

Stanbridge Earls SEN Case Study

Stanbridge Earls in Hampshire is a small independent school specializing in specific educational needs including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia.

Audio Notetaker is being used increasingly throughout the school across subject areas and year groups and has been used both by staff to create resources, and by students to create audio notes in lessons and complete homework.

Dean Williams, ICT Manager, is a keen supporter of assistive technology in schools and believes that Audio Notetaker has great benefits for pupils:

‘It's fun and it's a leveler; you're no longer sitting next to someone who can type or spell better than you because that doesn't matter with Audio Notetaker. It's testing your knowledge not your ability to write.’

At Stanbridge Earls, Audio Notetaker is used for preparing lessons, revision notes and homework assignments in audio form as well as student note taking:

- Students use the software for taking notes in classes. Taking a lot of notes quickly can be hard for some students, and recording helps to alleviate this.
- Students who cannot complete homework assignments with text use Audio Notetaker to do so orally instead.
- Likewise, Audio Notetaker is used for creative writing assignments, where pupils are able to use much more advanced vocabulary than is expected based on their reading ages, as they do not have the confidence to try and write longer, more complicated words.
- Teachers use the software to give detailed oral feedback on a piece of work, which some students prefer over lengthy written feedback.
- Some teachers prepare audio-based revision notes for the pupils, broken up into sections, and then encourage them to first find images to illustrate each topic, and then if possible create a few of their own written notes to accompany them. The staged nature of this task makes it easy for pupils of all abilities to engage with the task initially, and allows them to build confidence. The use of images that they had found also allows students to create revision notes that have personal meaning to them, which had benefits when remembering the material later.

The school is training all staff on Audio Notetaker as part of their Assistive Technology ICT strategy, also the subject of an Oxford University Education Department research project.

Dean believes Audio Notetaker is not just for schools with dedicated facilities. ‘We had a visit from the SENCO from a school in Winchester who were advised to visit us by a local education site. They had one dyslexic child in Year 5 and after seeing what we do here they bought a copy of Audio for her. She loves it and the SENCO is already saying that it will get used for other things’.