

# All schools to have high speed internet by 2025

Every school across the country will be able to access high speed internet by 2025, the Education Secretary has announced today (Wednesday 23rd March).

Speaking at the Bett Show in London, the Education Secretary set out the latest step in cross-government plans to roll out lightning-fast gigabit broadband across the UK.

To achieve this ambition, the Government has also announced a £150 million fund to support schools most in need to upgrade their WiFi connections. Over the course of the next three years, the Department for Education (DfE) will reach out to schools in priority areas to facilitate the introduction of faster and more reliable connectivity.

The department is also publishing its first set of technology standards, aimed at supporting schools and colleges in understanding which technologies they should have in place to best support effective teaching.

The standards refer specifically to broadband and in-school connectivity. Schools and colleges will be able to access advice on the most recommended technology infrastructure, which itself will support best practice in helping pupils learn.

Both steps to further improve technology in schools and colleges will contribute to the Government's aim to level up education for all – improving pupil access and outcomes, reducing teacher workload and making running a school more efficient.

Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi said:

Digital technology, and the data and infrastructure that underpins it, is changing the way we live, work, and learn. We need to use our experience from the pandemic as a springboard to embed new and better ways of using technology in schools, and across education.

This new investment moves us a giant step forward to helping ensure that every school across the country has the best technology.

Upgrading schools to high speed broadband, setting out clear standards so that schools know what technology they should have in place, as well as providing funding to support them in achieving this, is the latest way we are levelling up education across the country.

The pledge to deliver high speed broadband will make learning more interactive, helping schools and colleges ensure that every pupil has access

to the best education possible.

Geoff Barton, General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said:

We very much welcome this focus on supporting improved digital technology in schools through the measures outlined by the Secretary of State.

It is really important to seize the opportunities offered by technology to enhance the learning experience of young people and having the right infrastructure in place and evidence base of what works is vital in achieving that goal.

Schools are very keen to make the best possible use of technology for their students, and many already do fantastic work in this direction. Anything which helps will be warmly received.

The £150 million provided to help schools upgrade their technology will include those in the department's previously identified Education Investment Areas. These 55 areas were first set out in the Levelling Up White Paper in February this year and refer to areas of the country where school outcomes are the weakest. They will receive targeted investment, support and action to help children from all backgrounds and areas succeed at the very highest levels.

These updates build on the department's ambition to get children and young people connected in the best way possible, putting 1.9 million laptops and tablets in the hands of disadvantaged children and young people; supporting 1,000 schools in hard-to-reach areas of the UK get online with super-fast broadband; and funding the pioneering Oak National Academy, an online platform supporting pupils' education across the country.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Julia Lopez said:

Getting faster broadband into schools is crucial to levelling up. It means teachers can spend more time teaching instead of staring at loading screens and will put the benefits of interactive and internet-powered technology at more students' fingertips.

That's why I'm giving my full support to the Education Secretary to help hundreds of schools across England seize the benefits of lightning-fast connections, and that's on top of the millions of rural homes and businesses in line for an upgrade through our £5 billion Project Gigabit.

Caroline Wright, Director General, BESA said:

Our research of 1,000s of schools annually shows that teachers top three concerns are connectivity and infrastructure, ICT training, and a lack of funding. I'm glad that the DfE has listened to the evidence on this occasion and is announcing plans to improve connectivity and provide digital standards guidance to better help schools understand the baseline infrastructure that is needed to start addressing the digital divide that exists in our schools.

Schools will be able to access the standards online via gov.uk, and eligible schools will be contacted in due course by the department to enable them to access the funding available to upgrade their technology infrastructure.

---

## [Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine: UK statement to the OSCE, 23 March 2022](#)

Thank you Mr Chair. This statement is delivered under the topic raised by Ukraine and I request that this be accurately reflected in the Journal of the Day.

Mr Chair, it is with great regret that we have reached the appalling milestone that it is now a month since President Putin launched his unprovoked, premeditated and a barbaric attack on Ukraine. Throughout these terrible weeks we have seen the most reprehensible and horrific attacks conducted against Ukraine in which so many innocent people have lost their lives.

We have watched the biggest concentration of forces amassed since the Cold War roll into Ukraine where it has been frustrated by fierce Ukrainian resistance. The Russian invasion has largely stalled on all fronts. Russian forces have made minimal progress on land, sea or air in recent days and they continue to suffer heavy losses. Thousands of troops, hundreds of tanks, attack helicopters, and close air support have so far failed to yield results.

Mr Chair, Russia has unleashed a horrendous amount of violence on the Ukrainian people. Russian naval forces continue to blockade the Ukrainian coast and to launch missile strikes on targets across Ukraine. The blockade of Ukraine's coast is effectively isolating Ukraine from international maritime trade and is contributing to the deteriorating humanitarian situation Russia has created by preventing vital supplies reaching the Ukrainian population. This is exacerbated further with the attacks on Ukrainian ports and port cities, including the atrocious and indiscriminate

destruction of Mariupol.

