Education Development Trust

Making the Leap:

Putting Technology at the Heart of Policy Reform for 21st Century African Education Systems

Dr Patrick Brazier, Chief Executive
Education Development Trust

Who we are

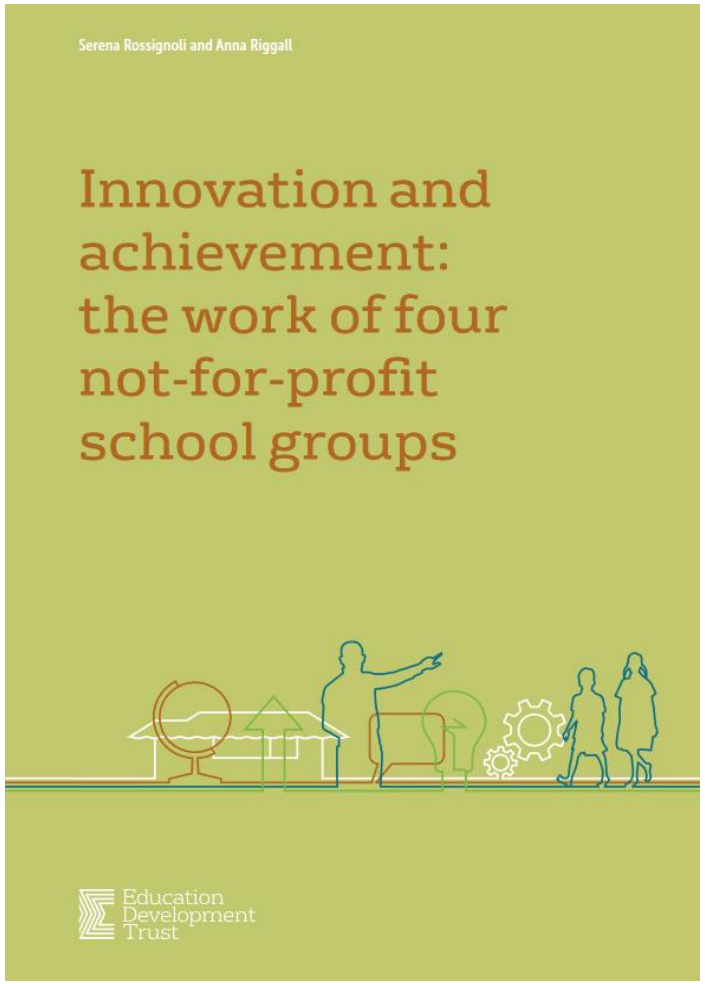
We are an international not-for-profit organisation that works with governments around the world to improve school systems and provide quality careers advice and guidance.

