Digital Strategy Policy

Park Community Academy

Created October 2020

Our Vision

At Park Community Academy our vision, for all of our children, staff and families, is to enhance teaching and learning through the use of digital technology**.** Our curriculum enables pupils to learn how to use digital devices safely to support their daily lives. We aim for our pupils to be able to communicate and interact with people safely online and to control technology for a purpose. The PCA staff have a positive attitude towards digital technology and recognise the positive impact it can have on the quality of teaching, pupil engagement and behaviour, if used appropriately to enhance the learning experience. By integrating digital technologies across the curriculum, we believe we will improve the outcomes and raise attainment for our learners. Park Community Academy is committed to investing in digital technologies, in order to inspire and motivate our learners. We aim to maintain and extend our digital technology resources and facilities, including hardware, software and infrastructure to support our learning environments. Our overarching aim is to ensure that our pupils have access to current digital technologies, enabling them to make a significant contribution to our growing digital world, and successfully equipping them with essential skills for life and work.

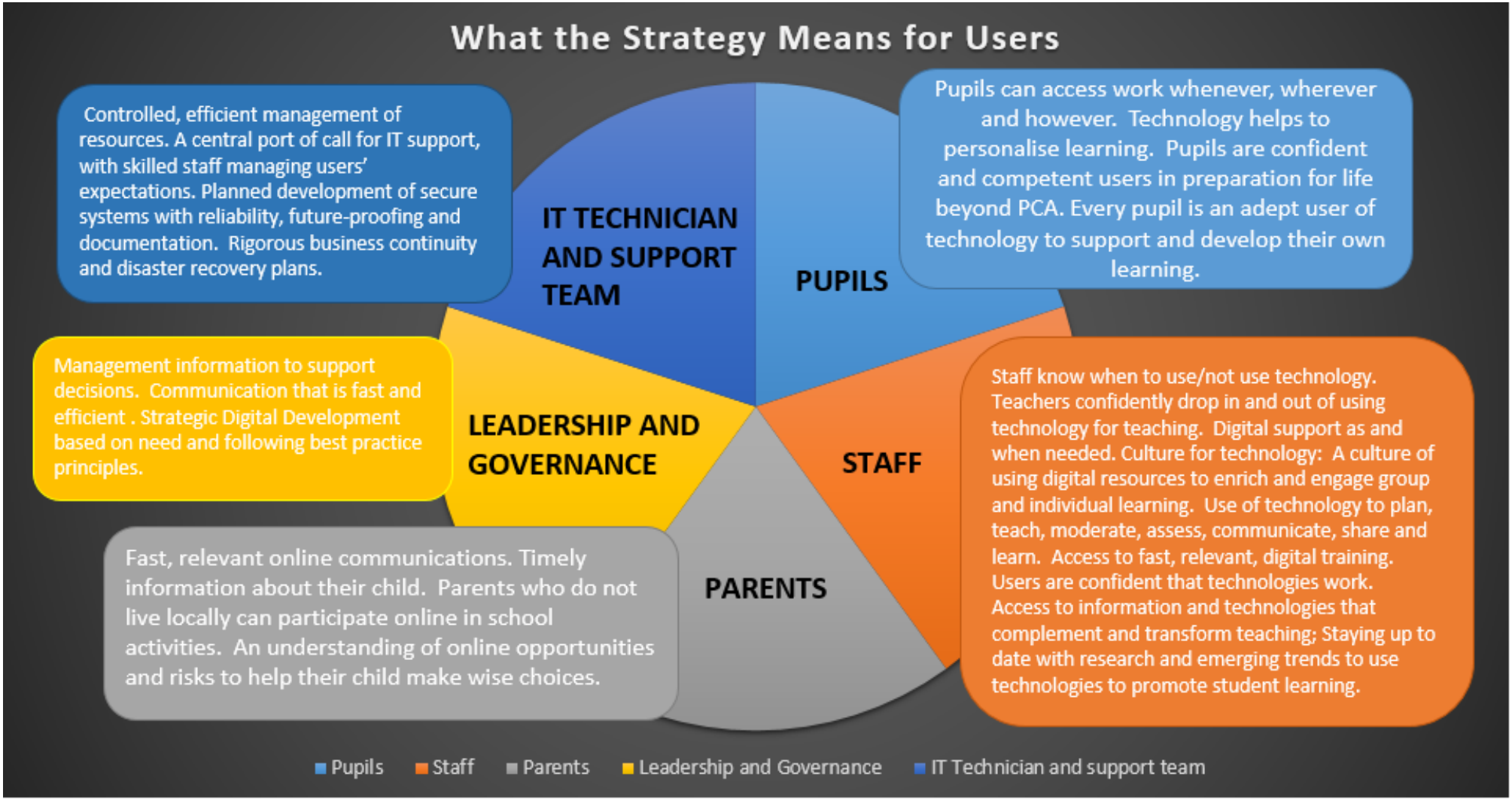
Purpose of the Digital Strategy Policy:

