

TCAT



Digital Strategy

Transforming Teaching, Learning and Operations

SERVE CHALLENGE EMPOWER

INTRODUCTION

Digital technology shapes every aspect of modern life. For education, it presents both profound opportunities and significant challenges. In its Future of Jobs Report 2025, the World Economic Forum states:

“Trends in AI and information processing technology are expected to create 11 million jobs, while simultaneously displacing 9 million others.”

This is the world our students are entering now. It is our responsibility to prepare them not simply to cope with rapid digital change, but to thrive within it. They must develop the knowledge, confidence and critical thinking needed to navigate complexity, distinguish truth from misinformation, and use technology with dignity, responsibility and compassion.

This begins in the classroom. While traditional approaches remain important, many aspects of teaching and learning still sit uneasily alongside the digital world our students inhabit beyond school. A more blended and digitally-enabled model can open wider opportunities for engagement, access and achievement. This is why TCAT’s iTeach strategy is so important: by equipping every teacher with an iPad, we can create a stronger foundation for consistent, high-quality digital pedagogy across the Trust. It is also why the iLearn strategy, whereby students have access to one-to-one devices in the classroom, must to develop in parallel with the iTeach Strategy.





The curriculum must also evolve to reflect the pace of digital change, particularly in relation to artificial intelligence. TCAT must respond to both the opportunities and the ethical considerations that AI presents. We will ensure that technology enhances, rather than replaces, the human relationships at the heart of education, while equipping students with the knowledge and skills to use AI safely, effectively and responsibly.

Schools already depend on complex digital ecosystems to support their day-to-day operations, and those systems continue to evolve rapidly. From finance and administration to connectivity, devices and cybersecurity, strong digital infrastructure is now essential to organisational resilience and operational effectiveness. If our schools are to thrive, they must be supported by secure, reliable and future-focused digital environments that enable innovation rather than constrain it.

TCAT'S WIDER DIGITAL STRATEGY IS BASED AROUND 3 CORE AREAS:

1. Pedagogy; digital learning and inclusion
2. Infrastructure and Technology
3. Safeguarding, privacy and ethics

Two cross-cutting themes underpin each pillar:

1. Operations and Finance
2. Data Analytics

OUR WIDER VISION IS:

To create a future-ready, inclusive and secure digital ecosystem that enables excellent teaching, learning and operations across the Trust, ensuring technology is



used strategically, ethically and sustainably to improve outcomes for all.

OUR KEY PILLARS ARE:

1. Pedagogy: Digital Learning and Inclusion

We will use technology to strengthen teaching, learning and inclusion, ensuring equitable access to high-quality digital tools, reducing barriers for disadvantaged and SEND learners, and supporting more efficient ways of working for staff.

2. Infrastructure and Technology

We will build a resilient, secure and scalable digital environment, with reliable connectivity, modern devices, standardised systems and integrated platforms that support collaboration, efficiency and long-term sustainability across the Trust.

3. Safeguarding, Privacy and Ethics

We will ensure that digital innovation is safe, lawful and ethical through strong safeguarding, secure data practices, clear governance, and transparent use of AI and analytics, supported by training, oversight and continuous review.

OUR COMMITMENT

Through these pillars and cross-cutting themes, we will deliver a coherent and ambitious digital strategy that strengthens teaching and learning, modernises infrastructure, protects our communities, and enables smarter operations across the Trust. We are committed to ensuring that technology is used purposefully, ethically and sustainably, so that every investment in digital capability improves inclusion, resilience, efficiency and outcomes for all.



THE VISION FOR EACH AREA

1. Pedagogy: Digital Learning and Inclusion

Empower Students: Through the iLearn strategy, provide students with the digital tools, skills and resources they need to enhance their learning experience. This will help foster creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking thereby building a future ready workforce.

Enhance Teaching: Through the iTeach Strategy, equip teachers with advanced digital platforms and training to create engaging, interactive, and personalised learning environments.

Inclusive Access: Ensure all students and staff have equitable access to digital devices and high-speed internet, bridging the digital divide and addressing barriers.

Data-Driven Decisions: Utilise data analytics to inform institutional practices, track student progress, and improve educational outcomes.

Cybersecurity: Implement robust cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive information and ensure a safe digital learning environment.

Parental Engagement: Use digital tools to enhance communication and collaboration with parents, keeping them informed and involved in their child's education.

Professional Development: Offer ongoing professional development opportunities for staff to stay current with the latest digital tools and educational technologies.

Sustainable Practices: Promote environmentally sustainable practices through the use of digital resources, reducing paper usage and waste.