Our Mission

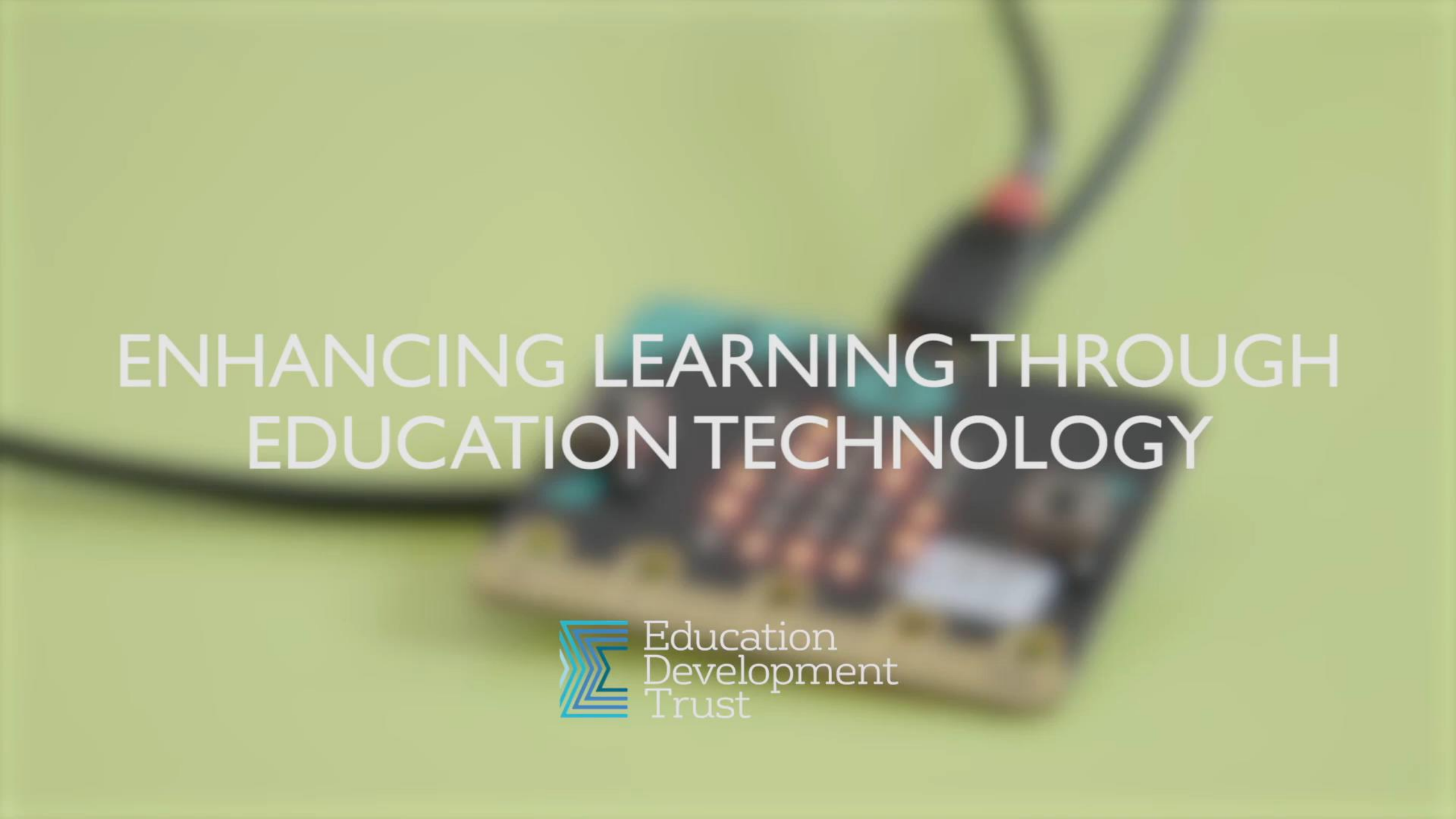
To provide evidence-based sustainable solutions that transform lives through education.


In partnership with governments, we design and deliver large scale reform programmes

Our research programme focuses on bright spots in education reform.



In the UK we run a centre dedicated to excellence in the use of educational technology.


ENHANCING LEARNING THROUGH
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Drawing on our organisational experience, I ask 4 key questions:

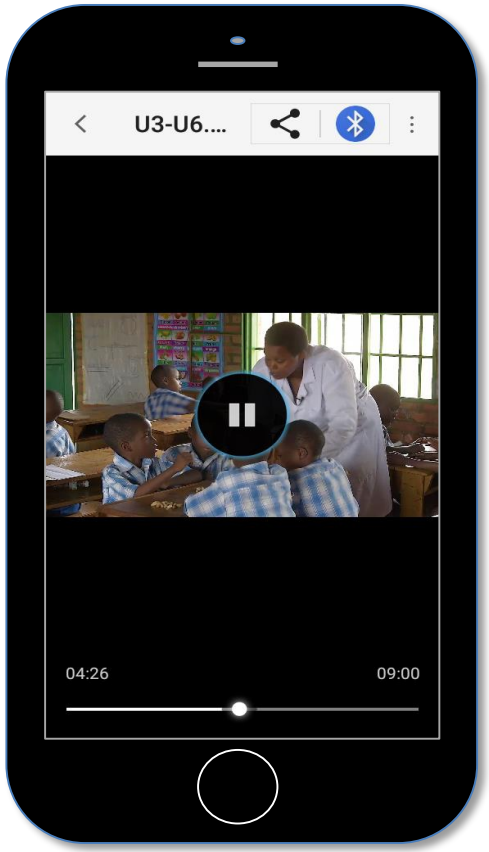
- Where is the promising practice?
- What are the reasons why technology reform often fails?
- What should we be teaching students about technology?
- How can we get teacher buy-in for technology reform?

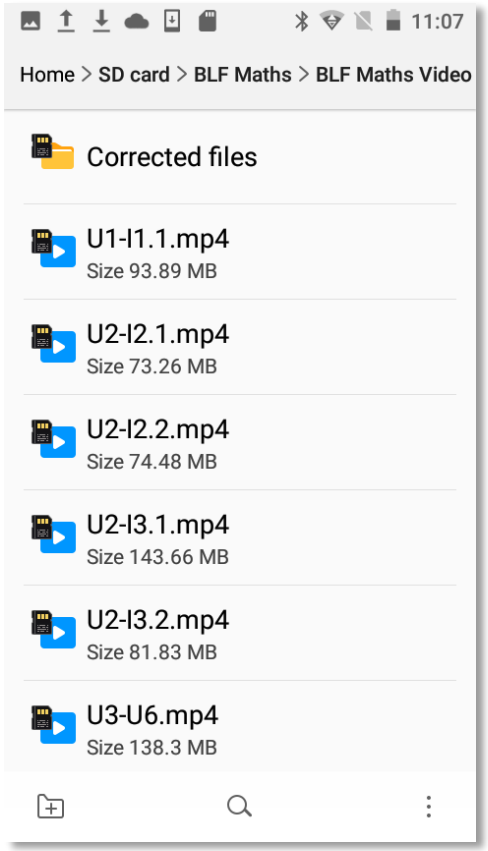
What ‘bright spots’ are there in the world of educational technology?

