



# NEN Technical Standards for Standalone Primary Schools

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## Executive Summary

This document focusses on the technical aspects of implementing ICT in a single standalone primary school that is not part of a MAT. This brief Executive summary is designed for school leaders to introduce the concept of what, at a high level, is required to take place. The document then goes on to the technical detail, referencing the DfE standards documents where they exist and providing additional detail when they do not so that a holistic solution is referenced.

### A design for ICT in a single Non MAT Primary School

#### Preamble

This paper is to supplement the guidance published by DfE on meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges>

In primary schools it is not uncommon to find considerable variation between the devices in use and in the solutions found in nursery, infant and junior settings. These issues can represent a significant challenge to school leadership teams, representing a significant risk in respect of security, manageability, cost of refresh, reliability and compliance issues. That said, developing a solution is not about '*standardisation*' and updates for its own sake. Rather, the approach below is based on an acknowledgement that whilst a degree of autonomy desirable, two key concepts should underpin the approach to the solutions adopted:

- The need for a **common core** in respect of the technologies driving the overall network, particularly in respect of those that are 'invisible' to users; and
- A **flexible edge** - i.e. the concept of deploying different device types and/or software etc. to meet the demands of different key stages, individual's special/additional educational needs, and/or teacher pedagogies.

#### The four-layer model:

Technical solutions in any school can be viewed as comprising of four layers:

1. External technologies carrying traffic from/to the wall of the institution
2. Internal technologies that carry traffic around each institution's estate
3. The hardware systems that users put their hands on
4. The software applications in use

#### Layer One: The external technologies carrying traffic from/to the wall

The connectivity should be brought up to specification whenever expiry of the current contract allows. DfE guidance on this layer is found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/broadband-internet-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Whilst it is in this layer that the '**Common Core**' principle applies most readily, simply changing Broadband provision may not be the whole solution as there are many elements inside the school which may affect the performance of the internet service. These are the 'dependencies' described in the DfE guidance; i.e. the technologies found in Layer Two.

#### Layer Two: The Internal Technologies that carry traffic around each institution's estate

The Local Area Network also needs to be fit for purpose, with internal network cabling (sometimes called the '*passive network infrastructure*') and internal network equipment (sometimes the '*active network infrastructure*') such as switches, routers and wireless access points (WAPs) being key to performance. These elements are covered by two separate sections in the DfE guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/network-cabling-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/switch-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

The position in respect of *passive network infrastructure* is complex. Faulty or low specification cabling will have a negative impact on the quality of network performance as it plays a critical role in the speed of data transfer. It may not be possible, however, just to rip it out and start again as it can be disruptive and expensive to replace cabling buried in walls or carried in ducts above ceilings.

It is in this layer, too, that the '*Common Core*' applies most readily, with the technical specifications applying to these active networking components.

**Layer Three: *The hardware systems that users put their hands on***

At present DfE guidance does not extend to this level, under which the vast majority of an institution's hardware estate is found, and it is here that the '*Flexible Edge*' concept comes into play. This layer includes classroom toolkits and end-user devices, e.g.:

- IWBs/Display/Visualisers;
- Desktop PCs, Laptops, Chromebooks, Tablets;
- Peripherals like cameras/video cameras;
- Robotic kits;
- Specialist music devices;
- Multi-Function Devices (MFDs) and/or printers, scanners, etc.;
- Cashless catering equipment;
- Access control equipment ... and much more

Whilst there is absolutely no suggestion these be standardised - as different subjects, learners' ages, teachers' pedagogy, additional/special educational needs etc. should dictate the chosen solution - any degree of commonality, even if there are several different 'sets' of equipment, will make support easier and offer greater economy of scale in purchasing.

In making choices several considerations apply when determining an asset's fitness for purpose:

- Affordability
- Usability
- Reliability/robustness
- Warranty period
- Longevity
- Energy consumption
- Carbon footprint
- Security
- Upgradeability
- End of life disposal arrangements

**Layer Four:** The Software such as the MIS, back office administrative, productivity & curriculum software. Where possible this should also be standardised, but a different curriculum application stack may well apply to Early Years c.f. Key Stage 1 & 2 as different tools will be appropriate to their respective needs.