To invest in digital technologies, it is necessary to have a clearly defined digital strategy to justify the expenditure to all key stakeholders and ensure that purchases made have the maximum impact on teaching and learning. A school's digital strategy is a long-term journey, with multiple milestones along the way and this policy aims to highlight PCA's milestones and how we aim to reach these. The Digital Strategy Policy ensures that we meet the needs of all of our pupils and plan for progression for all, regardless of their access to digital technologies outside of the school environment or their learning needs. This policy has been created drawing upon information in the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020 document and the DFE document 'Realising the potential of technology in education: A strategy for education providers and the technology industry'.

Aims of the Digital Strategy Policy:

The school's IT technician and Computing subject leaders will continue to deliver a reliable and secure infrastructure that balances the needs of pupils, staff and guests across the school site, with:

- Effective, innovative use of technology for learning and teaching;
- First class, cost effective and sustainable technology;
- Standardised core equipment that also offers scope for diversity;
- Planned investment in technology that drives value for money by exploiting and building on existing technology;
- Communication of key objectives, activities and impacts to all stakeholders;
- A clearly communicated strategic direction.


What the Strategy Means for Users
Controlled, efficient management of resources. A central port of call for IT support, with skilled staff managing users' expectations. Planned development of secure systems with reliability, future-proofing and documentation. Rigorous business continuity and disaster recovery plans.
IT TECHNICIAN AND SUPPORT TEAM
PUPILS
Pupils can access work whenever, wherever and however. Technology helps to personalise learning. Pupils are confident and competent users in preparation for life beyond PCA. Every pupil is an adept user of technology to support and develop their own learning.
Management information to support decisions. Communication that is fast and efficient . Strategic Digital Development based on need and following best practice principles.
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE
STAFF
Staff know when to use/not use technology. Teachers confidently drop in and out of using technology for teaching. Digital support as and when needed. Culture for technology: A culture of using digital resources to enrich and engage group and individual learning. Use of technology to plan, teach, moderate, assess, communicate, share and learn. Access to fast, relevant, digital training. Users are confident that technologies work. Access to information and technologies that complement and transform teaching; Staying up to date with research and emerging trends to use technologies to promote student learning.
Fast, relevant online communications. Timely information about their child. Parents who do not live locally can participate online in school activities. An understanding of online opportunities and risks to help their child make wise choices.
PARENTS
Pupils
Staff
Parents
Leadership and Governance
IT Technician and support team

How we Overcome Key Barriers to our Digital Strategy:

- **Training**- A staff audit is being compiled to be distributed to identify individual gaps in skills and knowledge and to identify confidence levels in the use of ICT. This is a reflective measure based on some of the difficulties encountered when we have rolled out Google Classroom across the school. It is important not to simply expect that all staff members are confident ICT users and that they understand how to model to pupils how to access work/ use programs which the pupils are expected to use. Without training staff on how to use particular software and hardware, we cannot expect these staff members to in turn teach the pupils how to use them and this is something which we have recognised at PCA. The Computing Subject Leaders and Senior Leadership Team support staff to deliver a high quality digital education, including half termly app/ resource training during staff meetings and twice weekly ICT drop in sessions. Computing subject leaders attend regional/ national/ online training and disseminate useful information for our setting and learners to the wider school community. There is an app of the month sign in the staff room, which is also emailed out, which introduces staff to a new app which can be used to enhance teaching and learning or reduce teacher workload. Computing Subject Leaders also carry out subject specific learning walks to monitor how digital technology is being used across the curriculum to help to build up a picture as to how well it is being embedded and used for enhancement of the current provision.

