Digital Leaders are pupils trained to be experts and advocates of using appropriate technologies in schools allowing them to act as ambassadors and peer mentors for staff and other students. There are hundreds of schools with thousands of Digital Leaders across the UK and feedback from pupils and staff at the schools is overwhelmingly positive. This has resulted in 3rd millennium learning technologies and pedagogies being used effectively to raise self-esteem, improve attainment, independence and engagement across the curriculum.
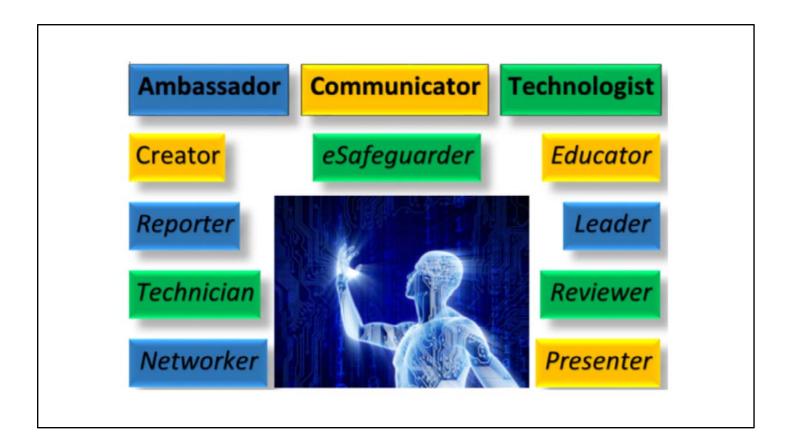
Digital Leaders is a catchall phrase used for any children who are identified as technically proficient in one or several technologies and who use their skills and knowledge to support the classroom teacher, students, other staff or parents. Ideally, they are given the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge within school and meet as a team regularly to reflect on the work they do within and out of school.

The way teachers organise and utilise their digital leaders varies greatly from school to school and there is no 'correct' way to develop and utilise them. A very informal approach could involve a few children helping in targeted areas for setting up equipment, removing / resetting content from cameras & mobile devices, responding to issues with printers, etc. Other schools have a much more organised and structured approach where digital leaders are very clear about their roles, meet regularly, support targeted groups within the school community, act as a vehicle for pupil voice and have some system for accrediting the activities they engage in or achieve. Obviously many schools operate somewhere in the middle of these two descriptions.

Personally,we believe the role of a digital leader is about developing a whole series of skills within a pupil and not just those with a technology focus. There are many advocates of digital leaders across the country who share similar views and in 2013 Paul worked with Chris Sharples to create a Digital Leader Framework that schools could use as a basis for their own digital leader programme. This identified key skills and knowledge we felt a good digital leader should demonstrate.
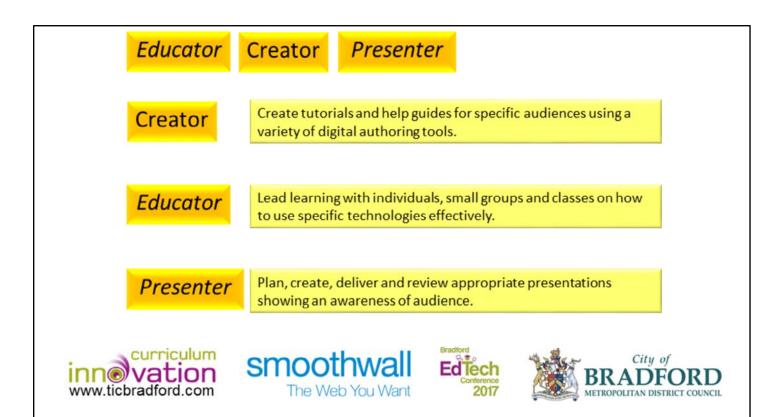
Reporter   Leader   Networker

Leader — Encourage the use of technology with others and take on regular commitments and responsibilities as a Digital Leader

Networker — Take part in face to face or online events to meet & share information with students, teachers, parents and governors.

Reporter — Create news articles about the effective use of technologies and digital leader events using paper or digital formats.

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Demonstrate **leadership**,

Network effectively with others

Report information to others through physical and digital media

Educator | Creator | Presenter

Creator — Create tutorials and help guides for specific audiences using a variety of digital authoring tools.