Innovation and Adaptability: Foster a culture of innovation and adaptability, encouraging the safe exploration and integration of emerging technologies in education.

Community Partnerships: Build partnerships with local businesses and organisations to support digital initiatives and provide real-world learning opportunities for students.

2. Infrastructure and Technology

- Establish a resilient, scalable and secure digital infrastructure across all academies.
- Ensure reliable, high-quality connectivity in all learning and working environments.
- Standardise core platforms, systems and technical approaches across the Trust.
- Strengthen cyber resilience through robust controls, monitoring and incident response.
- Expand the use of cloud-based and integrated technologies to improve collaboration and efficiency.
- Implement a sustainable device strategy that supports equity, accessibility and value for money.
- Adopt a planned lifecycle approach to hardware, software and infrastructure investment.
- Provide consistent, responsive and centrally-coordinated technical support.
- Build Trust-wide digital capacity and technical expertise to support delivery and innovation.
- Use data and performance insight to inform infrastructure planning and prioritise investment.
- Align technology investment with Trust priorities and long-term operational needs.
- Develop an adaptable infrastructure model that can respond to future technological change.

3. Safeguarding, Privacy and Ethics

- Embed a Trust-wide culture of digital safeguarding, privacy and ethical practice across all academies.
- Ensure all digital systems, processes and platforms comply with GDPR, data protection requirements and relevant DfE guidance.
- Strengthen safeguarding arrangements through effective filtering, monitoring, reporting and response procedures.
- Promote safe, responsible and age-appropriate use of technology by students, staff, parents and carers.
- Develop clear governance and accountability for the ethical use of AI, data and emerging technologies.
- Ensure AI and analytics are deployed transparently, with appropriate human oversight and clear lines of responsibility.
- Protect the rights, dignity and privacy of all users through secure access controls, proportionate data use and regular review.
- Provide regular training so staff and students can recognise, prevent and respond to digital safeguarding and data protection risks.
- Use risk assessment, audit and assurance processes to monitor compliance, identify concerns and drive continuous improvement.
- Ensure that digital innovation is pursued in ways that are safe, lawful, inclusive and aligned with the Trust's values.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall responsibility for TCAT's Digital strategy will sit with:

The Digital Strategy Board (DSB) whose responsibilities are:

Policy Development & Oversight

- Approve and review digital policies (e.g., online safety, data protection, AI ethics).
- Ensure consistency across all schools in the Trust.

Budget & Resource Planning

- Develop multi-year digital investment plans.
- Monitor cost-effectiveness and sustainability of digital initiatives.

Training & Capacity Building

- Ensure staff and student digital skills development.
- Oversee CPD programs and digital leadership training.

Risk Management

- Identify and mitigate risks related to cybersecurity, data breaches, and system failures.
- Maintain incident response protocols.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Communicate strategy progress to governors, staff, parents, and students.
- Gather feedback to inform continuous improvement.

The membership of this will include:

Trustees, The CFO, The COO, IT Technical Lead, Principals and Strategic partners.

Overall responsibility for the iTeach strategy will sit with the iTeach Strategy Group (ISG), whose responsibilities are:

- **Strategic Oversight:** Ensure the iPad rollout aligns with the MAT's teaching and learning priorities and digital vision.
- **App selection:** recommending which apps are most effective based on evidence
- **Impact Evaluation:** Assess how iPads improve pedagogy, workload, and student outcomes.
- **Support & Training:** Oversee CPD for staff to maximize effective use of devices.

The membership of this will include:

Principals, Trust colleagues and members of SLT all of whom have decision-making capacity for the above responsibilities.

The Digital Hub (DH)

The Digital Hub will cover the following areas:

- **Central Expertise Hub:** Serve as the main point of expertise for integrating iPads into teaching and learning across the MAT.
- **Showcase Best Practice:** Share examples of effective classroom use and innovative teaching strategies using iPads.
- **Support and Troubleshooting:** Provide first-line support for technical and pedagogical issues related to iPads.
- **Escalation Pathway:** Escalate unresolved or complex issues to the iTeach Strategy Group for further action.

Membership will include EdTech innovators from schools across the Trust.

The Central IT Services Team (CIT)

This team will comprise the Head of IT Services and Senior IT Technical Leads from across the Trust. Its responsibilities will include:

- **Provide technical leadership and operational support** for the deployment, configuration, maintenance and lifecycle management of devices and core infrastructure.
- **Ensure systems and devices are secure, compliant and well integrated** with the Trust's digital infrastructure, standards and cybersecurity requirements.
- **Provide responsive technical support and escalation management** to resolve issues efficiently and maintain service continuity across the Trust.
- **Work in partnership with school leaders, staff and strategic partners** to ensure technology is implemented effectively and supports teaching, learning and operational priorities.