## Fundamental Technical Principles

The fundamental principle behind this document is that schools should take advantage of public cloud services where it is commercially advantageous to do so. At the time of writing this document, this typically means the use of either Google Workspace for Education Fundamentals or Microsoft 365 A1 both of which offer significant cloud-based tools free of charge for education establishments. It is expected that these services will form the basis of the school's ICT systems and it's likely that some additional bolt-on services will be required for either system.

## Local Services

The following services will typically operate from equipment based on-site in the school (i.e. not available over the internet connection/cloud services). The equipment hosting these services will vary by ICT supplier:

- DHCP services
- File shares for:
  - Legacy data (where absolutely essential and for data that the school does not want to be located in the cloud)
  - School specific purchased content (where no cloud option is available for that content)
- Print queues and any legacy print management systems
- Backup of cloud services data (unless a second cloud backup service is in use)
- Any other school specific system which cannot be operated from the cloud services (examples may include older MIS/finance system products, older telephony services, door access control systems, cashless catering, CCTV systems or BMS [building management systems])

**Note:** schools should be planning to reduce the need for on-premise systems which may require a server. Therefore, consideration should be given to any future purchase of equipment which may have a dependency on local servers (e.g. CCTV, door access control, cashless catering, admin/curriculum applications/content). In many cases cloud versions are available or are in development with suppliers.

## Cloud Services

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Cloud Solution standards here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/cloud-solution-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

The following services will be located in the Cloud/3<sup>rd</sup> Party provider:

- Education collaboration services through Google or Microsoft 365 (Google Classroom or SharePoint/Teams)
- Email through Google or Microsoft 365 (Gmail or Exchange Online)
- Google or Microsoft 365 for user data (Google Drive or OneDrive)
- Device Management, including the management of operating system updates (Google for Chromebooks, Microsoft Intune for Windows/Apple devices or 3<sup>rd</sup> party for Apple, if Intune is not sufficient)
- School MIS / Finance systems (where possible)
- DNS services (using a public DNS supplier)
- Telephone services (if not an older, on-site system)
- Network and wireless management systems (subject to a subscription – note this subscription should not be a mandatory requirement for the functionality of the network/wireless systems, just for management)
- Multi-factor authentication
- Backup of Cloud data (unless an on-site backup device is used)
- HR/Payroll services

### Note:

1. The section above discusses the use of Google or/and Microsoft cloud tools, whilst there would be significant benefits to standardising on one platform in terms of the user experience and there being a single system for all users to access, it may be that schools would benefit from the use of both systems in parallel; for example it may be that Staff use the Microsoft cloud platform for collaboration across the school but that Google is used for teaching and learning. This would allow schools to leverage the best of both systems, however, there would need to be clear 'sign-posts' to ensure that staff users (who would generally be accessing both systems) have a clear understanding as to which system is used for what purpose.

## Connectivity

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Broadband standards here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/broadband-internet-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Primary schools should have a broadband connection capable of supporting the use of the cloud systems. The connection should be based on the following specifications:

- Full fibre-optic (sometimes described as leased lines or fibre to the premises [FTTP] – older, copper connections do not meet the standard and should be avoided)
- Equally fast in both directions (synchronous) upstream and downstream. If this is not possible, primary schools should have a minimum 100Mbps download speed and a minimum of 30Mbps upload speed (schools larger than 500 pupils should consider 200Mbps download/100Mbps upload connections)
- Uncontended – i.e. not shared with others

- Easily and affordably upgradeable – i.e. a primary school purchasing a 100Mbps connection should request this is provided over a 1Gbs ‘bearer’ (this will allow the connection to be upgraded to 1Gbs without any additional cabling work)
- Redundant – i.e. a second or back-up line should be included, and this back-up line should ideally be diversely routed so as not to be hostage to a single event like accidental / deliberate vandalism and/or a Network Operating Centre failure
- Safe and secure – with the school protected from:
  - Hacking, Penetration, Data Theft, Ransomware attacks, etc.
  - Deliberate Denial of Service attacks

This means connections should be properly protected by firewall devices. This firewall should be managed by the broadband provider on behalf of the school, subject to a documented Change Control process

## Internet Filtering

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Filtering and Monitoring standards here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

All access to the internet should be filtered through an educationally relevant internet filtering system such that pupil access is filtered and monitored in accordance with the ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ document, paragraphs 140 – 147 (2022 document). This should be achieved using a product which meets the requirements, this should ensure granular control of internet access for all users. Schools can consult the UK Safer Internet Centre to choose an appropriate product/supplier (<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/teachers-and-school-staff/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring/filtering-provider-responses>)

An appropriate system will recognise the individual user using each device and filter internet access according to the profile of the user (i.e. a teacher would expect to experience a different level of filtering to a pupil). All pupil internet browsing should be recorded such that an individual’s access can be tracked if required.

