



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education Services

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EDUCATION SERVICES DIGITAL LEARNING STRATEGY

Purpose of Report:

To update Committee on the progress of Education Services Digital Learning Strategy.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to consider the progress made to date and ask the Executive Director to present further update reports, as appropriate.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1 Background

- 1.1 The Connected Learning iPad 1:1 Programme, launched by Glasgow City Council in 2017, which at the time was the largest single deployment in Europe, has provided every P5 to S6 pupil in a Glasgow school with an individual iPad. This initiative set out to ensure all learners had equal access to digital learning tools, fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment. It also reduced the risk of security incidents by limiting access to the school's network through personal devices, as all pupils are using the same, school-issued device with the same network security protocols in place. This consistent and secure approach supports the city's data protection and cybersecurity policies, ensuring that sensitive educational and personal identifiable information (PII) remains protected.
- 1.2 A standard device across all pupils ensures that every child has access to the same resources, preventing inequality and stigma that might arise from a "bring-your-own-device" policy, as outlined by the OECD's emphasis on digital inclusion and equitable access. By equipping every pupil with the same iPad, barriers to learning caused by socio-economic differences are minimized, enabling greater access to educational opportunities, regardless of background. The standardization of devices ensures every child can fully participate in digital learning, a critical aspect highlighted by the **OECD Skills for Digital Transition** (OECD, Skills for the Digital Transition, 2022). Furthermore, the accessibility tools available on iPad, along with innovative learning applications, create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment, particularly for children with both diagnosed and undiagnosed additional support needs.
- 1.3 Additionally, research by Gallup emphasizes the importance of using technology to foster creativity and critical thinking skills, both of which are supported by the iPad programme. According to Gallup, project-based, technology-enabled assignments are better for personalizing learning and helping students connect it to the real world (Gallup Education, 2019). This aligns with Glasgow's commitment to improving educational outcomes through the integration of technology in the classroom.
- 1.4 The Digital Learning Strategy Group (DLSG), first established in 2016-17, has continued to develop and adapt its remit to ensure the deployment of all devices improves outcomes for learners P1 to S6. The group continues to meet monthly analysing data, feedback, device performance, development needs, professional learning needs and, in partnership with CGI, supporting further deployment of technology across the school estate to support inclusive digital practices.
- 1.5 To ensure a coherent approach and impact on learning and teaching in every classroom, our group of over 350 Digital Leaders of Learning (DLOs) continue to be a critical team in ensuring the Digital Strategy in every establishment is realised through a bespoke establishment level professional development calendar. A named Digital Leader has been identified in Early Years Centres and schools. All GCC Early Years establishments now have a clearly articulated Digital Strategy.

- 1.6 To support the development of effective Digital Learning Organisations and strengthen Learning Communities, a Digital Coordinator has been identified in almost all Learning Communities to facilitate a 'one' team approach in the implementation of GCC's Learning & Teaching Framework and ensure improvement through meaningful collaborative approaches.

2 Progress & Impact

- 2.1 The GCC Apple Regional Training Centre (RTC) first established in 2017, has continued to develop and improve the design and delivery of all digital professional learning across the education estate. Now with 26 active facilitators, who have completed a skills analysis, GCC's Education Services Manager coordinates universal and bespoke support to establishments.
- 2.2 Our Regional Training Centre have designed and delivered professional learning across all sectors on a range of themes and skills including the effective use of core applications. In the academic session 23-24 over 100 professional learning sessions were delivered including Apple Teacher, Accessibility, Core App support and Apple Learning Coach. These sessions were attended by over 2000 GCC Practitioners from all sectors across the city.
- 2.3 By the end of December 2024, 146 Practitioners are now accredited Apple Learning Coaches with 60% of staff accredited Apple Teachers. 5 GCC Establishments are accredited Apple Distinguished Schools with another 4 currently engaging in the assessment process. 196 establishments are registered with Scotland's Digital Schools Programme with 149 now accredited Digital Schools.
- 2.4 In February 2024 the Digital Learning Strategy Group launched a refreshed Education Services Digital Strategy closely aligned to the five Grand Challenges described in All Learners All Achieving and supporting the implementation of the Glasgow Pedagogy Framework.
- 2.5 The Digital Learning Conference, held annually, provides opportunity for over 400 delegates to share best practice and undertake further professional learning to enhance experiences in the classrooms and playroom. In February 2024, a successful conference saw support for practitioners in the safe and effective use of Artificial Intelligence to support learning and teaching.
The annual conference planned for February 2025 will focus on the innovative practice taking place across our city with a focus on pedagogy and the use of our technology within learning and teaching.
- 2.6 Practitioner, family and learner questionnaires were issued in January 2024 as part of the two yearly exercise implemented since 2017. The table below indicates progress which has been made since the introduction of the 1:1 devices across the education estate began in 2017:

