Dataspire

The Summer IT Readiness Planner

Your Summer Guide to Transforming Technology for September

Why Summer is the Critical Window for School IT

The six-week summer holiday represents your **one opportunity** each year to make significant technology changes without disrupting teaching and learning. While students and staff are away, your school can undergo a complete digital transformation, ready for a seamless September start.

But the window is short, and proper planning is essential.

This planner, developed from our 20 years of experience supporting schools nationwide, walks you through the critical considerations, timelines, and checklist items to ensure your summer IT projects deliver maximum impact.

Use this planner to:

- **Identify your school's most pressing technology needs**

- **Develop a realistic summer implementation timeline**

- **Ensure no critical aspects are overlooked**

- **Maximise your existing IT budget**

Whether you're planning with your in-house team or seeking external support, this guide will help you make the most of this crucial opportunity.

Technology Assessment Checklist

NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE

Current wireless coverage mapped and tested

- **Do you have a heat map showing signal strength?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Are there any dead zones or weak coverage areas?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Is your wireless sufficient for 1:1 device scenarios?** _____ **YES / NO**

Switch infrastructure age and capacity reviewed

- **Are switches over 5 years old?** *(High replacement priority)* _____ **YES / NO**

- **Is Power over Ethernet (PoE) available where needed?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Do you have sufficient network ports for expansion?** _____ **YES / NO**

Internet connectivity speed and reliability tests

- **Is your broadband contract up for renewal?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Do you have an automatic backup connection?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Does your current bandwidth support your needs?** _____ **YES / NO**

> **Action Points:**

SERVER INFRASTRUCTURE & CLOUD READINESS

Server hardware age and capacity documented

- **Are any physical servers over 5 years old?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Is server storage over 70% capacity?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Do you have sufficient backup systems in place?** _____ **YES / NO**

Cloud migration opportunities identified

- **Which on-premise services could move to the cloud?**

_____

_____

- **What connectivity improvements would be needed?**

  _____

  _____

- **Have you calculated potential energy savings?** _____**YES / NO**

Backup and disaster recovery tested

- **When was your last full recovery test performed?** _____

- **Is your backup stored in multiple locations?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Can you guarantee data recovery within 24 hours?** _____ **YES / NO**

Action Points:

DEVICE MANAGEMENT & CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

Staff device audit completed

- **What percentage of staff devices are over 4 years old?** _____ **%**

- **Are all operating systems standardised and current?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Do you have a formal device refresh cycle?** _____ **YES / NO**

Classroom display technology reviewed

- **Are projectors or interactive screens failing or dim?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Do classroom display systems support modern connectivity?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Is there a standard solution across all learning spaces?** _____ **YES / NO**

Student devices assessed for adequacy

- **Are student devices sufficient for curriculum needs?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **What percentage of devices need replacement?** _____ **%**

Action Points:

SECURITY & SAFEGUARDING SYSTEMS

Cybersecurity vulnerabilities assessed

- **When was your last security audit conducted?** _____

- **Are all systems patched and updated regularly?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Do you have advanced threat protection in place?** _____ **YES / NO**

Filtering and monitoring solutions reviewed

- **Does your current solution meet the latest KCSIE requirements?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Can your system generate the required safeguarding reports?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Does it work for both on-site and remote learning?** _____ **YES / NO**

Staff security training status

- **When was the last staff cybersecurity training?** _____

- **Do you have a phishing simulation programme?** _____ **YES / NO**

- **Are security policies clear and regularly reinforced?** _____ **YES / NO**

Action Points:

Developing Your Summer IT Timeline

Reality Check: Managing the 6-Week Window Effectively

The checklist in this planner covers all potential summer IT projects that schools might consider. However, we recognise that attempting to complete every item within the 6-week summer holiday would be challenging even for the most well-resourced IT teams.

We recommend schools:

- Focus on 2-3 critical priority areas based on your specific needs.

- Create a realistic implementation plan based on available resources.

- Consider whether additional expertise might help maximise the summer window.

Priority Setting Guide

When determining which projects to prioritise this summer, consider:

1) Projects that address immediate risks to school operations, security, or compliance

2) Projects that deliver significant benefits with relatively modest implementation requirements

3) Projects that directly impact the start of term (e.g., authentication systems, classroom technology)

4) Long-overdue updates or maintenance that could cause significant disruption if delayed further.

Action Points:

List your top 3 priority projects for this summer:

_____

_____

_____

What resources do you have available for implementation?

_____

_____

_____

What is your realistic timeline for completion?

