

Q Julia Bishop (researcher)

A Irina C (class teacher, Abbeycliff Primary School)

Q Thank you very much, Irina. So there's various sections to the questions. The first ones just relate to curriculum and pedagogy. So first of all it might be a good place to start just to talk about what's available to you in the classroom and how you work that into your planned curriculum, if at all, in terms of technologies.

A OK. So I think the way technology is set up in our phase is that on a Wednesday we have something that we call an 'Enrichment Day'. So all the children, sorry all the teachers in our Key Stage One phase teach one subject and my subject is Computing. So that means that all the children in Year 1 and in Year 2 I teach every Wednesday for Computing and we are at the moment using a lot, we are supported in the curriculum by SSEL, because SSEL is doing a lot of computing curriculum training, so I have basically been on training and I have been given lots of resources to use on the internet, but the main one I like to use is 'Barefoot'.

And I try to teach most sessions by always using the interactive whiteboards because I do feel like that is sort of getting the technology in. We do have iPads for each class, four, we've got iPads Golden Time on a Friday as well, so children can choose that and then we do also have access to laptops in school. However, with the level where our children are in Key Stage One, I find that we don't use laptops very often because even turning a laptop on and off is already quite difficult. During, on the Wednesdays when I teach Computing I do a lot of unplugged activities at the moment. So all term one was all about how to be safe on the internet, so I don't really know if you remember from the lesson but at first we talked about what do we already know? So we talked about personal details, about what can you share on the internet. It's very much a positive focus on that as well because I don't want them to think that the internet is a bad thing and then who to talk to if you're in trouble. We talked about cyber bullying and these are all...so that's not in just one session; that has been throughout all term one, so eight weeks. I do all of, each class will have had four sessions building up on those skills and this half term we're doing algorithms. So that's what you, so you came to the second session and we... so in the first one we got a toaster and we toasted bagels and then we were talking about how that really is an algorithm because you've got to follow the steps and the instructions. And then we did a treasure hunt and then hopefully towards the end of this half term we'll be making our own algorithms. So the children will actually make one rather than me telling them or they having to follow one, so they understand the build-up. So yeah, so I think, I'm not sure if I really answered your question but we're really sort of...I've really tried to look at the National Curriculum. What do our children need to know in Key Stage One? And then I have made my own planning using resources like Barefoot.

Q Sorry I don't know what Barefoot is.

A It's a website. I'm not sure who's created it, I'd need to look it up for you but basically it has lots and lots of lesson plans on it and the council is advising us teachers to use that to teach Computing. But I do find as much as I do teach Computing on a Wednesday very specifically, Computing is a subject that should be taught through all subjects. So when you are teaching literacy there should be something Computing in there. So I'm trying to constantly make links by telling the children 'Actually, we are doing this and this is what we have done in Computing as well'. I think because we have that very specific day where they really see me teaching that subject it is a lot easier for them to make connections with the

other subjects and to actually think 'Oh we're actually learning about a book right now, but we're also going to do something that we have done in Computing. We already know that'. So therefore that skill we can transfer it to the other subjects.

Q Yeah. Whatever you're doing.

A Yeah.

Q Yeah that's really interesting. You said you had training. Is that the council that's provided that or...where's that come from?

A So it's organized by Sheffield SSELPS. Gosh, I'm sorry, it's SSELP [Sheffield South East Learning Partnership].

So I'm the computing coordinator in school. So I have recently been sent on a computer coordinator course where we have basically looked at what is expected of me and my role because I'm quite new to the role as well and our Head of School used to be the computing coordinator. So she came with me and we were basically trying to lead the subject together and we have done...I wouldn't call it training but we've done a PDM so like a meeting as an introduction to these training for all teachers in school because every year group this year has one teach who's going on computing training and is coming back and needs to share their resources and that training will very much be about how to teach computing skills and how to share that with your year group and to make sure that our children are going to really start using those computing skills in their everyday life.

Q OK so then teachers like yourself and then trying to sort of feed it into all areas of the curriculum.

A Yes and we're just looking at in Key Stage Two especially, because you can't teach a Year 5 or a Year 6 curriculum to a year group that has had very minimal experience with computing so we're just basically trying to catch up and find ways of how we can give these children the best we can right now for what they can do.

Q Yeah. Do you get much guidance in the National Curriculum as to how to use technologies, media in their learning or is there something that you're actually, you're doing these connections and making them as part of your teaching?

A Well, I find the National Curriculum is...the bit that I look at the most is the statements of what the children need to know and I do find that there are some suggestions, I think under every curriculum, sorry subject within the National Curriculum, there are always some suggestions of things that you can do. However, I feel like I have used Barefoot or other teacher's planning a lot more than I have actually used the National Curriculum because it's very global and it's very much...what I find in general with the National Curriculum is that it states very clearly what the expectation is, but it doesn't state who you are teaching. So my class, being at [southeast Sheffield] quite a disadvantaged area with disadvantaged children, we are not where we should be on the National Curriculum. So therefore teaching the National Curriculum how it is literally stated on the National Curriculum is very hard because that is not accessible to them right now. So I do feel that I need to find ways through other resources that we've got or through adults, to find out how we are going to meet the children's needs. I think that's the main thing.

Q So yeah, [this question's] about how your decisions to use media and technologies, are they different or similar to your colleagues, but it sounds very much that what you've told me is that you are pretty much on the same page and you're working very much as a team. Would that be fair?

