

An Essential Guide to RiskIT Week



supported by



A Naace Publication by Abderrahmane (Ben) Benjeddi
Series Editors: Mark Chambers, Dr Carol Porter, Tim Scratcherd

Foreword from the Sponsor

NCS Technology provides guaranteed data and network installations, IPCCTV, wireless technology, electrical solutions including managed LED lighting and Audio Visual systems for a wide spectrum of clients across London, Kent and the Home Counties.

NCS is delighted to support the RiskIT Strategy, as a great way for schools to learn how to help all teachers get value from their investment with us.

Here at NCS, we have been supporting the education industry with our expert advice, service and the latest technology for more than 29 years. This means that we allow teachers to focus on what they are good at, teaching.

We make a point of getting to know our clients and their establishments so that we can recommend products and systems that suit their needs, rather than a 'one size fits all' solution with scope for future expansion built into all the projects we undertake; one reason why our clients tend to stay with us for years. Find out more about us at www.ncstechnology.co.uk

Vince O'Toole | Managing Director

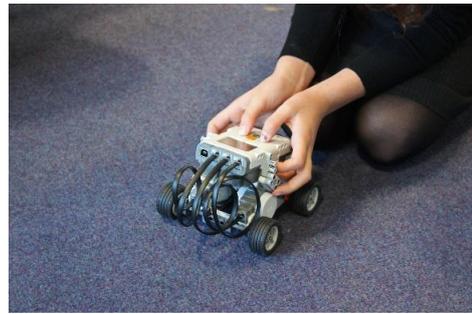
About the Author

Mr Abderrahmane Benjeddi (aka Ben) has worked in education for 20 years. He has covered many areas of responsibility within the schools where he worked, being especially tasked to raise standards through design, planning and implementation of ICT and staff ICT training. He developed the RiskITWeek strategy as a means to raising standards. The project was later shared with other schools. It was nominated twice and short listed once for the Naace Impact Award.

Ben has been asked to speak at major events such as BETT Show, the Naace Annual Conference, NEC, the QEII Conference Centre, EIS Annual Conference and others, where he has shared the RiskIT strategy with numerous educationalists.

Summary

With more and more technology being poured into schools, the question remains: what to do with it all? Can this technology influence schools' expectations or change direction? How can schools take advantage of all this? Sometimes we assume that teachers have some kind of innate gift and affinity with technology that just happens overnight.



For a successful implementation of ICT across the whole school, I believe there are three areas to be looked at:

Good and reliable ICT systems (hardware and software). You need to have a well-designed infrastructure with good quality devices.

Appropriate use of ICT. In many schools the use of technology is basic and monotonous. There are still some schools where the Interactive White Board (IWB) is being used as a projection screen, and even where it is used as an IWB, not all the features get used.

But in my view – **and most importantly** – to complete the picture you need to have **creativity** and **innovation** by the **whole school**; you can only get this if you have confident teachers and supportive leadership that lead to motivated students and interesting lessons. So how can you acquire that?

RiskIT Week is a strategy that has been tried and tested by many schools in and outside the UK. It allows schools to have a holistic approach to training. RiskITWeek is the best way of delivering training, up-skilling staff and sharing good practice. The fact is that there are simply too few days in the year allocated for staff training. Further, sending them out to attend courses is not only costly but teachers often return to school lacking the confidence to apply the ideas acquired (theory) from the training into a classroom environment (reality).

'Initiatives such as RiskIt weeks are creating the conditions for staff and students to work in new ways. The focus on trying new things with technology, and, for example, allowing students to teach teachers, means that staff and students are becoming more open to new ways of working.'

