

DigiSmart®

Targeted extra learning support with all session materials provided



Boosting Literacy, ICT and self-esteem

DigiSmart is an intervention strategy specifically designed to improve the attainment and confidence of Year 5 children who, for a variety of reasons, are falling short of their full potential.

The project provides a progressional programme of learning activities, using computers and the Internet as a motivational hook. It runs across an academic year and usually takes place after school.

The DigiSmart activities boost Literacy and ICT skills, as well as building self-esteem and confidence. The key ingredients are fun, motivation and plenty of challenge. Through the use of explicit learning targets, children are encouraged to recognise their achievements and build on their successes.

Project results to date show children making strong learning gains. These are all the more remarkable in view of the fact that, prior to DigiSmart, most were performing below the national average. Over 3500 children have benefited to date.

Attendance levels have been consistently high year on year since 2002, at over 90%.

DigiSmart has been trialled extensively as an action research project, working in partnership with a growing number of primary schools.

This project will appeal to schools who wish to achieve a successful outcome for a targeted group of Year 5 children who are still struggling to tap into their potential for learning as they approach the end of primary school.

"I can't believe the progress children have made and the confidence they now radiate."

Year 5 Teacher

"The DigiSmart project is one of the most innovative I have come across. Moreover, I consider the early impact of the project, in terms of educational gains made by young people, to be extremely impressive."

Director of Education



"The children are interested in DigiSmart because they achieve and do not get frustrated. It has really captured their imagination and they have been drawn in by the well-researched activities and topics."

Headteacher

How DigiSmart works

Once weekly sessions, starting in September, are held with a group of 12 children in Year 5 identified as likely to benefit most from a targeted intervention.

In each school a Lead Tutor (teacher or HLTA) is trained to take overall responsibility for session delivery, together with 1 or 2 Support Tutors. These may include teachers, teaching assistants, parents or sixth form volunteers.

Each child uses a DigiSmart Workbook which supports the online programme of activities. Children regularly assess themselves against targets aligned with the National Curriculum, in negotiation with one of the DigiSmart Tutors.

Professional Development

DigiSmart provides one full day's training that all Lead Tutors new to the project are required to attend. This prepares them to deliver the DigiSmart activities and also equips them to maximise the benefits of the programme for the children.

All staff receive a comprehensive Tutor Handbook, together with support and communication across the year.

Over 80% of teaching staff participating in DigiSmart have stated that their own skills and confidence have significantly improved as a result of their involvement.

"DigiSmart has given an unbelievable boost to the children and I have become a DigiSmart whizz myself!"

Year 5 Teacher



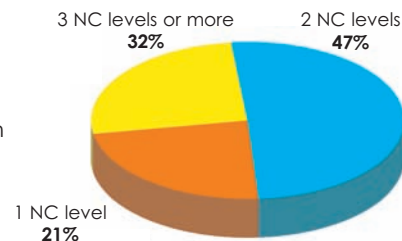
Improved Attainment

In every year of the project children's progress is measured. Action research data over the last 8 years evidences consistently strong learning gains, as shown below.

ICT gains:

All children were performing below the national average for ICT at the start of DigiSmart.

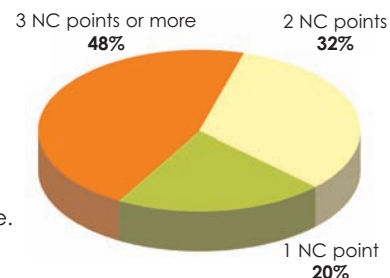
After 2 terms, 79% improved their ICT capability by 2 National Curriculum levels or more.



Literacy gains:

Many of the children began DigiSmart below the expected national level for reading.

After 1 year every child made gains, with 48% improving their reading by a full National Curriculum level or more.



"DigiSmart has been fantastic for these children. They have gained grades we didn't think they would get and DigiSmart played a really big part in that."

Headteacher

"Everything you have seen the children doing today has been down to DigiSmart. They have really benefited from the structure and working to targets."

Deputy Head & DigiSmart Tutor

"I did not think I would be able to do it. But I have learnt a lot and it has all been stored in my brain so now I am DigiSmart forever."

DigiSmart child

"Experiencing success at DigiSmart has given my son the confidence to have a go at things he was afraid of trying."

Parent of DigiSmart child

For more information please visit:

<http://www.digismartplanet.net>

Schools interested in running DigiSmart can register their interest electronically at the DigiSmart Planet website.
enquiries: admin@digismart.net

DigiSmart Project
LIFT for Learning
Wellington House
East Road
Cambridge CB1 1BH