



Illuminate Minds Trust

Digital Strategy

2024 – 2027



The Vision

A brave learning community where innovation and collaboration through technology create an ever evolving and agile approach to sustainability and preparing pupils for their future lives.

Aims and Objectives

- > To create a framework where communication and information sharing is simplified, avoids duplication and is in real time.
- > To reduce workload and enhance opportunities for collaboration.
- > To embed a culture of safe, secure practices in an ever changing digital world.
- > To develop innovative leadership who are unafraid of change.
- > To support great professional development across a family of schools, overcoming geographic and time constraints.
- > To equip our pupils with the knowledge and skills to thrive in an emerging digital landscape.
- > To respond with agile solutions to the challenges of inclusion.
- > To provide our community with the tools and equipment needed to achieve our ambition for all.

Guiding Principles

Our digital strategy is focused on fusion: bringing information and people together and supporting continual evolution in a changing educational and business landscape and improving the way we work together. For us, it is all about being **FUSED**:



Flexible: We are in the early stages of digital transformation and must never be afraid to change and adapt.



Usable data: Data-driven decision making and clear and purposeful use of data to inform and shape business and leadership strategy.



Simplification: Technology development supports our ability to collaborate and communicate with ease.



Empowering: Technology widens opportunities for our pupils and supports access and inclusion. Our community is at different stages of knowledge and confidence in embracing technology which means gaining confidence is key!



Daring to innovate: Our organisation seeks continual improvement because we don't believe in standing still and "Excellence Every Day" rejects mediocrity.

Excellence
Every Day



Five Steps to Transformation



- 1 A digital community
- 2 Integrated digital practice
- 3 Digital skills and user confidence
- 4 Digital citizenship
- 5 Innovation and creativity

Developing digital communities

Technology impacts every aspect of an organisation. Every member of the trust has a responsibility to support the implementation of the strategy as it will not be successful unless it is embraced by staff and correctly resourced. It is vital that we understand the different needs dependent on roles, provide access to suitable devices as well as upskill our teams and recognise the benefits of a streamlined, coordinated solution to communication and collaboration. Key considerations are financial and operational sustainability and a shared understanding and commitment to the growth in digital solutions.

Effective use of technology: securing impact

We believe technology presents huge benefits for not just our pupils but our whole community. We recognise the continual and accelerated developments which reflect the impact technology will now have on learning and we expect to see technology used regularly and effectively in school, at home and in the workplace.



Digital skills and user confidence

A barrier to maximising the opportunities presented by technology is lack of knowledge and confidence in its usage. In order to exploit its capabilities, it is therefore essential that staff are able to access high quality and regular training, internal support and advice and understand what the benefits are. One of the greatest risks in implementing a digital strategy is lack of staff commitment as a result of anxiety and lack of confidence. Embracing the new and welcoming innovation requires an open mindset and acceptance that mistakes lead to learning.

Digital Communities

Creating a culture where we are all learners entering a new world of technological advances is key for the success of our strategy. A digital academy will not flourish unless the ethos is shared by the whole community and the community has access to the required digital resources. Digital use impacts every area of education and as such every member of the community has a role to play in supporting this approach. We will learn together and introduce systems which strengthen collaborative working. We seek to provide the best resources possible, consulting with subject specialists and technology experts in determining which software matches the needs of our staff and pupils. Our goal is to maximise economic efficiencies wherever possible, all while ensuring we create safe environments in regard to data protection and cyber security.

Innovation and creativity

Our trust promotes the development of a digital team: technological leaders in every school who are supported by our Trust central team and collaborate in driving the digital strategy across the Trust. We aim to build a deep understanding of digital practice and continue to find solutions which reduce workload, increase collaboration and improve communication (staff) whilst engaging all pupils in their learning, using technology as a tool to remove barriers and preparing every pupil for economic security in a changing landscape.



A Human-Centred Approach

Our digital strategy starts with educators and leaders and the outcome which the organisation is hoping to achieve. Although finance is a significant consideration in terms of investment and sustainability, financial considerations are not the initial driver for the strategy but the infrastructure to support the implementation of technological solutions for Illuminate Minds Trust.