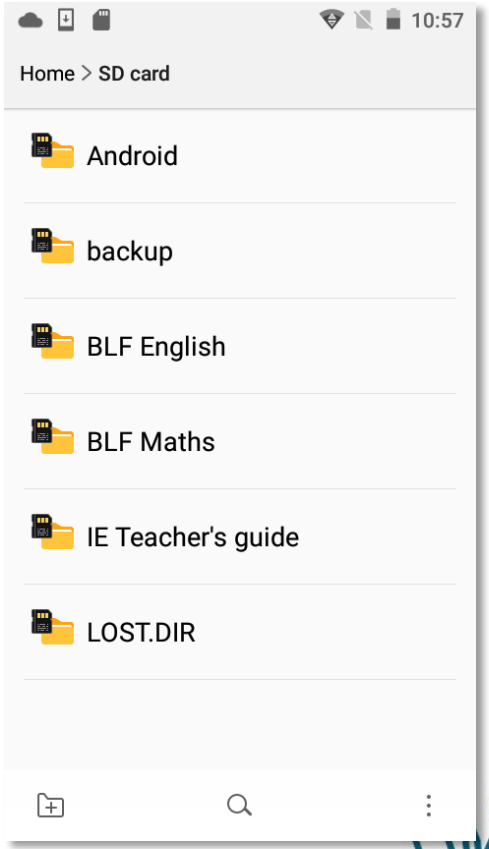
Technology has the potential to enhance almost every aspect of each school system


The power of SMS text messages to and from parents.
We empowered women in rural India to gather data about teacher absenteeism.
Getty Images

Audio and video content as part of a teachers toolkit - used for self study by teachers for their professional development.