A I definitely think that we are starting to work a lot more as a team. I think within Key Stage One we, because we have that Enrichment Day it is a lot easier to also then say to my colleagues 'Oh if you want to come and see how I teach computing as the most experienced person on the corridor basically, we've got time for that' and I am not yet sure how that is in Key Stage Two and within my role I need to find out basically, see how that goes this year and see other people and talk to people, about how they're doing it. But I do think we have from management and me, we have sent the message to all members of staff 'This is what we are going to use. This is the vocabulary that we are expecting you to use', so we've given them a list as well of things, 'This is the training that you are going to be on', so therefore we are hoping that the outcome will be something similar to everybody so that eventually we are all singing from the same page.

Q Yes, it's joined up. But obviously it's starting so you're just feeding it in and it's not quite there yet.

A Yes. Yes.

Q Yes, so I wonder which media and websites, apps, games, films, that kind of material that you would use in your own classroom and why you might bring those in, what your aims would be in doing that, or give me some examples if there are any. Perhaps there's lots.

A Because I think we use quite a lot very quickly without even realizing that you're using it so...oooh.. one that I use a lot for maths for example, especially with games, so when we have done a maths job, we've done the introduction and the instructions and the teaching part of it, they usually go off with a job and then based on what we've been teaching in maths, I will put a game on the interactive whiteboard and I think the website is called 'Bookmark' I want say. It sounds a bit weird, but it's very, it's a very big website so you can do phonics and all sorts on there but they also have a very specific maths section and they love that. They just love, it's basically just practicing on their own so we've done something on the carpet quite practical and then they just go off into their choosing time and it will be there available for them. They don't have to do it, but if they want to and I find that they want to do it. Once they know it they want to do it always very gladly.

Q Is that like games to practise and things like that whatever the skill is from maths that you've taught them?

A Yes, basically. I can look up the website for you just in a bit but I'm not sure what it's actually called.

Q No it's absolutely fine.

A But even things like YouTube.

Q Oh yes.

A There is a lot of very good videos especially, so we're learning, sorry we're reading a book called 'Lila and the Secret of Rain' at the moment which takes place in Kenya and obviously our children have no idea what Kenya looks like. So for example, the BBC has done some really good videos of children in their home countries which you can then use. So we very often use the BBC website, but if we can't find anything on there I always do a bit of pre-research on YouTube to see if I can find a video that kind of suits them. Always watch it before you put it on. That's a very big rule in teaching I think.

Q Have you learnt that from bitter experience or is it just something that you've had passed on to you as a tip?

A Oh I'm not too sure to be honest. I've never had major disasters.

Q No. When you said it I just wondered if there was a back story to that.

A No.

Q Good.

A I think, no, it's like, I think sometimes, and this is almost the downfall of computing, is that you want to do it so quickly and you think 'Oh I'll just do that really quickly' or 'I'll just put really quickly a video up' and then you'll put it up not having seen it before you've actually used it and then you'll find that actually it doesn't really suit my group of children. It's too difficult or it's not...it doesn't really reflect what we've been learning about. So I do find like if I am using something like BBC, Google, YouTube or anything like that I do always have to do it before. Obviously you can't just teach can you in general?

Q No there's lots of planning.

A You've got to plan it before, so that's the same with computing. You've got to plan it. So those are some really big things and then I think the main purpose of using this is to make learning more fun, more interesting, but to also really give them that image that they cannot just think of themselves or and especially going back to 'Lila and The Secret of Rain', how are you meant to know as a five-year-old in England what a country like Kenya looks like? Unless you've got an amazing family who travels all over, you just don't have that experience do you? So it's really great that all those resources are out there for us to use and for the children to actually be able to think 'Whoa, their lives are so different to ours'. So I do really feel that it's not just a fun part of it but it is really also giving them the tools to understand that our world is much bigger than just their classroom. Yeah, I'm not too sure if that really answers the question.

Q No, fascinating, no I'm really interested in lots of questions, whatever comes to mind, but I just wondered first of all if you, I mean you're just relying basically first of all on your own kind of search skills to find those materials, you don't go to a thing where it's all ready-made for you.

A No.

Q You're building up a set of judgments by the sound of it in the way that you evaluate stuff that you think is relevant and you know, at the right level. It speaks in the way that you want it to and illustrates some of the points that you've got in mind for your topic.

A Yes, definitely.

Q Yeah, that was a really interesting example. And it sounds like it's quite successful with them. It has, you know you keep using it because you're finding that it works well for doing exactly what you need to.

A Oh yeah definitely, yeah. I think our...the generation of students that are in school now has a lot of screens, have a lot of screens around them. So not constantly being, it only being me talking to them is not going to help them and especially when you have children with a lot of language issues, speech and language difficulties. We have got in Year 1 quite a few children with developmental language disorder, so therefore, me talking and them not being able to see what we're talking about is like talking to a wall. It does not, the message will not come across, so I think it is so important that when you are talking about something with the children you can actually use all those, all those things are out there on the internet, on the computer and even like simple things like Google Maps. So I use it all the time and when we read, I think you were in class for this as well, because we were reading 'Around the World in Eighty Days' so if I am reading in that book and I'm saying 'Oh they're in the United States of America' the kids will be like 'What, where is this?' So and I always start, when I use Google Maps I always say 'Look, this is where we are and this is Sheffield and this is England and this is the United Kingdom and this is Europe, which is where we're a part of' and then, and then you can sort of zoom out and then really sort of show them where on the globe we are. Because as much as I have globes in my class, it is really putting into perspective, this is our bit of the planet. And it's so small compared to what is out there and especially for a five-year-old. So, yeah, I think we, I think we use it a lot all the time, but yeah you definitely have to do your research. But I also think once you, once you have planned a certain topic quite a couple of times, you have become so much more aware of what resources are out there for you.