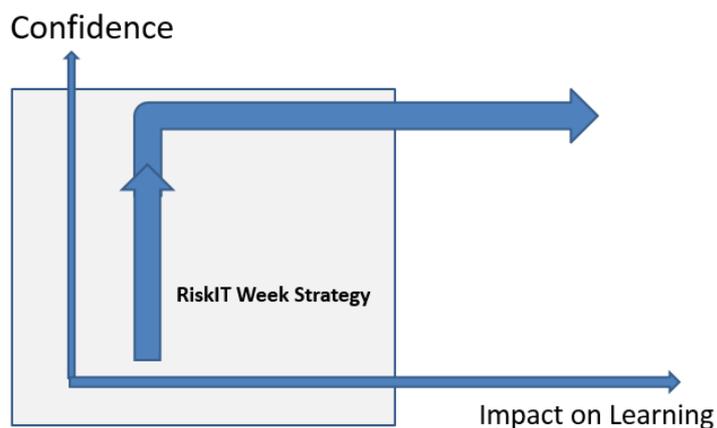
Ofsted Report September 2012, page 6 Parag. 3

Introduction

The RiskIT Strategy gives teachers an opportunity and framework within which they can experiment with new technologies and ideas that they have not tried before – in a real lesson and with a class of their choice. Success or failure of the activity is not relevant; the main purpose of the Risk Taking is to throw themselves in the deep-end, knowing there is someone with them to support them and that they are not being judged. Just like a child learning to swim or a teenager playing a computer game, if you fail, pick yourself up and try again – as long as you learn from your mistakes.

Staff need to be reassured that taking part in the RiskIT project does not mean abandoning the content of their lesson. As a matter of fact they should try as much as possible to stick to their curriculum but with the added twist of the innovative delivery.

The RiskIT strategy focuses on improving teachers' confidence and creativity. Once that is achieved the impact on learning becomes inevitable.



Key Concepts

The RiskIT strategy is about **all staff using ICT appropriately and innovatively as a means to improve teaching and learning.**

If there is to be a change in the use of ICT in schools, it should be done as a **whole school**, with the **full support and involvement of the leadership team** including the head and even governors where possible.

RiskIT is simply a **strategy** anyone can apply within their school with guaranteed positive outcomes if followed properly. Staff and students enjoy it, and most importantly it has a positive impact on learning.

RiskIT is for **one or two weeks** where the whole school takes part in delivering the **teaching and learning of their subject through ICT.**

There are only two requirements. It needs to be **the first time a particular piece of ICT is used**, and schools must be **willing to receive visitors** during that lesson.

Key Methodologies

A school can join the National RiskITWeek run by Naace. Usually it takes place in October or November each year.

It is essential that there is a coordinator or a project leader to lead the event.

The following steps should help you get organised and ready to change your school for the better.

Before the start of the project

The coordinator/project leader should start preparing at least three to four weeks ahead, depending on the size of the school, access to staff (teaching and non-teaching), and the leadership team.

Address the following points.

Decide on the week or two when you will be running the project.

Do lots of advertising, take any opportunity to sell the idea to staff and the leadership team, especially the head teacher.

Get the Leadership team on board. They have to be convinced otherwise the strategy will not work.

Teachers should provide the coordinator with a brief description of the RiskIT activity along with lesson time and class details.

A timetable of all those who are taking part should be made and advertised throughout the school, and sent repeatedly to all staff in order to generate interest.

The coordinator should allocate lessons for the Leadership team to visit for which they will have an "Opinion Sheet" provided. The leadership team plays a major role in all this; during the RiskITWeek they will make short visits to the sessions and give "positive only" feedback; it is important not to be judgmental or critical.

Technical support must be allocated wherever required throughout the session: this is very important as the support will make sure all the equipment is working properly and sort out any glitches as they happen.

Remember teachers are there to teach and not to deal with technical problems.

Students will be informed of the event and their cooperation is required as well as their opinion at the end of the session; again only positive feedback is allowed.

Staff can ask for help or training prior to the lesson, however they must use hardware or software with the class that they have not used before. From the students' point of view, they see a role model: the teacher is learning something new by trial and error.

It is essential to give strong supportive guidance on the **intellectual property** and the **appropriateness** of all materials teachers gather when providing resources.

During the RiskITWeek

Teachers need to be made aware they are taking part in something important, something that will change the way they teach forever (they are taking risk). They also need to know they are being appreciated in the efforts they are making to improve teaching and learning in their class.

To achieve any of that, they must work in a judgement-free environment; they need to trust that whoever is visiting them will only look at the positive side of things, as in the spirit of RiskITWeek, building teachers' confidence is paramount. Criticising the teachers taking the risk with new technology will only send them back into their shell – possibly never to venture in the use of technology again.

