

schoolzone *newsletter*

educational intelligence

message from the editor..

After a rather modest start to the new academic year in terms of research projects, we're delighted to be sending out a newsletter that is packed full of invitations to take part in a wide range and breadth of research projects, which means we'll be paying out a total of £1,500 in prize draw money alone over the next 3 weeks - perfectly timed to fund your pre-Christmas shopping!

For a chance to win, complete our Work/Life balance survey at <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/surveys/2008/rc08i8/>, which looks at the impact new technologies have had on the time spent on planning, preparing for and delivering lessons. Or, if you're a Key Stage 1 teacher, take part in our Reading Scheme survey <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/surveys/2008/RC08I3/> investigating how teachers decide which schemes to use, and how this has been affected by changes to the National Strategy. GCSE teachers can go to <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/surveys/2008/EligibilityRC08I2/> to apply to take part in paid-for focus groups, as can Key Stage 1 teachers by going to: <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/surveys/2008/EligibilityRC08I3/>

There are other exciting opportunities in the pipeline which we'll be announcing shortly, so do please keep an eye on our consultancy page, at <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/community/current.asp>.

It's bigger, whizzier and more accessible than ever before....I'm talking about our homepage <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk>, which has just been redesigned to make it even easier to find the information you're looking for, whether it's education news, information about new resources, searching for jobs or training events, or finding out about freelance consultancy work. Although the old homepage did the job perfectly adequately, the truth is that it was rather static and the interesting stuff was buried underneath the homepage. But don't just take our word for it - have a look and let us know what you think. We've added a

'feedback' tab, and have asked for comments about the design and layout, plus suggestions for any additional features which you think would add value to the site. Further work is planned for the next few months, so this is your chance to influence the way in which the site is developed.

Talking of providing feedback, many of you will be aware that we've recently carried out a review of Schoolzone's evaluation service, and have received comments and suggestions from teachers and publishers about how it's being used. Amongst the generally very positive feedback, one suggestion made by both teachers and publishers is the request to add a peer review section, allowing you to comment on how useful the evaluation has been. Again, you can tell us what you think about this by clicking on the Feedback tab, and adding your comments under the relevant section. Watch this space for invitations to take part in ongoing research into the Schoolzone evaluations...

This month's new feature is the 'New Products' category which is located at http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/feeds/ProductNews_feed.asp. Listing all recently published educational resources, together with a brief description and a link to the publishers' site where you can find out more information, this is ideal for those of you who're interested in keeping up-to-date on what's out there without needing to trawl through catalogues or promotional flyers.

If you've any other suggestions or ideas for making Schoolzone even more useful, please send your comments through to me, the editor, at Melissa@schoolzone.co.uk; in the meantime, to all of you involved in putting on end-of-year plays, Carol Services, parents' evenings, art displays and school trips, we wish you the very best of luck - and remember, your Christmas break is just around the corner...

Trial our new self-evaluation tool and receive free feedback on staff satisfaction and CPD needs in your school

Schoolzone, in conjunction with the University of Gloucestershire, is currently developing a series of tools that will enable schools to monitor levels of staff satisfaction, measure the impact of CPD on staff performance, and provide data to inform your Self Evaluation Framework (SEF). The data will be analysed instantly, giving you immediate feedback benchmarked against other, similar schools.

We're looking for primary and secondary head teachers who are interested in working with us, assisting in its development. In return, you will receive a period of free access to this tool.



The project runs from mid-October to the end of December. If you would be interested please complete the short eligibility form:

<http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/surveys/2008/EligibilitySEF/>

free resources & opportunities

Make the best even better.

Our webguide of 50,000 education websites is now open to registered users to add your own comments about each entry. Just follow the resource link in the results then click on the 'Add a Review' link at the top of the page.

Schoolzone's Teaching Recruitment Site!

This is an exciting opportunity for schools to advertise teaching jobs by registering with AllTeachingJobs.co.uk.

For just £40 per year plus VAT, schools can instantly add, edit and manage all school vacancies for an entire year.

Alternatively, if you are seeking employment, see our listing of current jobs, which are delineated by region, subject or sector.

In addition, Schoolzone is offering a job alert service. All you need to do is register an email address and your job search preferences, to receive this updated information every day.

Take a look at Schoolzone jobs today:
<http://www.schoolzone.allteachingjobs.co.uk/>

Contact Carmen Frowd,
carmen@schoolzone.co.uk or call 01242 262906
for more information.

interact Schoolzone interact

Schoolzone Interact currently has 3211 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:
<http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/community/interact/login.asp>

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."

Schoolzone Evaluations Service

Every month we provide you with a selection of new peer reviewed product evaluations for your information and contemplation. This month we are highlighting an evaluation of "Interface CMS"

"School web sites have long been a problem for keeping up to date whilst still remaining attractive and functional. ICMS is a content management system for school web sites that tries to solve this problem. The system is designed to fully automate the process of creating, updating and managing a school web site. The system is completely customisable and can be operated by those with little experience of web design."

To read the full evaluation please go online to :
<http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/reources/evaluations/evaluation.asp?evalid=5029>

Don't forget ... to have your say

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



Are you thinking of leaving teaching within the next two years?

Of the respondents, 57% voted YES and 43% said NO.

This month we ask:

Has new technology improved teachers' work/life balance?

Please go to our News page at <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/community/news.asp?Action=search> to cast your vote or email your comments to the editor: 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:
Good to Excellent - achieving outstanding lessons
Date: 7th January 2009
Time: 09:30 -15:30

The course gives a thorough understanding of Ofsted's criteria for good and for outstanding lessons and their contribution to whole school judgements. It explores the new Professional Standards for Teachers and their relationship with Ofsted's criteria and the Excellent Teacher and Advanced Skills Teacher requirements. More details are available here: <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/eventsandtraining/events/moredetails.asp?id=10445>

Email: admin@pbm-group.co.uk
Telephone: 01889 567014
Further details on the website.

www.schoolzone.co.uk