

Dumfries & Galloway Case Study



Dumfries & Galloway Council purchase new Community @ Home licence

Dumfries & Galloway Council is providing all of its 110 primary schools with the new **Community @ Home** licence from Softease, enabling all pupils and teachers to have full access to the schools core software, Textease Studio Plus, at home. All primary schools in the region have been using Textease Studio Plus since the launch of the National Grid for Learning in 1998 and now both pupils and teachers can enjoy using this ICT tool suite from Softease in the comfort of their own homes.



Kate Johnson & Will Clark, Dumfries & Galloway Council

ICT Development Officers, Will Clark and Kate Johnson, Dumfries & Galloway Council, reported, "We have found Textease Studio Plus the best all round package for our primary schools, it is so easy to use but also a very powerful ICT tool. However, we realised that with the increased focus on ICT in schools over the past few years, children often wanted to continue working on school projects at home and teachers needed to prepare for their lessons at home prior to teaching. Softease provided us with the ideal solution in its new Community @ Home licence which will give both pupils and teachers access to Textease Studio Plus at home."

The Community @ Home licence will undoubtedly fire childrens' imaginations to work on their own ICT projects at home, creating their own web pages using Textease or making their

own magazine pages, while they advance their ICT skills. This will also encourage teachers to try out new ideas using ICT and ultimately help them to integrate ICT into their lessons on a daily basis.

Scottish Education Minister, Peter Peacock, has recently highlighted that children between the ages of five and 16 spend just 15 per cent of their lives in schools. By encouraging children to continue their schoolwork at home they can benefit from the equivalent of roughly an extra year's schooling. Dumfries & Galloway Council is supporting this new drive by encouraging parents and children to work together at home on ICT projects using Textease.

Dumfries & Galloway's ICT Development Officers have also developed Qict, a region-wide ICT training scheme and qualification based around use of Textease Studio Plus. Kate Johnson, explains, "Qict offers all teachers and support staff the opportunity to gain a qualification that certifies their ICT skills. Textease Studio Plus is the ICT tools suite that is used across all primary schools and it is imperative that all staff know how to make the most of the software for their pupils. Having the Community @ Home licence has enabled us to offer this course as staff can work towards the



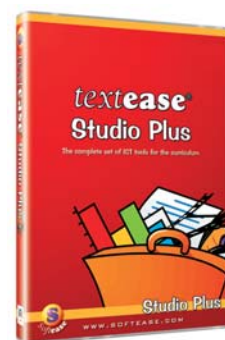
qualification both at home and at school."

The region already has nearly 300 school staff and teachers registered for Qict which will start in Autumn 2004. The assessment for the qualification involves a series of knowledge and skills tests as well as assessment on using ICT in the classroom. One innovative aspect of this qualification is that the pupils also get to rate their teachers performance.

Will Clark concluded, "The Community @ Home licence will enable us to advance our use of ICT in schools throughout the region. It will offer teachers and pupils cohesion in the software packages they can use at school and at home. We look forward to introducing this into schools over the coming year and also seeing the progression of the Qict programme."

Nick Walker, Managing Director, Softease, commented, "We developed the Community @ Home licence with the intention of opening up the opportunity for Textease Studio Plus to be used at home as well as in schools. We welcome Dumfries & Galloway's decision to introduce the licence across the region and are pleased that the software and accompanying licence has enabled them to launch an innovative training programme and qualification. We hope that other authorities will realise the benefits that the Community @ Home licence can bring to their schools."

Products used in this case study:



Textease Studio Plus

For further information visit www.softease.com.

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Inspiring creativity and excellence through ICT