Educator — Lead learning with individuals, small groups and classes on how to use specific technologies effectively.

Presenter — Plan, create, deliver and review appropriate presentations showing an awareness of audience.

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Demonstrate excellent **communication** skills

Create resources to help others use technology effectively,

Work with individuals or groups **educating** them on the use of technology

Being able to **present** confidently to a range of audiences

Demonstrate their ability as a **technologist** by utilising **technological** knowledge and experience,

Reviewing existing and new technologies and their suitability for use in a given situation

Always use equipment in line with school **E-safety** policies and curriculum.

Theme overviews

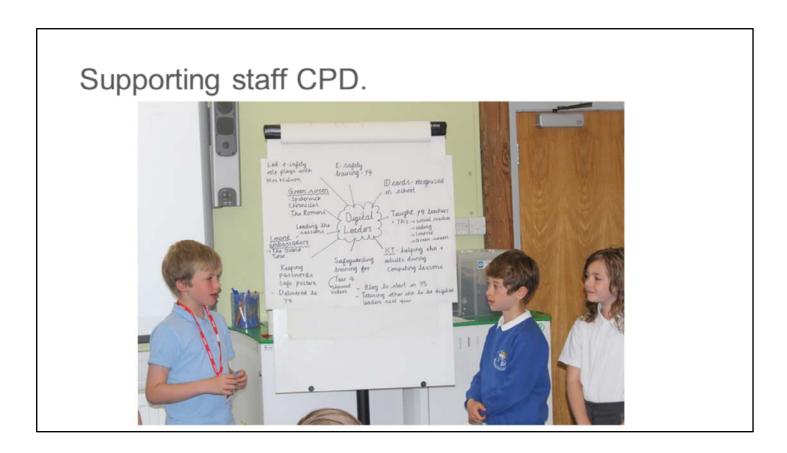|	**Ambassador (A)**		
	Leader	**Networker**	**Reporter**
Strand Descriptor	Encourage the positive / effective / safe and responsible uses of technology across the curriculum both in and out of school. Support others with learning and improving use of new technologies. Be identified as a Digital Leader, work in a team and take on regular commitments and responsibilities	Develop collaborative ways of working with other Digital Leaders. Take part in regular meetings and online discussions using feedback and response to feedback to improve ways of working for a variety of activities. Take part in and then organise face-to-face events and share information about Digital Leaders with other students/ teachers/ parents/ governors both in school and with Digital Leaders from other schools.	Create articles fit for audience and purpose using a variety of media using paper or digital formats. Articles will be about the effective use of technologies and Digital Leader news and events.
Level 1 Descriptor	Understand the concept of a role model and what this entails. Ensure general behaviour and attitudes to learning and technology are modelled in a positive manner. Be recognised across the school as a Digital Leader	Attend a 'technology event' organised by staff or older DLs such as a staff meeting, parent's open day, etc. and interact formally or informally at the event	Create a news article with respect to digital technology and share with others commenting on the benefits and limitations of that sharing mechanism
Level 2 Descriptor	Be recognised by the majority of staff and pupils across the school as a Digital Leader. Attend regular DL organisational meetings and be responsible for regular support and provision in school. Continue to be a role model by always exhibiting appropriate skills and behaviours through your own use of technology.	Use meetings, social media interactions and Digital Leader events to share knowledge and opinions and develop other collaborative ways of working both in and beyond school. Take part in online discussions and post comments online to receive and respond to feedback. Develop your Digital Leader collaboration through face-to-face and online engagement.	Create articles fit for audience and purpose using traditional and digital media related to digital technology. Demonstrate an informed opinion within the article by reference to pros and cons and other report sources. Be able to amend / update the article responding to feedback or new information.

As you can see from the headings above the impact a digital leader programme or project can have on a pupil can go way beyond that of being proficient with technology and can develop self-esteem, self-confidence, independent learning, empathy, logical reasoning, leadership and communication skills.

Supporting a group of children in their own class

Digital leaders typically meet out of lesson time but they can be utilised across the school within other lessons or activities in and out of school with some careful planning to mitigate the negative impact this may have on their own learning. Above is a summary of some activities that digital leaders have engaged with across the country.

make effective use of technology by ensuring the technology works effectively and is utilised appropriately by the children they are working with Examples include working with young children capturing a range of digital images to use in their work ensuring that they know how to use the camera safely and effectively and how to frame pictures for the best effect. The Digital leaders then ensure the images are transferred to a secure storage space where they can be printed or utilised in the creation of physical or digital media.