Pupil Feedback	
I use my iPad as part of everyday learning	91%
iPad improve my learning experience	80%
iPad enable me to work independently	84%
iPad help me to collaborate with others	71%
iPad help me to receive teacher feedback	76%
Feedback helps me to understand my next steps in learning	94%
I understand the importance of internet safety	93%

Staff Feedback	2017	2022	2024
I am using digital tools for collaboration and independent learning	31%	55%	71%
Our school has a clear digital strategy	29%	65%	90%
Teacher confidence in using digital tools	50%	75%	85%
Our school has a digital safety policy	34%	50%	90%

Parent & Carer Feedback	
I feel confident in using the iPad to support my child's learning at home	70%
The iPad helps my child to work independently	68%
My child's school effectively integrates digital technology into Learning and Teaching.	72%

- 2.7 Pupil feedback illustrates the impact of the 1:1 devices in pupils taking ownership and being able to work independently on their own learning. Teacher confidence has grown over time substantially and confidence levels among parents and carers continue to grow in the use of the iPads.

3 Pedagogy

- 3.1 The Connected Learning iPad Programme has enriched and enhanced the way teaching and learning are delivered in Glasgow's schools. By incorporating digital tools, teachers can create more dynamic, interactive, and engaging lessons. This has led to a significant shift in pedagogical approaches, allowing for personalised and inclusive learning experiences for all pupils
- 3.2 The ability to access digital tools, including accessibility features and applications such as **Kaligo**, Showbie, Clicker, Book Creator etc ensures that every pupil can engage with the curriculum, regardless of whether they have an official diagnosis of additional learning needs. The iPad's accessibility features, such as text-to-speech, magnification, and assistive technologies, allow students to personalise their learning environments, supporting all learners in achieving their full potential.

- 3.3 As highlighted by the OECD, digital skills are essential for participating in modern life, and fostering these skills in education is crucial for students' future success.
- 3.4 Collaboration and independent learning are key components of modern education, and the iPad programme has played a critical role in supporting these skills across Glasgow schools. The iPads enable pupils to work both independently and collaboratively, allowing them to take greater ownership of their learning.
- 3.5 Effective feedback is a cornerstone of successful learning, and the iPad programme has enhanced the ability of teachers to provide timely, meaningful feedback to their students. The devices support various tools and applications that streamline feedback processes, allowing teachers to offer personalized, constructive comments on students' work.
- 3.6 In 2017, **29% of teachers** reported that their school had a clear strategy for digital learning and feedback (Glasgow City Council Education Services, 2017). By 2022, **65% of teachers** confirmed that their school had implemented a more strategic approach to digital learning and feedback, largely influenced by the challenges of remote learning during the pandemic (Glasgow City Council Education Services, 2022). By 2024, **90% of teachers** stated that digital tools were integral to lesson planning and the provision of feedback (Glasgow City Council Education Services, 2024).
- 3.6.1 An impact study into the effectiveness of Kaligo Writing was carried out between October 23 and March 24 in 10 Primary and one Secondary Establishment. This application uses Artificial Intelligence to support the teaching of handwriting, spelling and grammar. Learners using the app daily receive immediate feedback on their letter formation leading to improved fluency in writing and reduced cognitive load in the learning process. The study strongly evidences significantly improved pace of learning leading to improved creativity and quality in the writing process. In some case studies, learners who had previously been unable to write independently can now do so. As a result, 47 schools across the Primary and Secondary estate are implementing use of the application from this session with over 1200 learners using Kaligo as part of a targeted literacy intervention.
- 3.7 A pilot of an application to support accessibility to digital exams for learners with additional support needs, is planned in collaboration with Call Scotland. This work will significantly reduce the need for young people to be assigned support personnel and adapted exam conditions. Education Services have engaged with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) with a view to enable all Young People with an additional need to use their digital device safely and compliantly during the exam diet at a future date. In June 2024 a statement was released by the SQA indicating that they will be amending their ICT security requirements to allow Apple and Chromebook devices to be used in external exams, provided that the restricted internet connection is only used to enable the operation of the device.

