
Enhancing learning and teaching through digital technology in Shetland's schools

**A Digital Learning and Teaching
Strategy for Shetland**

2021-2025



**Shetland
Islands
Council**

Introduction

A changing nation: how Scotland will thrive in a digital world is the national strategy which sets out the measures which will ensure that Scotland will fulfil its potential in a constantly evolving digital world. The Scottish Government aspire to create an education system which builds digital skills and it has therefore never been so important to take strategic decisions in education through a digital lens.

This strategy has been developed during a period of significant change in the delivery of education in Shetland and across the world.

The pace of change has presented a wide range of challenges for local authorities in Scotland with regards to pedagogy, connectivity and the skills required to navigate an evolving digital environment.

Most of the recent change has been out of necessity – a step change to ensure teachers and school managers have continued to provide high quality learning and teaching during a period of education disruption.

Change has also created new opportunities and accelerated progress towards a more digitally agile education system, many times more able to respond to the challenge and take advantage of the vast learning and networking opportunities afforded by digital connectivity.

The education system has experienced a seismic shift forward enabling staff to engage with technologies that are fast becoming ubiquitous across our system.

And now it is time to make further, more controlled, and strategic progress in enhancing learning and teaching through digital technologies.

This strategy will provide the framework which will enable Shetland Islands Council to make planned and deliberate progress to support digital educators, create digital learners, enhance digital access, develop digital leadership and build digital protection within our education system.

**As the border
between
physical and
digital gets
more
permeable, a
new kind of
literacy
emerges.**

JOHN BATELLE

Digital learners

At the forefront of this strategy is the aspiration to support, develop and inspire children and young people as digital learners with digital competency in communicating, handling information, transacting, problem solving as well as being safe and legal online.

Our children and young people are being educated in the middle of a digital revolution and are accumulating digital skills and experiences faster than ever before.

The digital world is changing in front of young people's eyes and we must prepare our children and young people for further societal change and future employment opportunities both in the emerging digital economy but also in traditional areas of employment which are becoming inherently more digital in themselves.

And we need to keep children and young people safe in the digital world, empowering them to have the appropriate skills, apply the right judgement, be proud of their digital identity and contribute with confidence, creativity and responsibility to the digital world.

The strategic ambition is to create digital learners who flourish in a digital world.

We will

- ✓ Reinforce digital literacy across all learning, not only the technologies area of the curriculum
- ✓ Create opportunities for learners to develop the skills and knowledge across:
 - ✓ Digital Literacy
 - Digital Identity
 - Digital Safety
 - Digital Security
 - Digital Emotional Intelligence
 - Digital Communication
 - Digital Rights
- ✓ Develop the range of approaches to parental engagement and family digital learning opportunities
- ✓ Create digital learning experiences and events which support the Developing the Young Workforce agenda
- ✓ Enhance, through Pupil Voice, the ways in which children and young people can influence their digital learning



Digital educators

A teaching workforce with an understanding of the digital world and the skills with which to enrich their pedagogy is a key element of the digital learning and teaching strategy for Shetland.

Educators have taken giant leaps forward in their own professional development and familiarisation with emerging technologies and platforms in recent years.

The proliferation of online training, webinars and live meetings, events and conferences related to digital learning and teaching has created opportunities for responsive, teacher led, individualised learning and development.

Without losing that aspect of reactive professional learning, we now need a focus on more consistent and strategic professional learning opportunities which meet the needs of teachers, schools and the local authority but, most importantly, meet the needs of our children and young people.

Extending professional learning opportunities to the whole team around the child will support a better skilled workforce across a whole school.

The strategic ambition is to support digital educators inspire and motivate learners through the use of digital technology.

We will

- ✓ Support teachers achieve the digital learning and teaching benchmarks of teacher competence within the GTC Scotland Professional Standards 2021
- ✓ Invest in devices for teachers
- ✓ Develop and embed the Technologies progression pathway
- ✓ Deliver a Digital Induction package for all new teachers to the authority including probationers
- ✓ Develop a digital learning calendar
- ✓ Commit to continual digital support to upskill our educators beyond the implementation of the strategy



Digital leaders

The success of the strategy will require leadership at all levels and a commitment to understanding the value and importance of digital technology in education.

