



e¹ Project 2

Project 2 will build upon the implementation of e¹ and seek to ensure the benefits of making maximum use of the system. It will operate during the session 2010/11 and will focus upon supporting schools to extend e¹ to all class teachers and other relevant staff in schools and throughout the Service. It will seek to meet data recording needs relating to GIRFEC processes and extend elements of data sharing with partner agencies. There is also an opportunity to give parents and pupils limited access to e¹.

Project Admin Assistant

Following recent interviews, Linda Mackintosh from Kirkhill Primary School will be seconded to the post of Administrative Assistant for 12 months from March 2010. Linda will be supporting school e¹ users and helping to identify improvements in using the system.

More ways that Phoenix e¹ improves on Phoenix GOLD

The following points were provided by Linda Mackintosh from Kirkhill Primary School.

- 1. Design** – the e¹ look and feel is much more user friendly than Gold – much more pleasing on the eye. All information relating to each pupil is held together, enabling information to be found very quickly.
- 2. Helpful Hints** - e¹ offers assistance and suggests useful hints in the form of red type at the top of the page if information being input is missing, etc. It also suggests individuals when you start to type in their name.
- 3. School Trips** - e¹ allows you to tag relevant letters to a pupil's file and attach payments for trips etc
- 4. Letters and Labels** – Creating labels and letters through Gold was fairly simple but very restricted. e¹ allows much more creativity for layout design.
- 5. Exporting to Excel** – the ability to transfer reports into Excel allows for a greater scope of customising reports. In Gold you were unable to 'tidy up' the design layout of a report and there were more restrictions to the information you could provide in your reports. In e¹ 'the bones' of a report can be set up, the report transferred to Excel and additional information or design (e.g. sorting, gridlines, colour, etc) can be added as required.

And finally... "Sometimes the school office is so busy you can't get peace to ensure that data is correctly inputted... with e¹ you can use a computer out-with the confines of the main office!"

Will class teachers be trained on e¹?

There are plans to extend e¹ access to class teachers and deliver some training in the session 2010/11. In the meantime, if schools wish to give training to class teachers themselves on logging in and performing basic functions there are worksheets that would support this. The worksheets are available under 'Guidance for Teachers' at the Phoenix e¹ User Support Site on the Council Intranet which can be accessed from the A-Z Index. In this case schools must, however, ensure that teachers are well aware of the security issues relating to use of the system as outlined in the Data Handling Admin Circular.

Will e¹ training be provided for Senior Management in schools?

Senior Management in schools will be invited to an overview session which should give you an insight into software support, the structure of the system, security issues, login, menu navigation, attendance, a "teacher's view", getting data out (including reports), future developments. Primary Headteachers will also be invited to these 'twilight' sessions (starting at 4pm) which will be hosted (usually) at the Secondary School in their Associated School Group. Details have yet to be finalised but is hoped that the Secondary SMT will be able to login to their own school's data (rather than a "training school") and that Primary Headteachers would be able to "team-up" with one of them. These sessions will run from February to June 2010.

Project Team

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Please provide feedback as to how useful the information in this newsletter is for you at www.highland.gov.uk/e1. This site has a list of useful FAQs.

What is e¹?

e¹ is a web-based system that delivers the information and the functionality to manage all areas of school operations, administration, resources and activities efficiently. e¹ is not only for admin but has been designed to be used across the whole school community. It retains all the key user capabilities of Gold but with additional features. Although it will look a little different to Gold, it is intuitive to use.

Where do I submit suggestions for improving e¹?

We are very keen to receive suggestions from those using e¹ on an everyday basis. We want to make sure that the system can meet all our needs and support increased efficiency. Once you are familiar with the system, you may find it helpful to keep a note of improvements that you think of as you go. You can email them to anyone on the team or use the online form on the website. We will then discuss them with Pearson.



The e¹ roll-out gathers pace

By the end of February, we expect to have 125 schools trained and live on e¹. This includes 7 Secondary schools, most of whom already use Staff Absence Cover fully within Gold and are ready to make maximum use of it in e¹.

With a full schedule for all of our trainers, we are still on course to complete roll-out to all schools by end of June 2010. The bulk of schools should have e¹ by the Easter break. A list of e¹ schools is on the project website.

What lessons have been learned already?

As we roll-out, we seek to learn from the initial experience so that we can make the process as smooth and useful as possible for everyone. We have found that extra time for the data migration process helps to allow for the unforeseen hitches that inevitably arise. As a result, data needs to be extracted from Gold a week before training.

We have also found that providing two full days Core training is better both for the trainer and trainees. The extra time means that there is more opportunity for hands-on learning.

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What can I do to prepare for e¹?

The following steps are essential to address as soon as possible (if you have not already done so) in order to ensure that training time is not reduced and the roll-out is as smooth as possible for your school.

1. Advise us of the names of all trainees for each aspect of training.
2. Begin Data Cleansing in Gold using guidance
3. (Secondary) Ensure that there is a room with enough computers for the trainer and all trainees and an interactive whiteboard or projector. The computers must be able to access the internet.
4. Ensure that all computers in the school are set up according to the technical requirements. School technicians should be able to cope with this task.
5. Contact us with any queries or requirements in relation to training and roll-out.
6. Ensure that staff at the school have the information that they need in relation to training and roll-out.
7. Think of potential improvements using e¹

e¹ search tips

The search facility in e¹ is designed to be flexible and comprehensive. You can use various categories and filters in order to narrow the range of your search and get you much more quickly to what you're looking for. In addition to the pupil search, there is also a personnel search.

