

Low-cost computing for education.

Teachers get more teaching time at UK primary school

Challenge

Increase computing access for pupils and better integrate ICT into the general curriculum despite limited space, budget, and teacher time.

Solution

New workstations based on NComputing X-series virtual desktops integrated with existing servers and laptops.

Impact

Increased IT access over 400% and teaching time in ICT lessons 100%. Increased reliability. Confidence to use ICT across curriculum.

Partner

kl ltd *KL Ltd, a UK-based premier NComputing partner specialising in the provision of desktop virtualisation and IT security solutions, provided pre- and post-sale services, including installation.*

Limited space and budget for computers is a common complaint in primary schools, and Wiltshire's Brinkworth Earl Danby's federated primary school is no exception. With 150 pupils across two sites, the school has historically had a small ICT suite with just 8 PCs available, along with 2 PCs in each classroom, and a laptop trolley with 20 laptops. In spite of its limited technology infrastructure, Brinkworth's centralised server hosts a range of primary education applications and the school's administrators wanted to see greater integration of technology into the school's general subject instruction.



Brinkworth pupils share the power of a single PC with the X-series.

Juggling PC seats leaves no time for instruction

With a limited number of PCs, classroom logistics, and slow start-up time made it challenging for teachers to integrate technology into classroom instruction. "Juggling the demands of starting up and shutting down the computers, troubleshooting, and managing the classroom across the two rooms housing the PCs left my staff with just 15 minutes of actual instruction time per session," explained Mrs. Sarah Findlay-Cobb, Brinkworth's Head Teacher. "The logistics of this inevitably impact on both the teaching and learning experience. It also means that it is simply impractical to integrate ICT into many subjects, or to use the technology to assist in accelerated learning for other subjects, such as English, history or science."

Mrs. Findlay-Cobb contacted other schools in the area to understand how they addressed these issues. She heard about successful implementations of NComputing's virtual desktops and contacted NComputing partner KL to learn more.

“Our ICT infrastructure now does what it is supposed to do; supports the education of our pupils, rather than being a burden on time and resources.”

SARAH FINDLAY-COBB
HEAD TEACHER
BRINKWORTH EARL DANBYS

NComputing brings PCs into the classroom

KL worked with Brinkworth to assess their needs and to determine if NComputing was the right solution. Since Brinkworth’s teaching staff was often responsible for basic maintenance and troubleshooting of the computers, they needed an easy-to-use solution that would also be low-cost. After completing a survey of issues and requirements and a site assessment, KL recommended the award-winning NComputing X-series.

The NComputing solution works because today’s PCs are so powerful that the vast majority of applications only use a small fraction of the computer’s capacity. NComputing’s hardware and vSpace™ virtualisation software tap into this unused capacity so that it can be simultaneously shared by multiple pupils. Each pupil’s monitor, keyboard, and mouse connect to the shared PC through a small and very durable NComputing access device. The access device itself has no CPU, memory, or moving parts—so it’s rugged, reliable, and easy to deploy and maintain.

Brinkworth installed the X-series virtual desktop into each fourth, fifth and sixth-grade classroom, freeing up the dedicated ICT lab for other uses. “We now have 11 workstations in these classrooms,” said Mrs. Findlay-Cobb. “The classroom teacher only has to start one machine and all the others automatically come on line. We have all the benefits of dedicated PCs with none of the fuss!” With increased access to computers in the classroom and the ease-of-use of NComputing’s solution, Mrs. Findlay-Cobb now sees ICT being incorporated into the delivery of the whole curriculum and the teachers have more time to teach.

ICT delivers the full curriculum

With Brinkworth’s ICT infrastructure now doing what it is supposed to do—supporting the education of the pupils rather than being a burden on the teachers—Brinkworth is able to fully utilize their suite of learning applications. Pupils have near one-to-one access to computers and ICT costs have come down. The school is looking forward to investing their technology budget on educational software rather than expensive hardware upgrades.

