Questions to help evaluate your school technology

The questions schools should ask before they buy, renew or replace technology

https://classroom.cloud/technology-evaluation-questions/

Strategy and vision

Do we have a written digital strategy and does this purchase serve it?

classroom.cloud is designed to support the objectives commonly found in a school digital strategy, including improving teaching and learning, strengthening safeguarding, enhancing device management and meeting the DfE Digital and Technology Standards.

To help schools develop or review their approach, NetSupport also provides a free Digital Strategy Guide. The guide helps school leaders assess their current position, identify priorities and build a practical roadmap for technology that supports educational outcomes rather than technology for its own sake.

What is our appetite for risk on this decision: proven and established or newer and less tested?

classroom.cloud is a mature, established platform used by schools worldwide. It is backed by over 37 years of experience in education technology from NetSupport and continues to be developed in response to feedback from schools.

The platform has been independently recognised through the ISTE Seal and Education Alliance Finland Certification, is supported by ISO/IEC 27001-certified information security processes, and is trusted by thousands of schools to support teaching, safeguarding and IT management.

For schools looking to minimise procurement risk, classroom.cloud offers a proven solution with an established customer base, independent validation and ongoing product development, rather than an emerging or untested technology.

Do we understand its pedagogical purpose?

classroom.cloud has been designed to support evidence-informed teaching practices rather than simply managing classroom devices. Its features help teachers create focused learning environments, maximise learning time and respond to pupils' needs as lessons progress.

From a pedagogical perspective, classroom.cloud supports:

- Maintaining attention and reducing distractions, helping pupils remain engaged with learning.
- Formative assessment, through live questioning, polls and real-time visibility of student progress, allowing teachers to check understanding and adapt instruction.
- Timely feedback and intervention, enabling teachers to identify misconceptions early and provide support before pupils fall behind.
- Differentiation and personalised learning, with the ability to support individuals or groups without disrupting the whole class.
- Active participation, giving every pupil opportunities to respond, ask for help and engage during lessons.
- Inclusive teaching, by making it easier to monitor progress and provide additional support where needed.

These principles align with recognised approaches to effective teaching and learning, and the platform's educational value has been independently recognised through the Education Alliance Finland Certification and the ISTE Seal.

How does it fit our teachers actually teach or must they change their practice to suit it?

classroom.cloud is designed to support existing teaching practice rather than require teachers to adopt a new way of working. It fits naturally into everyday lessons, whether teachers are delivering whole-class instruction, facilitating independent learning, supporting small groups or using blended learning approaches.

Teachers can use as many or as few features as they need, from simply monitoring student screens and sharing resources to using live questioning, collaborative activities and real-time feedback. This allows staff to adopt the platform at their own pace and in ways that complement their own teaching style.

Usability and user experience

Is it intuitive? Can a teacher do something useful in the first 10 minutes?

Yes. classroom.cloud has been designed so teachers can start using key features with very little training. Within seconds, they can see student screens, share their own screen,

send messages, launch websites, lock screens and monitor student activity through a simple, browser-based interface.

Independent evaluations support this approach. Education Alliance Finland recognised classroom.cloud for its ease of use and pedagogical value, while the ISTE Seal acknowledges its effectiveness in supporting teaching and learning.

Can teachers see exactly what pupils see on demand?

Yes. Teachers can view students' screens in real time at any point during a lesson, giving them an instant picture of what the class is doing. They can monitor individual students, selected groups or the whole class from a single dashboard without interrupting learning.

From the same view, teachers can offer support, send a message, share their own screen, open or close websites, or take control of a student's device if assistance is needed.

This live visibility helps teachers keep students focused, identify misconceptions early and provide support exactly when it's needed, rather than discovering issues after the lesson has finished.

AI in the toolset

Does it contain AI and has the vendor told us exactly what kind?

classroom.cloud does not rely on generative AI to deliver its

core functionality. Instead, it uses a combination of established technologies, including keyword and phrase detection, image categorisation and configurable monitoring rules to help schools identify potential safeguarding concerns, and ensures that decisions on safeguarding remain with the school rather than with a vendor.

We are clear about how these technologies work and what they do. Alerts are generated based on defined criteria and are always reviewed by school staff. The platform is designed to support professional judgement, not replace it, ensuring that safeguarding decisions remain with the designated safeguarding team.

How does the platform monitor the use of AI tools?

classroom.cloud helps schools monitor students' use of AI tools as part of its wider online safety platform. Activity across popular

AI platforms, including ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, Claude and Perplexity, can be monitored to help identify potential safeguarding concerns. Schools can restrict access to AI websites during lessons where appropriate, while keyword and phrase monitoring detects concerning interactions and generates real-time alerts for safeguarding staff. For Microsoft 365 environments, classroom.cloud can also capture and monitor Microsoft Copilot activity when students are signed in with their school accounts.

