



Home Access – Strengthening links

The government is about to launch a scheme called the '**Home Access**' grant. The grant will make funding accessible for 270,000 children and their families to access ICT at home.

Children that have access to a computer for school work are more likely to achieve at least a two grade improvement in one subject and at least half a GCSE grade improvement in other subjects. 38% of teachers in addition now set homework requiring ICT and 35% of families in Great Britain still do not have access to the internet. This scheme aims at partly combating the digital divide.

Eligibility criteria for the Home Access Grant

- Children looked after (Years 1-13)
- Families that have children eligible for free school meals (Years 3-9)
- Children (Years 3-9) with parents that receive any of the following:
 - Income support
 - Income-based job seekers allowance
 - Receives the Child Tax Credit and has an income of less than £16,040
 - Has guaranteed pension credit
 - Have an income related employment support allowance
 - Receive support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act.

Families may be required to provide evidence of the above when they make the application. They will only be eligible if their children attend a state maintained school full-time. Families will not be eligible if they have taken part in the 'Computer for Pupils' scheme.

The application process:

The scheme is expected to be launched after 13th January 2010. Families will need to apply by completing a written application form. Once an application is processed a 'one off use' debit card will be sent to families for use with their chosen supplier. Only one 'Home Access' package is available per family.

The Home Access package will consist of:

- One computer/ device per household with step by step instructions on using the package
- Filtering software to be controlled by parents
- 'Know It All' digital content - eSafety advice for parents
- Various assistive software
- Productivity software - TBC
- 1 years 3g dongle internet access; Additional broadband options may be added depending on uptake later in the year.
- Anti-virus and firewall software with pre-paid updates for 3 years
- Warranty, service and support for 1 year
- Re-instatement service in the event of theft for 1 year