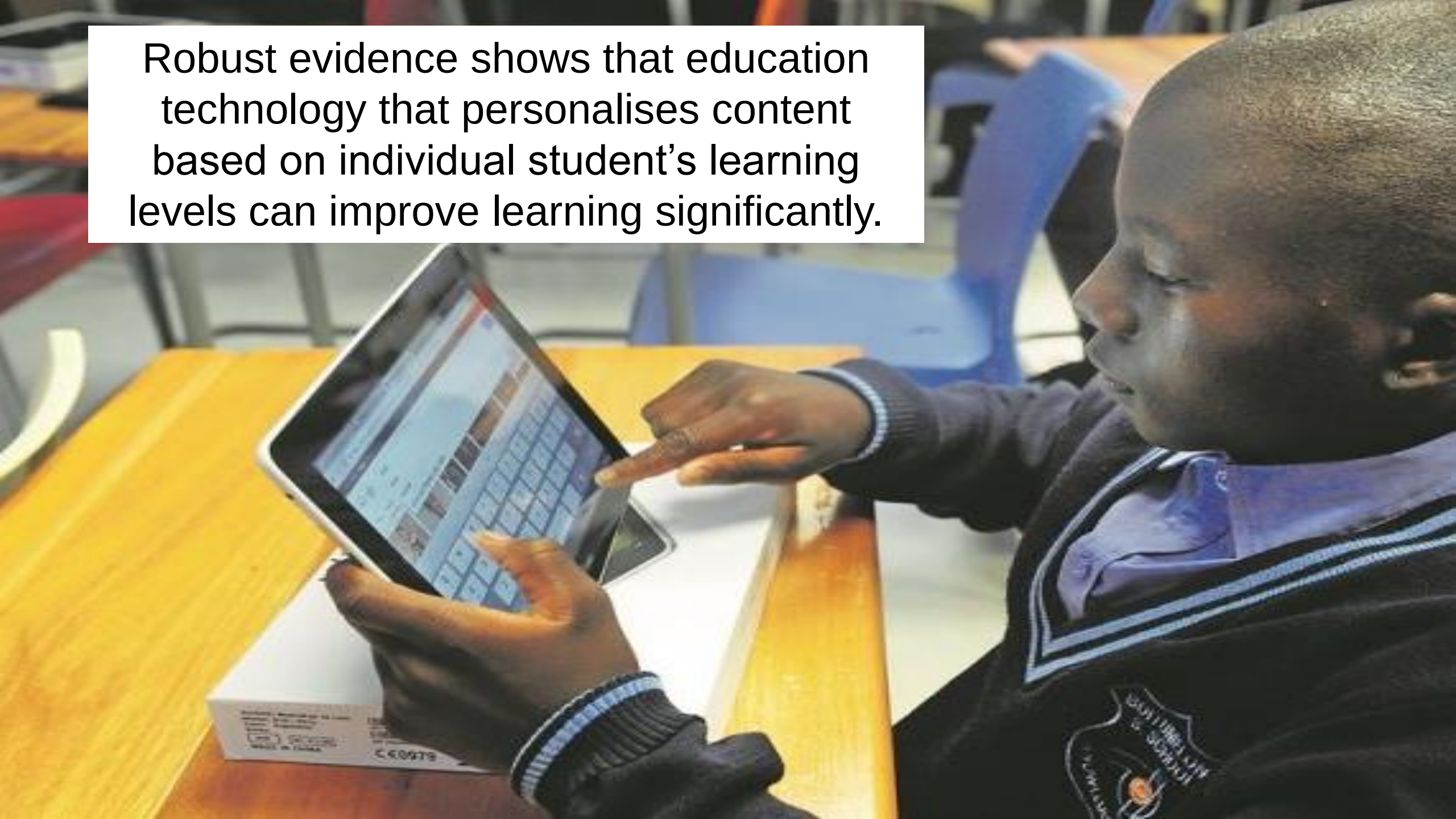






Videos used during community of practice meetings

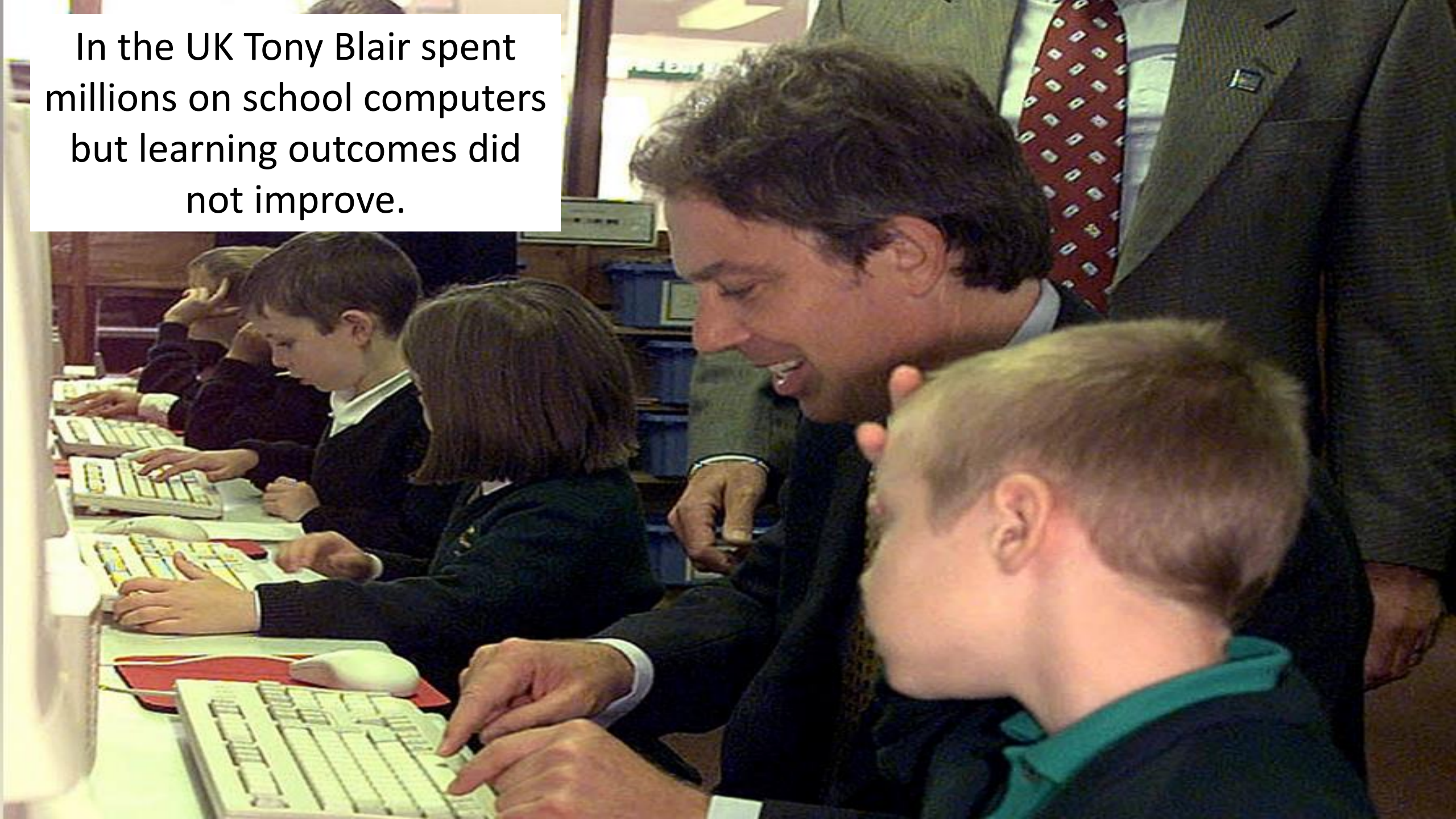
Teachers watching a lesson together as part of video for reflection activity


