On behalf of the Department for Education I would like to express my sincere thanks to you and to the University of Southampton for supporting the Network of Teaching Excellence in Computer Science (NoE) as one of the ten university regional centres in the network.

All ten universities in the network have exceptional computer science school outreach initiatives in place and provide outstanding support to teachers in their region. I would particularly like to highlight the contribution of Professor Leslie Carr, Dr Janice Griffiths, and Robert D. Blair, who have led the work at the University of Southampton.

The Government introduced a new statutory computing curriculum for all state maintained primary and secondary schools in September last year, with the aim of establishing computing as a core subject discipline in schools on a par with the natural sciences. The success of this new curriculum depends on school teachers, headteachers and school governors who, although enthusiastic about the new curriculum, mostly have no background in computer science.

The NoE aims to build communities of computing teachers who support each other to improve their subject knowledge, something essential if the subject is to become firmly established over the long term. The NoE is funded by the DfE and run by the Computing At School group (CAS). It is now in its third year and has so far helped over 40,000 teachers gain in expertise and confidence. The NoE has grown to the point where it needs strong regional strategic leadership to ensure it continues to provide high quality professional development at scale, which is why we decided to establish the ten regional centres.
Thanks to your staff and those from the other universities involved, we will be able to make sure school teachers throughout the country have access to the support they need to become excellent teachers of computer science.

With best wishes.

Nick Gibb MP