



Leading education in a digital world

Schools Digital Strategy handbook
2019 – 2026



The world is turning truly digital

From teams collaborating across the globe to data-driven decisions that improve the lives of millions, new frontiers are being crossed every day.

To become Australia's best education system and one of the finest in the world, we need to change the way we approach our digital development.

With the Schools Digital Strategy (SDS), we can give our students, our teachers and those who support them the digital skills they need today and in the future.

This handbook gives you everything you need to start planning, communicating and moving towards our digital future.



Mark Scott AO
Secretary
Department of Education NSW

What is the Schools Digital Strategy?

Our roadmap for leading education in a digital world

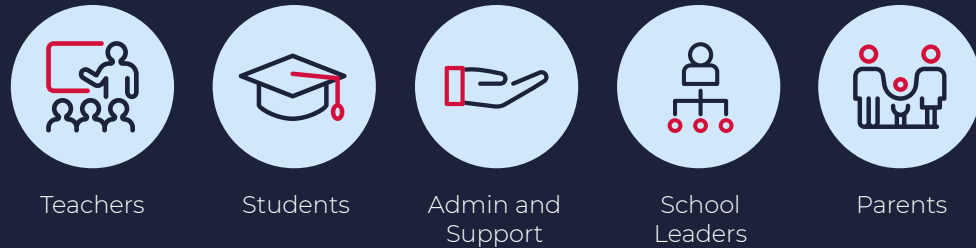
The Schools Digital Strategy (SDS) is our pathway to improving digital literacy and efficacy across the board.

To meet our vision objective of becoming “Australia’s best education system and one of the finest in the world” we must better understand, invest into, and integrate digital across the Department.

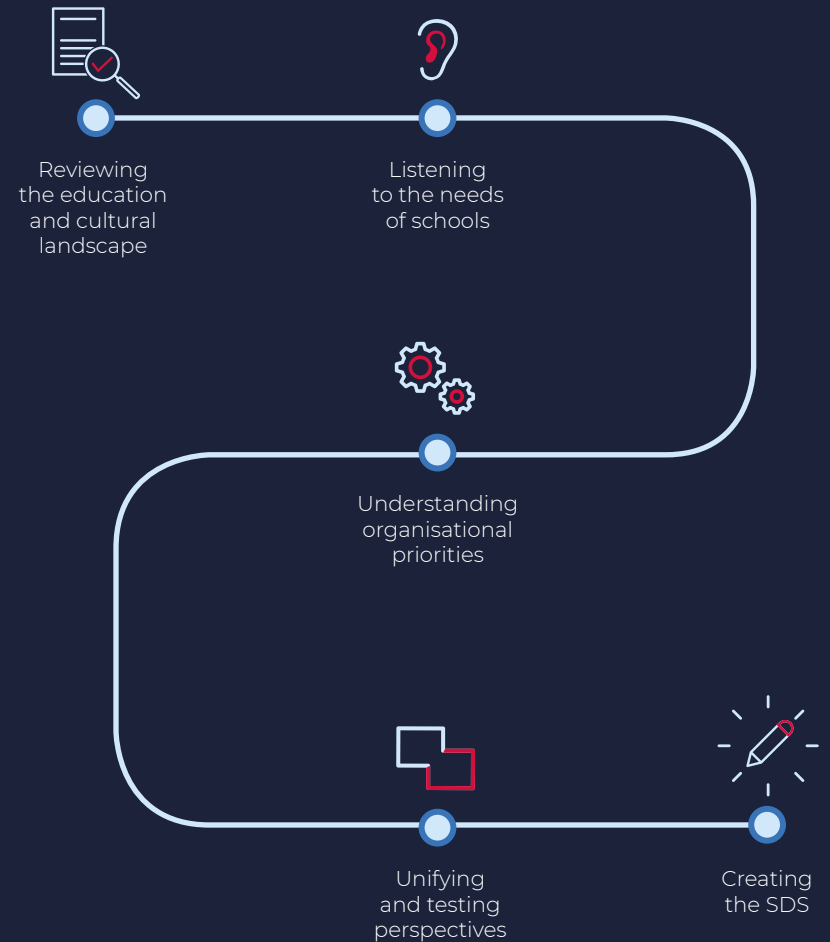
Focusing on those who teach

The Schools Digital Strategy focuses on ‘those who teach’ and ‘those who support those who teach’. It concentrates on teaching and learning, and extends to student and school administration.

