MIICE Newsletter 8 September 2004

This is the eighth quarterly summary for all who have expressed interest in MIICE. If you have comments on what should be in this newsletter, please contact Roddy Stuart on roddy@miice.org.uk or on 0141–339 7127. Contributions about initiatives in schools, teacher education establishments or education authorities will be most welcome

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to anyone who is interested in the use of MIICE to promote good learning and teaching using ICT. Please advise MIICE about changes of e-mail address or to recommend others to receive it - contact roddy@miice.org.uk

Please remember that all MIICE publications, including copies of previous MIICE Newsletters, are available from http://www.miice.org.uk

MIICE conferences

Materials from the 21 May 2004 MIICE conference in Moray House School of Education has been added to the MIICE website - Miscellaneous MIICE materials page. Thanks to Iain Midgley of Falkirk Council, Jim Scott and Jim Hynd of Perth High School, and Derek Robertson of the University of Dundee for these useful and interesting materials

MIICE video conference - a fourth conference was held on Wednesday 15 September 2004. The theme of the conference was the use of MIICE as part of the process of education authority policy formulation and/or review. Representatives from 8 MIICE partners - Aberdeen, University of Dundee, East Lothian, Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Fife, Inverclyde, Orkney and Renfrewshire - discussed some aspects of the components of an education authority's ICT policy and explored the ways in which the MIICE quality framework might be useful. MIICE's contribution is towards the planning of learning in the classroom rather than to the larger issues of policy; but then some argued that policy should perhaps also be more concerned with the facilitating of better learning. The conference was chaired by Jim Elder from East Lothian Council

MIICE conference - the next conventional conference will take place on Friday 19 November 2004 in Moray House School of Education in Edinburgh; details have been sent to each Scottish education authority and teacher education institute. The draft programme includes a contribution from HMIE about their impending publication on taking a closer look at ICT using How good is our school?, an update on ICT implementation in Perth High School from Jim Scott and Jim Hynd, and a demonstration on digital video from Karen Robertson of East Lothian, followed by a practical workshop to apply the MIICE framework to how this would be planned for classroom delivery and monitoring of progress. If you are interested in attending the conference, please contact roddy@miice.org.uk

Further conference is planned for Friday 20 May 2005. There will be discussion at the MIICE partners' meeting on 21 January 2005 about the purposes and arrangement of MIICE conferences, both conventional and by video link. Please pass on any views about the purposes and pattern of MIICE conferences to roddy@miice.org.uk

Subject guides

Iain Midgley of Falkirk Council has agreed to develop a guide on primary maths. He hopes to have something to circulate by Christmas 2004. Other areas which are at the planning stage include secondary English, primary science, possibly secondary computing, and music. The subject guides will relate ICT to the subject and make a selection of MIICE measures which may be helpful to assess progress in quality of

learning within these activities. The formats will undoubtedly vary. The MIICE partnership would be especially pleased to hear from any (local) group which would like to develop such a guide and can offer help with production. Please contact roddy@miice.org.uk

SEED policy on educational ICT

The MIICE partnership, after much discussion, sent advice to the Scottish Executive Education Department about the emerging ICT strategy which will build on the development of the National Grid for Learning. Here is an excerpt from the paper

The direction of change in the curriculum seems to support this increasing role for ICT, including the following trends

- The need for more interactive ways to learn, where the learners are actively engaged in the learning process, will stand learners in good stead in an environment where the absolutes of one decade are swept away increasingly rapidly by the growth in knowledge and the forces of technological and economic change in a global workplace. ICT offers many opportunities, including the use of general purpose tools for communication using both words and a range of video media, the use of specialist software to model the real world (eg in climate or in physical forces), and the increasing use of e-learning to offer scope for learning beyond the limiting confines of the school day and timetable (eg the proposed BBC Digital Curriculum or GridClub)

- The increased focus on creativity, on collaborations and on investigatory learning are all areas where ICT can make a big difference. A general purpose computer offers a wide variety of means to be creative, from the use of a word processor or e-mail client to express oneself to the development of web pages or movies to report or to imagine. Increased use of the world wide web has hugely broadened the scope of knowledge and resources (eg SCRAN) beyond the confines of a single primary school's own library - and increased awareness of the need for young viewers to be discerning as to currency, bias and relevance. Both of these activities are more often than not more effective when done as a group activity

- The development of thinking and reasoning skills, for example as part of the dispositions and core skills articulated within the 5-14 curriculum, reflects an increased awareness of how youngsters learn, including the preferred learning styles of boys whose relative under-performance is a cause of increasing concern. ICT can deploy a range of 'advanced organisers' in the form of outlining tools built into general purpose software, brainstorming tools such as those in online learning suites (eg Think.com), visual organisers and mind mapping tools (eg Inspiration or Kidspiration); templates offer the 'big picture' and small steps approach which appears to be particularly useful for boy-type learners

