

schoolzone *newsletter*

educational intelligence

message from the editor..

The new Schoolzone website gets the thumbs up from teachers

Yesterday afternoon, seven teachers representing a range of local primary and secondary schools, subject areas and job roles gathered to discuss the new Schoolzone website. The purpose of the discussion was to review the new features and services launched last month, find out more about how we can support the teaching community, and generally let us know what you think about what we're doing.

As always when we bring together a group of teachers, the discussion was lively (to say the least!), with fantastic ideas, suggestions and comments being delivered non-stop for two hours. The good news from our point of view is that it was all extremely positive. We know (from our web stats) that the evaluations and virtual tours draw in a huge number of teachers, but what about some of the other services which we provide to UK schools and teachers? One that received rave reviews is our 'Events and Training' service. Attendees loved the fact that you can click through to see a listing of local CPD and training events run by schools, authorities and suppliers, plus a brief description of the event.

As with all the teacher services on the Schoolzone website, this is completely free to view. What they couldn't quite believe is that it's also free to post your advert here. If you hadn't realised that you could advertise your school's training and CPD events for free, please get in touch with us. If you want to check this out for yourself, here it is: www.schoolzone.co.uk/eventsandtraining/index.asp. Schoolzone's recently-launched 'School news' service also generated a lot of positive comments. What's unique

about this news feed is that you can filter it by Key Stage and subject area, so that you don't need to wade through pages of information that isn't relevant to you. We've also added a brief editorial comment to many of the stories, so that you can immediately see what the implications of the information are - and we're providing links to related stories or information. All in all, this could be the quickest and most efficient way of keeping up to date with key education stories, policy changes and information. To see it for yourself, go to <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/community/news.asp>. The 'Jobs for teachers' service pulls together all the teaching vacancies currently being advertised by local authorities. Unlike other job sites, this only lists teaching jobs, so you won't waste time filtering your search to exclude irrelevant adverts. Again, the focus group participants were incredulous that it costs under £50 for all your teaching job ads for a year on our site - not only a fraction of the cost of advertising on other sites, but on one of the most frequently visited teacher sites in the UK. And finally - what did they think of the Schoolzone Newswire? All seven teachers said that they really like it. The information is usually useful, it's a good read, and they appreciate the fact that it keeps them up to date on wider educational issues as well as what's happening at Schoolzone.

Whew! As you know, Schoolzone receives no funding to support the work that we do for our teacher community, and our website development, services and information feeds are all self-funded. We do the best we can with our limited resources - but if you think we could be doing even better, then please let us know. Email your comments to me at Melissa@schoolzone.co.uk; we're always delighted to hear from you.



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Recent additions include hardware evaluations and interactive whiteboard use is considered where appropriate.



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interact **schoolzone interact**

Schoolzone Interact currently has 2830 schools as registered users. The service allows full access to publishers' educational content on a 'try before you buy' basis. There is a 'new to Interact' section for those who would like an introduction to what is on offer and there is no commitment to buy at the end of the trial period.

To access this free digital content please go to:
www.schoolzone.co.uk/community/interact/login.asp

Schoolzone has recently changed the criteria for inclusion into Interact which means a wealth of new resources will be available through the system over the autumn term. Keep your eyes peeled and take advantage of this great 'try before you buy' feature.

Interact feedback:

In a pre-launch Interact focus group teachers stated:

"This is a way to interface with bits of software that I am interested in and cut out the dross, I can find directly what I want."

New content in Schoolzone Interact

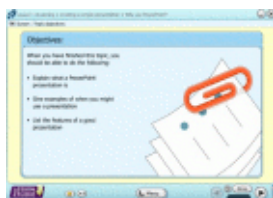
Access Cross-curricular resource Britannica Online School Edition for free
KS2, KS3, KS4



Britannica Online School Edition is a multipurpose resource designed to satisfy the learning needs of primary, secondary and sixth-form pupils. Teachers can research subjects by key stages and topics and plan lessons efficiently and effectively using curriculum-mapped content. The secure search facility allows students to find what they are looking for quickly and efficiently without the risk of questionable online content. Teachers can feel confident that their students are accessing accurate and up-to-date information written by over 4,000 expert contributors and professionally edited for age-appropriate content and language.

Have you accessed the Schoolzone Virtual Tours yet?

Virtual Tours are interactive demonstrations of educational content together with independent teacher voiceovers. This month's example is an ECDL resource:



Lesson Studio for ICT - Third Force

Lesson Studio for ICT is an innovative and creative resource that engages pupils and helps them to realise how they can raise their attainment

Check out the Virtual Tour area for further examples covering all subjects and key stages.
<http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/evaluations/virtualtours.asp>

Don't forget ... to have your say

Last month we asked our website users the following question...

Are lotteries for school allocations a good idea?

Of the respondents, 156 voted YES and 139 said NO.

This month we ask:

Have you experienced cyber-bullying?

Please go to our homepage at www.schoolzone.co.uk to cast your vote or email your comments to the Editor at melissa@schoolzone.co.uk.



Each month the Schoolzone website brings you details of events of interest to the education community:
www.schoolzone.co.uk/eventsandtraining/index.asp

For example:

Moodle for Geography Teachers
Dates: 21 April 2008 to 21 July 2008
10:00:00-15:00:00

One day's training in the Moodle VLE with specific emphasis on its use in geography/humanities teaching offered every alternate Monday from 7th January till 21st July - full details at <http://vle.olchs.lancs.sch.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=61731&chapterid=201>

Email: mco@olchs.lancs.sch.uk Telephone: 01772 326 900

Further details on the website.