It also includes some Corporate functions that support schools. It encompasses those critical participants essential to the student’s learning journey, such as parents and carers, and the community.



Developing the SDS



How the SDS delivers on state strategies

State strategy	SDS outcomes
20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boosting digital connectivity and utilise existing and ongoing network rollout. Equipping students with in-demand skills and competencies.
State Infrastructure Strategy 2018 - 2038 (Connecting Metro/Country Schools Programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening the physical infrastructure to support digital uptake and use in learning spaces. Connecting schools across the state in collaborative learning experiences.
DoE Strategic Plan 2018– 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing student engagement and participation. Equipping students with the digital, technical, and communication skills of the future workforce. Closing the digital divide between schools with equitable access to resources and opportunity.
<p>Digital NSW</p> <p>A wider government priority is to improve the customer service experience for all citizens who come into contact government services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering customer-centric education services. Enhancing data analytics and reporting capabilities to inform teaching and investment. Digitising and automating processes to reduce burdens and increase efficiency.

Where we're starting from

Amplifying our opportunities

As an organisation, we have already made significant strides forward into the digital era. To provide a robust foundation for further progress, we've identified a range of digital opportunities to build upon:

1. Improved and automated systems for schools offer an opportunity to free up valuable time for school leaders, teachers and admin staff.
2. Teachers and schools have first-hand experience to recognising student needs and innovation opportunities within the learning experience.
3. Customer interactions are well-served in places, and could be connected to form a seamless customer experience.
4. Schools who have taken the lead on digital maturity provide important lessons to learn and share.
5. A wealth of student and school data is being collected, and presents an opportunity to help make more informed decisions.

Our considerations

Our Executive identified five key considerations that shaped the formation of the SDS. These were used to ensure the strategy was focused, effective and fit for the future.

- Schools are best placed to take charge of their own digital journey, and innovate based on their needs.
- Teachers' digital literacy is a powerful lever to pull in improving digital maturity and improving the learning experience.
- The Department is best placed to provide support to schools on their digital journey, and leverage their network perspective for innovation.
- Real time feedback and collaboration within the learning environment will improve student outcomes.
- The digital playing field needs to be leveled across the state to ensure equity of opportunity for all students.

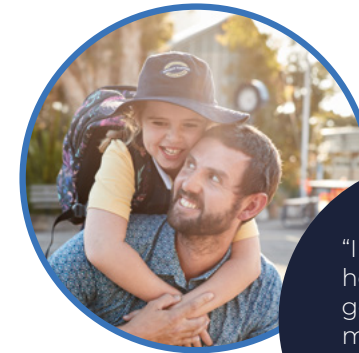
How the SDS can help



"I like to do fun things – that's when I learn best"
Annabelle, Student



"How can I support our school & community to provide the best educational opportunities for ALL of our students?"
Paul, School Leader



"I want to know how my child is going, and how I might help them at home"
Glenn, Parent



"How can I help my students achieve their best?"
Gina, Teacher

"There must be a better way to handle all these admin tasks!"
Lyn, Administration Manager



Our Digital Vision

To be an education leader in a digital world

Our Digital Vision is to be recognised as a leader in education through our delivery of integrated digitised learning, teaching and school operations that are customer-centric, responsive, efficient, seamless, and that maximise student outcomes while mitigating risk.



Our Schools Digital Strategy

1

Empower schools to shape their digital journey

- Enable digital maturity assessment and benchmarking.
- Enable schools to plan and implement new capabilities and measure their success.

2

Build our schools digital equity and capability

- Deliver digital teaching and learning.
- Improve student administration and school management.
- Drive collaboration and communication.
- Enhance our data, analytics and reporting capabilities.
- Strengthen our digital and equity foundations.