Where practical the filtering system should be configured to automatically send scheduled and/or real-time alerts to the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Schools should consider their off-site internet filtering requirements. This may be for school owned pupil or staff devices which are taken off-site. Modern filtering platforms frequently support on-device filtering managed through a central platform. This should be considered in conjunction with an Approved Use Policy (AUP) for both pupils and staff.

## User Directory Services

Underpinning any multi-user ICT system is an underlying User Directory. This is true for on-site or cloud hosted systems. Schools should consider the use of appropriate tools to link their MIS to the user directory such that users are automatically created in the relevant directory when the user is added to the school’s MIS. The system would then email back to the school the relevant user details that have been created.

Such a system will ensure that users are created automatically against a set of pre-defined rules. The system will also be able to pull across class and timetable information, which can then feed into the relevant cloud provider’s systems to setup relevant groups.

## Multi Factor Authentication (MFA)

MFA should be used for all staff at a minimum and should protect access to all cloud services and management systems (where supported by the provider). MFA is typically achieved using a mobile phone device with a relevant provider’s authentication app (e.g. Google or Microsoft Authenticator). However, where users strongly resist the use of a mobile phone device, dedicated hardware-based tokens can be used, which are purchased for each individual needing a token.



## Cyber Essentials

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Cyber Security standards here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/cyber-security-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

The Academy's Finance Handbook makes a recommendation that schools and trusts should look to complete Cyber Essentials. This is an important benchmark which can be used by schools to ascertain how their ICT systems are protected from potential cyber-attacks. As such schools should review their ICT systems holistically in order to understand any potential weaknesses/areas for improvement.

Once the school has completed their own assessment satisfactorily, then progressing down the formal Cyber Essentials / Cyber Essentials Plus certification should be considered. Schools should consider this an independent audit of their systems. Any recommendations/areas of improvement MUST be acted on in order for the school to be comfortable in the security of their systems. Typically, Cyber Essentials audits allow a period of time for rectification work to take place within the cost of the initial certification exercise.

Cyber Essentials Plus includes an on-site audit to verify the information that the school provides through the Cyber Essentials self-assessment and should be considered the baseline for schools to aim for.

## Servers

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Servers and Storage standards here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/servers-and-storage-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

### Minimum Recommended Hardware Specification

As discussed above, there is the potential for schools to retain a local server on-site. Where this is necessary, the server should be of the following minimum specification, although your ICT Supplier may recommend a specification specific to your requirements:

#### Notes:

1. As mentioned above, schools should be looking to reduce the need for on-premise server infrastructure, indeed if the school/Trust has already fully committed to a Google or Microsoft cloud platform then there may not be any servers in place currently
2. ALL servers should be genuine UK stock with manufacturer backed support and warranty
3. Please ensure that the specification of any server device allows for the operation of Police CyberAlarm in addition to any specific requirements of the school (<https://www.cyberalarm.police.uk/>)

Small form factor server device (tower PC size or equivalent)

4 core processor

Minimum of 32GB RAM

2x 200GB SFF SATA SSD for Operating System, configured as RAID1

2x 2TB SFF SATA SDD for DATA, configured as RAID1 as a minimum

Hardware RAID controller

2 x 1Gbs RJ45 network connections

Dedicated hardware based remote management capabilities, including the ability for a support provider to remotely control the server console at a hardware level

TPM 2.0

5yr next business day warranty

## Operating System Licensing

Note:

1. If a school/Trust has already fully committed to a Google or Microsoft cloud platform then there may be no need for an on-premise server and any associated licensing, therefore, this section only applies where a server IS required on-site

It would be expected that a Primary School is unlikely to require more than two virtual servers operating on any hardware-based server. As such, the school should ensure that they have appropriate licenses to support two servers. In the case of Microsoft licensing, this would mandate a minimum of a 16 core Windows Server Standard license<sup>1</sup> – this allows for the server itself and two virtual servers to operate.

Your ICT supplier should be able to advise you on the correct version of Windows Server to use based on the school requirements. However, school should aim to use the latest stable release to ensure longevity of support for the server (Windows Server 2022 is the current version at the time of writing this document).

