



Testimonial Kew Woods Primary 2011

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	Question	Answer
1	<p>Please give some background on yourself and your school</p>	<p>Kew Woods is a medium sized primary school with 300 children on the roll. We have just become a 2 form intake school with 60 children starting this September. We also have a Nursery on site with 26 places available during each session. We were outstanding in all areas on a last OFSTED report. We pride ourselves at being at the forefront of ICT development and have a vast array of software that the children used. We have made sure that the children in the Foundation Stage have a wide selection of software, covering all areas of learning and have used software from Q+D Multimedia for a number of years, before able to provide home access for the children with Busy Things</p>

2	How long has your school been using busythings.co.uk?	We have been using Busy Things since it was launched by Q+D Multimedia. Parents have had access to Busy Things since September 2009 so we are now in the 3rd year of use.
3	Who uses the product and how often?	<p>Busy Things is used by children in Nursery and Reception as well as children in Key Stage 1. In Nursery and Reception Busy Things is used during continuous provision on both the class computers and the Interactive whiteboard. In Key Stage 1 we have a link on our network for when the children log in. In October 2010 we launched a new learning platform and have created a link on our class page so children can have access to Busy Things on there. This has been hugely popular to have Busy Things through a single sign in log in. Reception children have been able to log in and play Busy Things during ICT lessons. This has also enabled children from Year 1, 2 and 3 to have access at home to Busy Things It is only the start of the new academic year and the children have only been in for 6 full days and already Busy Things is the preferred choice for child initiated activities. It is so popular that there will be one child on the computer with 2 or 3 watching closely behind.</p>
4	How easy is the software to access?	<p>Busy Things has been easy to access. We started by giving parents log in to www.busythings.co.uk at home and still do this for Nursery and Reception parents, at the start of the academic year. Single sign on through our learning platform has increased the use of Busy Things, particularly at home. The children found it very easy to navigate around Busy Things and find activities that they like. Children enjoy finding activities by exploring the areas of learning but also use Easy Search to choose activities by recognising the icon that they want</p>

<p>5</p>	<p>Which activities have you mainly used and why?</p>	<p>All activities are used at Kew Woods and Busy Things covers all areas of learning which means it can be used to support Problem Solving Reasoning and Numeracy, Communication Language and Literacy as well as ICT skills (Knowledge and Understanding of the World) At the start of the academic year Reception teachers make good use of Knowledge and Understanding of the World activities to help children to develop their mouse skills. The activities here are perfect for this, including Street Scene, Dressing up box, Worm World and Colouring Book. As a teacher I find the phonics activities to be highly motivating for the children and they are crucial for helping to develop the important skills of Letters and Sounds, and support teaching in the daily phonics lesson. The games bring phonics to life and support those visual learners. My children have always loved Dog and Cat. Messy Letters is a particularly favourite of mine as it supports our teaching of how to form the letters. We introduced cursive writing at Kew Woods and Busy Things is one of the few packages that can show how cursive letters are formed. It works excellently on the Interactive Whiteboard to help children learn how to form their letters correctly. The fact that the Letters and Sounds games are customisable means that these activities can be used at an early age when teaching Letters and Sounds. As I have said the children happily explore all the content. Over the last academic year there is always a great deal of interest when new games are added to Busy Things. The children have often played the games before I have even seen them.</p>
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<p>6</p>	<p>Please give examples of how the content is used.</p>	<p>Busy Things can be used in many different ways. It can be used for whole class teaching to help develop Maths and Literacy skills. The excellent Letters and Sounds content is particularly great for this. This can be for whole class or small group work. As all content on Busy Things is developed with early years in mind, one of its major strengths is for continuous provision / child initiated activities in both the Nursery and Reception. The games are based on the principles of play, a key element of the Early Years curriculum, so children love to play the games, without really realising that they are learning at the same time. It has been very noticeable with our new Reception intake that they are very confident when using Busy Things on both the computers and Interactive Whiteboards. Children have clearly improved their mouse skills while playing Busy Things and are highly motivated to play the games. In our first lesson of the year in the ICT Suite our Reception children concentrated for a much longer period than normal while exploring different activities on Busy Things to develop their mouse skills. On the days when I have selected other software on the computers the children have been closing these down and logging onto Busy Things !!!!!</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>How does busythings compare to other similar products you have used or know about?</p>	<p>Busy Things is a great resource to have in school for children in the Early Years as all content by Q+D Multimedia is specifically aimed at the Early Years. This means that the games instantly gain the attention of the children, especially in Busy Things, as the world is alive with sounds, colours, animation and is also full of all the characters that children have come to love from using software packages – particularly Dog and Cat and the pink men! There are lots of other Early Years software out there but our children love Busy Things as it is so easy and intuitive for children to use. The majority of the games need little instruction so children are easily able to work out what they have to, even with new games that they have not seen before. This supports problem solving skills as children must work out what to do. The customisable options for the activities, especially Problem Solving Reasoning and Numeracy and Letters and Sounds is a great feature which a lot of other software packages do not have. Busy Things is also priced really competitively which means that it is affordable for schools, in times when there is a</p>

