

## Making learning better: writing on learning surfaces

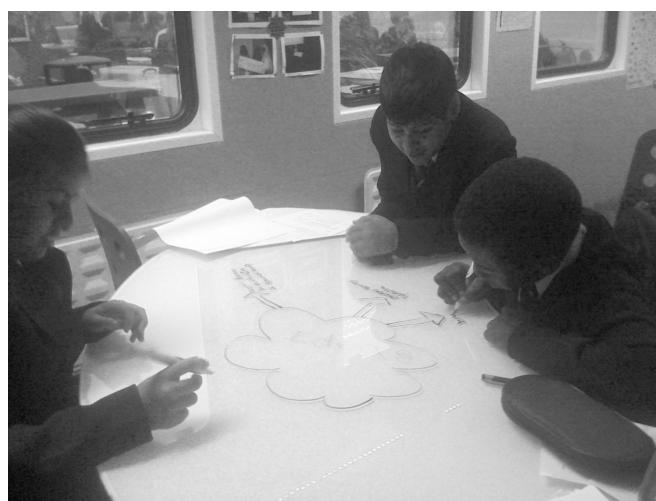
Over the last few years, students in our learner-led design projects have been exploring ways to make their learning more effective, and in doing so have of course reflected on their own learning too. This meta-cognition itself is hugely effective at "making learning better" - just thinking about how learning can be better improves it!.

However, data shows that the ideas coming from the students' research are also remarkably effective. A working exchange through Skype and actual visits, between **Lampton School students** in West London, the **SEK students** in Madrid & Barcelona and the **Silkeborg students** in Denmark, sought to build on the demonstrable effectiveness of the Lampton students' user-led classroom design, with its many innovative features which included multiple writeable-surfaces. But although writing on glass and desk surfaces was quick and easy to adopt, to transform really large walls cheaply, whatever their surface, needed a new paint solution.



Working with an architecture research student at **Universidad Camilo José Cela** in Madrid, and with input from a major European paint manufacturer, the SEK schools trialled a new surface treatment that has been developed and tested on over 100 surface samples. **Javier** - the student -

researched an easy way to configure and use a commercial paint for creating writable surfaces at a fraction of the cost of whiteboards or other alternatives. *"The idea is to benefit millions of kids all over the world - sometimes a small contribution is more useful for people than a relevant architecture"* - says Javier, modestly.



The paint is easy to apply, by roller or spray, and is safe around children. We are excited that something which emerged from a student-led classroom design project, swapped and built on in a rapid and quite viral way by other students in other countries,

with research input from students in university, has the potential to make a huge contribution to learning everywhere.

Meanwhile our students are busy summarising ways in which the multiple writing surfaces can be used in teaching and learning - for example it was clear from the outset that they were motivated by a sense of audience for their work. The performance data on student attainment confirms the impact of asking students, "how do you make learning better?" and then trusting their judgement to make it better. The net result: better learners, with better learning.

Details of the paint will be released in due course and will be widely available - watch this space - or maybe watch the walls, pillars, floors or desks near you!