



AdEPT  
Education

# Learning unleashed

Reimagining education tech  
for our changing world

# Journeying to a blended future

Blended learning – in classrooms and online – is re-shaping how we teach and learn. But adapting to the realities of 21st century education and building connected learning environments that resonate with today's 'digital natives' requires a high performance infrastructure that allows for future changes as technology evolves.

One thing is for sure. The recent coronavirus pandemic shutdowns focused Education on how IT can enable high quality outcomes for teaching and learning whatever the location.

For many schools and colleges, the experience has highlighted challenges which will need to be overcome to accelerate digital adoption and enable a vision of fluid student-centred learning that is connected, engaging and unlimited by time or space.

**With the pressure now on to reinvent education for today, and evolve the classroom experience in line with the ever-changing needs of students and staff, schools and colleges are focusing hard on how best to use technology to:**

- support the academic, creative, and emotional resilience of students and pupils
- find smarter ways to give student feedback and track progress
- increase the efficiency of education delivery and the security of the learning environment
- engage and communicate more effectively with parents
- enable more personal, bespoke learning experiences

Choosing the right technologies, laying the right IT infrastructure foundations, and having the right support resources in place to keep everything running smoothly is just the start.

Learning leaders also need access to impartial and trusted advice, so they can understand which solutions will work best in their environment - and which solutions offer the best value-for-money in the long run.



# Covid-19: a catalyst for change?

Learners accessed 2 million lessons in the first week the Oak National Academy, the DfE funded online classroom and resource hub created during lockdown, went live.<sup>1</sup>

During lockdown 63% of all state school teachers (including 82% of state secondary teachers) report setting work online; 45% of parents say work was set through the school's website, with 34% saying it was through an online portal/platform.<sup>2</sup>

Many private schools entered the crisis already set up to deliver online learning: 60% report utilising a pre-existing e-learning platform.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thenational.academy/end-of-term-report-summer-2020>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Impact-Brief-School-Shutdown.pdf>



# Investing in the right technology

Finding the right platforms to deliver learning content isn't an easy task. It requires a careful evaluation of which technologies best augment classroom learning or pave the way for the increased utilisation of virtual learning environments (VLEs) and other digital resources.

Learning leaders are now committed to harnessing technology and accelerating the adoption of new tools, so they can scale up the delivery of online resources both in and outside the classroom faster.

## **To deliver better outcomes, they're preparing to invest in solutions that:**

- Enable staff and students to come together securely to share work
- Platforms that make it easy for staff and teachers to create structured workflows, address core learning needs, monitor student progress, access training and resources, and boost communications amongst colleagues
- Make it easy to introduce more flexible and effective study habits; blended class and online learning, video calling and recording tools, knowledge sharing platforms that support at home study
- Initiate virtual breakout rooms where pupils and students can meet and collaborate in small groups

Supporting and sustaining all this information requires a modernised technology infrastructure that supports the adoption of collaboration software like G Suite Enterprise for Education or Microsoft Office 365 that enables teachers to organise class materials and work together in real time – even from a distance.



# 61%

of Microsoft's Education Community say their school is shifting to a hybrid learning environment featuring a mix of remote and in-person learning; 87% of educators also expect to use technology more in classrooms<sup>3</sup>

# 27%

of UK primary schools and 28% of secondary schools don't believe their WiFi is good enough to support their digital learning aims<sup>4</sup>

# 88%

of education leaders say improving the reliability of devices and services is a top priority if they're to push forward the digital agenda<sup>5</sup>



Outdated networks, capacity bottlenecks, storage and IT integration issues can all get in the way of pupils and teachers logging onto devices quickly – or sharing content and materials fast. Plus, protecting today's virtual classrooms means getting to grips with security and cloud-based identity management solutions that will keep everyone safe.