		<p>lot less funding around for ICT. A great advantage of Busy Things is that children are able to access it at home, as well as at school. This means that children are able to access games at home that they have been playing at school. The children are able to take part in meaningful, worthwhile activities at home where they are able to continue their learning – all in a fun environment – where they don't even realise that they are learning. This is highly popular with our parents, who often find it hard to find different websites for their children to use. It is a much better use of children's time than just playing on Cbeebies.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>To what extent does the product allow you to personalise learning?</p>	<p>* Favourites menu enables teacher to easily direct children to activities that they want the children to access first - also a good help for parents at home to see what activities to direct their child to. * It is very easy to set up different users in Busy Things which is really useful in setting up Busy Things for different age groups. This is particularly useful with the Letters and Sounds activities. All the content can be on for Year 1 and 2 children but activities that are too difficult are not appropriate for Nursery and Reception children can be switched off until they are ready to play the games. This feature works particularly well at the start of Reception as you begin the teaching of Letters and Sounds, for example you can teach s,a,t,p,i,n and just turn those letters on in the Letters and Sounds games. Therefore children are only coming across letters that they know. As more letters are taught the content can be turned on.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Do you have evidence that the product has a positive impact on learning?</p>	<p>I feel that there has been a positive impact in introducing Busy Things to the children at Kew Woods. The children love to play the games on the Interactive whiteboard and class computers and are therefore are interested, motivated and excited to learn. They are developing as independent learners and are becoming ever more skilful in navigating around the site. These skills are important as they grow older and move onto to using different software and other websites. Having Busy Things for home use as certainly enabled our parents to become more involved in what their children are doing in school. They are able to ensure that their children are involved in worthwhile</p>

		<p>learning activities when using the computer, and not always just on Cbeebies. Parents have been particularly keen with the great phonics resources in the Communication, Language and Literacy section. This has meant that children have been able to reinforce the key skills in this area – letter recognition, blending, segmenting and key words at home. In just the first week of school it is clear that children from our Nursery who have moved to Reception are confident users of Busy Things and can easily navigate around the site and find the games that they like to play. It has been the preferred choice for the class computers.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Did you deal with us personally when you set up your subscription? If so, how would you rate our customer care?</p>	<p>The level of support at Q+D Multimedia has been excellent and if you have any issue needing help with it is dealt with promptly and you are helped to resolve the issue. When we wanted to link directly to Busy Things through our new learning platform, the technical team were able to support me in this process I would highly recommend other schools subscribing to Busy Things.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the product?</p>	<p>Busy Things is an excellent product that forms a key resource in our Early Years provision at Kew Woods Primary School. Busy Things is jam packed with fun, motivating and highly meaningful activities that is helping children to become confident computer users. For children, some who have just turned 4, to be able to access Busy Things on their own at the start of the Reception year is a great example of this !! For Year 1 and 2 children it is still a great resources, and with home use, through a learning platform or Busy Things link, enables children to play fun learning games at home. Busy Things is also a safe environment for young children to be navigating around as parents would not want them on other gaming sites, for fear of pop ups and other links on there that may not be appropriate. What is great is that Busy Things is always being updated so it has not chance of becoming stale !! as the children and teachers !!! look forward to the start of a month when new games are added.</p>

Kew Woods Primary

Kew Woods is a medium sized primary school in Southport Mersyside. Here are pictures of the children using Busythings in nursery, reception and KS1 children.