- **Equipment/Procurement**- It has been recognised at PCA that proposals for new technology need to come from the teaching staff who will be using the technology. This is then co-ordinated by the subject leaders and a proposal is put together for any new equipment purchased. In the Autumn Term 2019, the Computing Subject Leaders presented to the Senior Leadership Team the benefits of Apple devices vs Android devices and demonstrated some of the key apps which could be used on the Apple devices which were transforming teaching and learning across the school. It was decided that we would stick with Apple devices given the fact that ipads tend to be more accessible to our pupils given: the screen size; user friendly touchscreen; familiarity of our pupils with using Apple devices; vast array of apps available to suit a variety of learning styles in the app store; stability of them and the fact that they are hardwearing and the fact they can be centrally locked down to control which apps are installed on them, so pupils can't download their own apps. The iPad is also a market leader, with each iPad release continually pushing the industry forward with one of the fastest tablets on the market and is compatible with our existing Apple tv boxes. Following the decision to continue to use Apple devices, PCA then researched thoroughly the cost and practicality of leasing devices as opposed to buying them. It was noted that in order to keep at the forefront of technological developments, the ipads ideally needed replacing with newer versions every 3 years, therefore leasing allows for constant replacement of devices with up to date technology and also offers the protection and security of knowing that any devices which become broken are instantly replaced. PCA are therefore in the process of developing their long term investment plan which is a combination of purchasing and leasing equipment. Keeping on top of technological developments and knowing where best to buy new digital equipment is another barrier for the success of digital strategies. At PCA, we have a specialist IT Technician who is knowledgeable about suppliers available and attends training regularly. Also the new DFE guidance document 'Realising the potential of technology in education: A strategy for education providers and the technology industry' will help schools by recommending pre-negotiated buying deals for technology and trialing regional buying hubs in the North West. It aims to support an online lending library allowing educators to 'try before they buy' through BESA's online LendEd service and will explore how to facilitate a better online marketplace for education technology to help educators to connect with trusted providers. PCA also attends a special school moderation group half termly in which a number of special schools within the North West meet and discuss moderation of work, new apps and devices which they have trialled and procurement offers. As part of the SeaView Trust, we will also look for opportunities for cost saving joint procurement across the Trust.

- **Measuring the impact of technology use-** It can be quite difficult to measure the impact of technology across the curriculum with the need to set control groups, and isolate progress to one sole factor, which is not how we operate at PCA as we ensure that through the combination of teacher input, digital devices, purposeful learning environments and real life experiences our pupils make progress from their individual starting points. Nevertheless, the impact of the Computing curriculum is monitored regularly by the Computing subject leaders when they review the pupil progress in relation to CASPA target setting and tracking. At the start of the year, the class teachers set a target for the pupils to achieve that year. This is then reviewed mid-way through the year and if a pupil is not on track to achieve the target, strategies and interventions are put in place to support them. At the end of the year the pupils are assessed and their level is assessed against their proposed targets. CASPA allows us to track pupil progress in relation to pupils with the same level of need nationally. Regular discussions are held between the Subject Leaders and the other staff who teach computing to monitor how they feel about the different units being

taught. Work is scrutinized by the subject leaders and moderation activities are carried out both within the school and also with staff from other SEND schools in the North West of England.

- **Infrastructure-** The school's full time IT technician is responsible for the maintenance of computers, printers, the school network and keeping software up to date. The subject leader liaises with the technician to ensure that the systems are running efficiently. Within the school there are 23 interactive screens, 50 computers, 40 laptops and 100 iPads. The Computing subject leaders keep up to date with new technologies and reviews the school's provision, as well as maintaining the existing resources in partnership with the school's technician. Hardware and software faults are logged with the IT technician who endeavors to rectify any problems as soon as he is aware of them. The school has a range of resources to support the delivery of the Computing curriculum, the Early Years Framework and learning across all areas of the National curriculum. Online tools such as Bug Club, Education City, RM EasiMaths, Espresso, Frogplay and Google Classroom are part of the experience of pupils. The school has a sensory studio which is an immersive 3D environment with an interactive board and three projector screens. The IT technician keeps a record of all the hardware and software and the dates they were purchased/installed. The subject leaders are responsible for the Computing budget. The Local Authority now hosts our servers. Passwords are changed every 30-90 days, there is now a 2 step ID process for emails and our documents are now off Dropbox and are more secure on Google Drive.