3

Align the department to support schools

- Re-orient the service model to better support teaching and learning, and empower the edge.
- Scale continuous innovation at the edge.

Where we'll invest



Digital maturity and user capability

- Digitisation of administration and compliance requirements.
- Automation of processes.
- Design and implementation of new initiatives by teachers.



Digital content, experiences and data

- Development of digital training and curricula, compatible across devices and networks.
- Integration of digital learning and teaching in the classroom.
- Skilling up students with skills of the future.



Digital devices, network and infrastructure

- Closing digital access gaps in all schools across the state.
- Enabling equitable opportunities for students to learn, develop and contribute to their learning.



Digital support and innovation

- Equipping teachers and preservice candidates to drive innovation and change.
- Providing innovators with digital support to deliver quality education and customer services.

How we'll achieve our vision



Setup: Foundations

Core foundations are designed, pilot programs implemented and business cases are developed.

Horizon 1: Optimising

Benefit measures are established, pilot projects are being scaled and a school-centric service culture created within the Department.

Horizon 2: Evolving

The pace of school's digital capability development increases, continual innovation becomes the norm and the school-centric service becomes fully embedded.

Horizon 3: Transforming

Digital delivery becomes fully integrated across Department and sector-leading expertise are developed.

Setup: Foundations

Horizon 1: Optimised



Capabilities and activities :

- Designing
- Planning
- Agreeing

Duration:

6 months

Key actions:

- Design foundation components.
- Implement pilots and deploy quick wins.
- Agree strategy governance model.
- H1 business case development.
- SDS communications program.
- Service model redesign.
- Service catalogue design and launch.
- Device strategy ratios finalised for H1.
- Automation pilots.
- Data and analytics strategy and CoE designed.
- Digital maturity baselined.



“Now that I understand where we sit on our digital journey, I can make informed decisions about our next steps.”

Tina, Principal

Capabilities and activities :

- Delivering
- Building
- Embedding

Duration:

2 years



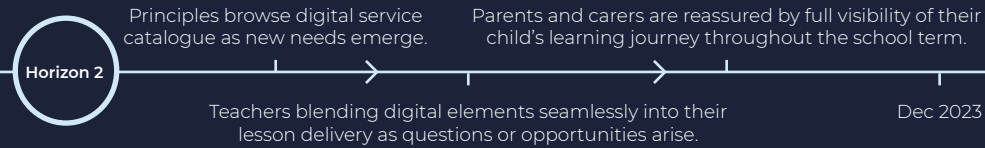
“Seeing how both my kids are progressing on the school portal puts me at ease about their development.”

Inna, Parent:

Key actions:

- Digital capability pilots scale across network.
- Market and vendor selection as required.
- Benefits measurement in place.
- Business change program and PD.
- Create school-centric service culture.
- Service model implemented.
- Service catalogue available.
- Connected schools.
- Device equity increases.
- Learning Management System available.
- Enhanced reporting.
- Student and teacher portals available.
- Streamlined administration.

Horizon 2: Evolving



Capabilities and activities :

- Evolving
- Innovating
- Enhancing

Duration:

2 years

Key actions:

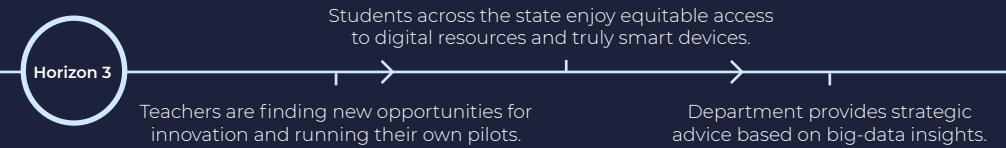
- Increasing capability development pace.
- Embedding continual innovation.
- Embedding a school-centric service culture.
- Digital service catalogue available.
- Connected learning spaces feature.
- Advanced analytics.
- Learning needs analysis supports student learning pathways.
- Parent portal and communication tools enhance experience.
- Improved digital literacy demonstrated.



