

The Home Access programme: Information for school governors

HOME ACCESS

NEXT GENERATION
LEARNING



What is Home Access and why is it important?

'Home access' means access to technology and connectivity at home. Evidence shows that children with home access to a computer are more confident and capable technology users, are more likely to gain over five GCSEs and one A-level with improved grades and are more independent learners overall.

Home access can also help to increase parental awareness, interest and involvement in their child's learning with schools able to update them on their child's progress more easily via online reporting.

What is the Home Access programme?

The Home Access programme is the government scheme to reduce the technology gap between varying income groups that leaves some children at a disadvantage in their education. It provides eligible children in state-maintained education in England with grants to buy a computer and internet access to support their learning from home.

Families across England can now apply for grant funding and the programme aims to benefit more than 270,000 households that currently lack access by March 2011. Recognising that some learners require additional support, assistive technology is also available.

How can schools get involved in the Home Access programme?

Schools can help raise awareness of Home Access Grants and make sure families know how to apply. With more and more pupils and families online schools can:

- set homework. Internet access at home means access to a wealth of information and learning resources that can be used for revision, research and practice
- communicate with parents. Electronic communications, provide opportunities for saving time and money on letters home and school newsletters. Online reporting provides parents with secure online access to information on their child's progress, achievement, attendance and behaviour. It enables parents to engage with and support their child's learning
- provide pupils with resources and tools for learning. Pupils can log in to the school's virtual learning environment (VLE) or learning platform to access multiple services at home. For example, pupils might access learning materials, store work and notes in their own personal learning space, submit homework and interact with other pupils and teachers.
- ensuring your school meets its obligations to provide parents with online reports by September 2012 for primary schools and September 2010 for secondary schools. For more information about online reporting see: [http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=oe&catcode=ss_es_fam_02&rid=16432]
- advocating the effective use of the school learning platform along with increased levels of home access for a more personalised, inclusive curriculum and to get parents more involved in their child's learning. For more information about learning platforms see: [http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=lv&catcode=ss_lv_lp_03]
- discussing how home access can help to provide families with access to extended services in line with the recommendations of Every Child Matters
- encouraging your school to effectively monitor how technology is used by signing up to the Becta ICT self review framework. For more information on the self review framework, visit: [<http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=srf>]

How can school governors get involved?

You can play an important role in helping deliver the benefits of home access for your school and families by:

- carefully considering the school's ICT strategy. Assume that most pupils have access to a computer and the internet at home
- talking to your head teacher about how the Home Access programme supports narrowing the gap in achievement between free school meals pupils and others
- requesting regular reports on the levels of home access amongst pupils

Home Access Grant helpline

Call: 0333 200 1004*

Minicom: 0121 748 1471

Support the programme
www.homeaccess.org.uk

Realise the benefits
www.becta.org.uk/homeaccess

*Calls may be monitored or recorded to maintain high levels of security and quality of service. Calls to this number cost no more than a call to a 01 or 02 number and count towards inclusive minutes in the same way as 01 and 02 calls. These rules apply to calls from any type of line including mobile, BT, other fixed line or payphone.