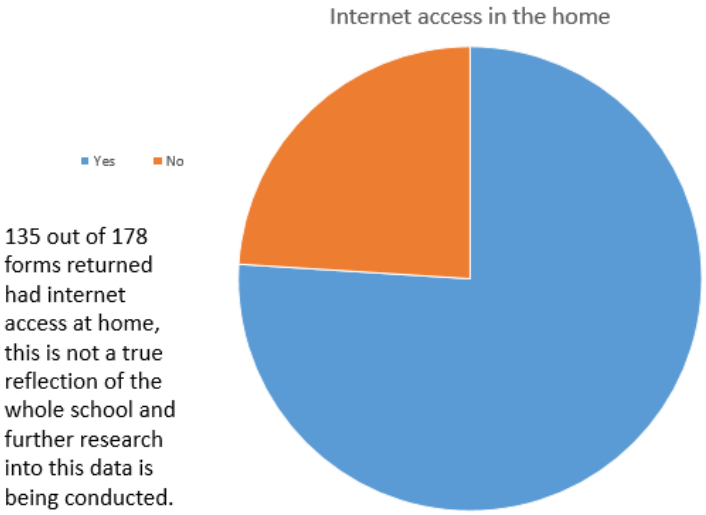
- **Technology in the Home/ Parental Engagement**- In recent years, there has been a growing understanding of the importance of factors outside the immediate school environment in explaining children's success in school. At the same time, there has been increasing attention paid to the ways in which children's home and family cultures are valuable learning environments in their own right. How children's schools relate to and work together with their home environments is therefore a critical subject for school staff to consider in order to support children's learning in the widest sense. Parental engagement in children's learning is important in order to improve children's achievement and narrow the gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. Schools are also being encouraged and expected to make information and access to learning resources available online for children and their parents, particularly during the Covid 19 pandemic. The availability of a home computer and internet access is seen as important enough for learning that the Home Access initiative announced plans to support low income families to acquire these technologies. PCA have identified which pupils do not have access to an appropriate electronic device and/or the internet. We managed to provide 7 laptops and 3 4G connections during the initial lockdown period of March to June 2020 through the DfE and SVT and 34 laptops were permanently donated by Social Services and distributed to our children who are Our Children or on a Child Protection plan. We have already provisionally sourced 11 digital devices which will be allocated should a further local lockdown be applied. PCA will also provide paper copies of home learning packs where necessary, these will be posted out to families or hand delivered by PCA staff. Class teachers are taking responsibility for continuously monitoring any barriers to accessing remote learning and reporting these to Team Leaders to allow for the appropriate distribution of remote devices/ 4G connections. PCA's website remains as popular as ever, especially during lockdown (March-June 2020) when parents and carers were still looking at the site as a way to keep connected to the school. The school Twitter account is hugely popular with 1799 followers (as of September 2020) and with over 7000 tweets having been made, which is increasing daily. We also use Text to Parents to ensure effective communication with parents/ carers and set up class emails during lockdown to enable parents/ carers to send any queries they had, or send photos of work and achievements to be celebrated, to the class teachers and support staff to ensure communication channels were supported. All teachers now set work through Google Classroom in order to prepare our pupils for how to use it should they need to self isolate for a period of time or in the event of a future lockdown. The use of Google Classroom is becoming embedded in our school practice and will prove to be a valuable tool for setting work both in and out of school. Further details can be found in PCA's Home Learning Plan 2020-2021.

- **Safety**- A progressive online safety curriculum ensures that all pupils are able to develop skills to keep them safe online. Opportunities for learning about online safety are part of PSHE and reinforced whenever technology is used. Clear rules for online safety are agreed by each class at the beginning of every year and our school SMART rules are displayed in every classroom. Parents and pupils sign an acceptable use policy together when a pupil first starts at the school. The class rules are then signed annually by pupils and shared with parents. The school supports the international Safer Internet Day each February and provides opportunities for pupils to consider online bullying as part of Anti-Bullying week in the Autumn Term. Opportunities are taken whenever possible to reinforce messages of a healthy life style. PCA has an online safety policy in place that details how the principles of online safety will be promoted and monitored. Equipment is maintained to meet agreed safety standards with annual electrical safety checks. From Foundation Stage, pupils are taught to respect and care for technology equipment. Further guidance can be found in the school's health and safety policy, the internet and online safety policy and the social media policy.