Safeguarding and online safety

Does it meet the safeguarding expectations of keeping children safe in education, including the online safety annex?

Yes. classroom.cloud has been developed to help schools meet the expectations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), including the online safety and filtering and monitoring requirements. For details visit: https://classroom.cloud/kcsie/

It is designed to support, not replace, a school's safeguarding policies and procedures. Schools remain responsible for their filtering and monitoring strategy, but classroom.cloud provides the tools and evidence to help designated safeguarding leads and staff fulfil their responsibilities in line with KCSIE and the Department for Education's filtering and monitoring standards.

We have also recently completed iKeepsafe's certification for COPPA and FERPA compliance, ensuring that we remain transparent with the processing of children's personal data.

What reporting routes exist inside the product if a pupil sees or experiences something harmful?

classroom.cloud helps schools identify safeguarding concerns in several ways, whether a pupil reports them directly or not.

- **Report a Concern** allows pupils to discreetly report anything that has made them feel unsafe or uncomfortable to the school's safeguarding team.
- **Keyword and phrase monitoring** alerts staff to language that may indicate a safeguarding risk.
- **Image analysis** helps identify potentially concerning visual content that may require further review.

These findings feed into classroom.cloud's safeguarding alerts and Risk Index, allowing designated safeguarding leads to prioritise

pupils who may be at greater risk. Each alert includes supporting evidence, such as screenshots, the triggering keywords or image category, timestamps and contextual information, helping staff quickly understand the concern and decide on the most appropriate response.

The platform also provides searchable reports, activity histories and audit trails, enabling safeguarding teams to identify patterns of behaviour over time, monitor trends across individuals or groups, and maintain evidence where further action is required.

If used at home, what changes about our safeguarding response abilities?

classroom.cloud extends safeguarding beyond the school day, helping schools maintain appropriate oversight of pupils using school-managed devices at home.

As part of our approach in supporting Privacy Enhancing Technologies, Schools have granular control of where and how they might choose to continue monitoring outside school hours, allowing safeguarding staff to receive alerts for potential concerns wherever a pupil is learning.

Monitoring schedules are fully configurable, so schools decide when monitoring is active in line with their safeguarding policies, acceptable use agreements and local procedures.

Wellbeing and purposeful use

What will pupils actually be doing on screen with this and is each activity pedagogically purposeful?

Pupils use classroom.cloud as part of normal teaching and learning rather than as a separate application. Depending on the lesson, they may receive resources from their teacher, complete independent or collaborative tasks, respond to polls and questions, request help, or share their work.

The platform is designed to reduce distractions and keep students focused on learning. Teachers can guide activities by sharing their screen, launching websites or applications, providing feedback, and supporting individual learners without interrupting the rest of the class.

Each feature is intended to support a clear educational purpose, whether that's improving engagement, checking understanding, encouraging participation, providing timely support or maintaining a safe and focused learning environment. This is reflected in classroom.cloud's Education Alliance Finland certification and ISTE Seal, which independently recognise its educational value and impact on teaching and learning.

Are age-appropriate settings and limits available where we want them?

Yes. classroom.cloud enables schools to create Online Safety/Safeguarding Groups, allowing safeguarding and monitoring to be tailored to the needs of different cohorts, such as year groups, key stages or vulnerable pupils.

Each Online Safety Group can have its own monitoring configuration, with safeguarding alerts automatically routed to the appropriate member of the safeguarding team. Schools can also filter safeguarding alerts, reported concerns and keyword or phrase activity by group, making it easier to review and respond to issues within a specific cohort.

Technical fit and infrastructure

Do our technical team have the capacity to support it?

Yes. classroom.cloud is designed to minimise the day-to-day workload for IT teams. As a cloud-hosted solution, there are no on-premises servers to maintain, and updates are managed automatically.

Deployment is straightforward, with integration into existing services such as Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, Microsoft School Data Sync, ClassLink, and Clever. Centralised management allows IT teams to configure settings, manage users and monitor devices without significant ongoing administration.

NetSupport also provides onboarding, documentation, technical support and training to assist with implementation and ongoing use, helping schools adopt the platform without placing unnecessary demands on internal IT resources.

Does it work with our current devices and the ones we plan to buy? Is it device agnostic or does it lock us into one ecosystem?

classroom.cloud supports Windows, macOS, ChromeOS, iPadOS and Android, making it suitable for

schools with mixed device estates. It doesn't require schools to commit to one hardware manufacturer or operating system.

The teacher and admin consoles are browser-based, while student applications are available across the supported platforms. classroom.cloud also works with services including Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, Microsoft School Data Sync, Google Classroom, ClassLink, and Clever.

Some capabilities vary by operating system.