Computer suite
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Computer suite
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Creating art for the busythings gallery
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Dressing the baby
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Choosing an activity
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Letters and Sounds – nonsense words
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Recognising and remembering
environmental sounds
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Recognising numerals
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



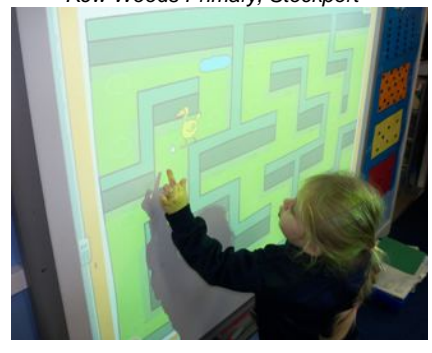
Graphemes and phonemes – sound
sorting
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



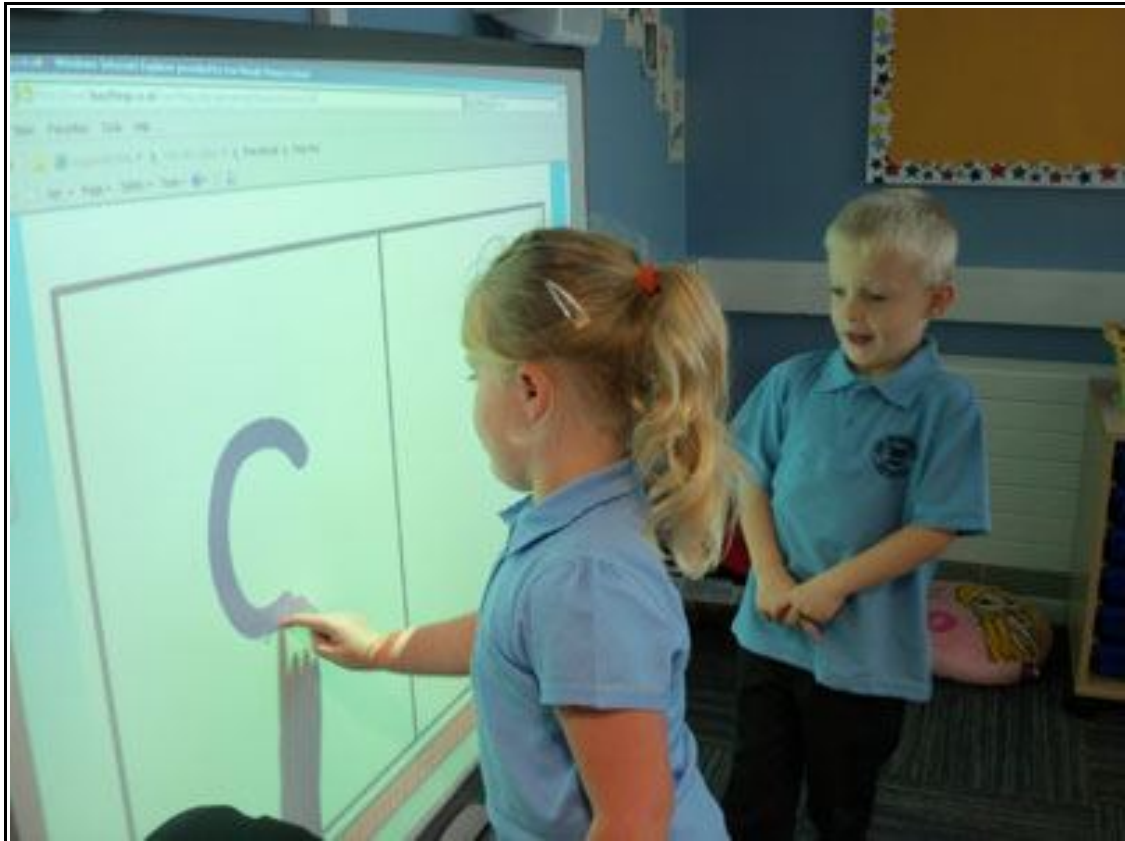
Mark making – letter practice
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Complete the tunnel by rotating shapes
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



Guide the duck through the maze
Kew Woods Primary, Stockport



At the whiteboard

For further information please contact:

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