Q Yeah you must get to know.

A Yeah, so very quickly when the children are like 'Oh we're interested in dinosaurs' I'll know 'Oh, on the BBC there is a video of Mary Anning [19<sup>th</sup> c. fossil hunter] based for children in Key Stage One, lots of good vocab' and I'll know straight away where I have to go and I think that's just a bank of knowledge that you build up as a teacher, as a professional.

Q Yes. And does that ever help you? Does it inform your own knowledge about the subject ???

A Oh yeah definitely. I say to the children all the time 'I don't know everything' so having that computer is amazing but I do always say to them 'The computer doesn't have a brain. It's like information that is on there and I've got to work it. So the computer can't work without me, but I sometimes can't work without the computer because it's got the knowledge that I need'. So I think it really is important with small children letting them know that it is still a piece of technology that you are working, rather than it seeming like oh this magical thing that is doing whatever and my teacher is just standing next to it. It's all there for a

reason and that is almost the hardest part of teaching because everything in technology is out there for a reason. It's not just there because it's just there, it just appeared one day. Someone has made it. So I think that is really what we're trying, the message that we're trying to send at the moment.

Q Yeah, that's really fascinating thank you. Do you ever, I mean what is their response when you're using technology? Can you see it in their faces? Can you see an emotional response or a kind of cognitive response in terms of maybe stuff that it then prompts them to ask or hands up kind of thing? Or is it just you just feel that it's going over well?

A I think...I think it also kind of depends on their level of...kind of how comfortable they are within the subject or the topic that we're teaching. So again, today we were talking about Lila in Kenya and I said 'Is there something that you would like to know about Lila in Kenya and about her life that you don't know about?' and then they came with questions so 'I want to know if Lila has a pet' and 'I want to know if she has a bed' or 'If she has toys' and there was one child who said 'I want to know if she's got a unicorn toy like I have in my house'. So I was like 'How could we find out?' and then they did say 'Oh we could use the computer'. 'We could use Google' because I always say 'Oh let's have a look on the search engine, let's have a look on Google'. So yeah, so I do think they have become a lot more confident in knowing that it has a purpose and yeah, and very often if I say 'Oh I actually don't know that. I've got to look that up'. They'll say 'Oh go look on the computer' or some children probably do that with their parents at home when they say 'Look at your phone'. We're not allowed phones in class but I always say 'I'm not allowed my phone, I'll have a look on the computer'. So I do and I do think when we use videos, especially to give them that, show them that image, they are very drawn by what is happening on the interactive whiteboard. And I think it is almost easier for them to make links because if I say 'Oh do you remember that video that we looked at about...' it really sort of ... can't think of what...

Q It might cement it in their minds because they've linked it to the image, is that what you're saying?

A Yes .

Q It's like that imprints on their memory somehow.

A Almost yeah, but I think basically if you can't picture it, anything

Q Yeah, it's abstract isn't it? It's beyond your ken.

A It will not be something that you will remember. So it is really important that we constantly give them lots of pictures or that we let them link their knowledge with some sort of picture in their head and it doesn't always have to be a computer or a video because I also don't want to... every lesson to start with a video because I think that kind of takes away the magic of learning. It's got to stay interesting and I think making it interesting can be in lots of different ways but I do think that having that technology makes it a lot easier for teachers to continue to make it interesting and it is also really nice for children to sometimes hear certain facts from different people. So not just hear me talk and say those things all the time, but actually having someone on there.

Q We've got David Attenborough to tell us today or something like that.

A Yeah. Exactly! Exactly. And I think, I think that is really powerful.

Q Yeah, so interesting. So OK, so supposing funding support was no issue, are there any technologies that you would like to use that you don't currently have access to?

A Well I think it would be really nice if we would have an update of the tech that we have now because our tech is currently not up to date any more. So we've got iPads but we can't update them, so we can't get new apps on them anymore because our, I don't have an iPad at home so I don't know this very well, but is it the iStore?

Q iTunes.

A iTunes.

Q Or the Apple Store, yeah.

A The Apple Store, sorry. So the Apple Store is not linked to the overall settings anymore, so therefore you can't...

Q OK, is that because there's some sort of, there's a question about this later...

A Because you can't update it.

Q You can't update it because there's some kind of limit on what some, what do you call it? Some sort of firewall or something like that that stops them from...

A Oh I feel like I should know a lot more about this, but yeah, so...

Q Is the content filtered and, you know, does that have an impact on their learning you can support? It's not quite that same question actually, so we'll leave that for the moment, but I guess the idea that you can't update them basically is difficult because it's not linked to iTunes.

A Yeah. I think, so even just simple things like that because very often even now that I am teaching algorithms this half term there are some apps out there that are really good at showing how to use certain steps and at the moment I can't get those apps on my iPad, so therefore I can't use them and even though we've got the iPads I can't, so that is a bit frustrating but therefore you've got to be creative and use the stuff that you already have or do more unplugged activities to support that. But in an ideal world that would be great. There is a lot of, I know that there are a lot of really good coding programmes for laptops. That would be great if we had that in upper Key Stage Two and almost if they would, I want to say weekly, but that might be a bit of a push, but that we would have some sort of coding sessions where they would actually really learn those skills and to have the tech available for them that actually works straight away. So, but very specifically about programmes, I do not really have a good answer for you for that.