How can you keep everybody's interest high?

For the role of the Leadership Team, all people taking part in RiskIT must be visited by a member of the Leadership Team. In order to ensure this happens, visits must be time-tabled in advance. There is no time limit for the visit. However five or ten minutes would be good.

For other teachers, it is a good idea to encourage other teachers to make a quick visit too. Again five or ten minutes would be ample.

For technicians, the school technical support should be booked in advance to support the lesson although some preparation and planning could lessen the need during the lesson.

For students, a little introduction to explain what is happening will go a long way. Some students may even be encouraged to provide some technical help if and when required. Some schools make good use of Digital Leaders. Please refer to Naace's separate eGuide about Digital Leaders.

Examples of activities and responses during a RiskIT week follow.

"Used the active remote devices to answer questions from which the students work out the lesson objectives. Students were very motivated and eager; all were "glued" to the answers and loved seeing their names and answer times on the screen. Lots of pure excitement from 60 students! The right answers coming up on the screen meant that the teacher could pick out students who gave correct answer and ask for their reasons; this in turn led to some discussion and spontaneous questioning by students."

Teacher comment, two classes, English, Northfleet School

"The girls reported that they loved the activity, felt they had completed more work and learned more than normal because they were totally engaged and due to the pairings received instant help on topics they had forgotten or misunderstood. Rather than 'not another practice paper' the girls launched themselves into the activity without complaint and with a sense of fun. Comments such as 'Can we do this again, Miss', 'That was good fun' and 'That lesson went quickly' indicated that students felt it was a worthwhile activity."

Teacher comment on student response, Maths, Northfleet School

Documentation is one of the most important parts of the project. Make sure that every RiskIT lesson is captured in a variety of ways. These can be

- Photographs
- Videos
- Interviews, especially with students, on video or audio only
- Opinion sheets (see website for examples) from the teacher, the visitors and from a sample of students.



Capturing activity must be done during the week and not a long time after. You need to gather all that while it is still fresh in everyone's heads and before they over analyse their performance and start looking at the things which did not work so well.

Teachers who decide to join the project **at the last minute** should be allowed to do so and treated exactly the same as all the other teachers in the project.

A valuable means of keeping people motivated and aware of the project, is the **timetable**, which needs to be updated and emailed to **all staff**. You may find that some members of the Leadership Team have forgotten who they should visit or when. The timetable can be used as a reminder in this case.

Teachers who are taking part in the project can be encouraged to repeat the same adventure with other classes. This way their confidence will grow and so will their style of teaching.

After the RiskITWeek

The week of the project may have come to an end, but the risk-taking it promoted is just the beginning. Teachers can transfer their skills to other classes and build on it: tweak, refine and perfect.

Little things matter.

The Leadership Team should **publicly thank the staff** who took part, possibly during a staff briefing. This can be very rewarding in both short and long term; it also builds staff confidence.

You may also use some of the material collected (photos, clips etc.) and **create a DVD** to give to staff as a thank you. This in itself will create interest and help recruit more participants next time around. Special edition newsletter: while respecting eSafety, an article with some pictures can make parents proud of their school.

Pictures **can go on display** around school to celebrate the use of technology.

Share the work through Naace and get rewarded in many ways: Open Badge Academy, a certificate for the school as well as a chance to win a prize such as iPad, laptop, camera, depending on the technology of the day.

RiskITWeek is, in a way, **an ice breaker**; so teachers who took part in it need to make appropriate and creative use of technology part of their everyday classroom practice.

CPD days can be an opportunity for staff to share their experiences and plan for future opportunities and events.

September is the best time to start preparing for next year's RiskITWeek, and one way of making sure the school is willing to adopt this CPD strategy is to put it on the calendar.

RiskITWeek should inspire the school to continually upskill staff and challenge them in creating interesting and rewarding lessons. To achieve that goal, schools need to embed the strategy in their curriculum planning. As it affects all areas of the school, there should be a coordinator who also should **be a member of Naace**. The latter will provide material, support and guidance as well as gifts and certification; the school will also be entered for a prize which is usually presented at the Naace annual conference and paid for by our sponsor. Here is an example of a later activity inspired by RiskITWeek.