Robust evidence shows that education technology that personalises content based on individual student’s learning levels can improve learning significantly.

Technology reforms often fail.

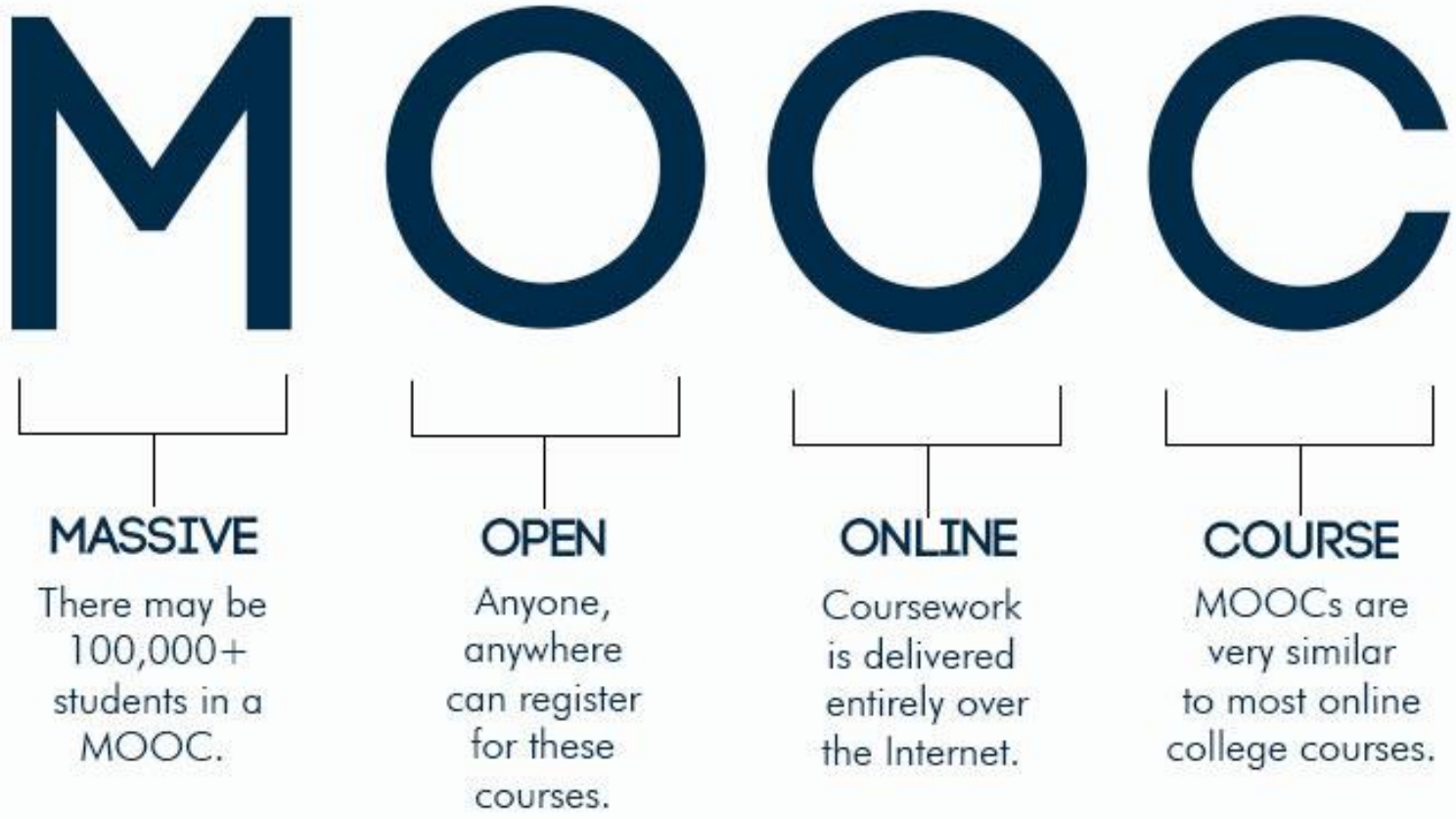
Why?