Q No that's fine. It's just interesting again to know, I mean is there any coding? Scratch or something like that?

A Yeah, we use Scratch and oh there is something else that we use but I can't remember what it is called right now. My colleague in Year 5 will know.

Q We'll ask, yes that's absolutely fine. I'm going to be interviewing them as well so, they get to tell me about that.

A Well that's the thing isn't it? Because I don't really teach that part of the curriculum, so therefore having all that knowledge about all those different programmes, I don't really have that much which I probably should so.

Q It's OK. So again we're talking about, we've talked about barriers, so talking about the different pedagogies and the way children learn, do you feel that technology and your uses of media do they benefit them or do you have comments relating to their collaborative learning or their enquiry based learning, problem based or project based learning? You know is it coming in on any of those levels would you say it's benefiting them or...

A That's a very long question. Sorry can we just go back to the beginning so that I can just hear it again? Sorry.

Q I'll just read it. It says 'We're interested in the way that technology or media is used in your classroom in relationship to the different pedagogies. Do you have any comments relating to your own practice in relationship to collaborative, enquiry based, problem based or project based learning'? I mean really we're asking do the technologies feed into any of those kinds of...perhaps you don't think about your teaching in that way?

A Yeah... I think it, these questions really make you think about how you, how you're teaching all the time. Well very often you're just in the teaching, aren't you? So it's a bit difficult to almost put yourself outside of that, but I would say there is a very big impact on having that in general even if it's...and especially what I'm drawn to now is the enquiry based learning and building up that knowledge bank that they have about the enquiries that they have and we are constantly encouraging our children to, 'Oh I wonder if she could find a book about this?', if they have a question, 'I wonder where we could find out more information about this?' So we're constantly bouncing back their own questions because we want them to be able to look things up because as much as it is lovely that I've got that computer and I can do a lot for them, at the end of the day we are teaching children to become independent adults so therefore me constantly doing things for them will not help them later on in their lives so...

Q Do they ever go off and take up the suggestion or do they have access to anything in the classroom where they could follow that up straight away or would you be asking them to maybe explore a bit at home along the lines of the suggestions?

A Yes so we do a lot of, so on our home learning we have a very specific section for our enquiry learning and then very often we say 'Can you Google, or can you search' I need to stop saying 'Google', 'Can you search two facts about...'and I think this week we had it about the northern hemisphere and the equator and the southern hemisphere and then the children were given the opportunity to write some facts down or even, I think it's about mini beasts, so choose a mini beast and can you create a poster for that? So therefore we are already encouraging children to use different types of media to get their information, so yeah, I think...



Q That's really interesting and in some ways you know I think the other things you've pointed to maybe come into these other categories as well. They're doing a maths thing online and so that's part of it isn't it?

A Yes, definitely and I do, I hope that I give the children lots and lots of opportunities to research or to practise their computing skills. So with my last year class we made our own non-fiction books and we made a non-fiction book about Autumn I think, if I remember correctly. So we researched facts and so we, my back then T[eaching] A[ssistant] had some children and some iPads and we were, she was typing it in for them and they were looking at the, where the facts, the non-fiction books that were already there and then they wrote something down and then later they typed it up in a Word document and they were printed off and they were so proud of it because they had typed it themselves, which was just so powerful and I just remember the entire year, that book, because we printed it off and then laminated it and it was in a reading corner and they would always, someone would be sitting there just looking at their own work and I think children are always most interested in their own stuff. Like, they always want to talk about themselves. Any new subject or new topic that you offer to them, they will always make that self link. So if I talk about Lila in Kenya going to feed the animals with her mum, they will say 'Oh I went to the farm because I...' so it's always about them isn't it? So if you manage to give them something and you make it about them, it will really become something that they just want to overdo all the time. So therefore by giving them a topic and giving them the opportunity to make it something for themselves, it was really something they wanted to over learn. So they all knew about deciduous trees and evergreen and like and the parts of a plant and then in Autumn the leaves fall off the trees, so they knew that because it was in their book and they just wanted that.

Q It sounds like they had a sense of ownership over that knowledge.

A Yes it is ownership that just makes it so important, doesn't it?

Q Yeah that's right. It makes it memorable for them.

A Oh yes.

Q And also it's recursive, so they keep visiting it by the sounds of it as well.

A Yeah and the entire year, anything that we did it was like 'Shall we make our own book about it?' And they were like 'Can you bring in your laptop?' it was like 'OK, I'll bring it again'. So yeah therefore computing really and technology really does get, yeah, come in really nicely I think.

Q Thank you. Is there anything else, other uses of technology or media in the school that you might want to comment on? For example, does it appear in assessment work that you have to do or non-curriculum activities or out of school, break times, that sort of thing?

A Oh I'm just trying to think. I'm sure there are.

Q I mean you mentioned Golden Time, that includes iPads actually ?? I think.