Bogged down and making minimal progress, frustrated Russian military commanders are trying to break the unbreakable – Ukrainian spirit and resolve. They are doing this in the most cowardly way, attacking urban and residential centres indiscriminately from distance using: Multi-launch Rocket Systems, Iskander Ballistic Missiles, artillery, cruise missiles, cluster munitions and thermobaric rockets.

This is not the art of war being conducted by an honourable and professional military of a Great Power. This is indiscriminate destruction. Those carrying out war crimes should know they cannot act with impunity. Indiscriminate attacks against innocent civilians amount to war crimes, for which those who are complicit, must be held accountable. The world is quite literally watching.

Our Russian colleagues have the privileged position to watch uncensored news from around the world reporting the true horrors of President Putin's chosen path of bloodshed and destruction. But again and again, in the face of the overwhelming truth, they continue to peddle the Kremlin's blizzard of lies and disinformation. They have lost all credibility. It is shameful behaviour, disrespectful to this forum, everyone in this room and the diplomatic profession.

Mr Chair, one month in, and President Putin's so-called "Special Military Operation" is certainly not going to plan. We can only imagine how angry he must be. How infuriating it is to be lied to. How devastating the consequences. Russian soldiers are paying a high price for this deceit – they are fighting and dying for a lie.

In contrast, the Ukrainian people are fighting for their homeland. United and defiant. The world is witnessing displays of courage, determination, and resolve that will go down in history.

The United Kingdom, along with many others, repeatedly warned that any Russian military incursion into Ukraine would be a massive strategic mistake and would come at a severe cost. Last week, we updated this forum on our continued support to Ukraine, our friends, as they fight for the right to choose their own destiny.

This week, I would like to update that the UK Government has now taken the decision to donate Starstreak, a high velocity, man-portable anti air missile to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. With the accompanying training package, this defensive weapon system will allow the Armed Forces of Ukraine to better defend their skies from Russian military aircraft.

I would reiterate, all of our support to the democratic sovereign nation of Ukraine is defensive in nature and will help them defend themselves against this Russian war of aggression.

We will make the Russian government pay the price of its actions. The UK stands with the Ukrainian people in their fight for their homeland. We will

work with our partners – for however long it takes – to ensure that the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the independence of Ukraine is restored.

Mr Chair, finally, I would again urge our Russian colleagues, to take a moment – to listen to the overwhelming condemnation ([141 countries at the UNGA](#)) and to listen to the truth. I urge them to consider their position, responsibilities and legacy as diplomats and citizens of Russia and stop their complicit propagation of President Putin's lies to their own people. Their actions and choices today will be ones they have to live with forever.

Thank you. And I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

---

## [UKEF, EDC & US EXIM Joint Statement](#)

News story

The export credit agencies of the United Kingdom, United States and Canada release a joint statement in response to the invasion of Ukraine.



The export credit agencies (ECA) of the United Kingdom, United States and Canada are appalled by the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and will continue to stand strong in supporting Ukraine.

In a show of united action against the Russian Federation's assault as well as Belarus' support for this illegal invasion, UK Export Finance (UKEF), the Export-Import Bank of the United States (US EXIM), and Export Development Canada (EDC) have together withdrawn any new export finance support for the Russian Federation and Belarus, while retaining support for Ukraine. This decision builds on the wide-ranging packages of sanctions and measures imposed on the Russian Federation and Belarus since the beginning of military operations, and we encourage any ECA that has not already done so, to join us in this step to impose financial pressure on the two countries.

Export credits help fulfil global demand for essential supplies when the private sector is unable to provide adequate financial support. ECAs are well positioned to provide this financial security through economic cycles and market disruptions. We will continue to support Ukraine and ensure that exports from our home countries can continue to flow while we also believe that all government-backed finance for supplies to the Russian Federation and Belarus should end.

## Contact

Published 23 March 2022

---

# [Chief Vet warns poultry keepers in Suffolk to take urgent action now or risk losing flocks to bird flu](#)

The UK's Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss is today urging poultry keepers in Suffolk to step up their efforts in the fight against bird flu following a recent spike of cases in the county.

In the last month alone, there have been five new infected premises confirmed in Suffolk with highly pathogenic avian influenza. The warning comes as the UK faces its largest ever outbreak of bird flu with over 100 cases confirmed since the start of November.

The Government introduced housing measures in November 2021 to minimise the disease spreading. This means that if you keep chickens, ducks, geese or any other birds you are legally required to keep them indoors and to follow strict biosecurity measures. If you do not do this, the disease could kill your birds and you could be prosecuted. These measures apply to all bird keepers whether you keep birds commercially or have a single pet chicken.

