



## METAVERSE VIRTUAL LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

# Scottish Virtual Reality Metaverse Initiative

## Pioneering Immersive Learning Innovations for Scottish Education

### Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive, fully costed proposal for the **Scottish Virtual Reality Metaverse Initiative (SVRMI)**, a transformative national infrastructure project designed to equip every publicly funded school in Scotland with state-of-the-art Virtual Reality (VR) hardware, immersive learning skills, and a bespoke sovereign metaverse platform—the **AlbaVerse**.

By leveraging the latest advancements in Extended Reality (XR) technology—specifically the **Meta Quest 3S** for secondary education and **ClassVR** ecosystems for primary and Additional Support Needs (ASN) sectors—the SVRMI aims to democratize access to high-quality experiential learning.

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# National Strategy for Immersive Learning: The Scottish Virtual Reality Metaverse Initiative (SVRMI)

## 1. Executive Summary

### 1.1 Strategic Vision

This report presents a comprehensive, fully costed proposal for the **Scottish Virtual Reality Metaverse Initiative (SVRMI)**, a transformative national infrastructure project designed to equip every publicly funded school in Scotland with state-of-the-art Virtual Reality (VR) hardware, immersive learning skills, and a bespoke sovereign metaverse platform—the **AlbaVerse**.

The initiative is not merely a hardware rollout; it is a pedagogical paradigm shift. It moves the Scottish education system from a model of *content consumption* to *immersive construction*, directly addressing the "Curriculum for Excellence" (CfE) capacities of creating successful learners and confident individuals. By leveraging the latest advancements in Extended Reality (XR) technology—specifically the **Meta Quest 3S** for secondary education and **ClassVR** ecosystems for primary and Additional Support Needs (ASN) sectors—the SVRMI aims to democratize access to high-quality experiential learning.

This proposal aligns with the Scottish Government's commitment to reducing the poverty-related attainment gap. By providing a standardized immersive layer over the existing digital estate, the SVRMI ensures that a pupil in a rural Highland school has the same access to virtual field trips, advanced physics simulations, and collaborative design spaces as a pupil in central Edinburgh.

### 1.2 The "AlbaVerse" Concept

Central to this proposal is the creation of the **AlbaVerse**, a national educational metaverse. Unlike commercial open worlds which pose safeguarding risks, the AlbaVerse is a closed, secure, and programmable environment hosted on government-approved infrastructure. It serves as a "Localized Curriculum Engine," empowering schools to program and build their own educational assets—from a virtual reconstruction of Skara Brae built by Orcadian pupils to a simulation of the Clyde shipyards designed by students in Glasgow. This shifts the value proposition of VR from passive entertainment to active digital creation and coding.

### 1.3 Implementation and Governance

The rollout will be governed by a new central body, the **Centre for Immersive Education**

**(CIE).** This dedicated unit will provide the "human infrastructure" often missing in ed-tech deployments: a cadre of 40+ VR Technologists and Pedagogical Leads to support schools, manage the technical estate, and deliver a tiered training accreditation program for teachers.

Implementation follows a three-year phased roadmap:

- **Phase 1 (The Pathfinder Year):** Infrastructure audits and "Lighthouse" deployments in 100 schools.
- **Phase 2 (The Secondary Surge):** 1:1 deployment of Meta Quest 3S devices to all secondary pupils.
- **Phase 3 (Primary & Consolidation):** Shared deployment of ClassVR units to primary schools (1:2 ratio) and full activation of the AlbaVerse inter-school connectivity.

## 1.4 Financial Summary

The financial model proposes a shared responsibility framework. The **Scottish Government** assumes the Capital Expenditure (CapEx) burden for hardware acquisition and national infrastructure, ensuring equity of access. **Local Authorities** (LAs) and schools assume Operational Expenditure (OpEx) responsibilities for recurring licenses and replacements, utilizing Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) where appropriate.