A      Yep, so I think we have both, Key Stage Two and Key Stage One club for that and we are...I think we've had in the past a coding after school club which is not, it's been a bit non-existent at the moment but we're just trying to find the tools and the skills of setting that up again. So we're hoping that by the end of this school year we've got a club up and running so that would be really good. Yeah that is important. We always join in with online safety week which is the beginning of the November. I think the first week of, oh February, sorry, the first week of February. So we have that and then we've got also the local police officers who are round in general a lot coming to talk to us about the importance of internet safety.

Q      You mentioned cyber bullying, would they come and talk about that as well?

A      Yes they do and there is, I want to call it a festival, but I might be wrong. Sheffield University organizes every year, I think it is in June, July, for children in primary schools to come and use the tech that they have and then the students accommodate it. I think last year someone in Key Stage Two that went. I wanted to go with my class last year but I think it says 'Ideally for children above six' and obviously I'm in Year 1.

Q      Oh that's a shame.

A      Yeah that is a bit of a shame. So there is, there are quite a few things that we can do, I think so around. You just need to be aware of them and stay on top of it, but yeah. I'm not really sure if this even counts but there are lots of year groups who take their children to the cinema.

Q      Yeah, that does sound, yeah. It's another medium.

A      Yeah. So, yeah, we try to give all year groups the opportunity to go to a cinema in Sheffield and to watch a film because a lot of our children unfortunately don't get that experience because it's too expensive or too far away. So yeah, so they'll have that as well. So I do think we do quite a bit but just trying to get it all together, but maybe one of my colleagues will be able to...

Q      Thank you. Would you like to get to the case study children that are [in your class] and talk about them because that is something I know you have knowledge [of]. And also we're going to go on to talk about creativity and learning and so on.

A      OK.

Q      So I'm just wondering, going to the other extent, if there are any technologies or media that you feel are negative for children and anything that particularly, you know, you feel is not good for them?

A      What I'm, I think one of my main concerns is with technology media is children playing games or watching certain videos that are not appropriate for their age. So very often we find in our school that children have older siblings who watch things at home or play things at home that is just not appropriate for the children, especially in Key Stage One and ??? and I'm talking about Grand Theft Auto and... oh what is the other one? Very popular at the moment, it's not Minecraft because I quite like that.

Q      Fortnite or...

A Fortnite, I think that is, as much as it is not...

Q I'm not putting words in your mouth...

A No, no, no, but it is, because it is allowing children to communicate with people they don't know, with strangers and I really don't think that our children understand the impact of talking to strangers on the internet and what could potentially come from that and it could be a lot of good things and I know from like I had a little brother who used to game a lot when he was 16, 17, 18, he met a lot of really nice people through that and is still friends with some of them which is fantastic. But not when you're five. It's just not appropriate. And trying to send that message across to our families is really hard and even just putting a child lock on your internet or the overuse of the internet and screen time. A lot of our children have way more screen time than they should have in a day and I think is it probably only like 30 minutes or an hour for a child at the age of six, seven. I think most of our children wake up with a screen and go to bed with one and I don't think, I don't think there's enough knowledge or that our parents have enough knowledge about the impact on children's mental health, their sleep, eating patterns even and therefore are also not necessarily keeping an eye on what is being watched, what is being used. Is it appropriate for my child? So we very often have children who have got nightmares because their older sibling was watching a film in the living room while they were in there as well and they saw that and I also kind of think as much as it is oh yeah it was a mistake, it was an accident, or didn't mean it to happen, once you've seen it you cannot get rid of that picture in your mind.

Q Yes that's the problem, it's in your mind.

A And that's the problem with technology, because it has such a big impact on us and it is so detailed that it is really hard to get over seeing some images you see. And even as an adult myself I hate horror films.

Q Me too.

A So I know that as soon as I see something that has something to do with that that I need to walk away from it or I need to close the tab or the, is it a tab?

Q Yeah.

A But our young children don't know that. They don't know what they find scary. They don't know what is appropriate for them and we as adults have got to teach them that and if you don't have adults at home who can support you with that it will, it can be, I think technology can be a very negative experience for you which is such a shame because it is such an amazing thing that has been created for us to use to learn, to communicate and all of that and yeah, so I'm really concerned about those things. But definitely also about the use of the internet on our mental health. So our Year 6s are on, well, not just Year 6, I think almost the entire Key Stage Two are using social media and maybe not Facebook anymore, but Instagram, SnapChat and there's probably more stuff out there that I'm not aware of and it worries me that they don't know that, for example, with Twitter, as soon as you've put a photo up you've signed away your rights to the photo. It's not yours anymore. You've put it on there, you've given it to Twitter. And our children don't know that and even as a social media user myself and I started using social media very late in my life and I think I was the

first generation in general who grew up with social media, I even now on Facebook will see, 'Oh look you did this eight years ago' and I just think 'Oh I wish I'd never put that on there' and it is not ever something embarrassing. But you have to, when you are a child you can't protect yourself for that and that is really, yeah, I almost want to say you can't over teach that because it is so important that they know and unfortunately once something is on the internet, it almost never comes off. And you've got to grow up as an adult and bear the consequences of choices you've made as a child, which is so unfair because you were a child.

Q You didn't know.

A Yeah. And these children are going to go and look for jobs in ten years' time and their bosses and people that are going to interview them are going to look them up on the internet and they're going to see things that they might think 'Oh I'm not sure if I want to hire this person because they have done this in the past' and I just think that is stuff that really, that really concerns me, just the not knowing part of it. Sorry I get a bit passionate about this subject.

