



Combating Digital Exclusion

Leaving no child behind

In January 2021, as the UK settled into another lockdown, the majority of children and young people were expected to learn from home. It's hard enough to study alone, without the face-to-face support of a teacher and your friends around you. But it is impossible if you don't have the right technology. It quickly became clear to us that hundreds of Norfolk children were at a major disadvantage because they didn't have access to a suitable computer or the connectivity required to fully access online lessons.

We knew we had to do something, and we had to act fast.



Getting Every Child Online



Working with our partners, Norfolk County Council and the Eastern Daily Press, we launched the Every Child Online campaign. Our aim was simple: to ensure every school age child in Norfolk had a digital device and internet connection, so they could learn from home. We were, and are, determined that no child is left behind in their learning because of digital disadvantage.

The scale of the problem

When we launched the appeal, it was estimated that within Norfolk's 430 schools and academies, around 5,000 devices were needed and at least 1,000 households with school-age children were unable to connect to the internet.

In addition, via our network of charities and community groups and the Norfolk Assistance Scheme, we were made aware of hundreds more young people who, whilst outside the school system, desperately needed access to technology to enable them to learn, communicate and apply for work.

Our plan of action

Via Every Child Online, we contacted every Norfolk school to find out from teachers on the front line where the gaps were: which of their students were struggling due to limited or no access to an appropriate computer.

Working with the Eastern Daily Press, we called on businesses and organisations to give pre-used, corporate devices to the Council, to be refurbished and distributed to schools. People were also invited to make a financial donation to the appeal.

The difference you made

As always, you - the Norfolk community - stepped up.

Thanks to all of you who got involved, we were able to deliver **more than 5,000 devices** to Norfolk schools, enabling children to learn from home.

We received amazing contributions from businesses such as **Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm** in Great Yarmouth, **Sheringham Shoal Offshore Windfarm** and **Lotus Cars**.

We are so grateful to everyone for their support.

Plugging the Gap

Sadly, there are always young people who remain invisible. From young carers to children with complex needs; care leavers to those who have recently left school; our **Plug the Gap** initiative identified families and young people facing multiple disadvantages who were not allocated a device through school.

An incredible partnership between **Osiris Technologies, Candour Marketing and Norfolk Community Foundation**, we worked with our fantastic network of charities and voluntary groups, and the **Sir Norman Lamb Coalition for Young People**, to provide **46 devices** to young people who really needed them.

Thank you

To everyone who has stepped up to help us ensure that no child in Norfolk is left behind when it comes to learning online, thank you for the difference you have enabled us to make.

“Thank you so much for the laptop that Carly received. It is going to benefit her a lot with now being able to participate better with Young Carers and with her home learning remotely especially with Covid 19 and most of it being online.”

Dougal, aged 15, lives with his six siblings. There were insufficient resources within the home to enable each child to access their learning activities provided by school. Dougal’s mum says: “Dougal is now using the new laptop to access the school timetable. I’m so grateful for the support as it will really help Dougal get back into learning. He has not been very motivated to learn until now, but this has changed thanks to his new device.”

“Joy was already struggling to keep up in class due to the language barrier and not really having any friends in school yet. Access to a device removed one barrier and really made a huge difference to the way she learns. For example, now when she comes to homework club, she can share the screen with the volunteer teacher, and they can work on the areas she is having problems with much more easily. She can interact with her teacher and classmates better.”

Visit www.norfolkfoundation.com to find out more about our work.

“Every day of learning lost is another hurdle to climb for our children and young people. By combining our resources, energy and skills, Norfolk Community Foundation, Norfolk County Council and our partners and business supporters were able to deliver vital technology to families when it was needed. What we can achieve for Norfolk when we work together is nothing short of amazing!

- **Claire Cullens,**
Chief Executive,
Norfolk Community
Foundation