Supporting staff CPD.

Examples include iPad training where staff are being introduced to the basics of using an iPad and the digital leaders work alongside group of teachers or lead small sessions focusing on a specific aspect of the iPad such as using the camera. This enables smaller group activities and round robin short focused training activities to be delivered effectively within CPD sessions

Providing information with regard to the effective use of technology to a given audience.

Examples include face-to-face activities already outlined but also creating reports and reviews that appear in newsletters, blogs, websites and on approved social media. This can involve creating a range of tutorials and help guides including video tutorials.

Supporting the management of ICT equipment within the school

Supporting the management of ICT equipment within the school. Examples include ensuring equipment for a session is appropriately set up and charged. Putting out equipment at the beginning of the day and then ensuring it is collected and secured at the end of the day. Being able to respond to simple and common issues where printers, IWBs and other equipment fail to work as expected.

Acting as ambassadors for the school at external events.

This may include working in other schools as already outlined or presenting at local, regional and national events and conferences. Every year BETT utilises groups of digital leaders within the exhibition.

Roles

Some schools use digital leaders with a specific, other schools develop a set of skills and knowledge appropriate to the needs of the school and the children. For example a school with a large iPad deployment may focus on the effective use of that technology and the associated apps and content utilised in class. In many cases these children are acknowledged as digital leaders within their school and are have to behave as positive role models. They may wear specific T-shirts, badges or hats to identify them as digital leaders and some have to demonstrate their ability as a digital leader before they can be formally accredited and wear the item of clothing denoting their position.

Badge	Digital Leader Theme: Ambassador	
	Name:	Date started:
	Leader Level 1 L1.1 I can explain what is meant by a role model and give examples of good role models in the real world L1.2 I understand that I am a role model and I can explain and demonstrate behaviours expected of a Digital Leader L1.3 I can give examples of how I have helped and advised others in my role as a Digital Leader	
	Leader Level 2 L2.1 I am recognised by staff and other students at my school as a Digital Leader and I model good skills and attitudes in my own use of technology L2.2 I have demonstrated reliability, organisation and team skills by being a Digital Leader for at least a school year L2.3 I have demonstrated leadership skills through giving regular support to others and planning and delivering events in and beyond my school	
	Networker Level 1 N1.1 I understand what 'networking' means and I can describe why this is important in my role as a Digital Leader N1.2 I have attended an event with a technology focus and was introduced to the audience as a Digital Leader N1.3 I have contributed at an event with a technology focus and met new people as a Digital Leader	
	Networker Level 2 N2.1 I have contributed at an event with a technology focus in and beyond my school N2.2 I have collaborated positively with others in and beyond my school through face-to-face and online interactions N2.3 Other people in and beyond my school have actively engaged with me to access my knowledge and skills as a digital leader	
	Reporter Level 1 Rep1.1 I can write a news article about digital technology or digital leadership using appropriate structure, vocabulary and spelling Rep1.2 I can describe the purpose of my news article and how it can be used to share information and ideas Rep1.3 I can share my news article with others and discuss the benefits and limitations of that sharing	
	Reporter Level 2 Rep2.1 I can create digital reports; publish them online and explain how they are fit for audience and purpose Rep2.2 I can ensure my report is well balanced and accurate using appropriate research Rep2.3 I can update my report in response to feedback or changes to the technology referenced in it	

Accreditation and recognition of digital skills is a key aspect of ensuring the quality of your digital leaders and developing them as young adults. Many schools use certificates linked to identified criteria within their role as a digital leader and some schools have used open or online badges as a means to accredit their digital leaders.

Online badges or online badges are very useful ways for a digital leader to demonstrate their abilities as a digital leader to staff, students and other digital leaders and exist in a variety of learning platforms / portals such as Makewaves and Edmodo. In each of these children are given a set of criteria they need to achieve in order to achieve a digital leader specific accreditation or online badge. This is very similar to the philosophy with Scouts and Guides where children achieve a badge they sew on their uniform. The online or open badges can be viewed within a child's profile or homepage in products such as Makewaves and Edmodo. Below is an example badge PS has created based on the digital leader framework created with Chris Sharples that exists in the Digital Leader environment used with schools we are working with in Edmodo.