Q No it's good. Irina, may I ask you how old you are in fact? Because I think that has a bit of a bearing on where we all are in relationship to media.

A I'm twenty-six.

Q OK that's very helpful.

A Am I too young to ??? I don't know. Yeah.

Q But it does make a difference on this day and age, what point you came in on as it were in digital development and so it's interesting to hear you talk about growing up with, you know, being a first-generation social media user.

A Yeah. I think, well, I think I am.

Q That has a bearing on your...

A Yes because I remember going to school and in class we had those big computers and there was a programme on it and it was basically like Scratch where you would get the dog to walk from A to B and things like that and using the mouse and using those little arrows and that was it. Well, our technology has advanced so much and I have kind of had to learn along the way, because I never got taught a computing curriculum when I was in school, so it's great that we've got this, however, teaching the dangers of the internet in a positive way because, as I already said earlier on, the internet is a positive thing so therefore it shouldn't be something that you're afraid of. It should be something that you are aware of and you know how to use it safely. And very often when we say to our children 'Don't do that' they want to do it anyway. You're going to figure it out. So you might as well tell them 'Go and do this, but try and do it this and this way'. Yeah. So we for example we made Avatars last half term in class, Twinkl Avatar Creator, great resource and I said 'You can make it look like yourself or you can make it look like someone completely different but if you put it out there on the internet with your nickname, nobody is going to know that it is you and then you can use the internet safely'. So really trying to focus on that aspect of the internet, I think. And I think it

would have also been really useful for myself if I would have had that when I was in primary, secondary school, someone telling me ‘Actually, you can use this, however, ??? you use it’.

Q So it’s about a message of ‘Yes, access it, but do it safely’.

A Yeah.

Q Do it in a way that’s not going to screw things up later on or something like that.

A Which is hard because I do think our children outgrow us in knowledge. They’ve got a lot more knowledge about technology than a lot of teachers that we have in school, especially generation wise, if someone who is in their sixties is going to talk to you about social media, you’re probably going to be like ‘Er, hang on a minute!’

Yeah, even I’m not happy with my parents. I’ve got my dad on Facebook and when he’s like tagged me in stuff, I’m just like ‘Will you stop it?’ So yeah, so I do, it is trying to find that common ground with these children where you’re both speaking the same language and it is really hard with especially children from certain families and backgrounds, to find that, that sort of space of acknowledgement and respect. And I know that I might have those skills but I know that you have a lot more knowledge so therefore I should listen to you how I need to use my skills so that I can be a safe user of the internet. Yeah, just trying to find a balance is really difficult, I think.

Q But it’s interesting, it is a conversation, it’s a collaboration of some type here.

A Yes. And that trust, mutual trust. And also I think children are very often embarrassed about things they do and it also needs to be in a non-judgmental sort of space. Like it’s OK if you watch videos that are above your age but please be honest about it, but therefore, then I am not allowed to judge you for it. And I think that’s always really hard for adults in general, but also especially teachers and parents because you want to tell your children ‘No, that is not for you, don’t watch that’ or do that. But then at the same time they have decided to be open and honest about it so therefore you can’t shut the door on them because they have opened it up for you.

Q You’ll just break the trust that you’ve just established with them, yeah exactly.

A Yeah, yeah. You’ve got to, yeah, somehow, I don’t know. I think you get what I mean.

Q I think I do. It’s so interesting talking to you. I just wonder if you feel that children are bringing things from home and that’s impacting on what you do in the classroom. Are they, it’s sort of what you’ve been saying I suppose.

A Last year I think there was at some point on the internet where it was actually really sad. I think it was Kids YouTube and there were videos of Peppa Pig and then right in the middle of it there was this lady with black hair [MOMO Challenge meme?], a really scary image and I think it happened, I can’t remember when it happened but it had a big impact on the kids and I had to do a circle time about what had happened because so many children were affected by it.

Q Had they all seen it, do you know, or had they just heard about it, maybe one or two, a small number and then it spread through talk? I mean maybe you couldn't get any sense of that I just wondered if you did have any.

A I think out of thirty children maybe five had seen it and, therefore, the panic just spreads like wildfire.

Q And was that within the school more widely or was it particularly your class?

A Yes. No it was a very, it was a lot in school but I'm not sure if everybody did a circle time because, but I just felt like my class needed one, so therefore we spoke about what have we seen and about it being not true. So it is and that somebody has done that who wants to make you sad. Someone wouldn't do that if they want to make you happy and you need to remember that it is not something that is happening in your house. It is happening on a screen and that person can't get to you, as much as you have seen that close up. So yeah and I think when stuff like that happens parents usually come and talk to us about it as well

Because I think they feel...I think they are also quite taken by surprise that that happened on the internet and I also think a lot of our parents are my age so they are that or just a bit older than I am, but they are that generation that grew up with computers and never really had these experiences as children and then they've got their own children who are experiencing negative things through media and they don't necessarily know what to do about it because you don't have that experience yourself. So therefore you can't all of a sudden be like 'I know what to do' or 'I know how to fix it'. So I also think it's almost like a message or question, 'Is there anything you could advise us?' Or, 'What shall we do?' Or 'Could you talk to my child because I have already spoken to them but it doesn't seem to help'. And as we talked about earlier on, sometimes you need to hear the same message from different people before you actually hear it.

Q Yes I wondered if you found yes your authority as a teacher was actually something that helped them so...yeah as you say you can put it in a different voice because of who you are in your role.