_____

_____

_____

**Many schools partner with external specialists
for summer implementations to:**

- **Access specialised expertise not available internally**

- **Complete more projects within the limited timeframe**

- **Ensure proper testing and validation before term starts**

- **Free your internal staff to focus on term preparation**

Summer IT Timeline Checklist

Part 1: Assessment & Decision Making (June)

- **Complete technology audit** _____ ☐
- **Determine project priorities and scope** _____ ☐
- **Finalise budget allocation** _____ ☐
- **Select implementation partners if needed** *(Dataspire can help)* _____ ☐

Part 2: Procurement & Preparation (June-July)

- **Order all required hardware and software** _____ ☐
- **Schedule implementation teams** _____ ☐
- **Develop contingency plans** _____ ☐
- **Communicate plans to key stakeholders** _____ ☐

Part 3: Summer Implementation (Late July-August)

Begin implementation of your 2-3 priority action areas:

Infrastructure Projects

- **Network upgrades** _____ ☐
- **Server migrations or replacements** _____ ☐
- **Cloud transitions** _____ ☐
- **Physical wiring and access point installation** _____ ☐

Systems & Software

- **Operating system upgrades or migrations** _____ ☐
- **Software deployments** _____ ☐
- **System integrations** _____ ☐
- **Data migrations** _____ ☐

Testing & Optimisation

- **Comprehensive testing of all systems** _____ ☐
- **Staff device preparation** _____ ☐
- **Classroom technology setup** _____ ☐
- **Security hardening and testing** _____ ☐

Part 4: Return Preparation (Late August)

Final Week: Readiness Checks

- **Full systems testing** _____ ☐

- **Staff login verification** _____ ☐

- **Documentation completion** _____ ☐

- **Training materials preparation** _____ ☐

Budget Optimisation Strategies

Maximising Existing Investments

- **Cascading Strategy:** Redeploy better devices to priority areas.

- **Partial Refresh:** Target only critical components rather than complete replacement.

- **Staged Implementation:** Spread costs across multiple budget cycles with a phased approach.

Energy Efficiency Opportunities

Schools implementing cloud solutions and modern equipment typically see:

- Up to 80% reduction in energy consumption*

- £3,000-£8,000 annual savings in electricity costs

- Additional savings in cooling and maintenance

Potential Funding Sources

- DfE Digital Strategy funding – *Connect the Classroom*

- Energy efficiency grants – *Solar Solutions That Pay for Themselves*

- MAT-wide procurement savings

- Leasing options to spread costs

Change Management & Training

Staff Communication Timeline

- **4 Weeks Before Term:** Initial communication on changes

- **2 Weeks Before Term:** Detailed guides distributed

- **1 Week Before Term:** Optional early access/training

- **First Day Back:** In-person support availability

Training Approaches

- **Tiered Training Model:** Different levels for different staff roles

- **Champions Programme:** Identify and train internal experts

- **Just-in-Time Resources:** Provide short video guides for specific tasks

- **Ongoing Support:** Schedule regular drop-in sessions

*https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-efficiency-guidance-for-the-school-and-fe-college-estate/energy-efficiency-guidance-for-the-school-and-further-education-college-estate

Next Steps:
Securing Your Summer IT Success

While this planner provides a framework, every school has unique needs, constraints, and opportunities. The difference between a stressful, partial implementation and a smooth, complete transformation often comes down to expertise and planning.

How Dataspire Can Help

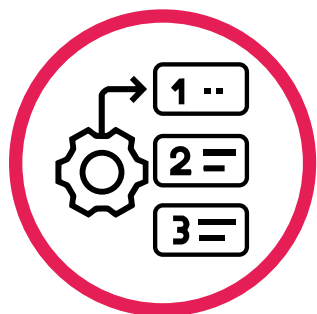**Since 2005, we've helped hundreds of schools successfully implement summer technology transformations. Our team:**

- **Understands education:** We only work with schools and speak your language

- **Delivers on time:** Our summer implementation track record is 100%

- **Works within budgets:** We find creative solutions to maximise impact

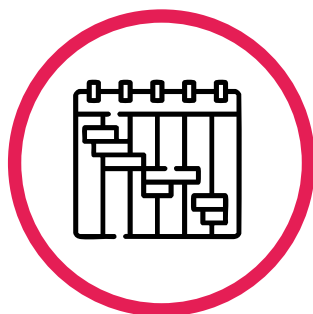## Limited Summer Implementation Slots Available

Due to the focused nature of the summer window, we have limited capacity for new projects. Schools are securing their implementation slots now to ensure they don't miss this critical opportunity.