The child submits evidence to cover the criteria in the description. They then receive a certificate and the badge shown on their profile.

Open or online badges are very popular with children and can travel with the

children as they move from school to school or from Primary to Secondary. Using a learning platform or portal enables groups of digital leaders across schools locally, regionally and nationally to share their successes, work collaboratively and communicate ideas.

	Digital Leader Theme: Communicator		
Badge	**Name:**		**Date started:**
	Creator Level 1 C1.1 I understand the purpose of a technical guide and I can identify the elements that make a good 'guide' C1.2 I can write a guide about a digital technology using appropriate structure, vocabulary and spelling C1.3 I can suggest some simple ways to improve my guide based on feedback from end users		
	Creator Level 2 C2.1 I understand the differences between a multimedia tutorial and a traditional tutorial and I can use both appropriately C2.2 I can create a multimedia guide combining existing multimedia (video, animation, sound) with appropriate understanding of copyright C2.3 I can create appropriate Multimedia (video, animation, sound) as part of a multimedia guide		
	Educator Level 1 E1.1 I understand the need to communicate effectively and I can describe characteristics of a good communicator E1.2 I can work with individuals or a small group explaining how to use a specific technology E1.3 I can reflect on my training session and suggest some simple ways to improve it		
	Educator Level 2 E2.1 I can use a simple audit or other system to identify the needs of learners E2.2 I can create and deliver appropriate materials to meet the needs of a range of learners such as students, staff and parents E2.3 I can evaluate my learning sessions using attendee feedback to check that the needs of the learners were successfully met		
	Presenter Level 1 P1.1 I understand the purpose of a presentation and I can identify some good elements of presenting P1.2 I can create a presentation using technology and deliver this to a small group or class P1.3 I can reflect on my presentation session and suggest some simple ways to improve it		
	Presenter Level 2 P2.1 I can create presentations that meet the needs of various audiences including students, staff and parents P2.2 I can present effective presentations showing suitable skills and using a range of appropriate software and technologies P2.3 I can evaluate my presentations to show they were effective and engaging including feedback from others		

		Digital Leader Theme: Technologist			
Badge	Name:			Date started:	

Badge	
	Technician Level 1 T1.1 I understand what technical knowledge is and why it is important to have a good technical knowledge as a Digital Leader T1.2 I can use appropriate technical knowledge where necessary and understand the need to ensure others understand it too T1.3 I can explain / model in detail how a specific piece of technology can be used and what to do when things go wrong
	Technician Level 2 T2.1 I can demonstrate my technical competency using a variety of hardware and software as required T2.2 I can utilise my technical knowledge and understanding to support a range of learners effectively T2.3 I can demonstrate that I use technology with appropriate use of licensing and Terms & Conditions
	Reviewer Level 1 Rev1.1 I understand the purpose of evaluating technology and I can identify some elements of a good evaluation Rev1.2 I can identify some positive and negative aspects of the technology Rev1.3 I can write an evaluation of a digital technology using appropriate structure, vocabulary and spelling
	Reviewer Level 2 Rev2.1 I can investigate then choose or create a simple template to review types of technologies. Rev2.2 I can create regular reviews that meet the needs of a specific audience enabling them to make informed choices Rev2.3 I understand the need to write reviews in a fair and responsible manner and I can demonstrate this through my reviews
	(e)Safeguarder Level 1 eS1.1 I understand what personal information is and that I only share this with people I trust eS1.2 I only communicate online with people I know in the real world and do so politely and respectfully eS1.3 I understand the need to inform a trusted adult if I access content that makes me feel sad, scared, threatened or confused
	(e)Safeguarder Level 2 eS2.1 I will carefully consider the implications for myself and others of anything I publish online eS2.2 I use strong passwords and secure devices to protect myself online eS2.3 I understand the consequences of cyberbullying and what to do if I or my friends are cyberbullied

Example: St Antony's RC Primary School

Delivered Assemblies:
Launching digital leaders and "help box" for staff
Online Safety for whole school