<sup>3</sup> <https://news.microsoft.com/en-my/2020/07/23/microsoft-leading-the-future-of-education-with-technology/#:~:text=Insights%20gathered%20from%20the%20Microsoft,once%20in%2Dclassroom%20teaching%20resumes.>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/HEFI/FUJ-Education-Report-UK.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/HEFI/FUJ-Education-Report-UK.pdf>



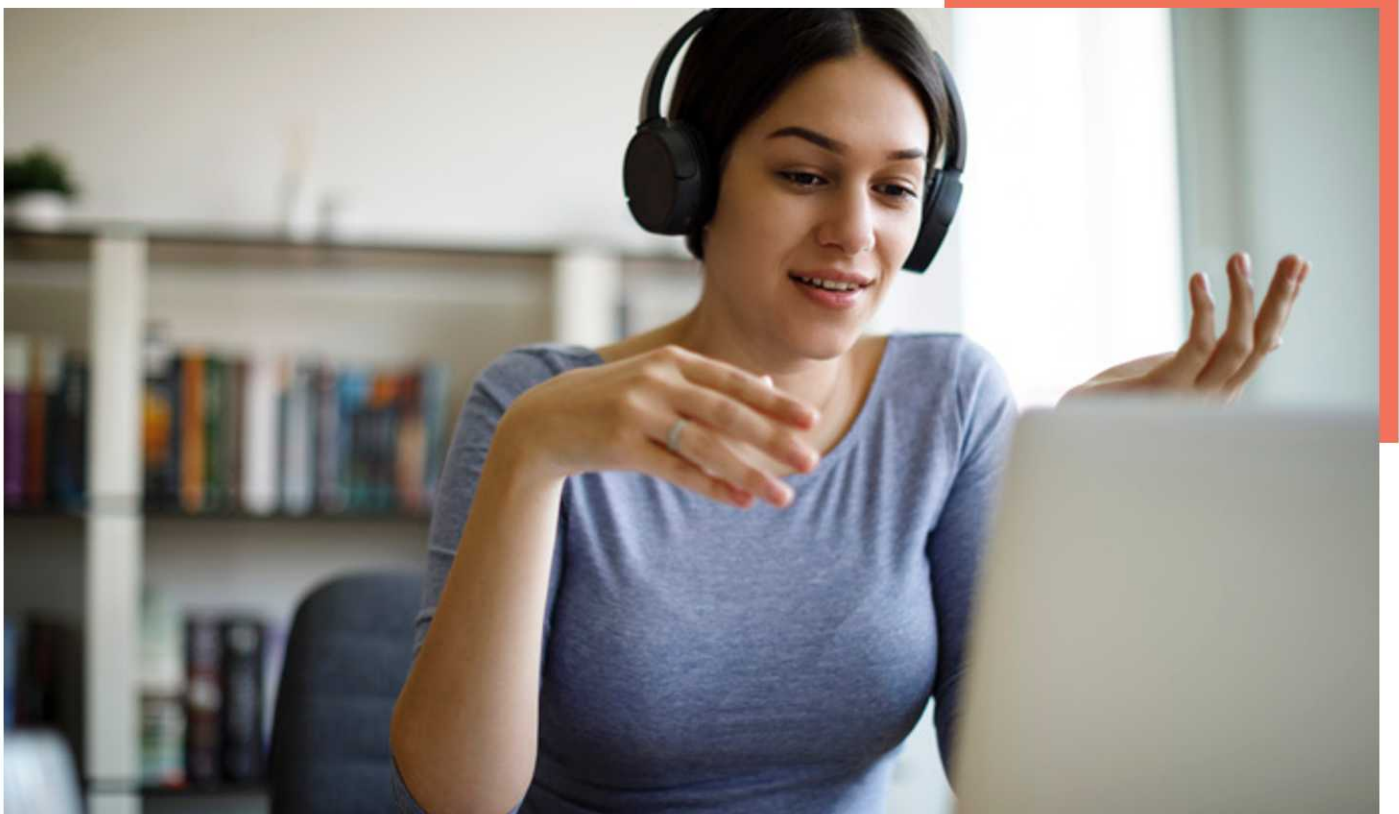
# Developing the right capacity is **just the start**

Getting the basics in place is critical to ensuring that investments in sophisticated digital learning technologies deliver on their promise. But you also need to ensure your environment is always available – 24 x 7 – and scalable enough to cope with any demand.

As students staff and faculty teams move towards more remote and hybrid learning, the ICT infrastructure you put in place will need to be able to cope with the demands of new learning modalities that are being evolved at speed.