"A French and a History teacher collaborated and did a re-enactment of the battle of Normandy. They filmed the whole thing in the school field with students on both sides of the

school field lead at each end by the two teachers in period army uniforms. Then using the green screen, students had to read their scripts about the historical event.”

Northfleet School

Key Outcomes

The following are just some of the benefits that can be achieved as a result of a successful RiskITWeek project.

- Interesting lessons • Enthusiastic students • Reach **all** students • Save time • Achieve more • Teachers as learners • learners as teachers • active learners • technology as a means to a goal • innovative ideas • highly skilled and confident staff.

Here are some ways schools have approached RiskIT and benefited. There are links to more examples in the resources.

“RiskIT has been part of our annual programme of professional development provision for the last three years and fulfils a specific role for us. It provides the opportunity to bring our ongoing developments with learning technologies sharply into focus, once a year, and it provides an annual reminder that we all have something to contribute to our collective learning.”

Ian Guest, Head of ELearning, Sheffield High School

“Overall I feel the project was successful with many staff trying something new. Bookings have continued with the iPads in particular and key members of staff who were involved have continued to think creatively by utilising ICT in innovative ways in their lessons since then. I would recommend RiskIT to other schools and plan to include it in our college calendar next year.”

*Nikki Cooper, Programme Leader – ICT Across the Curriculum
High Tunstall College of Science*

“RiskIT week’s success at Arden has been that staff are encouraged to try something new and they are also given ideas on what that might be or they can find their own subject specific ones if they want. They are offered support from other colleagues or the Digital Leaders before the weeks to prepare if they need it and also during the activity. The RiskIT leaflets from the first year are available alongside guides to using different technologies on our staff VLE dashboard where we have a page for advice and to share ideas on ‘TEL’ (Technology Enhanced Learning).”

Liz Allton, Assistant Principal

Next Steps

Each school is different in the level of experience of its staff with ICT. One of the key principles of RiskIT is for the school to know its strength and build on it. This could be in line with the school development plan i.e.: independent learning, questioning, creative thinking, collaborative learning, and so on.

“Our early RiskIT years were not based on Themes, at the time the focus was on building confidence amongst staff and therefore they were free to choose whatever they were comfortable with, our role was to support them and provide technical support. Based on the theme selected, I can then put some practical ideas on what staff might use with their

students. Teachers could contribute or chose their own ideas/skills to creative lessons. The role of Heads of Department is crucial”

A Benjeddi

After evaluating the success of the project, the RiskIT coordinator along with the curriculum leader can make necessary tweaks in preparation for the next one. If used properly and regularly the strategy can lead to fundamental culture changes in a school.

Some Teaching Resources

RiskITWeek Website <http://riskitweek.com/> - resources, case studies and advice to get you started on your RiskIT journey.

Join Naace, and find out more about our National Conference, at www.naace.co.uk

Northfleet School for Girls Ofsted Report is at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/118788>

The Naace Open Badge Academy is at <https://www.openbadgeacademy.com/naaceopenbadges>

[High Tunstall College of Science](#)

[Arden Academy](#)

South Green Junior School, Billericay: <http://ow.ly/EMoq303xFbV>

Pantana School, Bangkok: <http://ow.ly/3H9u303xFpG>

Liz Allton in Staffroom: <http://staffrm.io/@lzsaddler/2UTlqEURDv>

Naace has produced this series of Essential Guides, or “eGuides” in response to an identified gap in teachers’ CPD. That is, how to use technology creatively and effectively to make significant impacts on learning and standards in other curriculum areas.

Naace believes that technology has a major role to play in raising standards in learning across the curriculum, provided teachers know how to adapt their pedagogies in order to maximise the potential gains offered by learning technologies.

Sponsored by NCS Technology

Naace has a network of qualified associates who can support your school. For further information contact:
naacepde@naace.co.uk

Cover artwork by Gaia Technologies

Having read this “eGuide”, you may wish to register with The Naace Open Badge Academy for Open Badge CPD accreditation

Copyright ©Naace August 2016. All rights reserved.