Book Your Summer Consultation

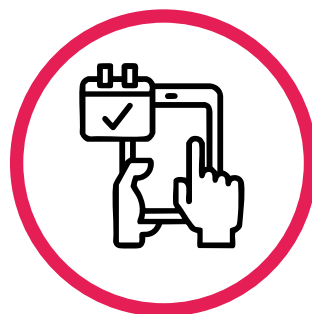**Our no-obligation 20-minute consultation will help you:**

Identify your highest priority summer projects

Develop a realistic implementation timeline
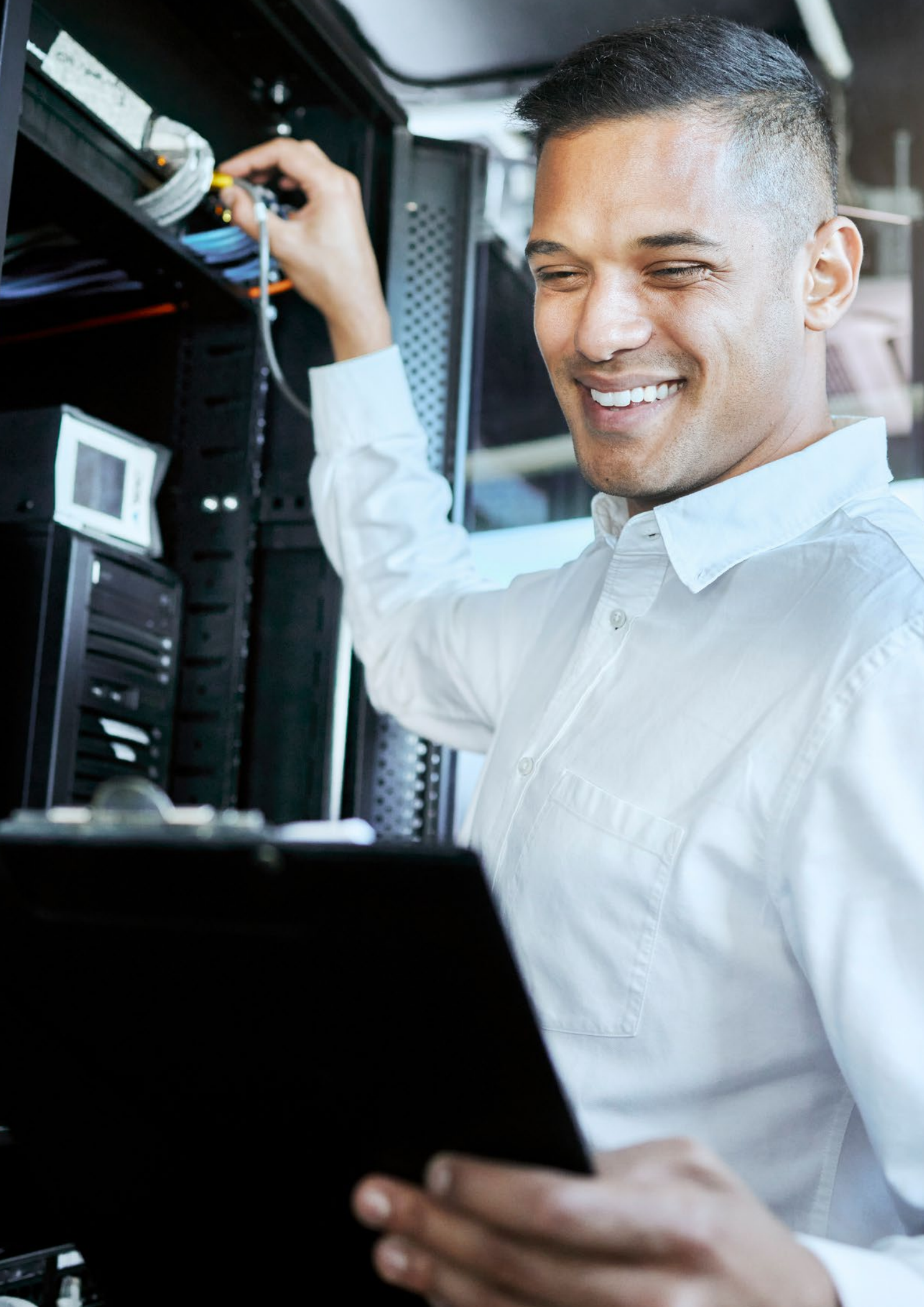
Explore budget-friendly options

Reserve your implementation slot if desired

Book Your Consultation Now:
Email: **info@dataspire.co.uk** or call **0345 603 1233** for more details.