## **Building a robust infrastructure for learning begins with understanding:**

- What digital learning content, tools and resources will be supported
- How many, and what types, of devices will be supported
- Current network speed and capacity
- How reliable and robust is the physical infrastructure
- What resources are available to fund this transition





**When it comes to planning the infrastructure that's needed for the future ready school, education leaders will be confronting a number of critical decisions around the technology resources:**

- Initiate a cloud-powered or hybrid infrastructure that makes it easy to manage, scale and protect devices and networks or
- Update existing servers, ensuring that appropriate functionality and backup capacity is in place
- Enabling secure fit for purpose Wi-Fi networks and high speed Internet access across the campus
- What mobile devices will students and teachers need?
- Which whole-class teaching tools should be implemented to open up opportunities for a more interactive learning experience at a lower cost?

Implementing the capacity and connectivity required to enable a new era of hybrid and remote learning is just the start. Devices, servers, and the network environment need to be kept up-to-date and constantly monitored, managed, and supported 24x7 to minimise any risk of disruption or outage.

But very few schools and colleges have the resources or expertise that's needed to get the best possible return on each asset – or to adequately support an increasingly sophisticated ICT environment going forward.



## Bridging the technology skills gap: the benefits of working with a Managed Services Provider

**As technology becomes an increasingly integral part of education, schools and colleges are turning to trusted specialist managed service providers to tap into the skills and expertise they need to:**

- Manage tight budgets, decrease staffing overheads, and minimise disruptions resulting from day-to-day IT issues
- Stay up to date on changing technologies and how these can support teaching and learning
- Migrate to the cloud to drive down expenditure and enhance learning
- Minimise overall support costs and future-proof their technology provision
- Enable risk management and increase system reliability, taking advantage of options like smart monitoring and remote maintenance to eliminate disruptive failures
- Access unlimited expertise on everything from networking to software, security, safeguarding and more



# Securing your environment – and keeping students safe

Information security is vital to keeping everyone – and their data – safe and secure.

Making the most of digital advances means that information security is now a top priority for education institutions everywhere. With cyber crime on the rise, protecting sensitive data and safeguarding pupils and students has never been more important.

**With the National Cyber Security Centre reporting that last year 83% of schools<sup>6</sup> had experienced at least one cybersecurity incident. Protecting vital assets requires a dedicated team of experts that can maintain the security posture of the institution by taking care of measures like:**

- Network firewalls
- Security patches
- Malware protection
- The secure configuration of devices
- Incident management
- Content filtering and moderation platforms that protect students from cyber bullying and offensive content

In addition to shielding essential assets, education leaders need to have the right protocols and technology controls in place to safeguard students online – whether they're using a BYOD or school device – and stay compliant with GDPR privacy requirements.

Along with cyber-security measures, all data assets must be backed-up in a bullet-proof manner so that should the unthinkable happen – back office and learning resources can be recovered the moment they're needed.



<sup>6</sup> <https://gdpr.report/news/2019/09/09/privacy-over-four-fifths-of-uk-schools-have-experienced-at-least-one-cybersecurity-incident/#:~:text=The%20National%20Cyber%20Security%20Centre,had%20been%20infected%20by%20malware.>