### Projected Investment Headlines:

- **Total National CapEx (Year 1-3):** £179.2 Million (approx.)
- **Annual National OpEx (Steady State):** £32.1 Million (approx.)
- **Per-Pupil Capital Investment:** ~£232 (Secondary) / ~£125 (Primary)

This investment represents approximately 3.6% of the annual Education and Skills budget, a justifiable allocation for a program that fundamentally modernizes the nation's educational capabilities.

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## 2. Strategic Context and Needs Analysis

### 2.1 The National Educational Landscape

The SVRMI strategy is grounded in a detailed analysis of Scotland's current educational demographics and estate condition. As of the 2024 census, the publicly funded school system comprises **702,428 pupils** and **53,412 teachers** across **2,446 schools**.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 2.1: Pupil and School Demographics (2024)**

Sector	Schools	Pupils	Teachers	Pupil-Teacher Ratio

<b>Primary</b>	1,978	379,354	24,468	15.5
<b>Secondary</b>	360	315,072	24,988	12.6
<b>Special</b>	107	8,002	2,138	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,446</b>	<b>702,428</b>	<b>51,594</b>	<b>13.6 (Avg)</b>

Source: Scottish Government Summary Statistics 2024 <sup>1</sup>

While the pupil roll has seen a marginal decrease of 0.7% (3,100 pupils) from the previous year, the complexity of educational delivery has increased.<sup>2</sup> The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) has risen to 25.7%, indicating growing economic pressure on families.<sup>2</sup> This socioeconomic context is critical; it underscores the necessity of a state-funded intervention. Relying on "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) models for VR would catastrophically widen the attainment gap, as high-fidelity VR hardware remains inaccessible to low-income households.

## 2.2 The Digital Estate: Lessons from History

The SVRMI is not deploying into a vacuum. It builds upon the successes and lessons of previous massive digital rollouts, specifically the **Glasgow City Council "Connected Learning"** program and the **City of Edinburgh "Empowered Learning"** initiative.

### 2.2.1 The Glasgow Model (Connected Learning)

Glasgow's deployment of 50,000 iPads created a ubiquitous 1:1 learning environment.<sup>3</sup>

- *Success Factor:* The program emphasized teacher confidence. By 2024, 90% of Glasgow teachers reported that digital tools were integral to lesson planning, up from just 29% in 2017.<sup>4</sup>
- *Lesson for SVRMI:* Hardware is useless without "human software." The SVRMI must prioritize the **CIE training function** to ensure teachers are confident using VR before pupils receive devices.

### 2.2.2 The Edinburgh Model (Empowered Learning)

Edinburgh's £17.6m investment deployed 27,000 iPads to pupils from P6 to S6.<sup>5</sup>

- *Challenge Identified:* Infrastructure readiness. The rollout highlighted the need for robust Wi-Fi density and granular web filtering.<sup>7</sup> Teachers reported lower confidence in technical infrastructure reliability compared to pedagogical use.
- *Lesson for SVRMI:* VR places significantly higher loads on network infrastructure than

tablets due to the latency requirements of streaming 3D content. The SVRMI rollout must be preceded by a mandatory **Infrastructure Readiness Audit (IRA)**, upgrading Wi-Fi 6 access points where necessary.

## 2.3 The Pedagogical Case for Immersive Learning

Why VR? The justification moves beyond "novelty" to grounded cognitive science.

