

Make the most of your devices



Following the DfE's Laptop Scheme, what's next for your school?



Department
for Education

Benefit from our experience, by considering these scenarios.

Since the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic just over 12 months ago, the Department for Education, has delivered over 1.2 million laptops and 75 thousand routers to schools. The laptop scheme focused on supporting disadvantaged pupils, those:

- with no digital devices in their household
- whose only available device is a smartphone
- with a single device in their household that's being shared with more than one other family member
- who have no broadband, including families who access the internet only through mobile data

This scheme has gone a long way to help pupils remain engaged with the remote learning systems employed by their schools and have helped maintain ongoing engagement with these pupils.

However, as the planned lockdowns start to ease and pupils have returned to the traditional onsite teaching methods, what will the legacy of this scheme look like and what will happen to the 1.2 million laptops that have been delivered? There appears to be a few scenarios.

In this guide

We'll walk you through a few scenarios we think are the most likely. Your school needs to decide next steps. What's your school's plan? To:

- Allow pupils to keep their allocated laptops and routers to support longer term learning?
- Recall the DfE equipment to use as a school resource?
- Use the DfE laptops as a springboard to kickstart your hybrid learning approach?
- Let the equipment becomes dormant and unused?

Scenario 1. Pupils keep allocated laptops and routers to support longer term learning

Hopefully the most likely scenario for most schools, this scenario continues to provide IT services for those pupils that need it the most. Using this equipment on an ongoing basis will help pupils engage with online homework as well as remaining prepared should the school need to have bubbles learning from home on a temporary basis in the future.

The outcome is that Teaching & Learning can take place irrespective of location, in this case the DfE laptops have become the facilitator.

This approach has a number of pupil centric advantages in that those that benefit from this scenario are those that had previously been identified as benefiting the most, so in essence it's a continuation of the same approach.

Some remedial work may be required by the schools IT Team though as laptops delivered with 1-year licencing arrangements will expire soon and these either need to be extended with the DfE

Scenario 2. The school recalls equipment to use as a school resource

Bringing the laptops back into school and deploying the school's own laptop image to them before adding them into the school's central pool of devices that can be used in classrooms and deployed to students that require them in the event bubbles of home learning being needed. This approach could be a catalyst to adopt a hybrid learning model, and again the DfE laptops have become the facilitator to Teaching & Learning taking place irrespective of location enabling anytime, anywhere learning.

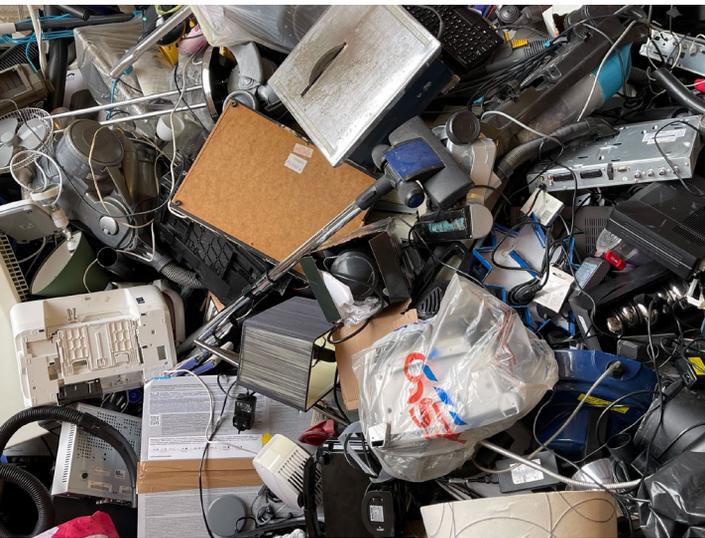
In a similar approach to Scenario 1, these devices will all need to be imaged with the school's standard configuration to allow them to fully integrate on the school's network and safeguarding solutions.



appointed provider, or the school's image will need to be deployed to the laptops. Some schools took the decision to do this as they were delivered but many will need to do this. Imaging these devices brings the added advantage of the school's IT Team are then able to manage them with the rest of their devices and the school will have a consistent safeguarding solution deployed across all their laptops. However, there will be a resource overhead in preparing the laptops and this will need to be considered.



By bringing the devices back to the school, there is the potential for the laptops to add value to a larger number of pupils and potentially to those pupils that were not allocated a device under the DfE programme. However, consideration will need to be given to ensure that those original pupils are not disadvantaged by any pooling of equipment.



Scenario 3. Equipment becomes dormant and unused

This is the worst case scenario. The Government has invested a great deal of money in this programme and unless schools take positive action to re-enforce the future use of this equipment, there is a risk it will go unused and any potential value will be lost. Therefore, positive action is needed by schools to ensure that a plan exists for the future use of these devices.

Whatever the school chooses to do, there are a few things that need to be considered:

- **Damage.** Things get broken and repairing laptops can be expensive. School's should consider setting aside a budget to maintain this equipment, or even consider insurance to ensure that this equipment remains serviceable in the medium to long term.
- **Refresh.** IT Equipment only works effectively for a certain period of time and consideration will need to be given to a policy for refresh of this laptops. Some schools may take the approach of simply not replacing them, others will take the DfE scheme as a catalyst for providing a long term solution, in which case devices will need replacing in around 4-6 years.
- **Licencing.** The DfE laptops were provided with a 12 month licence and whilst this can be extended, many schools will likely re-image these devices to adopt the school's software and policies. In doing this, schools need to consider their own licence agreements to ensure that that are adequately covered for the increased use of licences. Many software providers licence schools on an overall staff or student count, which makes licencing simple. However, other software might be on an installed basis and this will have an impact on overall licencing costs.

How We Can Offer Further Help

Our Virtue Technologies Team have a wealth of experience working with schools to provide a secure and safe environment for teaching and learning. We want to help you enhance teaching and learning through the use of IT that's made with education in mind.

We're able to support customers with advice, planning and solutions. Whether you'd like to get reassurance about your current set-up or want to talk about the ways to make your strategy and workable 5 year plan so your school can realise your IT goals, we're here to help.

To discuss your IT Security further, or any other aspect of your IT products and solutions, please contact your **Account Manger** directly or through our main office on **01695 731 233**.