

Disparities in digital infrastructure

Various disparities in school and digital infrastructures are apparent, such as differences between quality and types of available devices, connectivity at home and in school, access to software (free vs premium versions; creative packages etc.), pandemic-prompted technology choices and levels of IT support.

"... our laptops are old, they are, they're really poor quality unfortunately. A lot of them don't work, erm, they can't, they're very glitchy, and so to have sort of easy laptop lessons where they can get on and do the independent work or do independent research on laptops still feels like a struggle." [Teacher, School Yellow]

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"The money here enables you to trial different things...where I was before you would just look for what there was in a cupboard and hoped it worked...There wasn't a budget available for new tech or time to think creatively about best solutions." [Teacher, School Orange]

"... the laptops that we have access to regularly are not up to the task, erm, and also I'm competing with my colleagues for access to them, so I can't use them as often as I would." [Teacher, School Yellow]

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"There's so many different systems that still exist you know it would be ideal to have just kind of one all-encompassing system eventually like you know a package for schools that's just one system and you have everything you need." [Assistant Headteacher, School Yellow]

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"I have to write an essay in drama that is due in a few days and I'm getting kinda stressed because, like, it's on my phone and I can't, like, type stuff, like, well on my phone because obviously it's zoomed out and you can't see what you're writing and so I have to, like- 'cause my brother (...) has a computer that I can use but he usually wants to use it (for work) so I can't, like, I can barely use it".

[Student, School Purple]



"I think that is an equity issue like the fact that (...) a school over there has got an amazing IT person with incredible skills and you know and he's not employed by [name of local authority] he's just someone - they're just lucky. They are incredibly lucky and their school gets - their students get a better experience".

[Assistant Headteacher, School Yellow]



"I think like the equity side of it is just like, us remembering as adults that they don't all have access and they won't tell us, like it, they don't want to tell us that they share a iPhone between four of them at home, or whatever it is, that we haven't got data that month or, and we look at them and think you've got an iPhone in your hand, you've obviously got money but actually it doesn't mean it's turned on, or it doesn't mean he's got data."

[Teacher, School Purple]



Questions for discussion

- What are the **constraints / opportunities** presented by a school's digital infrastructure?
- In what ways can the **design and/or use** of EdTech account for disparities in infrastructure?