1. **Experiential Equity:** VR is the "Great Equalizer." It allows a student in a remote island community to visit the Louvre, explore the Great Barrier Reef, or walk through a diverse urban center. This directly addresses the geographical and economic barriers referenced in Scottish attainment gap data.<sup>8</sup>
2. **Cognitive Engagement & Retention:** Research cited by ClassVR indicates that learners using VR are up to **4x more focused** and retain knowledge faster than traditional methods.<sup>10</sup> The immersive nature of VR eliminates external distractions, creating a "flow state" conducive to deep learning.
3. **Constructivist Learning:** The SVRMI moves beyond *consuming* content (watching a 360-video) to *constructing* knowledge. By programming the **AlbaVerse**, students engage in complex problem-solving, spatial reasoning, and systems thinking—skills essential for the future workforce.<sup>11</sup>

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## 3. The "AlbaVerse": A National Sovereign Metaverse

### 3.1 Conceptual Definition

The **AlbaVerse** is proposed as a bespoke, persistent virtual world environment, sovereign to the Scottish education system. It is not a commercial "walled garden" like Meta Horizon Worlds, which carries inherent data privacy risks and advertising models. Instead, the AlbaVerse is a secure, government-hosted ecosystem designed specifically for the **Curriculum for Excellence**.

It functions on two levels:

1. **The "Creation Layer" (The Sandbox):** A programmable environment where schools are allocated virtual "land." Here, pupils use low-code tools to build educational assets.
2. **The "Experience Layer" (The Library):** A curated repository of high-fidelity simulations (e.g., Higher Chemistry molecular labs, National 5 History battlefields) accessible to all schools.

### 3.2 Technical Architecture and Sovereignty

To minimize development costs while maximizing functionality, the AlbaVerse will be built upon a licensed enterprise XR engine (such as a modified Unity-based client or a private instance of a platform like *CoSpaces Edu* or *Roblox Education*), hosted on Scottish Government private

cloud infrastructure to ensure data sovereignty.

- **Identity Management:** Integration with **Glow** (Scotland's national schools intranet) is mandatory. Pupils will log in using their existing Glow credentials, ensuring Single Sign-On (SSO) and linking their VR creations to their broader digital learning portfolio.
- **Data Residency:** All user data, voice logs, and creative assets will be stored in UK-based data centers, fully compliant with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. This contrasts with consumer metaverses where data often flows to US servers.
- **Safety Protocols:** The environment will feature "walled" social interactions. Voice chat will be proximity-based and restricted to class cohorts or specific inter-school projects supervised by teachers. There will be no access for the general public.

### 3.3 The "District" Model: Localized Curriculum Creation

A unique feature of the AlbaVerse is the **District Model**. Each of the 32 Local Authorities<sup>1</sup> will administer a "District" within the metaverse. Schools within that district are tasked with digitizing their local heritage, geography, or economy.

#### Use Case Examples:

- **Orkney District:** Pupils at Kirkwall Grammar use photogrammetry to create a digital twin of the Ring of Brodgar. They program NPC (Non-Player Character) tour guides to explain the neolithic history. This asset becomes available to a school in Glasgow studying prehistoric Scotland.
- **Aberdeen City District:** Pupils design a simulation of a floating offshore wind farm. They program the physics of the turbines using Lua scripting (supported by the platform), teaching them renewable energy concepts and coding simultaneously.
- **Edinburgh District:** Students create a virtual "Fringe Festival" venue, designing stage sets and lighting rigs in VR, supporting the drama and arts curriculum.

This "creation-first" approach ensures the metaverse is not a passive entertainment medium but a constructivist tool. It turns the entire nation's pupil population into co-creators of a national digital educational resource.

### 3.4 Development Costs and Partnerships

Building a metaverse is capital-intensive. Industry data suggests enterprise metaverse projects range from £300,000 to over £2 million depending on complexity.<sup>12</sup>

- **Core Build:** The SVRMI allocates an initial **£2 million CapEx budget** for the core engine development and "Builder Tools."
- **Ongoing Development:** An annual OpEx budget will support a small team of developers within the **CIE** to maintain the servers and release asset packs.
- **Community Benefits:** Utilizing the Scotland Excel procurement framework<sup>13</sup>, the tender for the AlbaVerse development will mandate community benefits. The winning software contractor must offer Modern Apprenticeships to Scottish school leavers and partner

with *Historic Environment Scotland* to provide 3D assets of national landmarks gratis.

