

Name of school **Walton Le Dale High School**  
Post code **PR56RN**  
School URN **119743**  
Head teacher **Mr. J. Harris**  
Assessor **Gavin Hawkins**  
Moderator **Richard Allen**  
Date of assessment **21 October, 2021**

## Focus elements

Leadership and Management  
Teaching and Learning  
Assessment

## Visit agenda

This report is based on a virtual assessment visit rather than a full report following a visit, due to rising Covid infection rates. The agenda was therefore amended accordingly to ensure that online meetings could be held with key stakeholders.

### Virtual Assessment Visit Agenda

09.15 - Introductions and discussion with HT and Subject Leader (and possibly Governor if available)

Leadership and Management issues:

The vision and whole-school development;  
ICT innovation and its impact;  
The impact of ICT on working practices;  
Monitoring and evaluation.

Interviews:

Opportunities to talk to a representative group of staff and a group of pupils.

10.30 - Pupils

Examples of work of which they are particularly proud, how they did it and why;

Digital Safeguarding

How they use EdTech within school, how they acquire skills and how they know they are making progress

How could their experience in school be even better?

11.00 - Staff:

Curriculum, assessment and impact:

How EdTech capability is developed and assessed;

Target setting and meeting pupils' needs;

Impact of innovations and developments on classroom practice and provision;

Learning beyond the school day

11.30 - Opportunity to look at school resources, e.g.

School Improvement Plan

EdTech Action Plan

Examples of planning, cross-curricular planning, and assessment processes

Tracking systems and the use of assessment data

Technology across the school to support business processes.

12.00 - Feedback

## Commentary on assessment

### Vision, leadership and organisational management

The school vision is clear that technology is essential to teaching and learning and school business processes. Leaders are determined that students should benefit from the innovative use of education technology to ensure improved outcomes. The vision is written to ensure that education technology is embedded across the curriculum and all staff are supported to become confident users within their subject area. Pilot projects, such as the implementation of OneNote, are encouraged by senior leaders with the impact monitored and evaluated prior to scaling and rolling out across school. The impact of subject leadership within the management of education technology is highly significant. The subject leader has worked diligently to support the embedding of curriculum activities, provide guidance, support online learning, and identify professional development opportunities. At a time of significant development, innovation and challenge, the benefits to the school of a highly skilled subject leader, supported by other key staff, have been hugely beneficial.

Students are extremely confident and proficient in using technology both within and beyond school. They are able to identify opportunities where technology enhances their work and can explain the benefits of online and independent learning.

In discussions with stakeholders concerning the challenges associated with impact of the pandemic, the recurring view was that the school had been able to turn the difficulties teaching remotely into creative and positive learning experiences. One of the legacies of lockdowns has been the embedding of tools such as Teams and Office365, which were used extensively, but are now critical to the functioning of the school and extending learning beyond the school day.

Digital safeguarding and online safety is a strength. Teachers have received effective professional development and as a result are able to model safe behaviour and can recognise students who may be at risk. Online safety is part of the Computing and PSHE programmes of study and opportunities are found across the wider curriculum to reinforce messages and promote safe use. The school partners with another local secondary school to provide advice and guidance for parents who can also obtain online safety advice and updated information from the school, including regular briefings from the Head of IT, and external partners. The school uses CPOMS (a software solution for monitoring safeguarding, wellbeing, and pastoral issues) to record and flag safeguarding concerns. The respective policies are detailed and thorough and are reviewed regularly in line with changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education and other good practice guidance.

A high proportion of students have access to an appropriate device and connectivity at home; however, the school provides loan devices for those students who do not currently have home access. The school views this as essential to the continuity of learning and can provide examples of students who are more engaged in learning due to home access and the provision of web-based resources which can be accessed at home. A member of staff from the Modern Foreign Languages department explained how students were learning additional languages, beyond those offered within school, as they could access resources such as "Linguascope" which they could access independently.

The school benefits enormously from a skilled and enthusiastic Computing subject department who are keen to support other colleagues embed the use of computing skills within other subject areas. All the staff interviewed were extremely appreciative of the support they had received from computing specialists for their support with both online learning and applying skills across other subjects. This ensures that the skills, knowledge and understanding gained within discrete Computing sessions can be reinforced within other subject areas.

The budget for education technology is aligned to a fully costed digital strategy, covering both curriculum and non-curriculum requirements. School leaders are clear that technology, when allocated and used effectively, can have significant financial benefits and the four-year budgetary cycle ensures both continuity, and the opportunity to invest in new and emerging technologies. This guarantees that education technology is high profile and meets the needs of the curriculum and business processes.