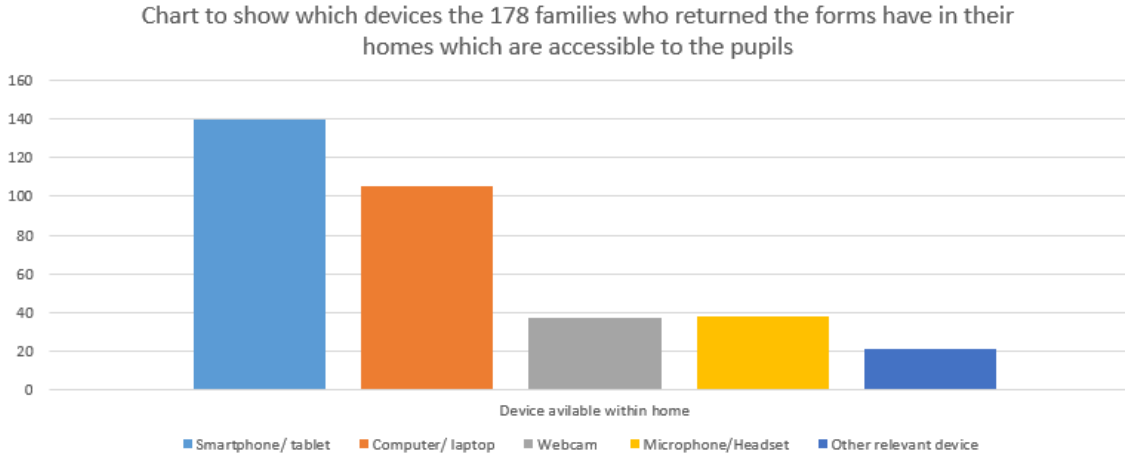
Subject area development plan - October 2019- October 2020

Subject Area: Computing			Plan written by Caroline Johnson & Nicola Makinson				
Target	**Actions**	**Time Frame**	**Lead Personnel**	**Cost**	**Intended outcomes**	**Evidence of progress/ success**	**Rag Rat-ing**
To develop the use of ICT across the curriculum.	Staff training to be delivered to ensure staff are up to date on how to use technology in the classroom to enhance learning. Learning walks to be conducted to deduce how ICT is currently being used across the curriculum. Staff audit to be circulated to identify training needs.	2019-20	NM/CJ NM/CJ/SK	Cost to be identified	Increased staff confidence using ICT which should encourage them to use ICT more effectively. To have a greater bank of resources/website knowledge to support the curriculum delivery. To enhance pupil learning through the use of ICT.	Audit document created, sent out and results collated. Learning walks at end of year vs start of year. Pupil interviews would determine how ICT was being used across the curriculum.	
To identify training needs in Computing and the use of IC T across the curriculum.	Staff audit to be circulated to identify training needs. In order to develop an excellent blended learning offer for physical and virtual teaching and learning, children (and families via them) also need to be trained to be competent users of on line platforms –Google Classroom, Bugclub, RM Easimaths and Frogplay.	2019-20	NM/CJ	No cost	Identification of any gaps in training to allow for trainers to be booked for CPD sessions or training delivered by in house experts. Provide family tasks and upskilling opportunities through digital platforms. Develop competent pupil users by embedding this into daily classroom practice and explicitly teaching how to use these platforms as part of the Computing Curriculum.	Audit document created, sent out and results collated. Staff training delivered. Impact of training identified through learning walks and audits. Pupils able to successfully access home learning on the designated platforms independently (or with parental support) from home. Parents/ carers more confident users of school platforms.	
To develop online safety coverage across the school and in the wider community.	Ensure we follow guidance in the KCSIE document. Create a whole school online safety scheme of work from KS1-5. Send NOS updates as tweets and on the newsletter- set up a weekly slot on the newsletter. Organise a school wide Safer Internet Day. Invest in online safety books for younger pupils. Deliver training re new online safety scheme of work. Deliver training on how to use the new online safety books. Provide guidance for staff on what is to be delivered during Online Safety Day and lesson plans provided.	2019-2020	NM/CJ	£200	To have created an online safety scheme of work from KS1-5. To have shared online safety advice with the wider community. A school wide Safer Internet Day held across the school with guest speakers from relevant organisations.	New online safety scheme of work being used across school and evidenced in books/ ICT folders. Weekly slot for NOS update on newsletter. Safer Internet Day feedback from staff. Photos of activities/ visits undertaken.	
To develop the Computing curriculum for the EYFS-linking the KS1 SOW to KS2/3.	Identify gaps in the EYFS Computing curriculum. Look at existing EYFS curriculum documents and policies.	2019-2020	NM/CJ	Cost to be confirmed dependend on resource needed	More resources required for teaching programming.	KS1 pupils will have a greater understanding of the Computing curriculum- evidenced through lesson observations and pupil interviews where appropriate.	
To ensure we have enough equipment to deliver the Computing curriculum and allow ICT to be used across the curriculum.	Renew outdated equipment. Purchase/ lease new equipment to meet the needs/size of the school. Identify which equipment is the most cost effective, robust and effective. Computing team to attend training and events re technology updates. What is available on the market and purchasing events such as the BETT conference. Training for all staff on how to use the equipment. Training for staff on how to store equipment to maximise life-span.	2019-2020	NM/CJ/SK	Cost to be confirmed dependend on resource needed	Sufficient equipment available to deliver the Computing curriculum. Up to date technology. ICT being used across the curriculum without issues of equipment all being booked out and shortage of devices.	To have a new updated Computing suite. To have enough equipment for all classes to access when needed. To have less equipment sitting unused. To have equipment being used across the curriculum.	