A Yeah.

Q That's really interesting. Thank you. Let's talk about the flip side. Let's talk about creativity and technologies. So we're really interested in exploring how play with technologies might support children learning, which you've talked a bit about, learning new skills, knowledge or if it forms a barrier to any of those things. So you've talked a little bit about digital technologies and content that you use to facilitate learning and these are explicitly linked to curriculum themes, specific things that you're doing at the time and you'll look for that element but you won't necessarily make it that pattern all the time. So do you include instructions which guide children to a particular approach to use the technologies? For example, are there games with rules where the games and context provide specific constraints or prompts? That sounds a bit like the maths app that they use. In other words so you're steering them to one thing or another or...this is how you do a search on the internet or something like this so it's...

A Yeah, I think I do try to generally when I use the computer to talk them through what I'm doing, also to keep their attention and concentration. But for example if you put

something out like ???, you can't just put it, well you can, you can put it out and there will always be someone who figures it out.

Because most of them are, well, yeah, they see the buttons and the arrows and they're just like 'Oooh, I want to do this'. But there are always children who, for example, will press the left button twenty times but that means that it will only go, it will only rotate left, it will not go forward or backwards. So we do try to always offer an introduction to any sort of skill-based activity and I think especially on my Wednesdays during the computing time I am offering a lot of that.

Q Yeah. That's really interesting. And when you said about that I immediately thought about John because I've observed him at home because I see him and he's one of the 'figure-outers' of technology, it's really interesting, yeah, so I imagined if he might be the one who would do that. Do you ever do any more open-ended stuff where you want them to problem-solve, you want them to sort out 'OK, how are we going to use this? How are we going to do this?' You know, can you figure this, can you? Yeah, problem-solve it.

A Yeah, so I hope this half term to do a bit more...algorithm, like sequencing as well. So on my training we did an activity with instruments and there was a website with coloured buttons and you press it and a bell rings basically and I kind of want to sort of give them, so this is stuff we haven't done yet but I'm hoping to do.

Q This is what you're working on.

A So for example, giving them those colours in their hands and then to say 'I want you to start in an order and you go and make a tune' or a tune that they already know and then put them in the wrong order and, therefore, can you debug it and can you figure out where it's wrong.

Q Yes.

A But I am not convinced yet that we are ready for that right now at this point in the year, so that might be something that we do at some point in the spring. So I'm just seeing how we're going with the algorithms in general.

Q Yeah but that's exactly the sort of thing that you aspire to with that group, yeah.

A But we are definitely doing that this year. There will be a point where we're going to do this.

Q And just also, just you saying about debugging, it just made me think the language that you use you're using the technical terms.

A Yes.

Q Algorithm, I presume this is sort of like a conscious choice you're making here to get them to talk the talk.

A Yes.

Q Associated with technology.

A Yes, so yeah on our, when we did our introduction to the computing curriculum a couple of weeks ago with all my colleagues, we did literally give them a set of vocab and said 'When you are teaching computing, this is the language that we are expecting you to use'. So by the time all these children are leaving us, they know what an algorithm is, they know what we mean when we say 'Can you debug that?' They know a sequence or lots more, which I can't think of right now, but yeah there is the expectation that we are...and unplugged, I always say to the children 'We're going to do an unplugged activity, that means that we're not using the computer or some sort of technology right now'. I think I used it when you first came.

Q You did. That's the first time I came across it, so is that a general term or is that one you've coined yourself? I've never heard it before but...

A No it's, it is one of those terms that we are...

Q Oh I didn't know that. So finally on this section, the LEGO Foundation has developed a tool for learning and understanding technology play. I just wondered if you have noticed the following characteristics of play/using technologies. Does it make them really sort of actively engaged with the technologies and what range of emotions would you see perhaps with children who are involved playing with using technologies? Big questions again, sorry.

A Yeah...so what was the beginning of the question again?

Q So it's about.. so they're interested in applying some of the things that they're interested in this play tool, learning through play, so some of the things are like, you know, what are children doing? Are they actively engaged or are they sort of non-users? How does it and also really interested in wellbeing. What are the emotional things that are going on with children? What emotions might they be displaying also when they are using this? Are they enjoying it? Is it fun? Is it frustrating? You know and I just wondered if you had examples of those sorts of range of emotions they might have shown and the kinds of levels of engagement maybe that you would see with technology in your classroom.

A I do find, no no, no, I do find that children who already have a lot of technology experience at home are obviously better users in class, but also seem to be less interested. So, one of the things that I find really interesting with our children in Key Stage One is not being able to watch a film. So, not having that concentration or the determination to sit through something and not doing anything else, but just doing the watching, basically. So I know that that doesn't work for our kids and I also find that if I would give them iPads, mainly our children with autism are the children who have a really long attention span for it but a very high involvement for very long periods of time. Because really it's like they almost go in it isn't it?

While our other children are like 'Oh I'll just go try this app for ten, fifteen minutes' and then just sort of like 'OK, I've done this, I'm going to do something else now'. So I think it also really depends on the child, but you can see all sorts, high involvement and very skilled also. And yeah I also see children who try and after a while just think 'It's not for me, not really' or 'The game is not for me'. Yeah.



Q What do you think they're responding to there? Is it because they're not progressing in a game that's got levels or answers that they're not getting or is it that they're getting bored because it's repetitive? Can you hazard any guesses or do you have any insights into that?

