

# Digital solutions helped students excel at critical thinking

The information that is given today may not be relevant tomorrow. Therefore, schools today have tried to shift focus and teach students about critical thinking. Six months after the British International School of Stockholm decided to combine effective teaching with technology, teachers have seen improvements in their students' learning skills.

Established in 1980, the British International School of Stockholm (BISS) has built a reputation for excellence in its teaching, with high academic standards in a nurturing yet challenging environment. But as the school grew bigger, the miniscule IT department faced challenges due to the growth of both students and teachers.



**We used to be just a small primary school until we opened a secondary school, and later on our International Baccalaureate programme. Right now we have around 550 students but it might well be over 600 next semester since we are growing every year”**

Stuart Blackmore, Director of IT and digital learning

Last year, Stuart was working for a large international school in Brussels with 1500 students.

“I was asked by the principal at the British International School of Stockholm to help set up their IT programme and work with digital learning in school. When I arrived

I quickly saw that it was a complex IT landscape with quite a few legacy matters. The problem with that from an IT perspective, is that it is hard to contain without a large IT team. I had one colleague and recruited another one, but I realized that we needed to simplify.”

Stuart Blackmore quickly decided to use Google’s solution, Google Workspace for Education which he found to be the easiest and also most cost effective solution for the needs of the school.

“If you want to have a large impact for a relatively low cost and quite quickly, Google is a good option... But beyond those aspects it is also all about learning. We are trying to create a fundamental shift from teaching to learning at the school. The information given today may not be relevant tomorrow, therefore we need to focus more on critical thinking by letting teachers work collaboratively with students and by bringing technology into the classroom.”

Today, every teacher has been given a Chromebook, and from age seven every student uses Chromebooks and Chrome Tablets.

“Teachers had to adapt quickly to new ways of working but their response was incredible. We have seen a huge change in the mindset and teachers are talking a lot about student engagement, Stuart Blackmore explains.”

The lessons learned from the British International School of Stockholm shows that effective teaching, coupled with good implementation of technology can improve students' critical thinking and learning skills.

“Many applications we use are focused on collaboration. If you walk around the school on a normal day, you can see how Google Slides are being used in one classroom where students present things for a group taking notes. In another classroom I have seen students create quizzes in Google Forms which they then share with other students. If you go to the primary school area you can see how the kids use Book Creator which is a third party Android application where children can express their learning through drawings, voice notes and create small e-books that they can share with their parents.”