**@schools\_digital**

**DIGITAL SCHOOLS AWARDS LAUNCHES IN SCOTLAND**

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills *welcomes HP, Hewlett Packard Enterprise and Intel support for programme*

*Scottish primary schools encouraged to sign up to the programme which will help them assess progress and recognise excellence in the use of digital technology while providing practical support and encouragement*

21 September 2016: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, John Swinney today launched the ‘Digital Schools Awards’, a national awards programme whichpromotes, recognises and encourages best practice use of digital technology in primary schools.

The awards programme was officially unveiled at the Scottish Learning Festival at the SECC in Glasgow, where John Swinney was joined by pupils from Beith Primary School in North Ayrshire and Middleton Park School in Aberdeen.

The Digital Schools Award recognizes best practice and builds on the progress already made, by providing a pathway and resources for schools seeking to do more with digital technology. The programme also recognises those who achieve excellence and supports the efforts of schools, teachers and learners in making the best use of digital technology in the classroom.

Schools that achieve excellence will be awarded ‘Digital Schools’ status recognised by Education Scotland.

HP, Hewlett Packard Enterprise and Intel are providing support for the programme, including a financial commitment of £110,000 in 2016/17 as well as the provision of practical support and resources.

Speaking at the launch of the Digital Schools Awards at the Scottish Learning Festival at the SECC in Glasgow, Mr Swinney said: *“The Digital Schools Award is a fantastic example of industry supporting education in Scotland. It is the result of collaboration between Scottish Government, Education Scotland and the digital industry and as such it is closely aligned with the aims of the Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy.*

*“I welcome the support of HP, Hewlett Packard Enterprise and Intel in driving this initiative forward I would urge all primary schools across Scotland to get involved.”*

Primary schools across Scotland can register for the programme at [www.digitalschoolsawards.co.uk](http://www.digitalschoolsawards.co.uk) where they can undergo a self-evaluation of current practices and standards. The programme aims to sign up 400 primary schools in its first year.

Dr. Bill Maxwell, Chief Executive of Education Scotland, said: *“The Digital Schools Awards programme will help more people take advantage of the opportunities digital technology offers. I welcome the support of the programme and its partners in helping our learners develop the skills and creativity needed to be successful throughout the lives. I encourage all primary schools to sign up to this programme and the benefits digital offers.”*

George Brasher, Managing Director for HP UK & Ireland, said: *“HP is spearheading the Digital Schools Awards programme in Scotland as we believe that the technology industry has a clear responsibility to help the next generation with their digital learning. The STEM worker shortfall is estimated to hit 40,000 annually in the UK and with an increasing number of jobs being created to meet the shifting demands of the digital economy, this gap is only going to widen. We have a responsibility to partner with teachers, government, parents, pupils and other industry leaders to enhance digital learning and close that skills gap.*

*“HP is delighted to support the Digital Schools Awards programme which is gaining fantastic traction in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and we look forward to working with Education Scotland on the successful roll out of the programme in Scotland."*

The scheme has already been successfully rolled out in the Republic of Ireland with 1730 schools signed up to become a Digital School and 336 accredited within the first three years of the programme. In Northern Ireland, where the programme launched almost a year ago, 18 schools have been awarded ‘Digital Schools’ status.

*“At Hewlett Packard Enterprise, we are committed to inspiring young people to develop their digital skills. This is why we are proud to support the Digital Schools Awards scheme, which allows us to work directly with schools to help improve learning and attainment”,* said Marc Waters, Managing Director of Hewlett Packard Enterprise in the UK and Ireland*. “We look forward to working with Education Scotland to support the roll-out of the programme.”*

For further information and to register on line visit, [www.digitalschoolsawards.co.uk](http://www.digitalschoolsawards.co.uk).

**ENDS**

**For further media information please contact Alison Downs / Rory Weller, Frame, 0141 559 5840 or mobile 07841 720 006 or email** **rory.weller@framecreates.co.uk** **/** **alison.downs@framecreates.co.uk****.**

**Notes to Editors**

The five measurement criteria under which schools will be evaluated in order to become a Digital School are as follows

**Leadership and Vision:** Digital Schools will have a whole-school digital technology policy that outlines a vision and strategy and conveys a positive attitude towards the use of digital technology.

**Digital Technology integration across the curriculum**: Schools will show digital technology integration across the curriculum in learning and teaching. Staff will demonstrate a clear understanding of how digital technology can be used in the curriculum to improve student learning.

**School culture:** Schools will demonstrate an awareness that digital technology has an impact on the quality of learning and teaching, pupils’ attitudes and behaviour and the wider school community.

**Continuing Professional Development:** Schools will demonstrate a commitment to on-going professional development in relation to digital technology, with a mechanism in place to inform teachers of courses in relation to professional development, as well as school-wide support and encouragement.

**Resources and infrastructure:** Schools will have in place appropriate digital technology resources, including hardware, software and infrastructure, to support particular learning environments. Schools will also have deployed appropriate digital technology resources that reflect the plan for future improvement and development of digital technology as outlined in the whole-school policy.