A I guess it's a combination of a lot of things I think, because I also think in Key Stage One we still offer them a lot of learning through play and therefore also a lot of outdoor play, which I can imagine a lot of our children don't have that at home, don't have a garden with a lot of sand or water or toys or anything like that. So while they do, almost all of them will have a tablet at home. So if you've got the choice to do something at school that they also have at home then you will probably not choose it so I do think that the things that the children don't have at home are things they tend to choose in class and therefore technology, phones, tablets, even laptops for some of them and TV, it's something that they have a lot of in their home life so they're not very interested in it in their school life. And I think that is also one of the reasons that they cannot sit through a film is because I can imagine that a lot of the children in my class go home and watch TV all afternoon. So therefore if I then give them the opportunity to sit and just do that while all those other things are around them, almost sort of calling them and saying 'Come play with me', they're just not very interested. So I do think that is, yeah, I can think of quite a few children in my class who have that.

Q That's really interesting. Do you there's any kind of, you know, in terms of maybe ideas in their heads, things they see and characters they know of, you know from what they're seeing, do you think there is any kind of positive pull through in terms of imagination, pretend, or you know, the kind of content that they might be drawing on do you think?

A Yeah.

Q It's actually stimulating them to bring creative things to what they do in the classroom? Or indeed in the playground I suppose.

A Well yes, so it depends, so we've got a child in Year 2 who loves Benjy. I've never seen it but it's a TV, a cartoon character and he plays it all the time.

Q Do you mean outdoors at playtime?

A Outdoors, indoors, we'll draw it, he'll pretend he is Benjy. So he is absolutely obsessed with this character, which is great because it initiates a lot of play for him but therefore I'm wondering does the play ever get...does it ever move on from that if you're so into one thing? Because it's almost like you are, how do you call them, when you're wearing...

Q Yeah, blinkers.

A Blinkers, yeah. So you can only see that thing that you've got in your head and not anything around you anymore.

Q And does it connect him, just thinking about this particular example, do you think it connects him to other children or might it be something that cuts him off if they're not into Benjy?

A I do think because it is Benjy and it's very popular, it is allowing him to

Q So there's a social element to it?

A Yeah, have a lot of friends and I can also imagine if it wouldn't be popular that he would probably be into it that much. It's the same with 'My Little Pony'. I think that just comes and goes almost because 'My Little Pony', how old is that? Like sixty years, I think. So I think it really depends on the actuality, is that right?

Q Yeah, I know what you mean.

A So how knew something is, how big it is, the bigger the impact it has on our children and...yeah I think after a while they just move on from things and they move on to new things. But ideally I think I would almost hope that the start of the play starts around an idea which could be a character or a game and that they then up-level it while they play or they are playing Benjy but all of a sudden they see a caterpillar in the bushes and can therefore actually leave Benjy behind and start really looking at that other thing.

Q Yes, so it's a jumping off point for their imaginations.

A Yes and I am not sure how well our children can. We've got a big group of children that are really good at that but we find those are also our children who are working at the age related expected level. Well our children who are not there tend to get stuck with something.

Q So would you try and pick up on that in class? Would you be encouraging them to kind of pull things on, design it, adjust it, reflect it, you know that sort of thing you're consciously trying to get them to extend their knowledge?

A Definitely. Yes, we do want, because we're ??? in an ideal world the staff gets into the ??? with the children and we do a lot of observations through Tapestry, which is a programme, an app where the foundation stage and the National Curriculum is all put in together. So when a child is doing something that you think 'Oh that's good learning', you can log it, you can take a photo of it and therefore you've got it.

Q Oh you've got the record.

A You've got it which is really good so it...

Q Who has access to that?

A All teachers and TA's. All teaching staff.

Q Not the parents.

A The parents have access to it in a way that they can see what we do and they can, they can reply to it. So if the parents think that they are doing something at home that they think is interesting, so for example, a lot of parents use it for when they are reading with their child to take a photo of it or a video and then they put it on, so we can see it, so it is kind of a communication system about your child's learning, which seems to be really effective, which is lovely. So we use that and then, I think ??? ideally the adult gets in and they sort of through

questioning or thorough certain actions you help the children up-level their play and therefore their learning. But yes that's...

Q And they respond to that do you find once you...

A It depends on the child. Some children are very ready to up-level their play and they want to. They are so interested in what you've got to tell and they ask questions and they really join in and especially, there is a stage where it is I think it is twenty-two to thirty-six months in the EYFS where older children, for example, with water, they will just scoop and they drop it and they scoop and like that the water pour out, pouring and scooping basically. We've got quite a few children in Year 1 who are still on that level and therefore then trying to get involved in that play and trying to up-level it, you can see them thinking 'No that's not what I'm doing, I'm doing this, I'm busy'.

Q Is that sort of a safe space for them do you think?

A Yes, so I think...

Q Do you think it's the safety of that known familiar place with something like that?

A Yeah and also being confident enough to take a risk and move on. And being ready. A lot of our children are not ready to up-level their play or are not ready to access technology that is up-levelled. So therefore they're not interested or they get frustrated because it doesn't work and it's the same for me. If I have to access a coding programme, which I've never done before and all of a sudden I've got to be able to do it, after a while you give up. You're just like 'Well this is too much for me', so it's the same with our children.

Q Yeah. Oh that's absolutely brilliant, Irina. It's half past four. I have some more questions but I think we should stop here.