

## Case Study

### John Ogilvie High School

John Ogilvie High School is a six-year co-educational, Catholic comprehensive and is located in Hamilton, South Lanarkshire. Its catchment area covers parts of Hamilton as well as Blantyre and Burnbank in the West of Scotland. They have been using MindGenius education for 3 years now, and in that time, its use has spread throughout every department of the school and is used by staff for management and planning and by pupils extensively across the curriculum.

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The high school has around 200 PCs running MindGenius. It is used in all subjects to varying degrees throughout the curriculum, including science, maths, technical subjects, assisted learning and homework. The increased use of MindGenius has been helped by teachers each having a PC in their classroom, thereby facilitating the spread of ICT within the school.

Mr McGeever, a science teacher at John Ogilvie High School, uses MindGenius with his 12-year-old First Year pupils. He says evidence to show the improvement MindGenius has brought about in his pupils lies in what he sees day in day out in the classroom, and throughout the academic year, experience which he says indicates significant benefit for pupils of all levels.

The end goal for the pupils in this class is to give a presentation in MS PowerPoint in front of their classmates. The only guidance they are given is in the topic; pupils then take charge of their own learning. They review previously learned work and begin their presentation in MindGenius, focusing on getting the content and structure right. MindGenius allows them to work in a format where changing and re-arranging information is simple and quick. Pupils can also use MindGenius features such as Output Tree Layout and the Map Explorer to practise going through the presentation. The map can then be exported to MS PowerPoint where the focus moves from structure and content to making the presentation look good e.g. adding images, colours and scrolling titles.

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Edmund McFadden,  
Deputy Head Teacher,  
John Ogilvie High School.

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The pupils are confident and enthusiastic using the software, and even volunteer to give their presentation to the whole class. As the pupils applaud, Mr McGeever points out that the pupils seemed to have come to an unspoken understanding that each presentation should receive applause. The presentations are followed by constructive criticism, which again seems to be well received by the class.

One of the best things that MindGenius has brought to this particular science class is its ability to include all pupils, no matter what their ability. For one particular dyslexic pupil, this has meant having the confidence to refuse the help of another pupil to read his presentation for him. Using the branches in MindGenius as a trigger, he is now able to confidently give his own presentation as an expression of his own achievement.

MindGenius has caught on throughout the entire school, not just as a way to revise for exams but also for creating all kinds of work in different stages. In the science class, MindGenius was part of a process leading to a MS PowerPoint presentation. In Mr Jamieson's woodwork class, however, the map is the final outcome included in material sent to the SQA for evaluation.

The pupils in the woodwork class use MindGenius to work around their brief, which in this case is the design for a table. Using MindGenius they are able to develop ideas and look at possible problems that might result from different choices. Pupils said MindGenius allowed them to think of more words and to bring ideas out of their heads.

The benefit of this way of working, as opposed to with a traditional paper-based map, is clear when you look at examples of older work from past years. Paper maps often bear the signs of repeated corrections and illegible handwriting. Mr Jamieson says that in the past pupils were often frustrated and disheartened at having to restart maps or were unable to produce something that reached an acceptable standard. Using MindGenius maps, work can be amended and edited electronically, and printed out in whatever format is most appropriate to the size of the final map.

These MindGenius maps are then pasted into a folder containing diagrams and photographs of the final table for evaluation by the SQA. Using MindGenius in subjects like woodwork helps teachers to be innovative and also helps the quality of the pupils' outcomes. Using MindGenius in the classroom keeps pupils interested and motivated and this is especially evident in pupils with behavioural or attention problems. MindGenius significantly helps lower achieving pupils to raise the level of their work.

MindGenius is becoming part of the culture in John Ogilvie High School. The staff are really beginning to see tangible benefits for themselves and their pupils using MindGenius in the classroom. In a busy school environment where there are so many demands on people's time, it is hard to adapt to a new way of working. However with MindGenius' intuitive easy-to-use interface and extensive benefits for both staff and pupils, it is being used for everything from lesson planning to reports and much more.

**For more information e-mail**  
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