## Provision of ICT; quality and range

The school is extremely well resourced, with sufficient devices, specialist ICT rooms and appropriate peripherals, such as visualisers, microphones, and cameras for students to access the full curriculum and to apply computing skills within other subject areas. All teaching spaces are equipped with new interactive touch screens and staff spoke of the importance of having clear display technology for use within lessons. The school is continually reviewing the provision and exploring new and emerging technologies. Recent examples of new equipment include a laser-cutter and 3D printer to produce models and prototypes of student designs. Teachers have access to their own laptops and all curriculum resources, activities and content is available through the school's Office365 online learning environment. This is fully embedded and supports all curriculum areas, both within and beyond school. Microsoft Teams and OneNote is used regularly for setting assignments and for delivering remote live lessons, when required. All members of staff and students have full access to Office365 tools and students are encouraged to install the tools on home and personal devices as part of the school licence agreement. Subject departments make full use of Office365 and "Class Charts" to regularly set assignments, share resources and homework tasks. Departments have also used subject specific funding to procure applications and software which are relevant to their priorities and regularly use applications such as Hegarty Maths, Doodlelearn, Blooket and Kahoot.

During discussions with specific members of staff, from a range of subject departments, it is clear that staff value the investment that is being made in devices and applications to engage students and to raise standards. Within Modern Foreign Languages multimedia texts are commonplace and the curriculum is online for students to access within and beyond school. A range of online applications are used across all year groups, and resources are made available from sites such as BBC Bitesize and Oak Academy. The teacher spoke of the importance of using sound files within language teaching and how access to resources on Teams had "revolutionised teaching and learning", as students were gaining a greater understanding of language learning by deepening their learning beyond school.

In Design & Technology, a member of staff spoke of the importance of being able to model and demonstrate effective design techniques using the class visualiser. He explained how techniques were modelled using the visualiser, with screen recordings created and uploaded to his YouTube channel which students could access outside of the lesson to develop their skills further. This is clearly having an impact on outcomes as students are refining skills beyond school, which lead to greater gains within the lesson.

A teacher of Humanities spoke of the impact that technology is having on "bridging the gap in learning" as remote learning leads to opportunities for continuous provision. Microsoft Teams is enabling instant and dynamic feedback rather than more traditional methods of assessment such as the marking of exercise books after the lesson. This allows for misconceptions to be addressed during the lesson and for examples of good practice from students to be shared instantly, something that was previously difficult to achieve.

Opportunities for supporting SEND students with accessing the curriculum are well developed. Accessibility tools such as consistent fonts and background screen colours are deployed across all school devices to ensure that all students can access resources and applications. Specialist resources such as IDL Literacy are used as a multi-sensory approach to support learners with dyslexia and other learning difficulties to increase reading and spelling outcomes. Special arrangements, such as the use of Exam Reader (scanning pens) are used for students during exams to ensure that reading difficulties are not a barrier in other subjects.

Within the Library Resource Centre, books have been available remotely to students using the ePlatform system, which provides access to a library of digital and audio books. This was as a direct impact of Covid restrictions as the library had to close and, whilst the school was able to deliver books to student homes, it was felt that a more sustainable approach should be sought. Many staff spoke of the impact of ePlatform, with the Head of English describing how the platform provided access to a vast range of both classic and contemporary fiction which can be used to broaden reading opportunities for students. From the data available within the system, it's clear that this is highly valued by students. Other tools such as Bedrock Learning is available to students which develops the use of academic vocabulary and tracks progress to identify next steps for language acquisition. This has the potential to have a significant impact on student outcomes as the acquisition of academic vocabulary is critical to accessing aspects of the curriculum.

In addition to devices, equipment and applications, the school is also fortunate to have several staff that have undertaken qualifications within the Microsoft Innovative Educator (MIE) programme. Staff that have completed the qualifications and digital badges are not solely confined to the Computing department, as staff within other

subject departments, such as Maths and Science have also undertaken the training. This is a real strength of the school as it raises the profile of Microsoft tools, which are the core applications used in school, and provides the opportunity for sharing examples of teaching and learning with technology across school.

A member of staff within the Science department, spoke of the importance of the MIE programme to her practice and how belonging to the MIE community had benefitted the school through access to online courses, resources, and advice from colleagues in other schools. She has led Enrichment Days using Micro:bit for problem solving activities and has had the opportunity to share her practice by presenting at events such as BETT.

Professional development opportunities are essential to the continued high profile of education technology at Walton-le-Dale. The senior leader responsible for CPD spoke of how a recent staff survey showed significant growth in confidence because of a commitment to CPD. All staff can produce digital resources and make them available online. They are linking resources and activities within Teams and value the digital work that students create within OneNote. This commitment to developing a community of practice within school will undoubtedly lead to continued outstanding practice with education technology.

Technical support within school is highly effective, with disruption to teaching and learning minimised. The school benefits from a broadband connection which is sufficient to meet the needs of staff and students. Filtering is through NetSweeper which provides safe, secure, and reliable access and AV Tutor is used for remote access and control of student devices. Filtering policies and whitelisted sites can all be modified by the Network Manager. The school has a robust WiFi network which all staff and students connect to through school devices and a safe guest WiFi for visitors. WiFi provision is regularly reviewed and upgraded across the school when considering new purchases or to meet greater demand in specific zones.

