

Tech-savvy schools gain recognition from UK experts for championing cyber skills

Eight more schools and colleges receive CyberFirst schools award for first-rate cyber security teaching.

- Eight schools and colleges are latest to be recognised for offering top cyber education by GCHQ’s National Cyber Security Centre
- Gold, Silver or Bronze status officially awarded to [new CyberFirst Schools](#) for encouraging young people to develop cyber skills
- Hosting a cyber escape room experience, workshops with local industry and cryptography classes among opportunities offered by successful schools to promote cyber learning

SCHOOLS and colleges leading the way by championing cyber education for pupils have been recognised today (Wednesday) with gold, silver and bronze awards by the nation’s experts.

Eight institutions are the latest to be awarded by the [CyberFirst Schools initiative](#), led by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) – a part of GCHQ, for their work offering first-rate cyber security teaching in and out of the classroom.

In the most recent round of applications, three institutions in Wales were recognised for the first time, with two new successes in the North East of England and two in the South West, as well as one school in Cheltenham that had their previous award boosted to a Gold award.

Since the initiative was launched in 2020, [49 CyberFirst Schools and Colleges have been recognised](#), helping to develop cyber skills ecosystems around the country and addressing the industry’s cyber skills gap.

Examples of top work awarded in this latest round of successes includes hosting a cyber-themed escape room experience for pupils and teachers, running coding and computing clubs and inviting speakers from local industry to share their experience of working in cyber roles.

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

“Well done to all the schools and colleges across the UK that have been awarded CyberFirst Schools status for the high standard of cyber security education they provide.

“Offering young people opportunities to gain hands-on experience of cyber security is essential for inspiring the next generation of talent and keeping the UK secure online in the years to come.

“We welcome these institutions to our growing community of schools, colleges, local industry and universities who are playing a key role in helping cyber skills ecosystems thrive around the country.”

The initiative’s Gold award recognises schools that show they deliver the highest standard of cyber security education; Silver awards indicate the schools are meeting most of the judging criteria and offering good standards and Bronze is for those working towards excellence.

Applications from secondary schools and further education colleges were welcomed from select areas around the UK. The latest successful institutions are:

School	Award
All Saints’ Academy, Cheltenham	Upgraded to Gold*
Carmel College, Darlington	Silver
Chepstow School, Chepstow	Silver
Corfe Hills School, Poole	Bronze
Gower College Swansea	Silver
Pate’s Grammar School, Cheltenham	Silver
The College Merthyr Tydfil	Silver

Thorp Academy, Ryton	Bronze
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Being a CyberFirst School comes with a number of benefits including recognition from the NCSC and opportunities to work with CyberFirst member organisations from a range of sectors on cyber related activities.

Examples of first-rate cyber security education offered by the schools included:

- All Saints’ Academy working with the cyber security team at IT and business process services firm CGI to host the organisation’s Cyber Escape experience on their site, where hundreds of pupils took part in cyber challenges to escape the room.
- Corfe Hills School hosting industry speakers to talk about cyber security. They also encouraged students to take part in CyberFirst initiatives including the [CyberFirst Girls Competition](#).
- Thorp Academy introducing an encryption and cryptography module to enrich the computing curriculum for Year 8s and holding an event to celebrate women in technology to inspire more girls to take Computer Science GCSE.

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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