

schoolzone *newsletter*

educational intelligence

message from the editor..

Welcome to the NEW Schoolzone.co.uk

Next time you log onto the Schoolzone website, we hope you'll be pleasantly surprised. We're conscious that it's been a while since the site was last revised, and that we've been adding more and more content to it without really updating the old stuff. Consequently, even we've found it difficult to navigate our way round the various areas. So, after a lot of internal debate - and feedback from you - we're finally about to unveil our new-look, user-friendly, added-value site.

The first step was to reorganize the navigation, making it much easier for you to get to the areas we know are most frequently visited, such as the webguide, the evaluations, and Interact, our 'try-before-you-buy' service.

We've also added new content to Interact, which now has 40 titles in total, 15 of which have been added in the past couple of weeks.

We've structured the home pages so that you can access different search engines much more easily. For instance, you can now click through to find local educational events and services from our home page.

The other key change was to add new features to the site - such as our 'search for jobs' engine, and our education news headlines, which will keep you up-to-date on new initiatives, policies and research.

We hope all of this contributes to taking Schoolzone one step closer to being your one-stop-shop for free information, advice, resources, and consultancy opportunities - but don't take our word for it: log on, and send through your feedback.

And now for some stats: Over the past 12 months, 5,518 of you have subscribed to our RSS feeds. In January alone, 859,484 unique users logged onto our site. Two thousand, five hundred and fifty four schools are using 'Interact: Try before you buy'. Over the past month alone, we have carried out around 75 interviews with educationalists, paying an average rate of £40 per interview. We paid out a total of £1,250 in prize draws for online surveys. We have held five focus groups, with each attendee earning £50, and we have paid out around £1000 to teachers who have reviewed products or product concepts.

If you would like to find out how to take part in our educational research, and see how it supports your own professional development, please click through to our site.

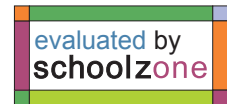
We'd also be delighted to hear your comments about what you think of the new site. Email Melissa@schoolzone.co.uk - we look forward to reading what you have to say.

schoolzone evaluations - helping you spend your eLCs wisely

Baffled by e-learning choice? Trying to decide how to spend your eLCs? Schoolzone can help. Our evaluations are independent and written by classroom teachers. There are currently 832 independently-evaluated products on the Schoolzone website and available in our Digital Resource Guide (see www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/evaluations/getDRG.asp for how to order the hard copy edition).

Search here for your subject area and age-range: www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/evaluations/findeval.asp

Recent additions include hardware evaluations and Interactive Whiteboard use is considered where appropriate.



New content in Schoolzone Interact - Access 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.

Britannica Online School Edition is linked with other relevant resources to allow pupils to explore in their own way and at their own pace. Britannica provides access for students anytime, anywhere. You can subscribe directly or access via a variety of learning platforms and VLE products.

free resources & opportunities

Add your own comments to the UK's best educational search engine

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 link in the results then click on the Add a Review link at the top of the page.

interact *schoolzone interact*

Schoolzone Interact currently has 2676 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:

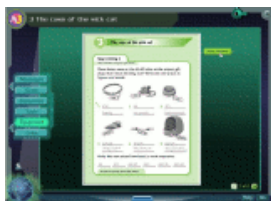
In a pre-launch Interact focus group teachers stated:

"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."

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 a Maths resource:



Maths Investigator 3 - Oxford University Press Key Stages 1 and 2

Maths Investigator is a top-secret spy agency whose mission is to make maths fun. The flexible, motivating resources bring maths to life and offer perfect support for the Primary Framework for Mathematics, with problem solving that's built-in, not bolt-on.

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...

Is your pupils' school uniform too expensive?



Of the respondents, 631 voted YES and 199 said NO.

This month we ask:

Are your pupils at risk of peer violence?

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 Languages Teachers

Dates: 10 January 2008 to 10 July 2008 - 10:00-15:00

One day's training in the Moodle VLE with specific emphasis on its use in Modern Foreign Languages teaching offered every alternate Thursday - full details here: <http://vle.olchs.lancs.sch.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=61731&chapterid=211>

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

Further details on the website.