# Top priorities for IT leaders in UK schools and colleges

100%



want to balance levels of access and security<sup>7</sup>

93%



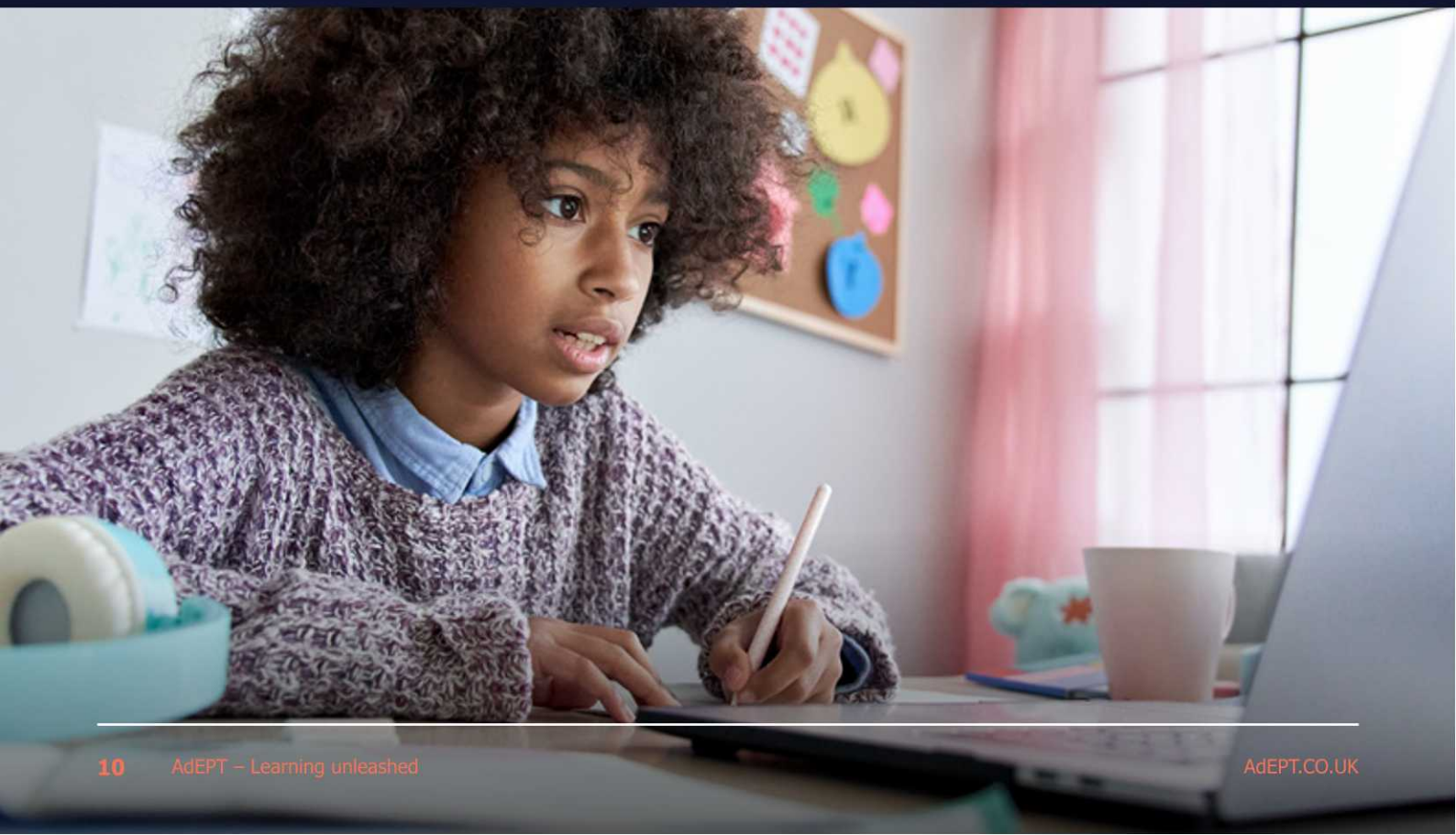
want to improve network security<sup>7</sup>

