



CyberFirst NI Roundup

June 2025

Bringing you the latest news, events, and success stories from CyberFirst Schools & Colleges across Northern Ireland - connecting educators, students, and industry to inspire lasting change in education.

CyberFirst Schools & Colleges Awards

We are proud to welcome three new Silver Schools to the CyberFirst NI community:

- **Glenlola Collegiate School**
- **Rainey Endowed School**
- **St Dominic's Grammar School**



Delivering good standards of cyber security education

Congratulations also to the following schools and colleges who successfully renewed their CyberFirst status:

- Gold: **Bangor Grammar School and South West College**
- Silver: **Dalriada School and Shimna Integrated College**

This brings our total number of CyberFirst Schools and Colleges in Northern Ireland to 31. [Click here](#) to view all our current schools and colleges.

Award Highlights

The 2024-2025 CyberFirst Awards recognised exceptional contributions across the UK, and we are absolutely thrilled that Northern Ireland brought home four awards:

- **Outstanding Ambassador Award: Victoria Logan**
- **Outstanding Teacher Award: Catriona Houston, St Patrick's College, Dungannon**
- **SME Industry Award: Vertical Structure, an Instil Company**
- **Best Bursary Graduate (All-Rounder): Rose Templeton**



Victoria Logan receives her Outstanding Ambassador Award at Aflac NI, following her recognition in the CyberFirst Awards. Although unable to attend the main ceremony, her impact and leadership were proudly celebrated on-site.



Pictured at the CyberFirst Awards: Lorraine McCaffrey (NI Cyber Security Centre), Stephen Wray (Deloitte), Jackie Wishart (NICS), Sara Lyons (CyberFirst NI), Rose Templeton (Vertical Structure), Simon Whittaker (Vertical Structure), and Hugh Tohill (NICS ESS DS).

CyberFirst Girls Competition

A Record-Breaking Year: Congratulations to **St Catherine's College**, Armagh, the top-performing school in Northern Ireland in this year's CyberFirst Girls Competition - our most successful yet.

To celebrate, CyberFirst NI hosted a special event at W5 Belfast in March for the top ten teams, featuring hands-on activities, recognition, and inspiration.



On the Road: Enigma Challenge Launches in NI

84 Year 9 students from [Foyle College](#) took part in the first-ever Enigma Challenge in Northern Ireland - a mobile CyberFirst experience brought directly into the classroom.

Led by trainer Ciaran, students used tools like CyberChef to crack WWII-style coded messages, combining historical context with real-world cybersecurity techniques.

Next stops: [Strathearn School](#), [Rainey Endowed School](#), and [Belfast Model School for Girls](#). We're excited to keep growing the next generation of cyber talent.



Cyber Explorers Cup

Congratulations to [Our Lady's Grammar School](#), Newry, winners of the 2025 Cyber Explorers Cup in Northern Ireland - an interactive competition designed for students aged 11-14 across the UK.

The school will receive £2,000 in tech vouchers and enjoy a special half-day Careers Day, hosted by Cyber Explorers and supported by CyberFirst NI.



Cisco Girls Into IT Event at South West College

As part of the UK-wide Girls Into IT initiative, 100 girls in Northern Ireland took part in an event hosted by [South West College](#), a CyberFirst Gold College. CyberFirst NI Project Manager Sara Lyons judged the Dragon's Den Challenge, showcasing the creativity and innovation of the students.

Due to high demand, South West College ran a second event in Dungannon to accommodate even more participants.

A huge thank you to South West College and Cisco for making this event possible in both Omagh and Dungannon.



Event Highlights

CyberFirst NI reached over 9,000 young people across Northern Ireland this academic year. Here's a few highlights:

- **Cyber Insights Days:** Over 700 Year 10 pupils took part in hands-on cyber activities and industry-led talks
- **CyberNI Week:** 220 pupils from 7 CyberFirst Schools attended events in Belfast and Londonderry
- **Empower Girls:** Over 600 girls from 22 schools joined our flagship event in partnership with Aflac NI. [Read more](#)



Empower Girls!



CyberNI Week



Cyber Insights Days



In the News

PM Launches National Skills Drive

"TechFirst builds on the success of the CyberFirst programme, which has already helped hundreds of thousands of young people gain cyber security skills." [Read more.](#)

All-Island Cybersecurity Sector Report Launch

CyberFirst NI attended the launch of a major sector report by NI Cyber, Cyber Ireland, and InterTradelreland. Key stats: 632 firms, 10,600 professionals, €3.2 billion (£2.9 bn) in revenue, 13.4% annual growth. CyberFirst NI looks forward to deepening cross-border partnerships and educational collaboration. [Read more](#)



Upcoming Event: CyberFirst Advanced

Sponsored by NI Cyber Security Centre

18–22 August 2025, 9:00am - 5:00pm, Belfast Metropolitan College, Castlereagh Campus

A free five-day course for 16–17 year olds interested in cybersecurity. Students will gain hands-on experience in Digital forensics, Encryption technologies, Open-source intelligence and Penetration testing

Includes industry talks, daily lunch, a welcome pack, and a certificate of completion. Places are limited - first come, first served. Register your interest [here](#)

Thank You to our Ambassadors & Industry Supporters

Thank you to all of our CyberFirst Ambassadors and industry partners. Your continued support helps shape the future of cybersecurity talent in Northern Ireland.

Get Involved

Whether you're an educator, student, or industry professional, there are exciting ways to get involved with CyberFirst NI.

Contact: cyberfirst@belfastmet.ac.uk