## Demonstrating impact on learning and teaching

This school has a robust approach to the monitoring and evaluation of education technology, including cost, impact on student outcomes, effect on teacher workload and business processes. Evaluation outcomes are reported regularly to governors who are supportive of the vision yet challenge senior leaders to continue to develop the provision further. In discussion with senior leaders, they described how ICT was fully immersed within the School Improvement Plan for teaching and learning and should support whole-school developments and not be bolted-on.

Technology is having a significant impact on the development of young people as opportunities are found for students to become independent in their use and extend their learning beyond the school day. Activities are planned which require students to use technology for real purposes, such as design activities, problem solving, or using the technology as a communication tool.

As students move through the school, appropriate applications are used which link discrete computing teaching to other aspects of the curriculum, thus impacting significantly on student's understanding of concepts relevant to their work across the curriculum. The link to cross-curricular activities is essential as this provides a real context for activities and provides deeper opportunities.

Students were able to explain how they used online tools such as Microsoft Teams, Class Charts, OneNote and DoodleLearn and how the tools integrated with each other and when each of them was used. The students also spoke about how their parents were benefiting from having parental logins to the various tools and how they felt that their parents were now more involved in their learning and able to support them more effectively. Staff also articulated the value of these approaches to engaging with parents, as they felt that parents were more able to engage with the school quickly through digital solutions, rather than wait for physical meetings.

The use of technology to inform and support learning is evident and teachers spoke enthusiastically about the impact that digital applications can have on their own working practices. The use of Teams and OneDrive for sharing documents, staff CPD podcasts for developing skills and confidence and Class Charts for parental engagement were all seen as real strides forward that have a measurable impact on outcomes. During discussion with teaching staff, it was clear that education technology is not seen as an "add-on" but as an essential tool which can transform learning if used correctly. One member of staff described how, when students are immersed in technology, "they don't realise they are learning".

The school has invested in software and applications for supporting pastoral and attendance aims, including CPOMS and Class Charts which enable tracking of individual student targets, achievements, and concerns. These applications ensure that teaching and learning time is maximised by replacing traditional methods of recording interventions with digital ones, an example of which is the use of Class Charts for recording individual lesson attendance rather than afternoon registration periods. Staff spoke of the importance of having access to dynamic data which assists with reporting to parents, identifying students for interventions or responding to safeguarding concerns quickly and efficiently.

The school demonstrates a real desire to ensure that technology enhanced learning plays a full role in broadening experiences for young people and enhancing pedagogy. The willingness for staff to take risks and to be supported by subject leaders and senior management, leads to tangible gains for students. The enthusiasm of staff is leading to the development of highly skilled teachers and non-teachers who are able to find genuine curriculum opportunities for using ICT to transform learning. As technology develops further, and the school continues to find new curriculum opportunities, then the gains from a highly motivated workforce, innovative and supportive leadership, and enthusiastic and willing students will lead to even greater outcomes.

## Areas of strength/outstanding practice within the context of the Self-review Framework

Senior and subject leadership is a real strength. There is a shared and devolved responsibility for the vision and ICT has a high profile within the school.

The use of online applications to support teaching and learning, both within and beyond school, is leading to improved outcomes as students become increasingly more independent learners.

The school is very well resourced with a wide range of devices, peripherals, software, and applications, all of which are carefully selected to ensure they effectively support teaching and learning.

Teachers are invested in and valued through a commitment to professional development underpinned by a clear vision, which this year has a focus of "Blended Learning". Staff are increasingly confident and can identify effective opportunities for ICT to impact on student outcomes.

Education technology is used effectively and imaginatively across all curriculum areas. Teachers are encouraged to explore new approaches to teaching and learning within their subject specialism.

Digital Safeguarding is very strong. Policies and procedures are consistent across school and students understand what constitutes safe behaviour. Parents are supported with resources, guidance, and regular advice from school leaders.

Engaging with parents using appropriate software and applications has a positive impact on student outcomes. Parents are fully informed regarding their child's progress.

SEND students benefit from accessibility tools, consistent fonts, and appropriate resources for developing literacy and language skills.

## The future

Explore opportunities for sharing the outstanding practice within school, by offering out-reach support to local and regional schools and by providing resources and professional development.

Continue to develop the use of Teams and OneNote across all subject areas to develop a portfolio of good practice which can be shared widely with other schools looking to develop their online provision.

Build upon the current good practice within STEM to identify local, national, and international opportunities for problem-based activities, such as Citizen Science, Apps for Good or T3 Alliance.

Identify staff from additional subject areas who could become Microsoft Innovative Educator's within their department.

Consider applying for the Naace 3rd Millennium Learning Award which will provide examples of good practice for other schools.

## Assessor recommendation: **Threshold reached**

Date received **26 October, 2021**

Date agreed by Naace **28 October, 2021**