In the UK Tony Blair spent millions on school computers but learning outcomes did not improve.

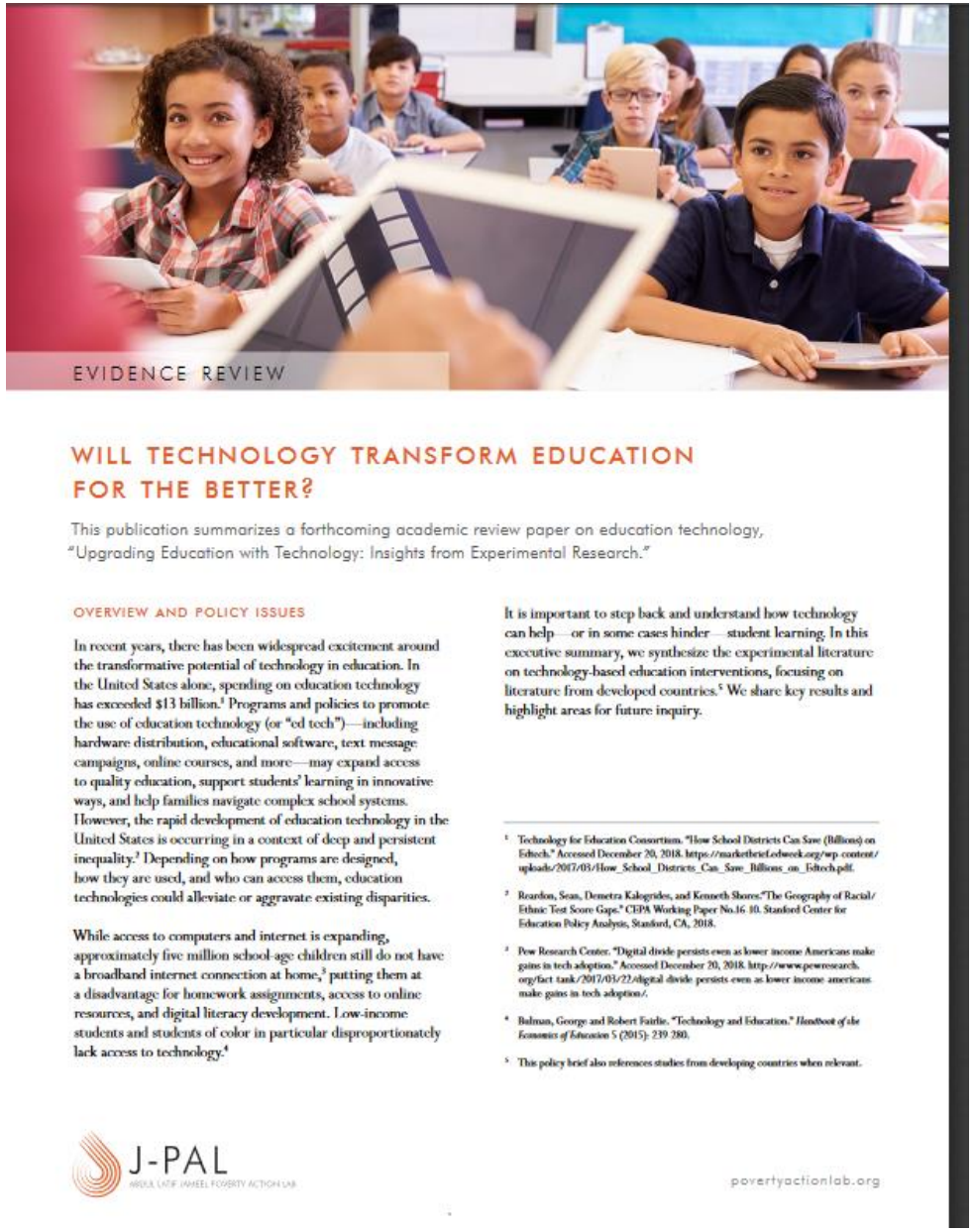


Millions of dollars were spent on the One Laptop Per Child Programme. It is now widely seen as a wasted investment.

MOOCs for Teachers were seen as a transformative initiative. The drop out rate of early courses were very high.