Wild birds spread the disease so it is vital to not allow wild birds to mix with your chickens, ducks, geese or other birds.

People can also spread the disease on their clothes and shoes so before going into bird enclosures you should wash your hands, and change or clean and disinfect your footwear.

The UK Health Security Agency has confirmed that the risk to public health is very low and the Food Standards Agency has said that bird flu poses a very low food safety risk for UK consumers, and it does not affect the consumption of poultry or eggs.

The Chief Veterinary Officer is reminding all poultry keepers that whilst the main source of infection comes from migratory wild birds, those failing to implement these measures risk infecting their own flocks by walking the virus into their holdings.

**Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss said:**

We have taken swift action to limit the spread of the disease including by introducing housing measures. However we are still seeing a number of bird flu cases both on commercial farms and in backyard birds right across Suffolk.

Many poultry keepers in Suffolk have excellent biosecurity standards but the number of cases we are seeing suggests that not enough is being done by all bird keepers to keep bird flu out. Whether you keep just a few birds or thousands, you must take action now to protect your birds from this highly infectious disease.

The avian flu outbreak has not gone away and implementing scrupulous biosecurity remains absolutely critical. You must continue to regularly clean and disinfect your footwear and clothes before entering enclosures, stop your birds mixing with any wild birds and only allow visitors that are strictly necessary. It is your actions that will help keep your birds safe.

**Poultry keepers must do the following:**

- house or net all poultry and captive birds to keep them separate from wild birds;
- cleanse and disinfect clothing, equipment and vehicles before and after contact with poultry and captive birds – if practical, use disposable protective clothing;
- where possible change their footwear before entering sheds housing poultry and captive birds. If not, then ensure they are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected;
- reduce the movement of people, vehicles or equipment to and from areas where poultry and captive birds are kept, to minimise contamination from manure, slurry and other products, and use effective vermin control;
- thoroughly cleanse and disinfect housing on a continuous basis;
- keep fresh disinfectant at the right concentration at all farm and poultry housing entry and exit points; and
- minimise direct and indirect contact between poultry and captive birds and wild birds, including making sure all feed and water is not accessible to wild birds.
- Store bedding so that it cannot be contaminated by wild birds.
- Ensure appropriate rodent control is in place in all areas where birds are kept, in addition to any areas where the birds bedding or feed is kept.

Poultry and captive bird keepers must be vigilant for any signs of disease in their birds and any wild birds, and seek prompt advice from their vet if they have any concerns.

We would encourage all keepers to [register their flocks with us](#). This is a legal requirement if you have 50 birds or more. Registering with us means that we will be able to contact you with information or action required should an outbreak happen near you.

Do not touch or pick up any dead or sick birds that you find. If you find dead swans, geese or ducks or other dead wild birds, such as gulls or birds of prey, you should report them to the Defra helpline on 03459 33 55 77. For further information see our advice to the public.

Bird keepers should report suspicion of disease in England to Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301, in Wales contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local Field Services Office. In Northern Ireland contact DAERA on 0300 200 7840. Keepers should familiarise themselves with our avian flu advice.

---

## [CNC is helping to shape the future of UK policing](#)

Strengthening links between the specialist force and the West Cumbrian college, students working towards a level-three diploma in policing, were invited to spend time at the world-class Griffin Park tactical training centre, just outside the Sellafield site.

While at Griffin Park, which has the biggest 360-degree live fire range in Europe, students learned about life within CNC and the FTU from officers and staff who carry out this unique work, and were taught how the Dog Training Unit can be utilised to protect both nuclear facilities and the public.

This was the first cohort of students given a four-day placement, and Chief Inspector Marcus Robson, Griffin Park's Unit Commander, said: "It's vital CNC plays a role in shaping the future of policing; and it's also really rewarding for us to play a role in the education of local students.

"While at Griffin Park, the students were given first-hand experience of the FTU and dog unit. They also had an opportunity to learn about life within CNC, and the incredible work we do from our experienced staff, who proudly defend the UK's nuclear sites as well as the public.

"Through these links with Lakes College, our aim is to bolster the wider recruitment drive, and it was great to see the students enjoy their time with us."

There are plans to host more students throughout the academic year at Griffin Park, which cost £42.5m when it opened its doors in 2020, and most recently hosted soldiers from the [USA's Nuclear Disablement Team](#).

Kayleigh Smith, lead work placement officer for Lakes College, added: "With many of our policing students being interested in a career with CNC at Sellafield, this is a great opportunity to see what their future career could entail.

"We are also working closely with CNC to look at the delivery of our curriculum, as well as having employer-engagement sessions with our students around the recruitment process.

"We are very grateful for the work CNC has put into this to make our students' work placement an unforgettable experience."