

**Radio in Schools response to Digital Britain by Melissa Thom, Founder & Director, Radio in Schools
June 2009**

Radio in Schools is particularly interested in how the recommendations in the Digital Britain Report will affect education, training and skills for schools, teachers, children and young people across the UK. Of particular importance to us are the recommendations for digital participation and skills, and content development, which link specifically to Radio in School's aims to provide real and meaningful tools, guides and resources in the classroom through exciting and emerging technologies for both students and their educators. We look forward to working with all our schools and partners to address the recommendations of The Digital Britain Report and set out below how the Radio in Schools service meets those recommendations:

Supports and promotes ICT

Radio in Schools is a national podcasting platform for easily showcasing and sharing students' work, both at school and in the wider community. At its heart, the programme promotes speaking and listening skills, but by using radio and ICT, it also increases understanding of digital technologies in a way that is exciting and relevant to the download generation.

Radio in Schools offers an easy version of the sound editing process using the online 'Virtual Studio' - a worldwide first. Developed with Audio Enable technology, the simple-to-use editing tools and professional resources mean young people can record, mix and publish broadcast-quality content at home, school or college without buying or downloading any software or equipment. As well as offering practical, tailored activities for creating and uploading podcasts, Radio in Schools also promotes debate about modern electronic media and its effect on people, culture and society. Used in UK schools, colleges, universities and youth organisations, Radio in Schools:

- Provides real models, purpose and audience for learning, allowing family and friends to actively seek pupils' work, celebrate achievement and provide learning in out-of-school contexts
- develops student voice and addresses personalised learning in new and innovative ways
- links directly to the National Strategy Frameworks and the National Curriculum and may be used across the curriculum from Key Stage 1 to 4, and in further and higher education
- has immediate applications for the 'IT' and 'Creative Media' Diplomas
- supports the speaking and listening elements of both GCSE English and Functional Literacy
- facilitates assessment of oral skills by teacher and student alike, at all levels and ages
- offers teachers new ways of engaging delivery of ICT in the classroom
- 'demystifies' the podcasting process
- builds confidence in using digital technologies

Supports Media Literacy

Radio in Schools encourages students to be both critically aware and appreciative of media industries. Most significantly, by fostering an understanding of how programmes are produced, and ways in which media may influence us, Radio in Schools encourages a discriminating understanding of modern communication media and helps students both to evaluate the quality of what they hear and see, without becoming easily manipulated.

The Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum, places ICT, speaking and listening at the forefront of the successful development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Radio in Schools offers a cross curricular resource that develops digital literacy alongside traditional literacy skills. Jane Carter, Senior Lecturer in Primary Education from the University of the West of England comments:

"Radio in Schools can be an early induction to the industry for those children that want it – introducing children for the first time to what is often an adult-only world. But what makes Radio in Schools unique is that it is not just about an apprenticeship to the digital industry, but a flexible learning tool that utilises what the industry has to offer and uses it in the same way as a traditional exercise or text book."

Promotes Digital Careers, Business Links and Partnerships

Radio in Schools provides a starting point to mastering and understanding a range of skills that are currently used in the professional radio industry. Users can develop further interest in media-related careers and continue to improve practical digital technology skills. Because of its very clear link to media industries, Radio in Schools is a product that in itself helps to align education and business needs. There are many opportunities for the further development of business partnerships, for example, in preparing resources, supporting training sessions and producing further tools to support classroom and training materials. Radio in Schools offers a range of opportunities for research and development, currently working with partners such as The University of the West of England, BT and local authorities and is backed by the DCMS and The National Literacy Trust.

Apprenticeships

Radio in Schools gives children and young people hands-on experience with digital media, building confidence and skills vital both to themselves – and a thriving digital economy. The programme is supported by Global Radio, the UK's premier radio company and the home of Heart, the UK's biggest radio brand. These focused links with the professional radio

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industry will grow the kind of interest and understanding that will support such initiatives as the recently launched Global Radio Academy and, most significantly, will help to ensure proper understanding and engagement with broadcast media for the future generation.

ENDS

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