

CyberFirst Girls triumph in national cyber competition at iconic Jodrell Bank

Teams from across the UK have been crowned CyberFirst Girls Competition champions.

- Winning teams from the National Cyber Security Centre's 2024/25 CyberFirst Girls competition attended a prize-giving ceremony at Jodrell Bank in Cheshire.
- Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre took home the crown of 'Top Scoring State Newcomer', winning a £4,000 prize.
- More than 14,500 girls from across the UK's four regions registered to take part in the 2024/25 competition which aims to inspire more girls to pursue cyber and technology in their education and future careers.

Schoolgirls from across the UK received awards for their exceptional cyber security skills at a prestigious ceremony on International Women's Day (Saturday 8 March).

A record 14,500 girls across all four nations of the UK registered in the 2024/25 [CyberFirst Girls Competition](#), which is run by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), a part of GCHQ.

With the competition in its eighth year, the girls competed in 12 regional finals and a category for independent schools. They tackled a series of cyber security challenges, including decrypting messages, cracking code and solving coding puzzles.

A record 4,159 teams from more than 800 schools signed up to the NCSC competition, which aims to encourage girls aged 12 to 13 to consider pursuing an interest in technology and a career in cyber.

The 13 regional winners and special award winners were recognised at a celebration day and gala prize-winning dinner at the iconic Jodrell Bank astronomical research centre in Cheshire on Saturday (8 March).

Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre in Birmingham won £4,000 as they were crowned 'Top scoring state newcomer'. Other special competition awards included The Henrietta Barnett School who were recognised as the 'Top scoring team'.

The Competition, which concluded in December, aims to encourage girls to explore the world of cyber and technology, helping to address the lack of diversity in the UK cyber workforce, where women currently make up just 17% of employees.

NCSC Deputy Director for Cyber Growth at the NCSC, Chris Ensor, said:

"A huge congratulations to all the 13 teams for winning their respective regional finals in this year's CyberFirst Girls Competition and to all the award winners.

"I'd like to extend my gratitude to the teachers who've encouraged and inspired their students to take part in the Competition, to our sponsors whose support makes this event possible, and to the girls who demonstrated admirable skills, determination, and teamwork.

"It seems apt on International Women's Day to point out the UK's cyber security industry needs more female representation, and I hope for many of the girls this marks the beginning of their interest in technology."

By encouraging girls to pursue this interest at a pre-GCSE age, the CyberFirst Girls Competition aims to change the future of representation in the industry.

The categories and award winners from the event are:

- Most team entries (State School) – Newlands Girls' School
- Most team entries (State Selective School) – Nonsuch High School for Girls
- Most team entries (Independent School) – Redmaids' High School
- Top scoring team – The Henrietta Barnett School
- Top scoring CyberFirst School – St Kentigern's Academy
- Top scoring returning school – The Henrietta Barnett School
- Top scoring state newcomer – Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre

The CyberFirst Girls Competition is the NCSC's flagship cyber security contest for schools, which opens annually to girls in Year 8 in England and Wales, S2 in Scotland, and Year 9 in Northern Ireland.

Since the Competition's launch in 2017, around 85,000 girls have taken part.

The NCSC's CyberFirst programme offers a range of free challenges aimed at offering young people the skills, opportunities and exposure they need to thrive in cyber security.

This includes free courses for boys and girls, which aim to introduce pupils aged 14 to 17 to the cyber threat landscape and to develop their digital and problem-solving skills.

CyberFirst has transitioned to TechFirst

From 1 September 2026, the CyberFirst programme became part of TechFirst. NCSC continues to lead the cyber pathway, ensuring young people can access high-quality cyber skills and career opportunities. For more information view [NCSC Cyber Skills](#).

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