OUR KEY DELIVERERS:

AC Academy/College, Digital Strategy Board (DSB), iTeach Strategy Group (ISG), Digital Hub (DH), Central IT Services Team (CIT), Strategic Partner (SP)

Our Key drivers:

Pillar 1 Pedagogy; digital learning and inclusion

1. Deploy iPads to enhance teaching and learning through evidence-informed digital pedagogy	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Promote the integration of digital tools that support active, collaborative, and personalised learning.	Create a trust-wide approach to teaching with technology, where every teacher has a device and follows a clear model of common pedagogy.	Jan 26	Through the iTeach and iLearn strategy, embed the use of iPads into lesson planning that index to TCAT's Excellence in Teaching and Learning policy.	ISG/AC/SP/DH
Provide professional development to ensure staff can confidently apply digital pedagogies aligned with curriculum goals.	Through a "train the trainer" model linked to the identification of core iPad strategies deliver common training across all academies to all staff.	Jul 26	Through a regular cycle of iPad upgrades linked to calendared CPD develop teacher awareness and capability to deploy iPad technology.	ISG/AC/SP/DH
2. Ensure equitable access to digital learning opportunities	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Address digital poverty by ensuring all students have access to devices, connectivity, and assistive technologies.	Through TCAT Thrives establish a data base of need and address accordingly.	Jun 26	Academies to audit IT access and develop an affordable intervention plan to provide loanable laptops or tablets to students who need them, offering Wi-Fi dongles or data packages for families without reliable internet where possible.	DSB/ISG/AC
Implement inclusive design principles to support learners with diverse needs, including SEND and EAL students.	Through the iLearn strategy identify key accessibility features of an iPad.	Sep 26	Include assistive technologies (e.g. screen readers, dictation tools) for students with SEND and EAL.	ISG/AC/SP/DH
Provide training and support to ensure students use platforms effectively and confidently.	Create a digital curriculum KS1-3.	Sep 26	Develop a Trust-wide programme to ensure that pupils are confident using the chosen, learning platforms, communication tools, assessment apps; utilise the iTeach hub, the iLearn strategy, student champions and Digital Hub to promote best practice.	ISG/SP/AC

3. Foster Digital Literacy and Citizenship Across the Curriculum	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Embed digital literacy, critical thinking, and online safety into all subject areas.	Produce a digital curriculum linking to all subjects.	Dec 26	Create a digital literacy progression framework that outlines key skills by year group and subject.	ISG/AC/SP/DH
Equip students with the skills to navigate, evaluate, and create digital content responsibly and ethically.	Produce a skills based digital curriculum for students	Jan 26	Empower students to lead digital ambassador programmes or peer workshops on online safety and digital citizenship. Include student voice in evaluating how digital learning is experienced across subjects. Develop and AI and Technology curriculum taught across all TCAT schools.	ISG/AC/SP/DH
4. Data analytics: ensure transparency and accountability in AI use	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Clearly communicate when and how AI tools (e.g. predictive analytics, automated grading) are being used.	Write an acceptable use strategy for AI across the trust and deliver.	Jul 26	Publish an AI usage statement on the school website and include clear explanations in parent communications and staff/ student handbooks.	DSB/ISG
Maintain human oversight for all AI-driven decisions affecting students or staff.	Through the iTeach Strategy Group and the Digital Strategy Group, provide oversight and governance for AI.	Sept 26	Require that all AI-generated recommendations or decisions (e.g. predicted grades, attendance alerts) are reviewed and approved by a qualified staff member before action is taken.	DSB/ISG

5.The Trust's digital policy framework ensures the safe, secure and consistent use of technology, underpinned by safeguarding, data protection and effective governance.	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Digital Teaching & Learning Policy AI & Emerging Technology Policy.	Consult and produce these policies.	Jun 26	By co-designing clear expectations, consulting stakeholders, communicating consistently, training staff, monitoring compliance, reviewing impact regularly, and updating responsively, ensuring alignment with strategy, regulation, and practice across the trust sustainably trust wide.	DSB/ISG
6.Operational Excellence: ensure the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of digital resources.	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Track usage and impact of digital tools to ensure value for money; regularly review subscriptions and licenses to eliminate. underused or redundant services.	Through the iTeach strategy group gather and evaluate evidence in a timely and effective fashion.	Feb 26	Implement analytics dashboards to monitor usage and impact of digital tools, linking data to student outcomes and staff efficiency.	DSB/ISG

