

# Libraries v Computers

Primary teachers see ICT as more of a priority for investment than school libraries. In research carried out by the British Educational Suppliers Association's (BESA) only two per cent of teachers indicated that libraries are more important than investing in interactive whiteboards (IWBs) and other classroom ICT. Nearly a third of teachers felt that classroom ICT was more important while the rest put ICT and libraries on an equal footing.



EBooks challenge  
libraries


Ray Barker, director, BESA said, "Where banks of computers have been provided in the space that may have previously held storage for books, the growing use of eBooks and of the internet for research, is putting pressure on schools to justify expenditure on traditional books."

The coalition government is beating the drum for a Back to Basics approach and on coming to power immediately announced the closure of Becta, the agency for ICT in schools. Primary teachers, it seems, do not share their view.

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## acoustics

There I was writing an article for Special Children on acoustics and all of a sudden the government made an announcement. Maybe I should try writing about world peace next time. Anyway, I learnt a lot about the issues of acoustics, especially in new buildings which seem to favour

large open spaces, glass, concrete and busy areas for people to congregate in. These large echoey spaces make it hard for deaf pupils but also cause problems for kids who are learning English or those learning a foreign language who need to hear pronunciation very clearly. The National Deaf Children's Society has been pressing for better buildings. Then there was Sir Alan Steer's report which shows that poor acoustics are one of the causes of bad behaviour. Kids can't hear, don't pay attention and find something else to do in the classroom. We've all seen it happen.

Despite the overwhelming body of evidence that acoustics matter, the head teachers I have spoken to recently said they did not want to spend their money on improving acoustics. Then, almost out of the blue, last Friday -16th October- the government issued a press release, 'Acoustic testing to be made compulsory in all Building Schools for the Future projects.' Yep that will do nicely.

[http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2009\\_0191](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0191)