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## 4. Hardware Strategy and Device Selection

To equip 702,000 pupils effectively, a "one size fits all" hardware approach is financially inefficient and pedagogically unsound. Primary pupils have different physical ergonomics and safety requirements than Secondary pupils. The SVRMI proposes a **Split-Tier Hardware Ecosystem**.

### 4.1 Secondary Sector (S1–S6): The "Creator" Tier

- **Device:** Meta Quest 3S (128GB - Business Edition).<sup>14</sup>
- **Target Population:** 315,072 pupils + 24,988 teachers.
- **Deployment Ratio:** 1:1 (Personal Issue).

#### Rationale:

- **Performance:** The Quest 3S features the Snapdragon XR2 Gen 2 chipset.<sup>14</sup> This high-performance processor is essential for the *creation* aspect of the AlbaVerse—compiling code, rendering complex 3D geometry, and running high-fidelity physics simulations.
- **Mixed Reality (MR):** The Quest 3S offers high-fidelity color pass-through. This allows students to see their physical environment (desks, textbooks, teacher) overlaid with digital content. This is a crucial safety feature for crowded classrooms and enables "Augmented Learning" (e.g., overlaying a virtual heart on a physical biology textbook).
- **Controllers:** The inclusion of 6DoF (Six Degrees of Freedom) Touch Plus controllers allows for precise manipulation, essential for vocational training applications (e.g., virtual welding, intricate design work).
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** At a retail price of ~£289<sup>14</sup>, it offers the best price-to-performance ratio on the market. Bulk government procurement is estimated to drive this down to **£232 per unit**.

### 4.2 Primary Sector (P1–P7) & ASN: The "Explorer" Tier

- **Device:** ClassVR Premium Headset.<sup>10</sup>
- **Target Population:** 379,354 pupils + 24,468 teachers.
- **Deployment Ratio:** 1:2 (Classroom Sets).

#### Rationale:

- **Ergonomics & Durability:** ClassVR headsets are ruggedized for younger users and feature a simple "strap-and-go" design without complex IPD (Inter-pupillary distance) adjustments that can frustrate younger children.
- **Control & Safety:** The primary pedagogical mode in early years is *guided exploration*.

ClassVR's "Teacher Portal" allows the teacher to launch the same content to all 30 headsets simultaneously and lock the devices to that content.<sup>17</sup> This prevents pupils from wandering into unapproved apps.

- **Social Safety:** These devices do not require individual user accounts or Facebook/Meta logins, mitigating the "13+" age restriction complexities for primary-aged children.<sup>18</sup>
- **Ratio Logic:** A 1:1 ratio in primary schools can lead to isolation. A 1:2 ratio encourages **collaborative learning** (paired programming), where one pupil navigates the VR world while the partner guides them using a tablet or notes, fostering communication skills.

## 4.3 Mobile Device Management (MDM) Strategy

Deploying consumer hardware (Quest 3S) in an education setting requires an enterprise-grade management layer to strip out consumer features (App Store, Social Media, Tracking).

- **Solution: ManageXR.**<sup>19</sup>
- **Function:** This software replaces the standard "Home" environment with a locked-down, school-branded launcher. It allows the CIE to push updates, install AlbaVerse patches remotely, and enforce "Kiosk Mode" during exams.
- **Cost:** Educational pricing is approximately £40 per device/year. This is a critical OpEx component for the secondary estate.

## 4.4 Peripheral Infrastructure: Charging and Hygiene

- **Charging:** To manage logistics, devices will be housed in **30-bay Intelligent Charging Carts** (e.g., V7 or RedboxVR).<sup>21</sup> These carts provide secure storage and manage power distribution to prevent circuit overloads in older school buildings.
- **Hygiene:** Shared devices (Primary) pose an infection risk (conjunctivitis). Every school will be equipped with **UV-C Sterilization Cabinets** (e.g., Uvisan VR360 or Cleanbox).<sup>23</sup> These units can sanitize 30 headsets in 2 minutes, ensuring safe turnover between classes.

