# Aligning schools with DfE digital standards 2025–26

16 June 2025



**Meeting the Digital Moment**

As part of the Government's strategy to modernise school infrastructure, the Department for Education (DfE) has committed **£45 million** in 2025–26 to improve school connectivity. This investment supports schools in meeting six national digital standards across:

- **Broadband performance**
- **Wi-Fi and network coverage**
- **Switching and infrastructure**
- **Cybersecurity and filtering**
- **Digital governance**
- **IT support access**

These are not simply technical benchmarks—they are the foundation for secure, inclusive, and resilient teaching and learning. For school leaders, this is a prime opportunity to future-proof their digital estate with capital funding already in place. **Digital infrastructure is now a key area of priority in school improvement planning across the country.**

**What This Means for Your School**

Whether you're leading a single site or a trust of 30 schools, meeting digital

standards is now part of your core leadership agenda. The 2025–26 capital window provides the funding to make it happen—especially through schemes like **Connect the Classroom**, **CIF**, and **Devolved Formula Capital**.

More than 3,700 schools have already benefited from prior upgrades. An estimated **1,000 more will be prioritised this year**, particularly those flagged in the DfE's RISE programme.

**Peer-to-Peer: What Schools Are Doing Right Now**

Across our network, school leaders are already taking proactive steps. Here's what we're seeing in real time:

- **One primary school in Lancashire** used its DFC allocation to replace ageing Wi-Fi with secure, site-wide access points—completed over a single half-term.
- **A South London MAT** commissioned a trust-wide broadband and firewall audit, aiming to standardise cybersecurity and filtering policies across 11 sites.
- **A rural secondary in Devon** is preparing a CIF bid for fibre infrastructure, having identified resilience gaps during remote learning.

These aren't isolated examples—they reflect a **sector-wide shift from reactive IT fixes to strategic digital planning**. The strongest outcomes are coming from schools that take early action, even before funding cycles open.

**Tailored Support: Trusts vs. Standalone Schools**

We understand that digital planning looks different depending on your context:

***For MAT Leaders:***

You're likely managing dozens of devices, sites, and service contracts. The priority is **scalability**—auditing trust-wide infrastructure, reducing procurement complexity, and standardising tools across schools. You may be building a five-year digital roadmap or aligning to broader decarbonisation goals.

***For Standalone Schools and Small Primaries:***

You may not have a full-time IT lead or in-house expertise. But you still need to

comply with national standards. The good news? You're not alone. We're working with hundreds of small schools to access trusted support, simplified audit tools, and capital funding advice tailored to your scale.

### Guidance for Planning Ahead

School leaders across the country are asking smart questions. Here's where to start:

- **What's our current baseline?**
  Ask your IT provider for a quick audit against the DfE's six standards—or use our readiness checklist.
- **Are we eligible for funding?**
  Many schools already have DFC or are in line for Connect the Classroom support. Even if you're unsure, we can help you find out.
- **What can we do now?**
  Start early: gather quotes, assess needs, and plan works around term dates. Many suppliers offer staged or scalable upgrades to match your timeline and budget.

### What the Data Shows

From our analysis of **26,000+ schools across the UK**, it's clear: **digital infrastructure has become a strategic priority**.

- **7,800+ views** on digital funding guidance
- **4,500+ schools** engaging with Connect the Classroom resources
- **3,200+ broadband and fibre queries**
- **1,900+ cybersecurity resource downloads**

These trends reflect growing action from finance leads, estate managers, and senior leadership teams focused on digital readiness for 2025–26.

### How We Can Support You

Whether you're planning a full infrastructure refresh or just getting started, we're here to help:

- Access our **Digital Readiness Checklist** and capital funding explainer
- Connect with DfE-aligned **IT, broadband, and cybersecurity partners**

- Join our **School Leader Briefing Sessions** on digital standards
- Explore case studies from schools like yours

**Final Thought**

Digital infrastructure is no longer a side-project—it's the foundation for resilient learning, safe online spaces, and long-term cost efficiency. The DfE has provided the funding—now it's time to plan, partner, and deliver.

By aligning to the digital standards today, you're not only meeting compliance—you're building the digital foundation your staff, pupils, and future curriculum will depend on.

Let's make this year's capital spend count.