



South Tyneside Council



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## Press Release

### **NORTHERN GRID AND BT PARTNER TO CONNECT NORTH EAST SCHOOLS TO NEXT GENERATION NETWORK, BROADBAND AND EDUCATION SERVICES**

Over 100,000 North East pupils across the region to benefit

Northern Grid, its partner Local Authorities and BT today announced a five-year deal to connect around 250 schools to next generation network, broadband and education services.

A brand new, high speed network, using a combination of the very latest broadband technologies, will give teachers and pupils safe, secure, flexible and high speed internet access. Schools will also benefit from more secure, resilient network provision.

The deal offers capped pricing with opportunities to reduce costs for schools across the life of the contract. The average cost of broadband connectivity across the 250 schools has been reduced, delivering real savings to schools. The partnership between BT and Northern Grid ensures that costs compare very well with others nationally and are at the lower end of the national pricing range.

Schools across the North East will benefit from safe and secure broadband and additional schools technology services for example virtualised desktop, telephony, security and e-safety.

The new network may form part of a larger, integrated Public Services Network (PSN), linking a range of public sector services such as Local Authorities, health and emergency services.

Paul Ringham, Vice President Local & Devolved Government, BT Global Services, said:

“BT is really excited about the opportunity to work with Northern Grid for Learning. This partnership will deliver financial savings and faster, more reliable internet access for schools right across the North East. Using the very latest broadband technologies pupils will benefit from safe and reliable access to a host of online learning activities. BT is also



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very committed to the adoption of PSN in local government so it is great to see that the new network could eventually form part of an integrated Public Services Network (PSN).”

Mel Philipson, Northern Grid, said:

“This contract provides the best broadband connectivity at the best prices for schools in this region. Northern Grid is very pleased to partner with BT and looks forward to using this opportunity to continue to improve our services to schools boosting our value for money. We are excited by the prospect of working with such a successful company and are committed to work with BT to bring the benefits to as many schools as possible.”

Schools interested in learning more about this brand new service, should contact Northern Grid for Learning on **0191 4611844** or visit [www.northerngrid.org](http://www.northerngrid.org)

**ENDS**

For further information about this press release please contact the Northern Grid on **0191 4611844**. All our news releases can be read at [www.northerngrid.org/press](http://www.northerngrid.org/press)

## About Northern Grid

Northern Grid for Learning was the first Regional Broadband Service established in England. Northern Grid has provided award winning broadband and services to schools in the North East for **12 years**. As a regional organisation, we are able to aggregate broadband procurements, driving down costs and increasing value for money.

We aim to improve the quality of education and learner experiences through the delivery of safe, secure, reliable and affordable broadband services. We understand that broadband is a mission



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critical service for schools and Local Authorities. As a regional organisation with strong national links, we are able to identify, promote and celebrate best practice in North East Schools.

Northern Grid is a Not for Profit organisation where all revenues are used to improve schools' services and reduce costs. Northern Grid is owned by seven North East Local Authorities. We believe that collaboration and co-operation deliver tangible benefits for all schools."

## For more information

Visit [www.northerngrid.org](http://www.northerngrid.org)

Ring **0191 4611844**

## About BT

BT is one of the world's leading providers of communications services and solutions, serving customers in more than 170 countries. Its principal activities include the provision of networked IT services globally; local, national and international telecommunications services to its customers for use at home, at work and on the move; broadband and internet products and services and converged fixed/mobile products and services. BT consists principally of four lines of business: BT Global Services, BT Retail, BT Wholesale and Openreach.

In the year ended 31 March 2011, BT Group's revenue was £20,076m with profit before taxation of £1,717m.

British Telecommunications plc (BT) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of BT Group plc and encompasses virtually all businesses and assets of the BT Group. BT Group plc is listed on stock exchanges in London and New York.

## For more information

Visit [www.btplc.com](http://www.btplc.com)