and we felt that HP, particularly with its global presence and its strategic partnerships, was best placed to help us succeed.

"We had an ambition to provide a world-leading service for education and we can only achieve that if we continually work at developing and enhancing it. By co-locating with HP, we have closer teamwork and greater efficiency which can only benefit the service over the long term."

Further information

For further information on the Classroom 2000 Project, go to: www.c2kni.org.uk