"The way the Department helps me grow professionally has totally changed. PD now makes feel empowered instead of burdened."

Cheryl, Teacher

Horizon 3: Transforming



Capabilities and activities :

- Leading digital education service delivery.

Duration:

3 years

Key actions:

- Developing sector-leading expertise.
- Full inter-Departmental integration for digital delivery.
- Personalised learning / formative assessment a reality.
- Equity in education access.
- Schools Digital Marketplace embedded.
- Predictive and behavioural analytics support decision making.
- Data and analytics centre of excellence features.
- Advanced digital literacy the norm.



"Our teacher is always finding new ways to teach us. Everyday feels exciting and new."

Jed, Student

Our future

7 Years
(2026)

Our schools thrive in a digital world.

The future of education will see students learn on their own terms. Their teachers, empowered to innovate, will continuously improve the learning environment. Outcomes and impacts will be measured to affirm growth.

School leaders and staff will be supported by efficient administration and management processes, and parents, carers and school communities will enjoy seamless digital interactions as they engage with schools.

Our schools will be a connected network, backed by the Department.

Key benefits

- Students are engaged and prepared for jobs of the future
- Improved equity access to digital devices and learning opportunities
- Data-driven student outcomes
- Improved Customer experience for everyone interacting with schools
- Improved school and student management efficiency

What this means for our schools



Students

All across the state, students are prepared for the jobs of the future with enhanced digital literacy and critical collaboration and team-based problem solving skills.



Teachers

Time and focus on students grows as teachers are freed of admin and low-value tasks. Teachers' capability is enhanced through hyper-relevant professional development, access to quality digital tools and greater visibility of student development.



Leadership

School leaders are empowered to make the decisions on the digital direction that suits their school. Data-based insights drive better decision-making, whilst automated school management allows more time to support their teachers and students.



Support staff

Support staff dedicate more time than ever supporting leadership, teachers, students and parents as manual and low-value tasks are automated.