- More courses and options within courses and the relaxation of 'age and stage' regulations all imply a growing workload for management of recording, assessment and achievement, for which an understanding of the benefits of use of ICT to manage learning is helpful. Increasingly there is interest, eg the PASS-IT project, in the use of ICT to assist in formative (and summative) assessment

- This diversity of learning modes and models also impinges on the learners. There is increased emphasis on the important of pupils being encouraged to record their individual achievements and their contributions towards collaborative activity into a continuing record or profile. ICT can offer a range of ways in which this

recording and evaluative process can be developed, from an early age. These help
to develop a realistic self-image and they strengthen an engagement with the
learning process which points in the enviable direction of lifelong learning

The MIICE partners unreservedly welcome the notion that the next strategy should be a
vision of 'where we are going' which can be helpful to the whole Scottish school
education community, and not only a checklist for the SEED by which the always
inadequate budget can be prioritised across the multiplying demands

The MIICE partners are concerned that, for too many of those participating in school
education, the potential for ICT to excite and satisfy are unknown and/or feared.
Working with one or two computers in the classroom or with a suite of computers in a
'strange' room are new ways of working for most teachers and therefore a source of
stress. Most parents did not have ready access to computers when they were at school
and so remain uncertain, or even hostile in a few cases. The loss of control which the
flexibility of software brings can be seen as a threat (by teachers and parents) just as
readily as it can be seen as an opportunity (by learners)

The MIICE partners therefore feel that programmes of continuing professional
development are the key to the next stages of the development of ICT use in Scottish
school education

Masterclass evaluation

Evaluation of the Masterclass Initiative was published on 23 September 2004. You can
download this from http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/eotmim-00.asp. The
evaluation was undertaken by George Street Research and included getting the comments
of participants about the initial 4 day training and about planned follow-up activity. The
MIICE overview was thought to be useful by 47% of those surveyed, which is well below
the 87% who thought the sessions on digital technology. Some explained the relatively
modest reactions to those aspects of the programme which related to quality of learning
and teaching, including the MIICE overview; the report says "some said that participants
may have felt intimidated by the discussion about best practice, reflecting a lack of
confidence in their abilities. Others commented that few participants seemed prepared for
this element". The researchers also asked about follow-up activities: "In one local
authority, a subgroup of Masterclassers is developing an evaluation tool, for teachers to
use to evaluate websites, to help teachers use the internet effectively in teaching. They are
developing a tool box of quality indicators based on MIICE that relate specifically to
websites and their content, and plan for the tool box to be disseminated around all schools
in their area"

MIICE around Scotland

Argyll and Bute A project to trial PC tablets in Port Ellen Primary in Islay will be using
MIICE to help them to monitor the success of children's uses of these computers

North Lanarkshire Colleagues from Ladywell Primary School in Motherwell have
continued their use of MIICE to help them to gather evidence for their Charter Mark
renewal request. This material is available on the MIICE website

Renfrewshire A group of Masterclass folk are now being used to offer workshops to
others in Renfrewshire schools on how they might make good use of MIICE tools

Shetland - There will be workshops about MIICE for Shetland teachers during SETT in
Shetland on Thursday 11 November and Friday 12 November 2004

SETT 2004 - Roddy Stuart, Calum Maxwell and Andrea Morton of Ladywell Primary

School (Motherwell) and Liz Marroni (Scottish Borders Council) conducted a workshop about MIICE developments at SETT 2004

MIICE

MIICE - Measurement of the Impact of ICT on Children's Education - is a partnership of Scottish EAs and teacher education institutes, led by the University of Edinburgh (Scottish Interactive Technology Centre at Moray House School of Education). The partnership is dedicated to discussion and action research to enhance learning and teaching through appropriate use of ICT. We are pleased to have welcomed North Ayrshire Council, Moray Council and the University of Stirling to the partnership since the June 2004 newsletter

The partnership now has 28 EAs and 5 teacher education institutes

EAs		TEIs
Aberdeen City Council	Glasgow City Council	University of Aberdeen
Aberdeenshire Council	Highland Council	University of Dundee
Angus Council	Inverclyde Council	University of Edinburgh
Argyll and Bute Council	Midlothian Council	University of Stirling:
Clackmannanshire Council	The Moray Council	Institute of Education
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	North Ayrshire Council	University of Strathclyde
Dundee City Council	North Lanarkshire Council	
East Ayrshire Council	Orkney Islands Council	
East Dunbartonshire Council	Perth and Kinross Council	
East Lothian Council	Renfrewshire Council	
East Renfrewshire Council	Scottish Borders Council	
City of Edinburgh Council	South Lanarkshire Council	
Falkirk Council	Stirling Council	
The Fife Council	West Lothian Council	