## Virtual Server Specification

Where using virtual servers, schools should ensure that the servers are built with 'thick' provisioned storage – this prevents the storage being over-allocated which could cause issues in the future. Virtual servers should be built to a specification which meets the requirements of the server without exceeding the available physical resources in the server, allowing sufficient resources for the server itself to operate (e.g. if the server has 32GB RAM, then no more than 28GB should be allocated across the virtual servers).

## Server UPS

Any server device should be connected to an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS), rated to support the running of the server for 10 minutes whilst allowing sufficient battery power for the server to shut down gracefully (i.e. not simply switch off). The school should consider purchasing a new UPS device in conjunction with the server in order to ensure that they're not relying on an old system.

## System Administration Accounts

Schools need to carefully consider what system administration accounts are in use and how they're used. Good practise would include:

- Never use a network system administration account for day-to-day activities (such as reading email, internet browsing and/or downloading files from the internet). System administrators should have a personal 'standard' user account for day-to-day activities and a separate system administration account. This reduces the risk of malware accidentally being introduced into the system
- Never share system administration accounts between users – each member of staff/3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor needing system administration privileges should have an individual named account
- Consideration should be given to disabling the default 'Administrator' accounts (only if alternative accounts have been created first). Usernames such as 'Administrator' or 'Admin' are prime targets for potential hackers trying to access the system

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<sup>1</sup> Note that Microsoft mandate a minimum of 16 processor core licenses for a Windows Server Standard license, however, if you have a server with more than 16 physical processor cores installed, then you will need to increase the number of Windows Server processor core licenses to match the number of physical processor cores. Also note that if more than two virtual servers are required, then additional licenses will be required in multiples of 16

- Consideration should be given to enabling multi-factor authentication for system administration access to the local network (in addition to administration access to any cloud service)
- If a 3<sup>rd</sup> party needs system administration access to the system then this should only be granted if confirmed it's absolutely necessary and any such access should be through a named account which is set to automatically expire once the 3<sup>rd</sup> party's work is complete

## System Service Accounts

Where there is an on-site system, system service accounts may be required for certain applications to function. Schools should take a zero-trust approach to these service accounts and grant the minimum access necessary for the application to function. Simply giving an account 'Domain Admin' access is not good practise.

Where possible system service accounts should be configured (through Group Policy Objects) to 'Deny Logon Locally'. This will prevent a hacker using a service account to access the school network.

## Anti-Virus

Schools should ensure that there is an appropriate anti-virus system in place. This should be configured for real-time scanning on all devices and weekly full scans of the local drives at a convenient time when the devices are likely to be switched on (perhaps first thing in the morning, before the school day?).

The anti-virus system should include a central management tool (likely based in the cloud) which can report the status of all devices. This system should be configured to ensure that the anti-virus definition files are no older than 12 hours from those available on the manufacturer's website.

Reporting should be configured on the anti-virus console such that the person responsible for managing the system receives alerts advising of any virus infection that cannot automatically be resolved by the system itself.

Google Chrome OS devices are designed to be more secure than other operating systems and have built in anti-virus systems. This along with centralised management and application deployment should result in a reasonably secure environment. However, schools should consider deploying anti-virus software across their Chrome OS devices, especially if the school has anti-virus licenses available.

## Anti-Malware

Schools may wish to consider the use of anti-malware software (some schools may have this bundled with their broadband connection). Where such a system is used, the anti-malware software should conform to the same principles as the anti-virus software above.

## Operating System & Firmware Updates

Schools must have a register of key devices/systems in place. This should clearly show the following details:

- The function of the device/system
- The manufacturer and model number of the device/system
- The date the device/system was purchased
- The expiry date of any support purchased with the device/system
- The version of installed software/firmware on the device/system

Where practical, schools should ensure that they are using devices which are capable of running a fully supported version of the relevant operating system. Appropriate manufacturer or 3<sup>rd</sup> party management systems (e.g. Windows Server Update Services) should be used to ensure that the devices are fully updated with the latest updates within 14 days of the update being made available.

Where there is no manufacturer or 3<sup>rd</sup> party management system, the school should ensure that the person/organisation responsible for the ICT system carries out at least a quarterly check of the items on the register to validate whether there are any critical updates which need to be applied to the device/system. Any such updates should be applied as soon as possible.

If the device/system is not capable of being updated then the school should consider disposing/replacing the device or system!