Supported a "Creative Minds" KS2 after school club
that used greenscreen technology to help create
performance poetry around the poem "Jabberwocky"

Case Study: Long Lee Primary- Overview

Digital Leaders' support is largely confined to Year 5 and 6 classes although they have recently introduced blogging in other KS2 classes. During a two week period support activity included:

- Leading a school assembly on blogging and how to blog;
- Supporting Year 6 numeracy lessons where pupils were using Excel to explore averages;
- Leading lessons introducing Year 5 to the school blog and e-book "Bug Club";
- With the lead teacher for Literacy, running weekly lunch-time blogging and e-book clubs (to provide access for pupils who have no home computer provision) in the ICT suite;
- Informal support of classroom ICT activities, teachers and each-other. For instance, creating blog posts on behalf of teachers;
- Daily switching on and logging off of computers in ICT Suite, reporting faults.

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Case Study: Long Lee Primary- Teachers

- Teachers describe Digital Leaders as, "a vital resource" and feel supported in using ICT to support learning in other subjects.
- They also feel the Digital Leaders initiative is a "highly effective route" to achieve more independence in pupil learning.
- Teachers, drawing on Digital Leader support, were observed to focus strongly on subject teaching and learning whilst the Digital Leaders dealt with basic ICT skill gaps, organisational issues such as problems with logging-in and distributing print-outs at the end of a lesson.

Case Study: Long Lee Primary-Pupils

- Pupils have "respect and admiration" for the Digital Leaders and indicate they value the one to one support with ICT skills.

- In lessons observed, pupils were able to remain tasked focused by Digital Leaders intervening to resolve skills gaps or technical problems.

- By offering lunch-time "clubs" Digital Leaders are helping to secure equality of opportunity for pupils who don't have home ICT access.

- The school Literacy Leader indicates that the Digital Leaders' work on promoting blogging and the schools' e-book provision is beginning to have a motivational impact on reluctant readers and writers, particularly boys.

Case Study: Long Lee- Key Conclusions 1

- The school recognises the benefit to Years 5 and 6 and wishes to extend impact across the school, possibly by identifying additional Digital Leaders from every class.

- As Digital Leaders are Year 6 pupils there is a need for succession planning. Staff and Digital Leaders themselves suggest an earlier selection and induction process for prospective Digital Leaders from Year 5.

- When Digital Leaders are chosen through a rigorous process they demonstrate ownership of their roles and work with considerable autonomy.

Case Study: Long Lee- Key Conclusions 2

- Staff are aware of the need to guide Digital Leaders interventions to ensure they consistently explain as well as solve ICT problems for pupils.

- Staff believe that a regular progress review meeting between Digital Leaders and the member of staff responsible is central to the success of the project.

- They are aware that Digital Leaders could be over-used to the detriment of their own wider curricular experience and they monitor this closely

What do the Digital leaders gain?

- Digital Skills
- Good Literacy and Oracy
- Resilience
- Self confidence
- Self esteem
- Presentation skills
- Learning to problem solve and work collaboratively
- Learning how to use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly
- Collaboration skills and critical thinking about digital technology

What does the School gain?

- An environment for pupil-led and personalised learning
- Pupils develop their literacy skills through online communication
- Sharing and celebrating the work children produce in class
- Pupils creativity, enjoyment and motivation through assigning positions of responsibility
- A positive impact on behaviour
- Providing real life situations for children to ask questions and communicate concerns about sensitive online issues such as online safety and bullying
- Support of ongoing communication between teachers and learners
- Pupil's views and opinions online through the use of surveys, digital feedback on classes, or digital 'show and tell' sessions

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Getting started with digital leaders → Add your school to the Digital Leader Network (DLN) and join in #DLchat → Find a school on the DLN map and organise kidsmeets / Skype sessions

Promote the role of digital leaders to your SLT and through staff meetings

Promote the role of digital leaders in assembly

Put up posters around the school

Make application forms available → Shortlist and interview your digital leaders! → Organise dates for first sessions

Create / join an Edmodo group and start networking

Review resources and learn about new technologies

Practise / learn new skills to become experts, e.g.
- online tutorials
- Kodu
- Scratch
- Prezi
- blogging
- Animoto / Photopeach

Organise workshops for staff / parents

Support teachers / peers in class

Set up a support request service for staff / parents