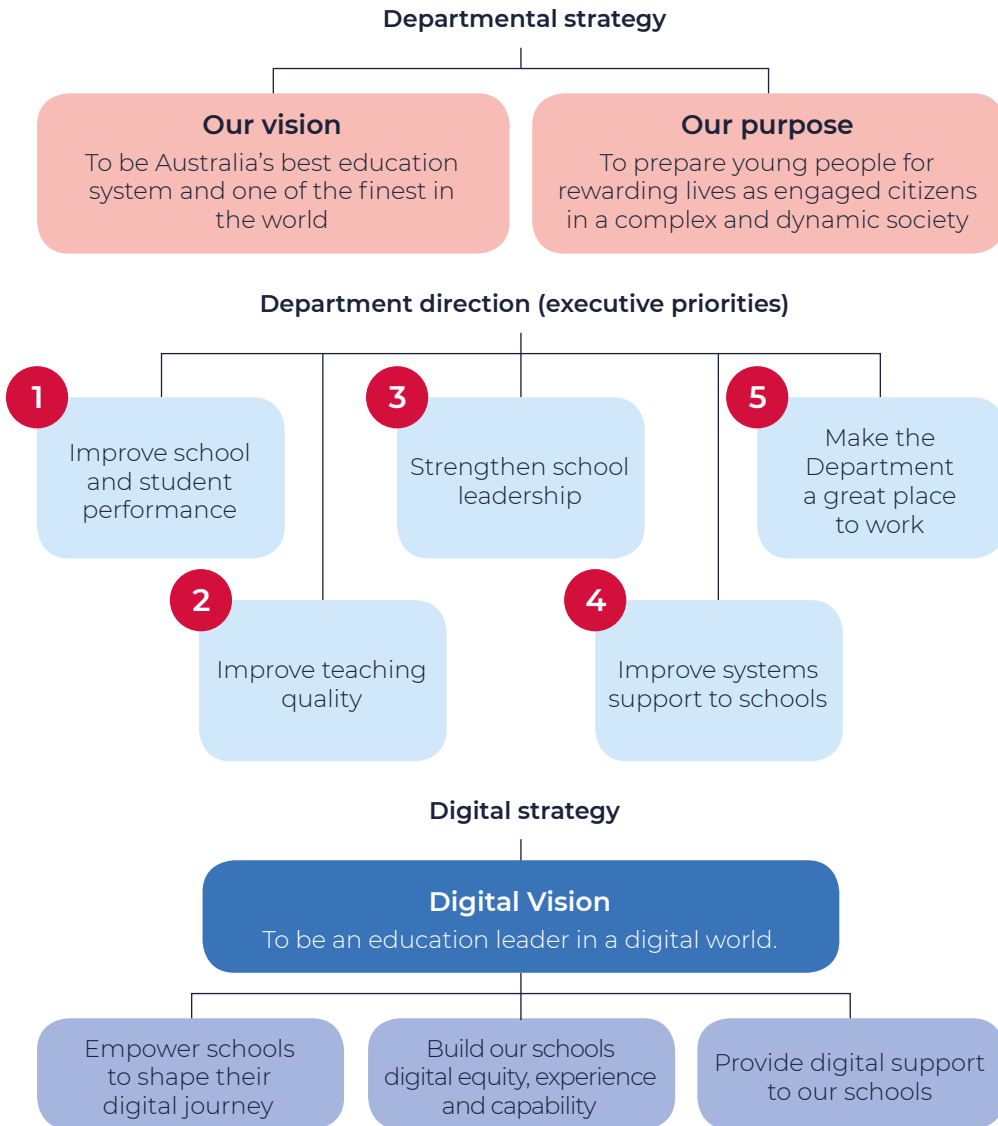


Parents and carers

Parents and carers are more connected than ever to their students' learning journey through improved data and transparency. Digital learning resources enable them to actively support the learning journey.



Strategy overview



Digital strategy pillars

Empower schools to shape their digital journey

Schools are empowered to self-determine their digital journey. They own their digital aspirations and are supported in the evaluation, planning, delivery and measurement of outcomes of the digital investments that suit them and their context.

Build our schools digital equity, experience and capability

Each school increases its digital capability and maturity for each year and equity is maximised. School management and student administration becomes seamless. Teacher admin time is minimised and each teacher attains high standards of digital literacy and pedagogy through professional development maximising student outcomes investments that suit them and their context.

Provide digital support to our schools

The centre re-orientates to be school, teaching and learning centric. The support model integrates within the school and learning environment and enables innovation at the edge for the benefit of all.



People and Culture
All staff and students have a digitally mature skill-set and mind-set



Pedagogy
Fully integrated with digital enabling the increased breadth of teaching techniques



Pre-Service
Digitally literate pre-service candidates thrive in the digital school environment



Processes
Are automated and augment human decision-making



Platforms
Are intuitive, co-designed with schools, self-heal and scalable



Property
Fully digitally enabled learning spaces - physical and virtual



Professional development
Access to the best digital solutions to develop high quality digital skills and career pathways

9 Focal areas explained

1 Enable digital maturity assessment and benchmarking

This involves the development of a digital maturity assessment framework across school capabilities. The digital maturity framework will need to be repeatable and reliable, be easy to deploy and enable schools to self-assess, provide data aggregation at the school, district and state level, and facilitate benchmarking against peer schools. It will also capture the proportion of staff who are progressing their digital skills to support more uniform digital practice uptake.

2 Enable schools to access digital resources

The integration of digital maturity within the Schools Excellence Framework to assist school planning, and help schools to choose capabilities, deploy them and measure their success. Enabling schools to plan and deploy these new capabilities will require the development of a service catalogue and eventually a Digital Marketplace of high-quality integrated PD, platforms, processes and case studies to aim effective adoption.

3 Support improved teaching and learning

This includes the enablement of digital curriculum, digital assessment capabilities in and beyond the learning environment, the deployment of connected learning spaces with digital technologies, personalised learning support, and making digital content creation and lesson planning easier for teachers.

4 Improve student administration and school management

Student administration and school management processes are improved, including automation of common transaction activities; AI and chatbot servicing of common service channels; digitisation of paper processes; greater integration of systems and improved user interfaces; and workflow support for tasks.