You can save predefined searches in e¹. Select the Advanced tab in Pupil search, select Pupil Type and click Add to select the fields you want to search on. Find the fields you wish to search on by opening the relevant folders and selecting and ticking the fields you want. Queries that you then define in relation to these fields can be saved and retrieved as predefined searches. These can also be deleted when no longer required.

You can also perform 'wildcard' searches where you don't know all of the details or for instance you want all pupil surnames in a similar range. The % symbol can be used to retrieve matches where only incomplete details are known. For example, you can search for all pupils whose last names begin with "Sm" followed by a "t" anywhere in the rest of their name by typing in "sm%t" in the surname field.



Kirkhill Primary have been using e¹ since May 2009 and have found that it has brought some real improvement to administration within the school.

Situated between Inverness and Beaulay, near the Moray Firth, Kirkhill Primary is a busy school with 180 pupils (including Nursery). After a whole term using Phoenix e¹, it was a good time to catch up and discuss the change with Linda Mackintosh who runs the office solo. We wanted to find out what the transition had been like and how things were going now. We began with what happened before training and the process of getting rid of unnecessary or inaccurate data (data cleansing) within GOLD before it is migrated to e¹.

What would have made data cleansing easier?

The major advice I would give any school is to ensure that all

Maximising e¹ efficiency at Kirkhill Primary School

records in Gold are currently up to date so that migration goes smoothly. It also saves time when you are getting to grips with the system. Some of the screens in e¹ vary from Gold so it can be tricky in the first instance to find errors until you gain more confidence.

Is there anything else that schools can do to prepare for data migration?

'Ad Hoc' reports do not migrate, so it is a good idea to list or print off some of your reports that you previously designed. The report system on e¹ is fantastic once confidence is gained, but if like me, you didn't note your reports it can take some time to initially set up these up or recall the information you required in them.

What was training like and what support do you have after training?

The 2 day training was very thorough and informative. On first sight of the system it looked much more complicated than 'our familiar Gold' but it didn't take long during training to see the benefits and

ease of use of the system. It was simple to use and ICT Education provided their usual outstanding additional support following training. The system has a very useful 'Help' guide built in which is perfect as a 'reminder' facility of how to carry out tasks.

What do you think are the immediate challenges in using e¹?

Setting up useful ad hoc reports is a challenge. It's also critical to ensure that data is

“the ability to customise reports can be a huge time-saving tool”



input consistently e.g. codes. A big challenge is the temptation to revert to previous practice rather than using the system to its full potential – i.e. listing pupils attending clubs, adding payments for school trips. The benefit of using e¹ rather than maintaining lots of spreadsheets is in keeping all pupil information linked in one place.

What will the challenges be for using e¹ in the longer term?

In the longer term, we need to investigate how Phoenix e¹ can be used widely within our school to bring more efficient record keeping; using the system to its maximum ability where it may not be used at present. As access to

e¹ is extended to 'all' staff they will need to be encouraged and supported to use the system rather than following present procedures.

How will e¹ help the school office to become more efficient?

Information on pupils will be able to be accessed quickly by those who require it rather than having to wait for office staff to prepare paper reports where they are not always required. In the long term, e¹ will hopefully reduce paper use and help save some essential office space as well as archive storage problems. It's important to keep up to date

with modern technology and embrace all that it has to offer rather than always carrying out procedures purely because “that was how it was always done”. Gold has been only usually accessed by the office staff in primaries, and even then, not all of its functions were used as they were fairly basic and it was quicker to use other options. e¹ opens up a new world of capabilities. Once non-office staff are trained to use e¹, I'm sure that we will find that it can be used in a multitude of ways to make the school run more efficiently and effectively, certainly from an office point of view.

Data Quality in e¹

High-quality information (relevant, accurate, timely, and complete) is essential in ensuring that we are able to support pupils effectively. If information is accurate we can use it at school and Local Authority level for better planning and decision making in order to improve outcomes for Highland's children. Decisions taken on the basis of poor quality data can result in limited resources being directed to areas or activities where they may not bring the most benefit. More importantly, it can result in outcomes that disadvantage children and young people.

In implementing Phoenix e¹ we need to make sure that it can yield the right information to the right people at the right time. Information will be more accurate when it is entered once and not passed about in different formats. It also needs to be complete with no missing fields and available when it is needed. A consistent standard should be applied so that it is reliable. When dealing with personal data we also have to ensure that it is securely handled and appropriate for our needs.

This Issue's Q&A

www.highland.gov.uk/e1

Q: How can I email letters to parents using Phoenix e¹?

A: Phoenix Gold did not provide the useful facility of sending letters by email to parents, but this is now available within e¹. Before you print a letter there are various options from which you may choose. These include being able to select 'Send Email' if the parent has an email



address recorded under contacts on e¹. There are two options; send by email if an email address is available, and send by email if user preference is set. Only those who fall into the selected category will be emailed and the rest will receive a letter. Remember to tick against 'Save Generated Letters and emails as attached documents against the recipients'. This will keep a 'Saved Letter List' against that parent with key details.