Does it work effectively with our current infrastructure, bandwidth, Wi-Fi servers?

As a cloud-hosted platform, it integrates with your current infrastructure while reducing the need to manage additional server resources.

The platform is optimised for everyday classroom use and operates efficiently across typical school broadband and Wi-Fi networks. Features such as live screen monitoring, screen sharing and remote assistance are designed to minimise bandwidth usage while maintaining a responsive experience for teachers and students.

Overall, performance will depend on the school's network capacity, Wi-Fi coverage and internet connectivity. NetSupport provides deployment guidance and technical support to help ensure the platform performs effectively within your existing infrastructure.

Does it help or hinder our progress against the digital and technology standards?

classroom.cloud supports schools in meeting the DfE Digital and Technology Standards by providing tools that improve classroom management, safeguarding and device management without requiring changes to existing infrastructure.

The platform helps schools strengthen their approach to filtering and monitoring, supports effective device management, integrates with existing identity and classroom systems, and provides reporting and audit trails to support governance and compliance.

Data protection and privacy

What is the vendor's breach history and what is their notification process?

NetSupport has never had any significant data breaches affecting classroom.cloud. As with any cloud service, schools should carry out their own due diligence as part of their procurement process.
If a personal data breach were to occur, NetSupport's Data Processing Agreement sets out a clear notification process. NetSupport will:

Notify the school without undue delay after becoming aware of a personal data breach affecting the school's data.

Provide sufficient information to help the school meet its own UK GDPR reporting and notification obligations.

Work with the school to investigate the incident and support mitigation and remediation activities.

NetSupport also provides security and privacy documentation, including its Data Processing Agreement, security information and details of its sub-processors, enabling schools to complete their own risk assessments and compliance checks before deployment.

What cyber security accreditations and practices can they evidence?

classroom.cloud is supported by recognised security standards and practices to help schools protect their data and meet compliance requirements.

Evidence includes:

- ISO/IEC 27001 certification, demonstrating that information security is managed through an independently audited Information Security Management System (ISMS).
- Secure hosting on Microsoft Azure, with customer data stored in regional data centres.
- Encryption to protect data in transit and at rest.
- Role-based access controls to ensure only authorised users can access sensitive information.
- Single sign-on (SSO) support through Microsoft Entra ID and Google Workspace, reducing password risk and simplifying identity management.

- Audit logs and activity records, providing accountability and supporting investigations where required.
- A published **Data Processing Agreement**, privacy documentation and details of approved sub-processors to support schools' GDPR and procurement requirements.
- Documented Technical and Organisational Measures on security.
- COPPA-compliant Children's Privacy Notice to improve transparency with children and parents.

Together, these measures provide schools with evidence that classroom.cloud follows recognised security practices and gives IT teams the information they need to complete their own security and data protection assessments.

Is pupil data used to train AI models or for any secondary purpose and can we refuse?

No. Pupil data is not used to train AI models.

Any personal data processed by classroom.cloud is used solely to deliver and support the service requested by the school, in accordance with the school's instructions and NetSupport's Data Processing Agreement. It is not used for advertising, profiling or other secondary commercial purposes.

Schools remain in control of how the platform is configured and what data is processed through their own policies and settings. NetSupport provides clear privacy and data processing documentation to support schools in meeting their UK GDPR obligations and completing their own due diligence before deployment.

Does it meet the criteria in our school privacy policy?

classroom.cloud has been designed with privacy, security and compliance in mind, helping schools meet their own data protection obligations.

The platform supports compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act by giving schools control over how monitoring is configured, what information is collected and when monitoring takes place. Schools decide how classroom.cloud is used in line with their safeguarding policies, privacy notices and acceptable use policies.

We have also recently completed iKeepsafe's certification for COPPA and FERPA compliance, ensuring that we remain transparent with the processing of children's personal data.

Data is protected through secure infrastructure, role-based access controls and audit trails, while ISO/IEC 27001 certification demonstrates that information is managed in line with internationally recognised security standards.

We provide clear privacy documentation, data processing information and guidance to help schools complete their own due diligence and ensure classroom.cloud aligns with their privacy policies and local governance requirements.

We also support schools taking a privacy-first approach with how they work with Children's data, giving guidance on how Privacy by Design and by Default can be achieved when using classroom.cloud.

Where is data stored and processed/Does any of it leave the UK?

classroom.cloud is hosted on Microsoft Azure, with customer data stored in the UK, Germany or the United States, depending on the region in which the service is provisioned. For UK schools, data is hosted in the UK.

In normal operation for UK customers, data does not leave the UK or the EEA. Where limited personal data is processed by approved sub-processors or an international transfer is required,

this is covered by classroom.cloud's Data Processing Agreement and appropriate safeguards are in place to protect personal data and comply with UK GDPR.