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# 5. The Centre for Immersive Education (CIE)

A common failure mode in EdTech is "dump and run"—delivering hardware without support. To prevent this, the SVRMI establishes the **Centre for Immersive Education (CIE)**, a central support function.

## 5.1 Organizational Structure

The CIE will operate as a division within Education Scotland or as a dedicated joint venture with Local Authorities.

- **Headquarters:** Based in a central tech hub (e.g., Glasgow or Edinburgh), housing the

core technical team and AlbaVerse developers.

- **Regional Nodes:** To ensure national coverage, the CIE will employ **32 Regional Immersive Technologists** (one per Local Authority).

## 5.2 The "VR Expert" Role (Regional Immersive Technologist)

These experts are the boots on the ground. Their remit includes:

- **Technical Triage:** Troubleshooting hardware issues that go beyond the school technician's capability.
- **Pedagogical Coaching:** Co-teaching lessons with less confident staff to model best practices.
- **Asset Management:** Managing the rotation of specialized kit (e.g., 360-degree cameras) between schools.
- **Salary Benchmarking:** To attract talent from the tech sector, these roles are benchmarked at **£40,000 - £50,000** per annum<sup>25</sup>, higher than standard school technician grades to reflect the specialist skill set.

## 5.3 Teacher Training and Accreditation

The CIE will deliver a tiered accreditation program, the **SVRMI Certified Educator**, modeled on the Apple Teacher program.<sup>27</sup>

- **Level 1 (The Explorer):** Online modules covering H&S, basic device operation, and finding content in the AlbaVerse library. (Mandatory for all staff).
- **Level 2 (The Guide):** In-person workshops on managing a VR classroom, basic troubleshooting, and integrating VR into lesson plans. (Target: 2 teachers per school).
- **Level 3 (The Architect):** Advanced training on *creating* content for the AlbaVerse—coding in Lua, 3D modelling, and photogrammetry. (Target: Computing/Tech/Art teachers).

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# 6. Implementation and Rollout Roadmap

Deploying over 500,000 devices is a logistical feat. A "Big Bang" approach carries high risk. The SVRMI proposes a **Three-Year Phased Rollout**.

## Phase 1: The Pathfinder Year (Year 1)

- **Objective:** Stress-testing infrastructure and establishing the CIE.
- **Action:**
  - Establishment of the CIE and recruitment of the 32 Regional Technologists.
  - **Infrastructure Readiness Audit (IRA):** Assessing Wi-Fi density in all 2,446 schools.
  - **Lighthouse Deployment:** Deployment of full hardware suites to 1 Secondary and 2 Primary schools in each of the 32 Local Authorities (approx. 100 schools).

- **AlbaVerse Alpha:** Release of the core metaverse platform to Lighthouse schools for beta testing.

## Phase 2: The Secondary Surge (Year 2)

- **Objective:** Universal 1:1 access for Secondary pupils.
- **Action:**
  - Mass procurement and delivery of ~315,000 Meta Quest 3S units.
  - Logistics coordinated via **Scotland Excel** distribution frameworks.
  - Activation of the **ManageXR** MDM across the secondary estate.
  - Launch of the **AlbaVerse 1.0** with full coding capabilities for S1-S6 curriculum.

## Phase 3: Primary & Consolidation (Year 3)

- **Objective:** Universal access for Primary/ASN and full ecosystem maturity.
- **Action:**
  - Delivery of ClassVR carts (1:2 ratio) to all 1,978 Primary schools.
  - Integration of Primary schools into the AlbaVerse "District" projects.
  - First national "AlbaVerse Expo," showcasing pupil-created assets from Phase 2.