## Police CyberAlarm

Where supported by the school's broadband provider and where there is an appropriate device within the school to host the service, schools should implement the Police CyberAlarm<sup>2</sup> (PCA). Schools should register for this individually at <https://www.cyberalarm.police.uk/>. This will collect system data from the school's firewall and forward it a central repository for trend analysis (no user or confidential data is recorded).

Police CyberAlarm will need to operate on a server device located within the school and should be factored into the specification of any server above.

## DHCP Services

Schools or their ICT supplier will need to ensure that there is a Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) service in place, this is typically located on a server but can also operate on a network switch or firewall device. The DHCP server will allocate unique IP addresses to the school's device, along with any other required information needed to communicate with the internet. Typical DHCP settings include:

- Range of IP addresses to allocate
- Network subnet mask
- Default gateway (router IP address)
- DNS server address
- Any telephone system specific information

## DNS Services

Schools or their ICT supplier will need to ensure that DHCP is providing the details of an appropriate Domain Name Services (DNS) server. This is likely to be the local server (if a server is present) or it could be your broadband provider or a public DNS server on the internet (e.g. Google's public DNS service).

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<sup>2</sup> Note that PCA is mandatory for academies wishing to join the DfE's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA)

## Backup

Schools need to pay careful attention to their backup strategy, it's important that the school understands what data they have, where it's stored, where it's backed up to, how frequently and how long the backup is stored for?

Again, the DfE RPA mandates a structured approach to backup which should include the following key principles:

- Ensure that backups are not stored in a location which is easy for a hacker to access (i.e. don't use a constantly connected USB hard disk)
- Ensure that there is a copy of backup data in an offline storage location (ideally located in the cloud somewhere....but not the same cloud where you have your main data stored)
- Ensure that only authorised users have access to your backup data.

The nature of cloud storage is that it is not online storage to the local on-site system. Cloud has to be accessed either by a user or a specially configured piece of software, therefore, it's inherently more secure than local storage, subject to suitable password strength.

Here are two scenarios around backups:

### Scenario 1 – school data in the cloud

In this scenario the school has all their data stored in the cloud (either Google or Microsoft 365), whilst both providers have a rudimentary data retention policy, it's not a backup solution. The standard offerings are essentially the same as the Windows Recycle Bin – a user can recover a delete file themselves for a period of up to 90 days. For a full backup, the school would either:

- Purchase a secondary cloud backup service (which would take regular backups of the live cloud data). This would act as a full backup and keep data for as long as the system is configured, up to the amount of storage purchased by the school

or

- Purchase an on-site storage device (which would stay on-site in the school), with some appropriate software which would backup the cloud data and store it on the device. It's important this device is dedicated to the backup function and is not used by users for other purposes

### Scenario 2 – School has on-site servers

In this scenario, the school has some on-site servers, which need to be backed up. In this case, the school would need to purchase a backup storage device, some backup software (which includes the ability to backup to a cloud storage provider) and some cloud storage. This system would backup the school servers to the storage device but then also take an additional copy and store it in the cloud storage area.

In all cases the backup systems should be monitored to ensure that the backup is functioning correctly, and a regular testing regime should be implemented to ensure that the backups can be used to restore data. Any testing should include a full restore of a system/service rather than simply restoring individual files.

## Network Switching

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Network Switching standards here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/switch-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

A primary school may not need a core switch as such as the size of the network will be much smaller than a typical secondary school. However, should a school have a particularly large network or large number of hub rooms, then a core switch may be appropriate.

### Core Switch

A core switch is a high-capacity switch generally positioned within the backbone or physical core of a network. Core switches serve as the gateway to the wider network:

\* Quantity of Core Switches will depend on the number of remote hub rooms and any server devices which will connect to the core switches:

- There should be a minimum of two switches (or a chassis device with dual management modules)
- The switches should have dual power supplies
- Where multiple switches are used, the switches should stack at a minimum of 40Gbps using dedicated stacking ports
- Must support current mix of fibre types and copper Ethernet including
  - Minimum of 24x copper UTP ports appropriate to the devices needing to connect (e.g. some devices may require 2.5, 5 or 10Gbps)
  - Support POE appropriate to the devices needing to connect
  - Appropriate number of 10Gbps SFP+ ports for the number of hub rooms such that each hub room is connected with 2 x 10Gbps links (with at least 2 spare)
- Support layer 3 switching, VLANs, access control lists and spanning tree support
- Rack mountable
- Support integration into a central configuration management platform with 5yr license included
- All core switches must have the manufacturer recommended software\firmware installed
- Lifetime warranty

