

ICT Digital Strategy

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail”.

B Franklin

The DfE's [Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#), a strategy for the education and children's services systems, tasks the education sector with reducing its environmental footprint, particularly in the drive to achieve net zero.

In action area 4, the strategy encourages schools to develop evidence-based decarbonisation and climate resilience solutions, including reducing energy demand and delivering savings.

A school digital strategy is an action plan for using technology to work more effectively in your school or MAT. It should primarily focus on improving outcomes for learners. Still, it can have more comprehensive benefits, such as improving staff well-being and efficiency, cost savings, and the opportunity to reduce the school's impact on the environment through reduced energy demand and life cycle impact (including the design, manufacturing, use, and disposal stages).

Getting started

Before devising a digital strategy, digital leads should become familiar with the [DfE, digital and technology standards in schools and colleges](#) to ensure that the proper digital infrastructure is in place.

Establishing the case for upgraded digital technology

1. Conduct a thorough assessment of the current digital technology infrastructure to identify areas for improvement and potential upgrades.
2. Evaluate the environmental performance of existing digital equipment, considering factors such as energy consumption, materials used, behavioural use, and end-of-life disposal options.
3. Identify baseline energy consumption data during both operational and non-operational hours.
4. Identify options for disposing of end-of-life electronic devices that are compliant with [WEEE regulations](#). Consider donating used electronic equipment to charities that comply with [WEEE guidance](#), ensuring social value.

Procuring sustainable technology

1. Prioritise selecting digital technology that meets recognized environmental standards (e.g., ENERGY STAR certification).
2. Compare the energy usage of existing technology with new, using websites such as <http://sust-it.net> to establish the potential impact of replacement.
3. Consider the life cycle impacts of different digital products, including manufacturing, transportation, and disposal. These can usually be obtained from manufacturers' websites.
4. Explore options for refurbished or remanufactured digital equipment to reduce resource consumption and waste generation.

5. Include sustainability criteria in procurement policies and guidelines, emphasising the importance of selecting environmentally preferable options.
6. Solicit bids from suppliers that offer eco-friendly digital technology solutions.
7. Evaluate suppliers based on their environmental commitment, product sustainability, and adherence to ethical sourcing practices.

Effective implementation of sustainable technology

1. Ensure proper installation and configuration of new digital equipment to optimise energy efficiency and maximise device life span.
2. Provide training for staff members on using new technology and best practices for maximising efficiency, such as switch-off and charging protocols.
3. Implement cloud-based documentation and communication systems to reduce reliance on location-based storage (servers) and paper-based processes and maximise the impact of the upgraded technology.

Establishing impact

1. Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to track the environmental and cost-saving benefits of the technology upgrade.
2. Regularly monitor energy consumption and waste generation associated with the upgraded technology.
3. Conduct periodic audits to assess compliance with sustainability goals and identify areas for improvement.

Ensuring long-term sustainability

1. Establish a refresh protocol to ensure continued efficiency.
2. Stay informed about developments in sustainable technology, procurement practices, and regulatory requirements to keep the operational procedure current.

Additional resources and guidance

- [EEF digital technology guidance report](#)
- [EEF digital technology guidance - recommendations poster](#)