Pillar 2: Infrastructure and Technology

1.Network: Ensure resilient, secure and scalable connectivity through modern cabling, switching and wireless systems across all academies.	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Audit, upgrade and maintain network infrastructure including high-speed internet and Wi-Fi coverage across all learning and working spaces.	Complete a Trust-wide network and Wi-Fi baseline review and prioritised upgrade plan.	Dec 26	Audit current infrastructure, upgrade strategically using monitoring tools to track performance and detect issues early.	CIT/DSB/ISP/AC
Implement robust cybersecurity measures to protect data and systems.	Implement a Trust-wide cyber security baseline, including MFA, filtering, monitoring and incident response.	Mar 27	Define clear protocols for network security, data protection, password management, acceptable use and incident response, and ensure all staff and students are aware of and trained in these requirements.	ISG/SP/AC/CIT
Audit digital tools and adopt a consistent set of platforms across the Trust.	Agree a core suite of Trust-wide digital platforms and a phased standardisation roadmap.	Apr 27	Through the Digital Strategy Board, establish a representative working group from across the Trust to identify the most effective platforms and tools and to support their standardised adoption.	ISG/SP/AC/CIT



2. Device management strategy: provide equitable access to devices and assistive technologies	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Maintain a Trust-wide framework of digital policies, including Acceptable Use, Data Protection, Cyber Security and Filtering & Monitoring, to ensure safe, secure and well-governed use of technology.	Define a sustainable Trust-wide device model, including replacement cycles and priority groups.	Feb 27	Develop a device lifecycle management plan that forecasts future need, curriculum demand and digital priorities.	DSB/AC/CIT
Ensure all learners and staff, including those with SEND, have access to appropriate assistive technologies.	Identify need and standardise access to appropriate assistive technologies across academies.	Mar 27	Create an Inclusive Digital Access Plan that identifies students and staff who require assistive technologies.	ISG/AC/CIT/SP
Establish clear processes for device maintenance, software updates, and technical support.	Implement clear Trust-wide support, maintenance and update processes through a central helpdesk model.	Jan 27	Through Halo, implement a centralised IT helpdesk system and ensure all staff know how to access timely support.	CIT/SP/AC
Plan for long-term investment in both hardware, software and apps.	Establish a rolling investment planning cycle for infrastructure, devices, software and support.	Jun 27	Develop a 3–5 Year Digital Investment Plan that aligns with the Trust's Strategic Action Plan and identifies projected costs for devices, infrastructure, software licenses, and training.	CIT/SP/AC
3. Policies: the Trust's digital policy framework	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
This framework must ensure the safe, secure and purposeful use of technology through clear expectations, strong safeguarding, robust data protection and consistent governance across all academies, including the Acceptable Use Policy, Data Protection and GDPR Policy, Cyber Security and Information Security Policy, and Filtering, Monitoring and Network Policy.	Review, update and approve a coherent Trust-wide digital policy framework.	Jul 26	Sustain this framework through co-design, stakeholder consultation, clear communication, staff training, compliance monitoring and regular review, ensuring consistent implementation across the Trust.	DSB

4. IT team: capacity and capability building	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Develop the capacity and capability to secure infrastructure, support, staff training, data insights, procurement oversight, and consistent systems enabling scalable, safe innovation across academies.	Define the target operating model, capacity plan and development programme for the IT service.	Oct 26	Build capacity through strong central governance, investment in skilled IT and data teams, standardised platforms, continuous staff development, shared dashboards and robust procurement processes. Review impact regularly and refine systems to support secure, scalable and sustainable innovation across the Trust.	DSB/CIT
5. Data analytics: data-driven decision-making	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Inform decisions on investment in digital tools and training based on actual impact.	Establish a common evaluation framework linking digital investment to usage, impact and outcomes.	Jul 27	Use evidence-based evaluation by linking digital tool usage data to measurable outcomes before making investment decisions.	DSB/AC
6. Operational excellence and finance: optimise financial planning for digital investment	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Develop a multi-year digital budget that aligns with the Trust's Strategic Action plan, forecasting costs for hardware, software, infrastructure, training, and support.	Produce a multi-year digital financial plan linked to infrastructure and service priorities.	Jun 26	Create a rolling 3–5 year digital budget plan linked to the Trust's Strategic Action Plan, using cost forecasting tools and annual review cycles.	DSB/AC
Explore sustainable funding models, including grants, partnerships, and leasing options.	Identify and evaluate sustainable funding options to support long-term digital investment.	Sep 26	Develop a funding strategy that includes applying for education technology grants, forming partnerships with local businesses, and using leasing models for hardware to spread costs over time.	DSB/AC