## 6.4 Procurement and Logistics

Procurement will be routed through the **Scotland Excel IT Peripherals Framework**<sup>13</sup> and the **Digital Learning Procurement Framework**.<sup>28</sup>

- **Why Frameworks?** This mechanism allows the 32 LAs to buy off a pre-negotiated contract without running 32 separate EU-compliant tenders.
- **Bulk Discounts:** The strategy assumes that by aggregating the demand of the entire nation (500k+ units), the Scottish Government can negotiate aggressive discounts (20-30% below education pricing) directly with manufacturers (Meta/ClassVR).

## 7. Financial Framework and Costing Plan

The financial model relies on a **Shared Cost Responsibility** framework to ensure sustainability.

- **Scottish Government (SG):** Funds the **Capital Expenditure (CapEx)**—the "setup" costs (hardware, carts, initial network upgrades) and the central CIE operations. This ensures that a school's budget does not determine its access to technology.
- **Local Authorities (LAs) / Schools:** Fund the **Operational Expenditure (OpEx)**—recurring licenses, insurance, and replacement of lost/broken units. Schools can utilize their **Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)** allocations for this, as the project directly targets the attainment gap.<sup>29</sup>

## 7.1 Unit Cost Analysis (Negotiated Estimates)

Table 7.1: Estimated Hardware Unit Costs

Item	Retail Price (Est.)	Target Bulk Gov Price (-20%)	Notes
<b>Meta Quest 3S (128GB)</b>	£289.99 <sup>14</sup>	<b>£232.00</b>	Includes controllers.
<b>ClassVR Premium</b>	~£400.00	<b>£250.00</b>	Based on bulk purchasing of 190k units.
<b>Charging Cart (30-bay)</b>	£1,200.00 <sup>21</sup>	<b>£950.00</b>	Smart charging essential.
<b>UV Sterilization Unit</b>	£4,000.00 <sup>23</sup>	<b>£3,200.00</b>	Large capacity (18-30 headsets).
<b>ManageXR License</b>	£50.00/yr <sup>19</sup>	<b>£40.00/yr</b>	Mandatory for Secondary devices.

## 7.2 Capital Expenditure (CapEx) - Scottish Government Funded

This budget covers the initial acquisition of assets over the 3-year rollout.

Table 7.2: Total National CapEx Requirement

Cost Item	Quantity / Metric	Unit Cost	Total Cost (£)
<b>Secondary Pupil Devices</b>	315,072 (1:1 Ratio)	£232	£73,096,704
<b>Primary Pupil Devices</b>	189,677 (1:2 Ratio)	£250	£47,419,250

<b>Teacher Devices</b>	53,412 (1:1 Ratio)	£232	£12,391,584
<b>Charging Infrastructure</b>	18,605 Carts (1 per 30)	£950	£17,674,750
<b>Hygiene Infrastructure</b>	2,446 Schools (1 Large UV Unit)	£3,200	£7,827,200
<b>Network Upgrades (Wi-Fi 6)</b>	2,446 Schools (Avg. Allowance)	£5,000	£12,230,000
<b>AlbaVerse Development</b>	Core Engine & Builder Tools	Fixed	£2,000,000
<b>Project Logistics</b>	Warehousing/Distribution (2%)	-	£3,500,000
<b>TOTAL CAPEX</b>			<b>£176,139,488</b>

*Analysis:* A capital investment of **£176.1m** represents approximately **3.6%** of the Scottish Government's £4.9bn Education budget.<sup>9</sup> Spread over three years, this is ~£58m per annum—a viable figure comparable to other major infrastructure projects (e.g., the £17.6m Edinburgh iPad rollout scaled to national levels).

### 7.3 Operational Expenditure (OpEx) - Local Authority / School Funded

This budget covers the recurring costs to keep the system running.