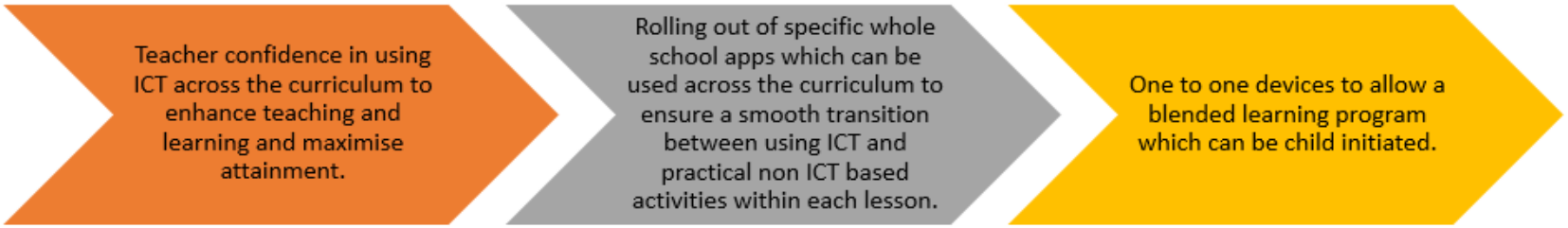
Evidence Base to Inform Strategic Planning (Pre-Ofsted Parental Surveys September 2020)



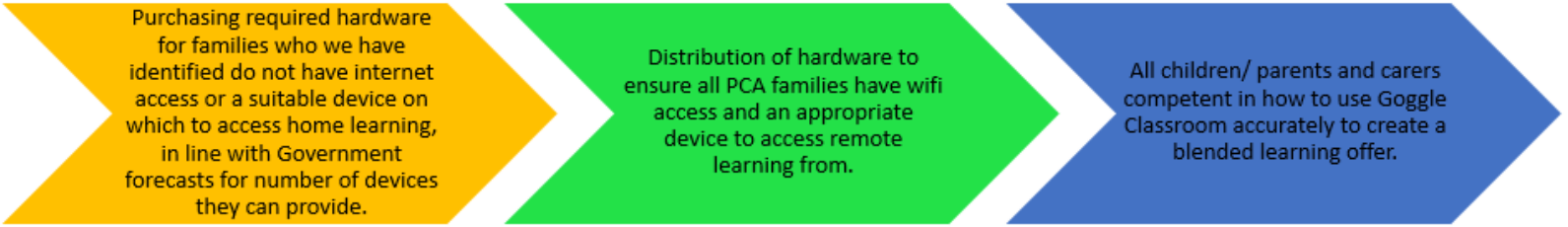
135 out of 178 forms returned had internet access at home, this is not a true reflection of the whole school and further research into this data is being conducted.



Long Term Strategic Vision



Home Learning/ Parental Engagement Vision



Review:

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Computing subject leaders and senior leadership team and shared with the school community including the Governing body.