1. The Blair government invested in hardware without training teachers and school leaders.
2. The global One Laptop Per Child Programme assumed that students were capable of self-directed learning.
3. MOOCS for teachers initially depended entirely on online learning. Most adult learners need some face-to-face interaction.



Will Technology Transform Education For The Better? J-PAL, 2019

Initiatives that expand access to computers and internet alone generally do not improve kindergarten to 12th grade students' grades and test scores.

Throwing equipment such as tablets or laptops at schools without addressing the training of teachers hasn't resulted in any sustainable solutions on the continent.

Professor Ulrike Rivett,
University of Cape Town

The deal with the teachers:

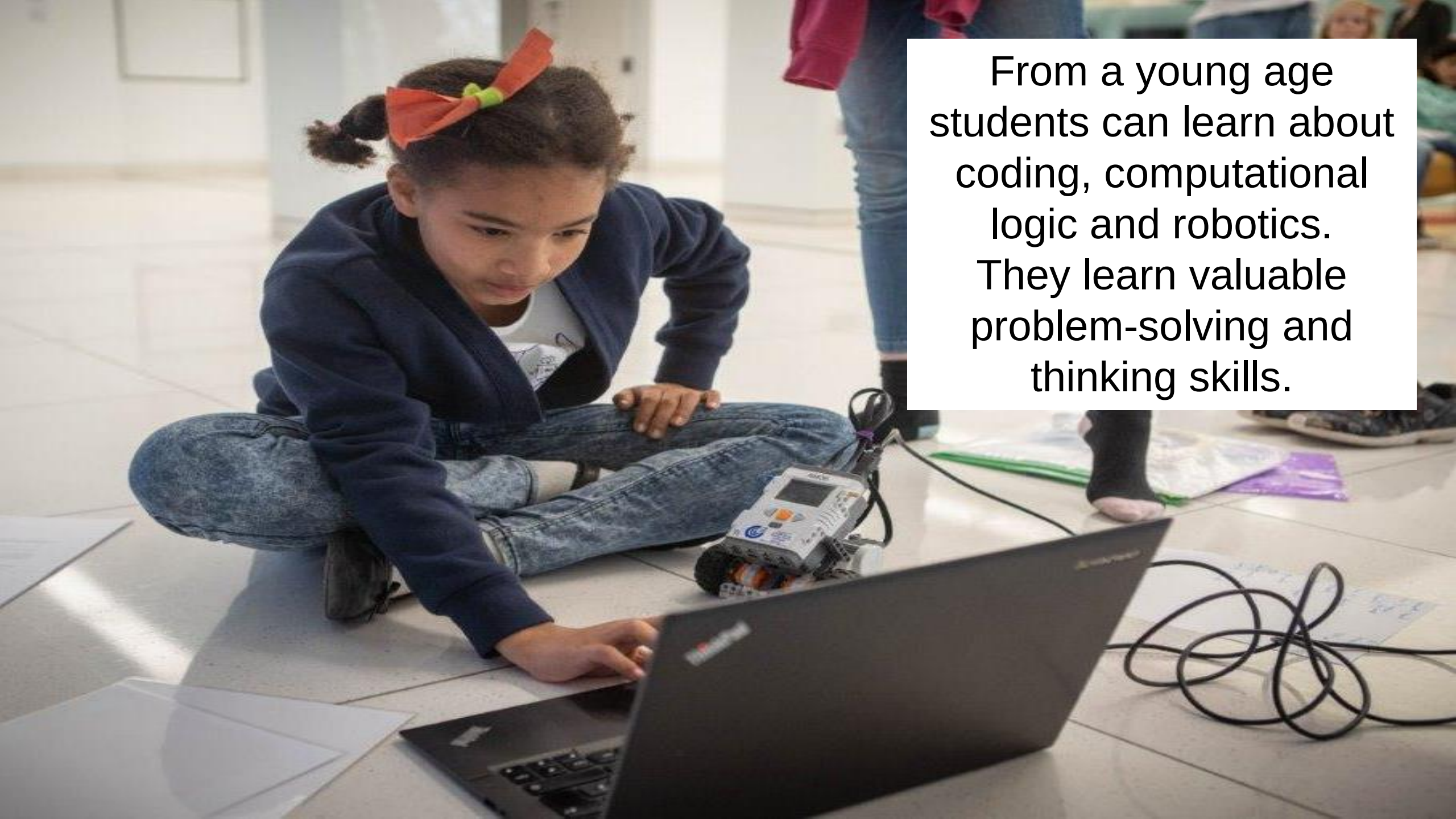
Excellent technology resources in return for higher levels of professionalism and better teaching.