To secure commitment to the strategy, it is vital stakeholders are fully involved in this process. Therefore, our strategy will always start from the perspective of finding solutions to user problems through a human-centred design approach: meeting the needs of educators, learners, business support staff and our families. Our digital strategy is based on the rationale that technology will improve the way everyone works, learns and shares information.

We will consider the following:

- How we use technology to enhance teaching and learning.
- How technology can support leaders in driving our Trust Strategy and continuous school improvement.
- The digital strategy must align with our overall ambitions and priorities.
- How technology can improve our relationships with parents and ensure timely and accurate communication.
- How our infrastructure is built to support our user requirements.
- Our internal IT support mechanisms.
- How the digital strategy can be shaped to support the various types of learners who have special needs in our context.
- How technology can increase access for EAL pupils and those experiencing EBSA.



Finance is at the heart of any strategy within the school and Trust, but in the context of a digital strategy, it's important to ensure that it is the facilitator and not the driver. The Trust Board should, rightly, support (but also challenge) any proposed expenditure (while ensuring that the school can measure its impact), that it is scalable, can be adapted locally and remotely where relevant, and make certain that there are the right economies of scale in the approach to be taken; in a nutshell, identifying the best investment for the Trust.

We will bring all our stakeholders together to ensure that the Trust has a full view of the solutions sought and begins a journey of exploration, fully accepting that there will be multiple amendments and potential "dead ends" along the way. Perfection is not the endgame and seeking this will be a barrier to innovation. Involvement of the users throughout will achieve two key goals:

- 1 Providing opportunities to test and trial.
- 2 Measuring the impact and receiving feedback on improvements



Ultimately, our approach and our desired outcome is captured in the following descriptors....

- How we safeguard our learners: any new technology must not impact the schools' ability to meet its obligations in terms of keeping children safe while using it and that children accessing resources online are still kept safe.
- What data we retain, how long for, and to ensure that it is secure and appropriate.
- How we reduce complexities and workload: ease of access, removal of duplication, coordinated systems and processes.
- The role of AI in removing unnecessary tasks and increasing output.

ROBUST **ACCESSIBLE** **COMPATIBLE** **IMPACTFUL**

RELIABLE **SECURE** **INTUITIVE**

INNOVATIVE **INCLUSIVE** **SUSTAINABLE** **AFFORDABLE**

Next Steps



Over the next three years our Trust will embark on its digital transformation journey to address the following challenges.

| 2024-2025 | 2025-2026 | 2026-2027 |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Identify areas for improvement and development.</p> <p>Collate user feedback on unnecessary workload and challenges in and outside of the classroom.</p> <p>Learn about technology and what it offers and commit to one platform (Google / Microsoft / Apple).</p> <p>Move to “Cloud-Based” systems for finance, management information and HR</p> <p>Demystify technology advancing through training, presentations and opportunities to talk and test.</p> <p>Develop Arbor as a management information system that works for us and our context.</p> <p>Reduce administrative duplication and workload.</p> <p>Build a network at executive leadership level.</p> <p>Capture ideas and opportunities from the whole community on “what ifs....”</p> <p>Bring IT in-house: appoint an IT Digital Lead within the Central Team.</p> | <p>Establish collaborative groups to trial technology for learning and business support.</p> <p>Explore how AI might improve communication and the sharing of information.</p> <p>Embed systems which remove or reduce barriers for learning for pupils with SEND and / or EAL.</p> <p>Create regular opportunities to gather feedback and share learning, progress and successes.</p> <p>Develop training and “surgeries” to increase confidence in new technologies.</p> <p>Introduce a standard technology equipment offer for every new pupil (Reception / Year 1)</p> <p>Encourage collaboration across our schools and beyond the trust to expose staff to innovation and opportunities to share ideas and network.</p> <p>Increase hybrid working opportunities for non-class based staff. Office staff would be by exception.</p> | <p>Assess impact against our initial ambitions and solutions sought.</p> <p>Identify strands for investment to secure future sustainability.</p> <p>Embed technology training in onboarding and induction processes for new staff.</p> <p>Define future trials and opportunities for further innovation and exploration.</p> <p>Strengthen drivers for continued development: formalise a central strategic team for technology initiatives and improvement.</p> <p>Explore further enrichment of the pupil experience through immersive learning to widen horizons and raise aspirations.</p> <p>Broaden the technology offer and extend this throughout the schools.</p> |

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