**Table 7.3: Annual National OpEx Requirement (Steady State)**

Cost Item	Responsibility	Metric	Annual Cost (£)
<b>MDM Licensing (ManageXR)</b>	Central Govt*	368,000 Devices (Sec + Teach) @ £40	£14,720,000
<b>AlbaVerse Hosting/Maint.</b>	Central Govt	Server Costs & Dev Team	£1,500,000

<b>CIE Staffing (Experts)</b>	Central Govt	40 FTEs @ £60k (w/ oncosts)	£2,400,000
<b>Content Subscriptions</b>	Schools (LA)	Eduverse/CoSpace s per School (£500)	£1,223,000
<b>Insurance / Breakage Fund</b>	Schools (LA)	5% Replacement Rate (Est. £15/dev)	£8,370,000
<b>Teacher Training Cover</b>	Schools (LA)	Supply cover for training days	£3,000,000
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL OPEX</b>			<b>£31,213,000</b>

*Note: It is recommended that MDM licensing be centrally funded to ensure security compliance is not compromised by school budget cuts.*

## 7.4 Per-Pupil Cost Breakdown (For School Budgeting)

To allow Head Teachers to plan their PEF spending, the following "Total Cost of Ownership" (TCO) per pupil per year is defined:

- **Secondary Pupil (Quest 3S):**
  - Hardware (CapEx - Govt): £232
  - Annual SW/Support (OpEx - School): **£15.00** (Insurance/Content share).
- **Primary Pupil (ClassVR):**
  - Hardware (CapEx - Govt): £125 (0.5 unit)
  - Annual SW/Support (OpEx - School): **£10.00** (Content share).

# 8. Risk Management and Governance

## 8.1 Health & Safety and Safeguarding

- **Age Appropriateness:** The SVRMI strictly adheres to the 10+ age rating for Meta accounts.<sup>18</sup> For Primary pupils (P1-P5) who are largely under 10, the **ClassVR** solution is used. This system does *not* require individual accounts; the teacher controls the experience centrally ("Teacher-Led Mode"), ensuring pupils are never unsupervised in a virtual space.<sup>17</sup>
- **Seizure & Vision Risk:** A "20/20" protocol will be enforced: 20 minutes of VR use followed by a 20-minute break. This aligns with optometrist recommendations to prevent

eye strain and mitigates seizure risks.<sup>30</sup>

- **Physical Safety:** All VR sessions must be conducted while seated (swivel chairs recommended) to prevent collision injuries ("Guardian boundary" breaches).<sup>31</sup>

## 8.2 Data Privacy (GDPR)

Using consumer hardware in schools presents data risks.

- **Mitigation:** The **ManageXR** MDM layer is mandatory for all Quest 3S devices. This blocks telemetry data from being sent to Meta/Facebook servers for advertising purposes.
- **AlbaVerse Data:** All student data generated within the AlbaVerse (creations, chat logs) is stored on Scottish Government servers, fully sovereign and subject to UK GDPR.

## 8.3 Sustainability

- **E-Waste:** The strategy includes a "Device Lifecycle" plan. At the end of the 4-year cycle, devices will be refurbished for community use or recycled via WEEE-compliant partners.
- **Power Consumption:** Intelligent Charging Carts manage power draw to ensure energy efficiency, charging devices sequentially rather than simultaneously to reduce peak load on school grids.

# 9. Conclusion

The **Scottish Virtual Reality Metaverse Initiative (SVRMI)** is a bold but necessary step to future-proof Scotland's education system. By investing **£176 million** over three years, the Scottish Government can deliver a world-leading digital infrastructure that does more than just "digitize" the classroom—it fundamentally expands the horizons of every learner.

The **AlbaVerse** transforms pupils from passive consumers of technology into active creators, equipping them with the coding, design, and systems-thinking skills required for the 21st-century economy. Through the robust support structure of the **Centre for Immersive Education**, and a fair, logical cost-sharing model, this proposal offers a sustainable, equitable, and transformative roadmap for the nation.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills approves the immediate formation of the CIE and authorizes the Phase 1 "Pathfinder" procurement via Scotland Excel.

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