84%

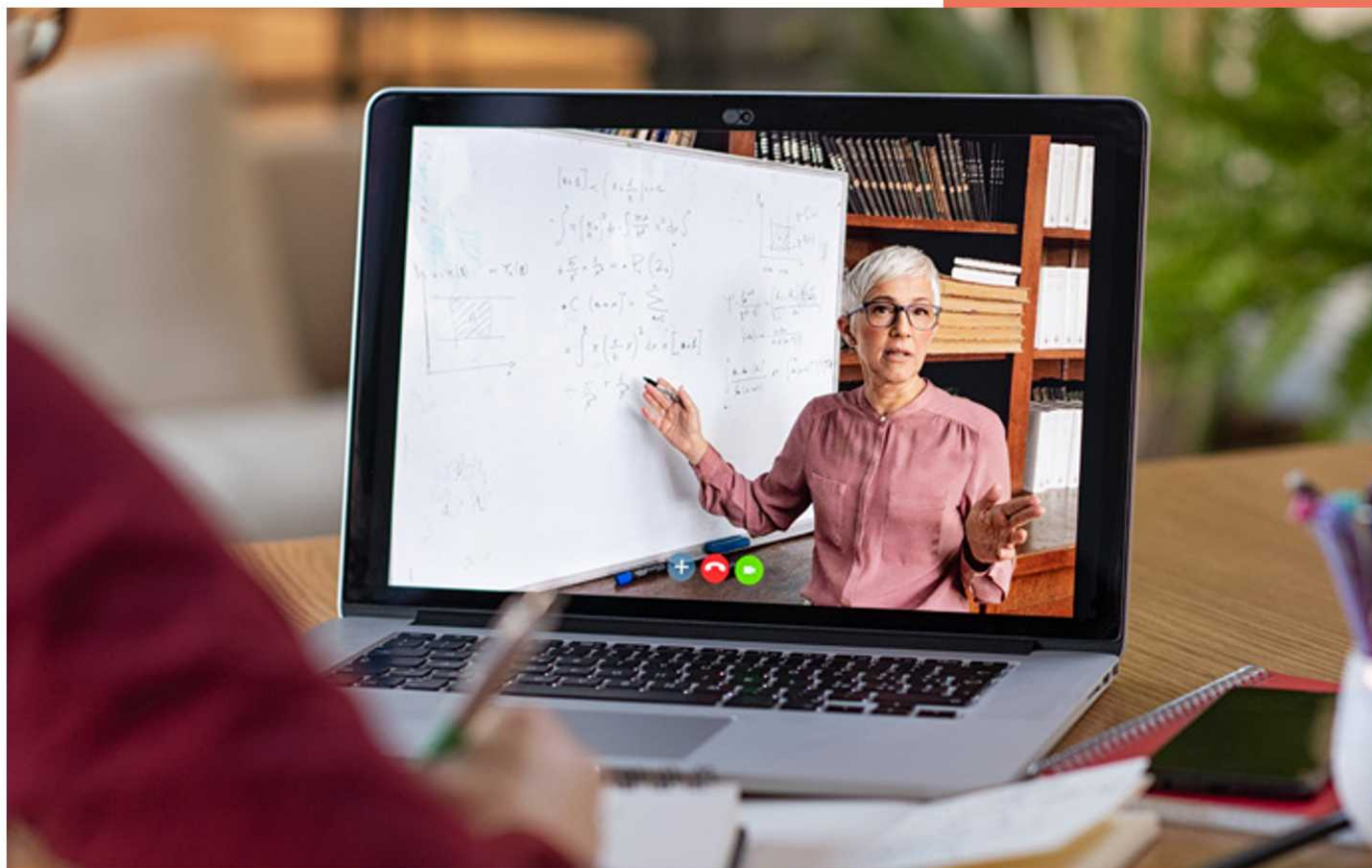


want to monitor what is accessed or apps being used by students<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/HEFI/FUJ-Education-Report-UK.pdf>







# Closing the digital **skills gap**

If digital learning is going to succeed, teachers and administrators will need the skills and confidence to use technology effectively.

Education leaders know that building the digital capabilities of teaching and administration staff is the key to achieving the good value for money from their technology investments.

Teachers are knowledgeable people – they need to be, to do what they do. But teaching and collaborating in an online environment may not come naturally for some. Which is why the OECD<sup>8</sup> recommends empowering

teachers to make the most of digital advances. So they can successfully apply digital technologies to deliver the learning experiences that students deserve.

When it comes to ensuring that new technology deployments deliver on their promised potential, education leaders will need to find ways to give teachers and support staff opportunities to fully explore the features and functionality of new devices and software platforms.

So they can effectively – and appropriately – use digital technologies to support their students' learning in the classroom and beyond.

At the end of the day, new technology shouldn't add to teacher workloads and must reduce the burden of the growing number of non-teaching tasks and administration tasks confronting today's education institutions.

**And that's where we can help.**

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/education-responses-to-covid-19-embracing-digital-learning-and-online-collaboration-d75eb0e8/>

