

Choosing desktops & monitors for your school or trust

A quick guide to getting
the specification right



Key decisions



Match performance to the role

- **Admin & MIS:** Modern multi-core CPU, 8–16GB RAM, SSD storage.
- **General classroom use:** Reliable CPU, 8GB+ RAM, SSD, onboard graphics are usually sufficient.
- **Specialist rooms (computing, STEM, media):** Higher-end CPU and, where needed, dedicated graphics.



Standardise where you can

- Limit the number of models to simplify imaging, support and spares.
- Agree a small set of “standard builds” across your school or trust.



Form factor & space

- **Tower / Small Form Factor (SFF):** Good for ICT suites and offices, more expansion.
- **Mini / Ultra-small:** Mount behind monitors to save space in classrooms.



Longevity & warranty

- Check RAM and storage can be upgraded.
- Look for 3–5 year warranties, with on-site options where possible.
- Build a refresh plan (e.g. 4–5 year lifecycle) into your budget.



Energy use

- Compare power efficiency ratings, not just purchase price.
- Use power management policies to reduce out-of-hours usage.

What to prioritise



Size & resolution

- **22–24"** Full HD suits most users.
- Larger or higher resolution screens may be appropriate for SEN, art or media.



Ergonomics

- Height-adjustable stands for shared desks and staff workspaces.
- Tilt and rotate options support better posture and reduce strain.



Panel type & viewing angles

- IPS panels (In-Plane Switching, a type of LED display panel technology) often give better colour and wider viewing angles – useful when several pupils share a screen.



Ports & compatibility

- Check desktops and monitors have matching ports (e.g. HDMI, DisplayPort, USB-C).
- Include any required cables/adapters in the order.



Built-in extras

- Speakers to reduce separate kit.
- Webcams (with privacy shutters where appropriate) for staff and meeting rooms.



Windows 11 – make it part of the spec

- ✓ Confirm that desktops meet Microsoft's Windows 11 requirements.
- ✓ Allow extra RAM and storage for future updates and applications.
- ✓ Plan how you'll manage a mix of Windows 10 and Windows 11 devices during transition.



New, refurbished and recycling



Refurbished devices

- Use in general classrooms, admin areas and temporary spaces.
- Ensure devices are data-wiped, graded and supplied with clear warranties.



Recycling and disposal

- Include collection and secure data destruction when replacing old devices.
- Ask for recycling certificates and ensure compliance with environmental standards.



How Everything ICT can help

Through the DfE-approved Everything ICT framework, you can:

- ✓ Get **independent support** to shape your specification using this checklist.
- ✓ Access **pre-approved suppliers** for new and refurbished kit.
- ✓ Bundle in **imaging, installation, support and recycling**.
- ✓ Run **compliant, quick procurements** without starting from scratch.

EVERYTHING
ICT

Share this guide with your IT lead or business manager and contact Everything ICT to talk through your desktop and monitor plans.

➔ **Speak to the team**

➔ **How it all works**