Policymakers need to do a deal with teachers.

‘We will invest in technology resources but we have high professional expectations of you and expect you to teach more effectively with the new resources’.

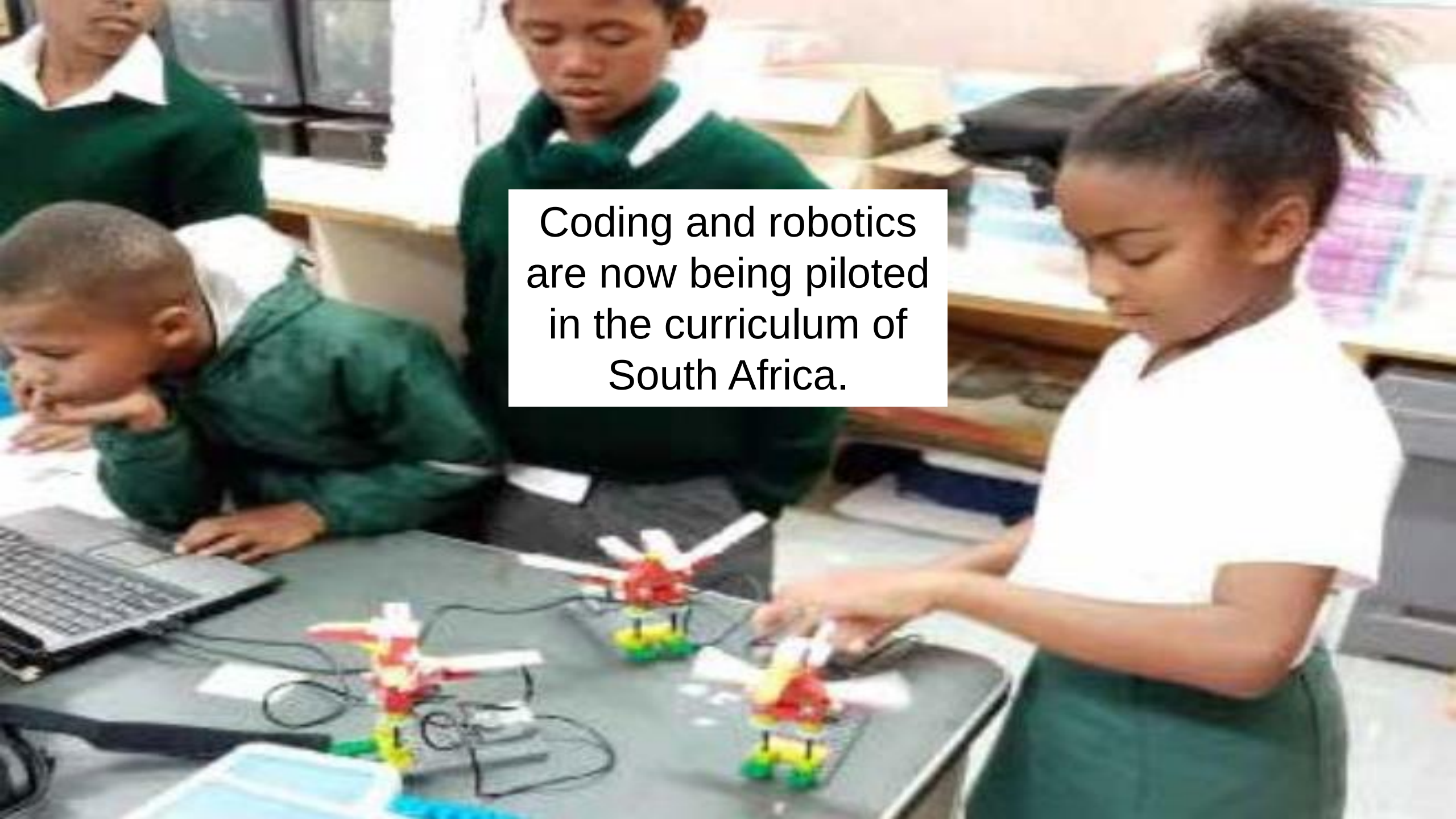
Is it enough to teach students how to use information technology?

The need for a curriculum that focuses on understanding computer science.



From a young age students can learn about coding, computational logic and robotics. They learn valuable problem-solving and thinking skills.

- Understand what algorithms are, how they are implemented as programs on digital devices, and that programs execute by following precise and unambiguous instructions.
- Create and debug simple programs.
- Use logical reasoning to predict the behaviour of simple programs.
- Use technology purposefully to create, organise, store, manipulate and retrieve digital content.


Coding and robotics are now being piloted in the curriculum of South Africa.