4 Monitoring and Tracking Tool

- 4.1 Education Services, in partnership with CGI, continue to develop a digital Monitoring & tracking tool for use across all establishments in the city. To date, the majority of Primary and Secondary mainstream establishments are implementing the Monitoring & Tracking toolkit. The purpose of this toolkit is to improve pedagogy in learning, teaching & assessment, improve approaches in moderation and analysis of data and increase levels of engagement, attainment and achievement for all.
- 4.2 From September 2024, an Authority Level Reporting (ALR) access was added to this toolkit. The ALR will give all improvement Officers and Education Directorate access to the data being updated at school level which evidences the progress of all learners across all subject areas. This reporting tool will significantly improve Authority Level analysis of areas of strength and best practice and provide intelligence on effective learning support interventions for young people.

5 Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Learning and Teaching

- 5.1 The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into education is transforming how learning and teaching are approached in Glasgow's secondary schools. AI has the potential to personalise learning, streamline teacher workflows, and enhance student engagement. Glasgow's schools have adopted approved AI-driven tools, such as Showbie, Microsoft Teams, Kaligo, and Magma Math (2024 pilot), to support this transformation. These tools are designed to assist in differentiated learning, feedback, assessment, and creativity.
- 5.2 In response to the fast-paced developments in AI tools, the Digital team have now developed Education Services AI Policy; **GCC Policy Document on Ethical and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Education Settings**. This document was circulated to all establishments and senior leaders this session and is available on GO Glasgow.

6 Promoting Digital Safety and Cyber Resilience

- 6.1 Digital safety is a critical aspect of the iPad programme, ensuring that pupils are well-versed in responsible internet use and cyber security. The programme integrates cyber safety education into the curriculum, helping students develop an understanding of the risks and opportunities associated with digital technology.
- 6.2 This focus on digital safety ensures that pupils can navigate the digital world confidently and responsibly, equipping them with essential life skills for the future. In addition, the OECD report on Educating 21st Century Children (2019) emphasizes the importance of digital literacy and well-being for students, underscoring that these skills are essential for their future participation in society.

- 6.3 The iPad programme's strong emphasis on cyber resilience helps protect students while promoting responsible internet use. This consists firstly of the Smoothwall internet filtering system managed by CGI which ensures safe usage of devices by our young people. Secondly our well-constructed digital technology framework provides a skills progression for schools to deliver to children and young people. By embedding these skills early on, the programme prepares pupils for future digital challenges and opportunities, ensuring they can engage safely and effectively in an increasingly digital world.

7 Summary

- 7.1 The Connected Learning Programme, one of the largest Apple Education Programmes ever undertaken, continues to engage with all establishments and a growing range of digital partners to support the maintenance and on-going upgrade of our infrastructure, articulation of our strategy, delivery of staff professional learning and improvements to our infrastructure to ensure accessibility for all.
- 7.2 The progress seen in the 2023-24 academic session demonstrates our commitment to our aspirational vision of ensuring technology positively touches and improves the lives of all learners. Across the city, the learning experiences being planned and delivered are helping to transform learning and teaching approaches. A core priority for the future of the programme continues to be ensuring creativity is nurtured in every learning space and that sustainable approaches to learning, teaching, assessment and reporting are at the core of strategic planning.
- 7.3 Improvement through effective collaborative working is at the heart of the Connected Learning vision. The development of collaborative, digital learning teams in every learning community is a central premise of our work. Using our technology to improve workflow, processes and systems to analyse needs, plan for learning and track progress will ensure every learners' journey is effectively supported with learning experiences accessible and relevant to needs.

8 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Financial provision for investment in infrastructure and service provision has been incorporated within the business case for the future delivery of ICT in partnership with CGI.
<i>Legal:</i>	Associated contractual and regulatory compliance requirements are in place.
<i>Personnel:</i>	Training and development needs of staff are included in the delivery plan.

Procurement: CPU and legal services input to the procurement framework are in place.

Council Strategic Plan: Grand Challenge 1 Mission 2: Ensure Digital Inclusion for children and young people

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? It is expected to do so.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? Increasing pupil access to technology and increasing engagement with parents.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify. N/A

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? If our young people achieve positive outcomes in their lives this will have a positive impact on the longer term social and community life of Glasgow.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? Young people who are better educated with enhanced digital skills are able to contribute more positively to the growing economy of the city.

**Privacy and Data
Protection impacts:**

*Are there any
potential data
protection impacts
as a result of this
report? Y/N*

Compliance with data sharing and information security requirements will be embedded into the associated technical solutions and operational practice.

*If Yes, please
confirm that a Data
Protection Impact
Assessment (DPA)
has been carried
out.*

9 Recommendations:

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to consider the progress made to date and ask the Executive Director to present further update reports, as appropriate.