### Access Switches

Access switches are the only one that directly interacts with end-user devices. Because an access network switch connects the majority of devices to the network, it normally has the highest port density of all switch types:

\*Quantity of Access Switches will depend on the amount of end devices in each area

- Either individual 1U switches or a chassis switch
- Where multiple switches are used, the switches should stack at a minimum of 40Gbps using dedicated stacking ports
- The switch or stack of switches should support 2 x 10Gbps network links to the main core switches
- Where high-speed WiFi 6+ access points are in use, the switches should support 2.5, 5 or 10Gbps connections to maximise wireless throughput
- Rack mountable
- Support integration into a central configuration management platform
- Must support 802.11af or 802.11bt appropriate to the devices needing to connect (e.g. high-performance WiFi 6+ access points will require higher power)
- Should support LLDP-Med
- All access switches must have the manufacturer recommended software\firmware installed
- Lifetime warranty

## VLANs

VLANs may need to be configured to ensure separation of network traffic for guest wireless users, the switch specifications above support the use of VLANs

## Network Patching

Schools should try to follow a patching colour scheme – this helps with the diagnosis of faults in the future (the scheme should be documented and a list showing the purpose of each colour cable kept in each network cabinet location). An example is shown below:

Device	Colour
Servers	Yellow
Wired	Grey
Access Points	Red
Printers	Purple
CCTV	Black
Telephones	Green

## Wireless

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Wireless Network standards here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/wireless-network-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

## Surveys

Schools should work with their ICT Supplier to carry out a survey of the school to ensure that an appropriate number of wireless access points are purchased to provide coverage across the whole school. This may include external wireless access points if the school needs wireless coverage in certain areas outside of the school buildings (note, there is likely to be some coverage from access points within the building, but this may be limited in terms of performance and range)

## Hardware Specification

Wireless access points should be a minimum of:

- WiFi 6 (802.11ax)

- Support 2x2 MIMO as an absolute minimum

- Support 2.4GHz and 5GHz

- Support either an on-site controller, use of an access point as a controller or integrate with a cloud hosted controller (note, the use of a dedicated on-site controller is the least preferred option)

- 802.11af PoE powered

- Support multiple SSIDs

- Support RADIUS authentication

- Support secured guest wireless access through the use of a time limited user account, managed by non-technical staff.

- Guest access should be separated from the main network such that access to any on-site server devices is not possible

Appropriate speed network interface as needed to support the maximum performance of the access point (i.e. 1, 2.5, 5 or 10Gbps)

Lifetime warranty

Full Apple Bonjour support across VLANs

External access points should conform to the minimum specifications above

## Wireless Networks/SSIDs

Wireless networks/SSIDs should be created as appropriate for the school use, as a minimum this is expected to be:

SSID for school managed devices

SSID for guest users - This SSID should restrict access to internet services only and prevent access to the local servers

Others may be required depending on the school's requirements.

## Wireless Security

Where possible wireless security should be configured such that no un-authorised access can be obtained to either the main wireless SSIDs or the Guest SSID. Schools should consider the use of named accounts for guest access.

## Access Point Mounting

An appropriate survey (either paper based or physical) should be carried out using appropriate survey tools to establish the wireless access point quantities and locations based on the school's requirements. Access points should be mounted as per manufacturer recommendations (usually ceiling mounted). Where the access point is not visible (e.g. installed in a ceiling void or behind an obstruction), then an appropriate label should be mounted adjacent to the access point location to allow easy identification.

## Workstations/Laptops

All devices should be UK stock from an authorised reseller

### Warranty Requirements

All new desktops and laptops should be provided with the following warranty cover:

#### Desktop Devices (including Apple desktops)

5 years on-site, next business day warranty

#### Laptop Devices (including Apple laptops)

Minimum 3 years return to base, 5-day turnaround from receipt warranty



## Minimum Recommended Hardware Specification – PC / Laptop Devices

All newly purchased workstations should meet the following minimum specifications:

Note: All mobile devices should be capable of being charged via USB-C

Device Type	Vendor	CPU	RAM	SDD (GB)	GPU	Screen Size	Operating System	Wifi	Warranty
Staff - All in One Desktop	Tier 1	Latest Gen Intel i5	16GB	512	Integrated	24"	Windows 11	Wifi 6	5 years
Staff Laptop Touch screen	Tier 1	Latest Gen Intel i5	16GB	512	Integrated	13-14"	Windows 11	Wifi 6	5 years
Staff Laptop Non-Touch screen	Tier 1	Latest Gen Intel i5	16GB	512	Integrated	13-14"	Windows 11	Wifi 6	5 years
Student All in One Desktop	Tier 1	Latest Gen Intel i3	8GB	256	Integrated	22"	Windows 11	Wifi 6	5 years
Student Laptop Touch Screen	Tier 1	Latest Gen Intel i3	8GB	256	Integrated	11 -13"	Windows 11	Wifi 6	5 years
High Specification Desktops	Tier 1	Latest Gen Intel i7	16GB	512	Dedicated	24"	Windows 11	Wifi 6	5 years

## Minimum Recommended Hardware Specification – ChromeOS Devices

All ChromeOS hardware should be purchased via an authorised reseller and enrolled into the School's Google Workspace for Education platform. This will require the purchase of a Chrome Device Management license for each device.

Device Type	CPU	RAM	Storage (GB)	Screen Size	Connectivity	Warranty
Desktop	Dual core	8GB	128	24"	1Gbs LAN + Wifi 6	5 years
Staff Laptop Non-touch screen	Dual core	8GB	128	14"	Wifi 6	5 years
Staff Laptop Touch screen	Dual core	8GB	128	14"	Wifi 6	5 years
Student Laptop Non-touch screen	Dual core	4GB	64	12"	Wifi 6	5 years
Student Laptop Touch screen	Dual core	4GB	64	12"	Wifi 6 only	5 years
Tablet	Quad core	4GB	64	11"	Wifi 6 only	5 years

## Minimum Recommended Hardware Specification – Apple Devices

All Apple hardware should be purchased via an Authorised reseller and enrolled into the School’s Mobile Device Management system. Apple desktop devices should include a WIRED keyboard and mouse rather than wireless

Device Type	CPU	RAM	Storage (GB)	GPU	Screen Size	Operating System	Connectivity	Warranty
iMac	M1	8GB	256	Integrated	24”	Latest Mac OS	1Gbs LAN + Wifi 6	5 years
Mac Mini	M1	8GB	256	Integrated	22” monitor required	Latest Mac OS	1Gbs LAN + Wifi 6	5 years
MacBook Air	M1	8GB	256	Integrated	13.3”	Latest Mac OS	Wifi 6	5 years
MacBook Pro	M2	16GB	512	Integrated	13”	Latest Mac OS	Wifi 6	5 years
iPad Pro (power users)	M1	8GB	126	Integrated	11” or 12.9”	Latest IOS	Wifi 6 only	5 years
iPad Air	M1	8GB	64	Integrated	10.9”	Latest IOS	Wifi 6 only	5 years
iPad Mini	A15	4GB	64	Integrated	8.3”	Latest IOS	Wifi 6 only	5 years

iPads should be supplied with full body protection cases, including screen covers

### Apple TV

HD/4k - 32GB Storage & Wall Mount / Lock

## Laptop Docking Stations

Laptop docking stations should meet the following specification:

USB-C connection which supports charging (a USB A to C converter can be used where legacy laptops do not have a USB-C connection)

1Gbs Ethernet port

Minimum 1 x HDMI 2.0 port

Minimum 4 x USB 2.0 / 3.0 ports

Universal docking station so will work with different vendors/brands.

## Hardware Specification – Laptop & Tablet Charging Units

### Laptop/Tablet Units

High quality steel construction

Secure locks

Support charging of all devices through a single power cable

No interference to wireless network coverage for devices whilst in the unit

Be available in different device capacities

Support large rotating castors for easy mobility

Support laptops with up to 16” screens

trolley with capacity for 10, 20, 30 and 40 units, with easy access for cable management. UK power board/cables required. Active ventilation should be included. Support laptops up to 15.4” screen.

## Device Operating System

The device should ship with an appropriate Operating System pre-installed based on the device. For Microsoft Windows devices, the school should engage with their ICT Supplier to confirm the most cost-effective option. Schools frequently have a Microsoft Volume License agreement which includes a license to upgrade to Windows Education version.