Enhanced and ongoing investment in resources is pivotal in ensuring learners have access to the tools required at each stage of their learner journey. Educators must know they have the support to deliver the curriculum and meet learner's needs.

Digital technology should be embedded across school improvement planning and a key consideration for school managers in creating a clear vision for delivering excellence and equity in their schools.

The strategic ambition is to support digital leaders who drive improvement.

We will

- ✓ Support school leaders achieve the digital technologies aspirational standards contained within the GTC Scotland Professional Standards 2021
- ✓ Establish an authority wide Digital Learning and Teaching Improvement Group
- ✓ Establish a Digital Learning and Teaching Network
- ✓ Increase senior officer commitment to STEM including the development of a STEM strategy for Shetland
- ✓ Establish digital champions in each school
- ✓ Ensure commitment to digital developments within School Improvement Planning processes



Digital access

Digital technology provides opportunities to create a fully inclusive education system which supports educators meet individual needs and offer unlimited access to the curriculum.

Device and connectivity challenges have stifled the progress that can be made in this area and limited our children and young people's experience of learning.

Steps must be taken to close the digital divide and provide all learners, regardless of needs or geography, with full access to high quality learning opportunities, now and in to the future.

The strategic ambition is to enable all learners to participate in digital learning and teaching and to address the rural and poverty related device and connectivity gaps.

We will

- ✓ Ensure that Education has a role in working with the communications industry and government to improve high-speed broadband and mobile connections throughout Shetland
- ✓ Continue to Identify and close the poverty related digital device gap
- ✓ Revise the designated numbers formula, working towards a device for every pupil
- ✓ Working within the legislative framework, establish a responsive, teacher led system of programme and application approval to meet the demands of the curriculum
- ✓ Ensure all learners have equitable access to appropriate inclusive technology to support access to the curriculum
- ✓ Audit and review existing inclusive technology use in the authority
- ✓ Inclusive technology has a planned investment structure which is responsive to additional support needs and is supported via ICT and external agencies
- ✓ High quality planned professional learning is available to support pedagogy and practice in using inclusive technology to support learners

We are committed to providing a device to every child in Scotland during this parliamentary term

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Education Recovery: Key Actions and Next Steps

The contribution of education to Scotland's COVID Recovery

Digital protection

The foundation of delivering an effective strategy is the policy framework which will create more consistency in the digital operations across our schools.

Work in this area will increase clarity, consistency, equity and security, protecting our staff and learners from risk and additional bureaucracy and workload.

This will enable more time to focus on enhancing learning and teaching and raising attainment through the use of digital technology.

Furthermore, as important as it is to protect our workforce, our practices must also protect the network. Our focus in this area will ensure that school data, systems and services are secure and that we are protecting the integrity of devices and appliances.

The strategic ambition is to improve digital protection which provides a framework of support and standardisation.

We will

- ✓ Revise and standardise core school level ICT/digital policies and procedures
- ✓ Embed corporate ICT policies and practice across Children's Services
- ✓ Ensure that the teaching and non-teaching workforce in schools engage in corporate digital training opportunities



Strategy Delivery

The strategic commitments will be outlined in a detailed action plan and progress will be reported through Shetland Islands Council's committee structures.

The strategy will be delivered by a Digital Improvement Group governed by the ICT Strategy Group and supported by a Digital Learning and Teaching Working Group.



OUTCOME DRIVEN

The action plan will have clear outcomes.



MODEL FOR IMPROVEMENT

The action plan will use improvement methodology where appropriate.



MONITORED AND EVALUATED

The action plan will have effective monitoring and reporting processes.

Contact

Shetland Islands Council

Children's Services

Hayfield House

Hayfield Lane

Lerwick

Shetland Isles

ZE1 0QD



**Shetland
Islands
Council**