# Managed Services from **AdEPT Education**

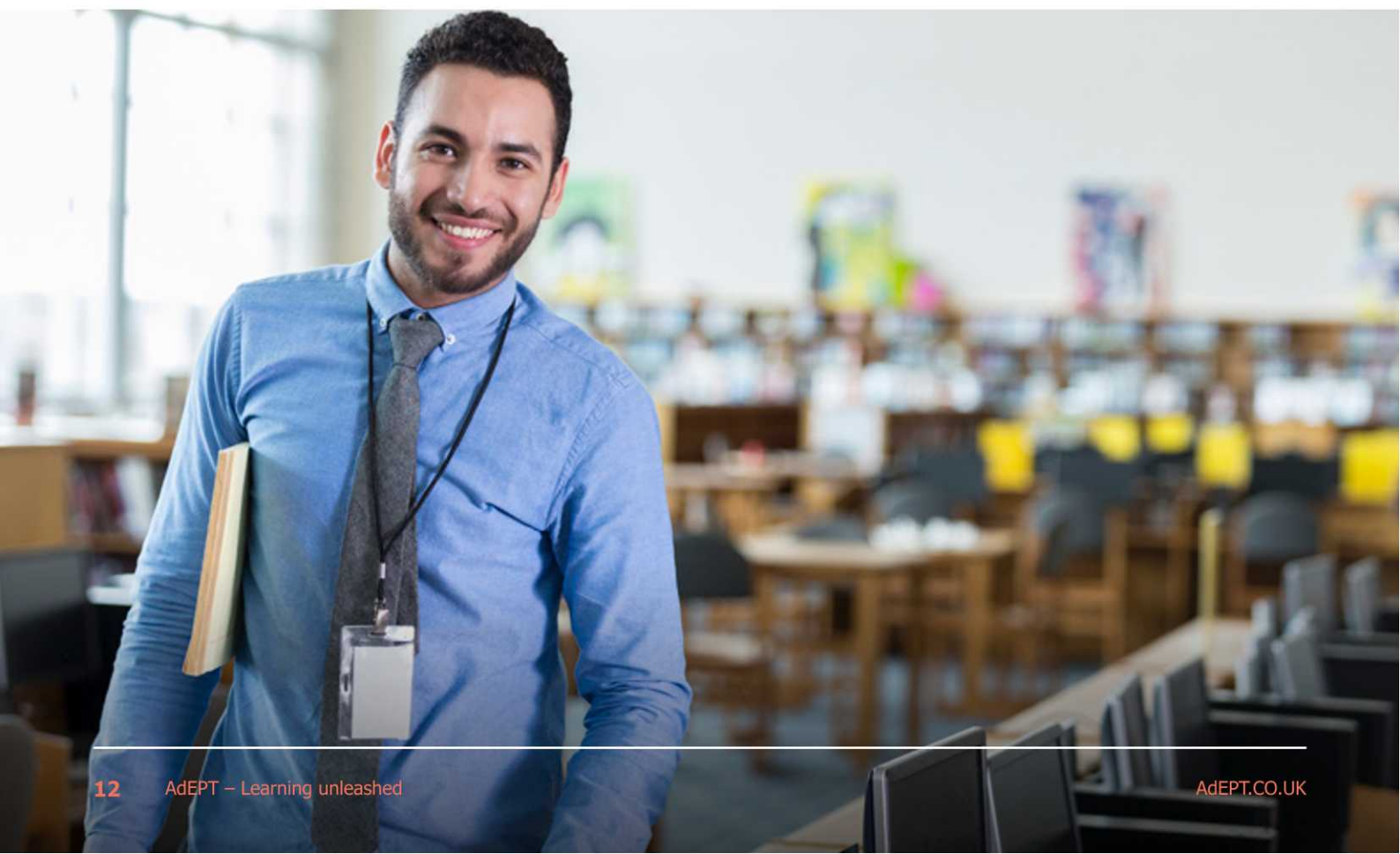
Proving timely and expert support services is just part of what we do...

With over 30 years' experience providing 'designed-for-schools' technology that is simple to use, easy to implement, and budget-friendly, our award winning range of products and services are being utilised by education establishments across the UK to enable their digital learning visions.

Dedicated to ensuring that education leaders are able to access the right infrastructure and resources to meet their needs, we offer a one-stop-destination for education leaders that want to enable the effective adoption of technologies that support enhanced learner outcomes.

Our tailored solutions enable education leaders to tackle every aspect of their ICT environment and transition smoothly to new digital platforms and ensure everything works efficiently at all times.

Plus we offer access to specialists in every field – including networking, software, security, safeguarding and more.





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#### **Southern Office**

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**AdEPT Education**

Unit 2 – 3 Ravensquay  
Business Centre  
Cray Avenue, Orpington,  
Kent, BR5 4BQ  
01689 814700

#### **Northern Office**

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**AdEPT Education**

6 Hayfield Business Park  
Field Lane, Auckley,  
Doncaster DN9 3FL  
01302 774820  
enquiries@adept.co.uk  
www.adept.co.uk