5 Enhance our data, analytics and reporting capabilities

An investment in improving our data and analytics capabilities, including through the development of advanced analytics, the evolution of CESE into a data and analytics centre of excellence, and integrated data within and beyond schools to aid comprehensive student data gathering. Advanced analytics underpin many components of the strategy, including personalised learning support, welfare support, and enhanced performance understanding.

6 Drive collaboration and communication

This area involves developing fit-for-purpose collaboration tools for students and teachers, creating communities of professional teaching practice, giving parents and carers online and mobile device access to relevant school and student information and communications, and giving students access to relevant school and subject information online from wherever they are in the state or beyond.

7 Strengthen equity foundations

This area involves increasing the device ratios for students of the appropriate age, and teachers, and ensuring the supporting network, connectivity and capacity is adequate to enable digital teaching and learning. It also involves moving to equity in digital literacy and increasing the confidence and skill sets across students and teachers.

8 Re-orient the service model to support teaching and learning

A re-oriented service model that provides greater people support to schools in order to more effectively deploy digital practices into the classroom. It embodies the principles of putting schools at the centre of service delivery and enabling them to succeed.

9 Scale continuous innovation at the edge

Ensuring the right governance, principles, practices and culture exists to support continual innovation at the edge. This area will support the identification and growth of innovation, capturing better practice and capabilities, test practices across the network and providing the ability to scale across the state.

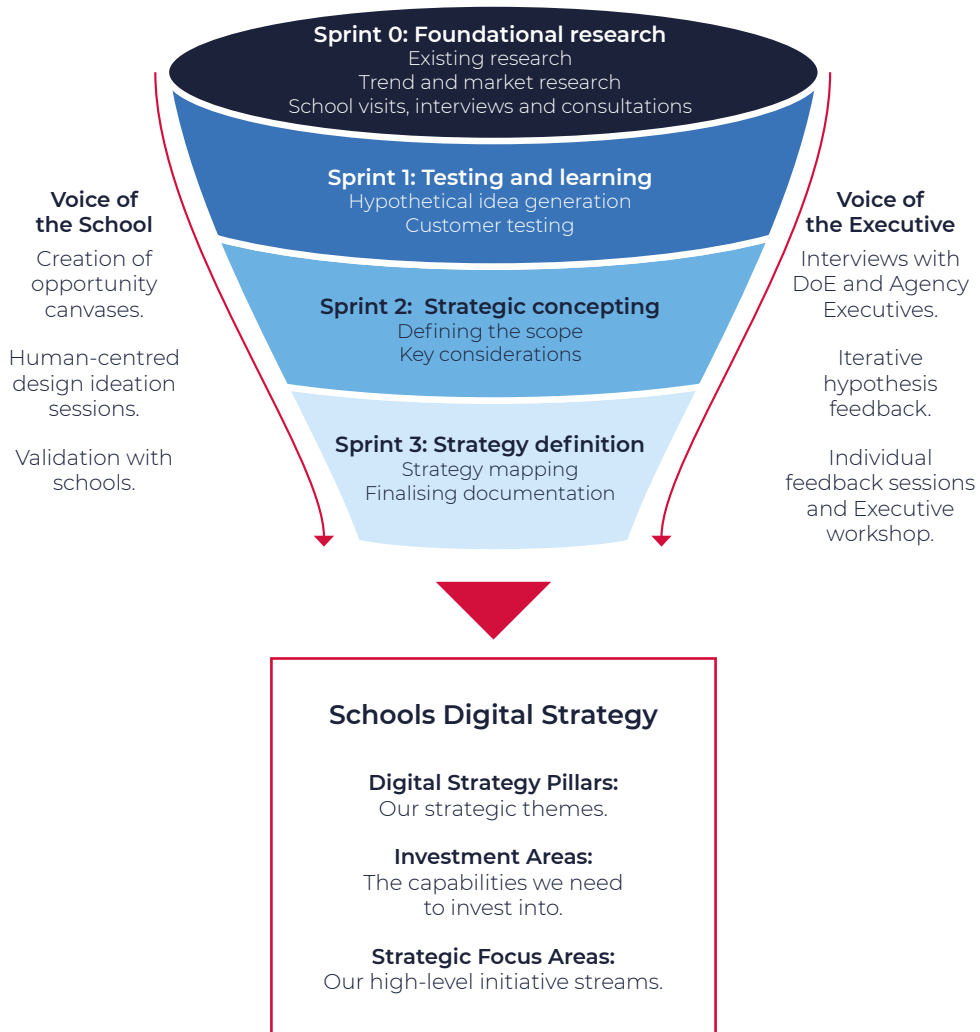
Legend: Digital Maturity and User Capacity