Maintain up-to-date records of digital assets and licenses, implementing robust data protection, cybersecurity, and procurement policies.	Implement a Trust-wide asset and licence management process with clear ownership and review points.	Nov 26	Conduct regular reviews of all digital subscriptions and licenses using usage analytics and staff feedback to identify underused or redundant services.	CIT
Conduct regular audits to ensure compliance with financial and regulatory standards.	Introduce a regular compliance and assurance cycle for digital finance, procurement and regulation.	Jan 27	Establish an annual internal audit schedule that reviews financial transactions, procurement processes, and compliance with DfE and GDPR standards.	DSB

Pillar 3: Safeguarding, Privacy and Ethics

1.The Trust's digital policy framework	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
This framework must ensure the safe, secure and purposeful use of technology through clear expectations, strong safeguarding and consistent practice across all academies, including the Online Safety Policy, Digital Safeguarding and Remote Learning Policy, and Staff Digital Working and Device Use Policy.	Review, consolidate and approve a Trust-wide safeguarding, privacy and digital working policy framework.	Jul 26	Sustain this framework through co-design, stakeholder consultation, clear communication, staff training, compliance monitoring and regular review, ensuring consistent implementation across the Trust.	DSB
2. Train students and staff to protect their data through robust privacy policies and practices	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Ensure compliance with data protection laws (e.g. GDPR) and use secure platforms for storing and sharing personal information.	Implement consistent data protection controls, secure platforms and access arrangements across the Trust.	Sep 26	Implement a GDPR-compliant cloud-based platform with role-based access controls.	DSB/CIT/SP/AC
Provide regular training on data handling and confidentiality.	Establish a mandatory programme of data protection and confidentiality training for all staff.	Nov 26	Schedule mandatory training sessions for all staff on GDPR compliance and data confidentiality, supported by refresher micro-learning modules each term.	DSB/SP/AC

3. Promote Safe and Responsible Online Behaviour	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Embed online safety education across the curriculum, delivering age-appropriate guidance on digital citizenship, cyberbullying, and social media use.	Embed a sequenced online safety curriculum across key stages and subjects.	Jan 27	Host termly parent workshops (in-person or virtual) focused on online safety, digital wellbeing, and school platforms, supported by downloadable guides and video tutorials.	DSB/CIT/SP/AC
Involve parents and carers through workshops and resources.	Establish a parent and carer engagement programme focused on online safety and digital wellbeing.	Mar 27	Host termly parent workshops (in-person or virtual) focused on online safety, digital wellbeing, and school platforms, supported by downloadable guides and video tutorials.	ISG/AC
4. Implement Secure Access and Authentication Systems	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Review strong password policies and systems including multi-factor authentication in place for staff and students, ensuring they meet current digital standards.	Implement Trust-wide identity, password and multi-factor authentication standards.	Dec 26	Implement a centralised identity management system with enforced password complexity and multi-factor authentication (MFA).	CIT/SP/AC
Regularly audit user permissions and access logs.	Introduce a routine permissions and access audit process for all key systems.	Feb 27	Set up a regular audit process using TCAT's MIS and identity management system to review user permissions and access logs.	CIT/DSB/AC



5. Establish clear reporting and response procedures for online incidents.	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Create a transparent process for reporting online safety concerns or breaches and maintain a log of incidents using them to inform policy and practice updates.	Establish a regular programme of digital safeguarding training for staff and students.	Sep 26	Establish a clear online safety reporting system through each school's digital platform, with incidents logged and reviewed termly by senior leaders and Trust leads.	DSB/CIT/SP/AC
Train staff and students to recognise and respond to digital safeguarding issues.	Introduce a routine permissions and access audit process for all key systems.	Jan 27	Deliver annual safeguarding training for staff and integrate age-appropriate digital safety lessons for students, including practical scenarios and response protocols.	ISG/AC

6. Data analytics: promote digital equity and inclusion	Transformative Steps	When	Deliver and sustain	Who will deliver this
Avoid bias in data analytics by regularly auditing algorithms and decision-making processes.	Introduce an AI assurance approach that tests for bias, fairness and unintended impact.	Jun 27	Establish an AI Bias Audit Checklist to review how algorithms classify or predict outcomes (e.g. attainment, behaviour) to ensure they do not disadvantage any group based on protected characteristics.	DSB/ISG/AC
Ensure AI tools do not disadvantage any group based on protected characteristics (e.g. SEND, ethnicity, socio-economic status).	Require equity and fairness checks before AI tools are approved for Trust use.	Sep 27	Require all AI tools used in the school to undergo an equity and fairness review before deployment, and periodically validate outputs against diverse student data.	DSB/ISG/AC





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