

# Assistive Technology - making it easier for everyone to learn

HOME ACCESS

NEXT GENERATION LEARNING



Home Access is the government programme that will help to ensure that more children in state-maintained education in England have access to technology at home to support learning, by providing them with grant funding to purchase a computer and internet package.

The Home Access programme began its phased rollout across England in January 2010. Initially the programme will target children in years 3 to 9 inclusive and will benefit more than 270,000 households that currently lack access by March 2011.

## Supporting all learners

Home Access packages are designed to be inclusive and are built with every child's needs in mind, including those who may need Assistive Technology support. A key offering of the Home Access programme is the inclusion of Assistive Technology software on every computer, which is a great learning tool for all the family and will help overcome some of the obstacles that prevent some children using ICT and getting online. The programs included in the preinstalled Assistive Technology suite are:

- TextHelp Read & Write, for text to speech and word prediction
- I-Zoom, for screen magnification
- Mindview, for mind mapping.

Eligible low-income families with children who have additional Assistive Technology requirements can also apply for specialist hardware to help them gain access to the

internet. Depending on the requirements of the individual, two different packages are available; Home Access Assistive Technology package 1 or package 2.

## Assistive Technology package 1

In addition to the Assistive Technology software that all the family will benefit from, Assistive Technology package 1 is designed for children who experience physical barriers to using a computer or getting online. Through the supply of extra hardware, applicants can receive adapted mice, alternative keyboards or keyboard stickers as part of their Home Access computer and internet package. Easy to set up and operate, the hardware means that children and their families will be able to fully engage with learning at home.

## Assistive Technology package 2

Recognising that there are children with more profound needs, Assistive Technology package 2 has been developed to meet their own specific set of requirements. From Summer 2010, individually configured Home Access packages with added Assistive Technology hardware and software will be made available to children meeting specific eligibility criteria. Families applying for this service will be contacted by a specialist evaluation officer to determine the most suitable Assistive Technology for their child, which once agreed, will be delivered directly to their door. As with all Home Access packages, service and support is offered as standard.

## Benefits for all

Becta and the Home Access programme are also collaborating with key stakeholders in the Assistive Technology community, local authorities and other third sector partners to maximise the benefits of Home Access Assistive Technology provision. In doing so the programme aims to narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from different income groups and with different needs.



"This scheme has brought other children with special needs not only online with other children, but in line with them as well!"  
Parent

Home Access Grant helpline  
Call: 0333 200 1004\*

Minicom: 0121 748 1471

Support the programme  
[www.homeaccess.org.uk](http://www.homeaccess.org.uk)

Realise the benefits  
[www.becta.org.uk/homeaccess](http://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.