Digital Content, Experience and Data

Digital Devices Networks and Infrastructure

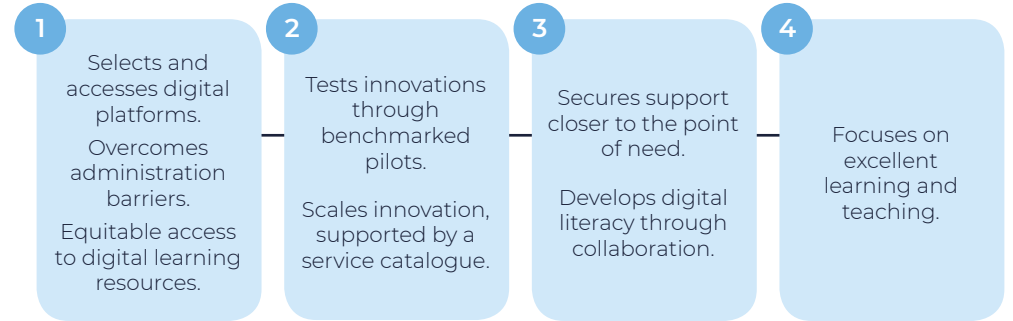
Digital Support and Innovation

Defining the SDS



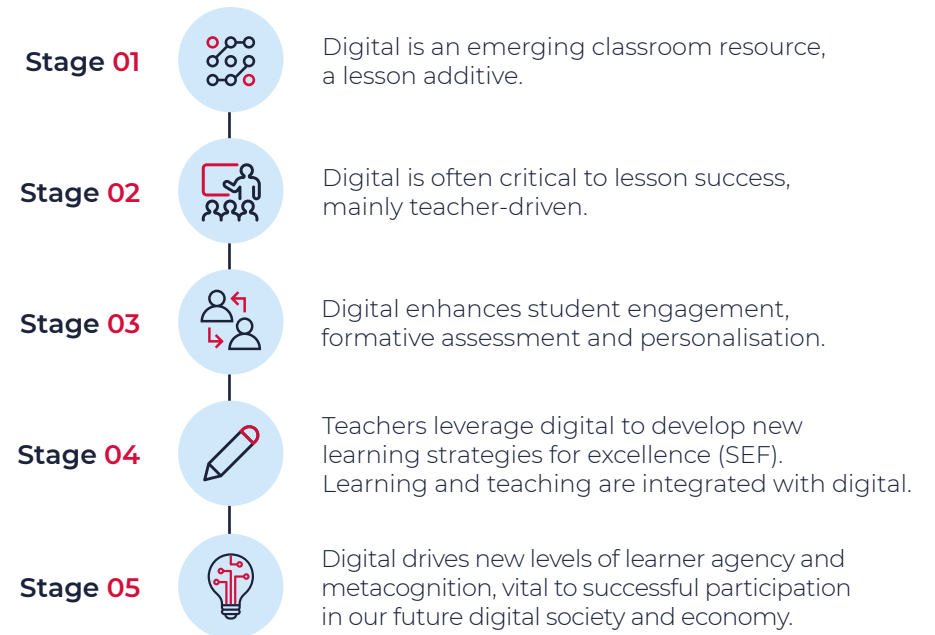
The school maturity journey

The school agency:



The learning space journey

The teacher and learner agency:





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Published August 2019

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