NetSupport provides clear documentation on data hosting, sub-processors and international transfers, enabling schools to complete their own data protection and privacy assessments with confidence.

Interoperability

Can it synchronise pupil and staff data from our existing systems?

Yes. classroom.cloud integrates with a range of existing school systems, making it easy to keep classes and users up to date without manual administration.
The platform supports synchronisation with Microsoft School Data Sync (SDS), Microsoft Entra ID, Google Classroom, Google Workspace, ClassLink, and Clever. This allows schools to automatically import users, classes and group memberships, reducing setup time and ensuring teachers always have access to the correct class lists.

By using existing school data, classroom.cloud helps minimise administration, speeds up deployment and ensures changes to pupils and staff are reflected quickly across the platform.

Does it support single sign-on?

Yes. classroom.cloud supports single sign-on (SSO), allowing staff to sign in using their existing school credentials rather than managing separate usernames and passwords.

The platform integrates with Microsoft Entra ID and Google Workspace, providing a familiar sign-in experience while helping schools strengthen security and simplify account management.

Using SSO reduces password-related support requests, speeds up access for staff and makes it easier for IT teams to manage user accounts across the organisation.

Evidence and impact

What kind of evidence is the vendor offering?

classroom.cloud supports its claims with a combination of independent evaluations, customer evidence and recognised certifications.

- **Descriptive evidence:** Customer case studies, testimonials,

product demonstrations and implementation examples from schools and trusts using classroom.cloud every day.

- **Causal evidence:** Real examples showing how schools have improved classroom engagement, strengthened safeguarding and reduced IT administration using the platform.
- **Independent reviews and evaluations:** classroom.cloud has independent evaluations from Education Alliance Finland (EAF), ISTE, iKeepsafe and the ICEIE. It has also been revied by Tech & Learning, Headteacher Chat, The EdTech Podcast and more.
- **Security and compliance:** classroom.cloud is ISO/IEC 27001 certified for information security management and integrates with recognised education platforms including Microsoft, Google Classroom, ClassLink, Clever, CPOMS and Tes MyConcern. It has also just completed certification for COPPA and FERPA with iKeepSafe as a US Safe Harbor.

Is any impact sustained over time, or a short-lived bounce?

Evidence from classroom.cloud customers shows that the benefits are sustained over time rather than being limited to an initial improvement after deployment. Schools consistently report lasting gains in teaching, safeguarding and IT efficiency as staff embed the platform into everyday practice. Teachers spend less time managing behaviour and more time teaching, safeguarding teams identify trends and intervene earlier through continuous monitoring, and IT teams reduce administration by managing devices from a single cloud platform. Multi-academy trusts also report improved visibility across schools, enabling them to standardise safeguarding processes and respond more proactively to emerging concerns. Case studies highlight ongoing improvements in student engagement, productivity, digital safety, staff confidence and operational efficiency, while independent evaluations from Education Alliance Finland (EAF) and ISTE also recognise classroom.cloud's long-term impact on teaching and learning. Regular feature updates, cloud delivery and continuous customer-led development ensure the platform continues to evolve alongside schools' changing needs, helping maintain and build on these benefits year after year.

Vendor relationship

Does the company provide training for staff and is it included or extra?

Yes. classroom.cloud includes free onboarding and ongoing training to help schools get the most from the platform. Training is tailored to different roles, including teachers, IT teams, safeguarding leads and senior leaders.

Schools have access to live online training videos, webinars, a CPD Hub with on-demand resources, user guides, a knowledge base and UK/USA-based technical support. As new features are released, updated training and guidance are provided so staff can continue to build their confidence.

For schools with more complex requirements, additional remote or on-site training can also be arranged.

We see training as part of the product, not an optional extra. The aim is to help every member of staff feel confident using classroom.cloud, from the initial rollout through to day-to-day use.

Is there a genuine dialogue route for feedback to shape the product?

Yes. Customer feedback plays an important role in the ongoing development of classroom.cloud. Schools can share ideas through their account manager and support team – we actively encourage feature requests and suggestions.

Many of the features available today have been introduced or refined in response to feedback from schools and trusts.

We believe the best products are built with schools, not just for them. Listening to educators helps ensure classroom.cloud continues to meet the changing needs of teaching, safeguarding and IT teams.

What training, support channels and ongoing assistance are included, and are there any additional costs?

classroom.cloud includes a comprehensive range of training and support resources at no additional cost. Schools have access to live and on-demand training, product guides, knowledge base articles, tutorial videos, webinars and customer support via phone, email and online chat. Schools can also access regular product updates, implementation guidance and ongoing assistance from the support team, ensuring staff can continue to get the most from the platform without unexpected support charges. Additional tailored training sessions can also be arranged where required.