## Laptop & Desktop Device Encryption

Schools must ensure that any device that is taken off-site has appropriate disk encryption software configured. For Windows devices, this is Bitlocker. This will provide an additional level of protection if a device is stolen or lost – the hard drive cannot be installed in an alternative device and data extracted from it.

## Remote Access

This document is written on the assumption that the school will operate with a cloud storage provider; as such, remote access into the school may not be required. Schools must be very careful to ensure that they are not opening possible 'back doors' into the system by allowing remote access. This includes the use of remote support tools which are often used by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to support their systems – these should not be left running, but should be started by somebody in the school in the event of a problem

## Printing

Schools should consider reducing the number of expensive to run desktop printers and move to a centralised print model using large multi-function devices (MFDs) / photocopiers. This will massively reduce schools' printing costs and make the system easier to support. Where there are multiple MFDs in a school, a 'follow me' print arrangement should be setup which allows the user to simply print to a single print queue. The user can then walk up to a MFD and either enter a code or use an ID card to identify themselves, the MFD will then print the work out.

Schools should ensure that printing defaults to black and white, with users having to manually over-ride the settings for colour printouts.

The Print Management System should support / be configured to:

- Report monitoring usage for staff and students (scheduled)
- Print limits / quotas
- Scan to email function
- Easy MFD terminal interface for end user
- BYOD
- Support Windows, Apple (Macs and iPads), Google Chrome and Android

## Classroom Audio Visual

Classroom teacher displays should be:

- LED/LCD display
- Minimum of HD resolution (1920 x 1080)
- Appropriately sized for the room (65" expected to be the minimum)
- Interactive software, licensed for the site and remote use by staff
- Multi touch
- Integrated audio
- Interactive where needed
- 2 x USB 2.0/3.0 ports
- HDMI 2.0 port
- VGA port
- An appropriate bracket and fixings for the screen size and wall
- Support for screen sharing using standard services (Apple, Google, etc)

## Large-Space Audio Visual

It's expected that any supplier would visit the site to audit the space, meet with the school to confirm the school's requirements and design an appropriate solution. However, the following basic principles MUST apply:

- Networked for maintenance / monitoring
- No filters in projectors
- Allow Airplay and mirror cast
- Support 2 x HDMI video & 3.5mm audio inputs
- Appropriate microphones / wireless mics should be provided as per the school's requirements
- 5yr warranty on all active equipment and the installation
- Suitable protective enclosure in accordance with the environment/alternative uses of the space

## CCTV

It's expected that any supplier would visit the site to audit the space, meet with the school to confirm the school's requirements and design an appropriate solution. However, the following basic principles MUST apply:

CCTV must operate within an isolated VLAN on the existing network infrastructure and utilise the built-in POE.

A new solution must be cloud based and support the following specification

- 90 days of footage retention
- Footage contains the date & time
- Functionality to export CCTV footage in a standard media format (i.e. mp4, avi, etc)
- Redaction of CCTV footage
- Send alerts via the web console or emails for any camera connectivity issues
- Ability to deploy software / firmware updates from the management console which can be automatically deployed or scheduled
- All hardware should be covered by a warranty for a minimum of 5 years

## CCTV Cameras

It's expected that any supplier would visit the site to audit the space, meet with the school to confirm the school's requirements and design an appropriate solution. However, the following basic principles MUST apply:

Supports the following choices of cameras

3 choices of internal Cameras

- 2-megapixel camera
  - WDR
  - Day/Night mode with integrated IR
  - Indoor Dome
  - F/1.4
  - POE
  - Sufficient built-in storage to support a network outage of at least 48hrs
- 3-megapixel camera
  - WDR
  - Day/Night mode with integrated IR
  - Indoor Dome
  - F/1.4
  - POE
  - Sufficient built-in storage to support a network outage of at least 48hrs
- 5-megapixel camera
  - Day/Night,

- Outdoor Dome,
- f/1.8 P-iris lens
- Cat 6A UTP cabling
- Sufficient built-in storage to support a network outage of at least 48hrs

2 choices of external cameras (all should be rated to IP67 as a minimum)

- 3-megapixel camera
  - WDR
  - Day/Night modes with integrated IR
  - Outdoor Bullet Camera
  - F/1.4
  - Supports POE
  - Cat 6A UTP cabling
  - Sufficient built-in storage to support a network outage of at least 48hrs
- 5-megapixel camera
  - WDR
  - Day/Night modes with integrated IR
  - f/1.8 P-iris lens,
  - Supports POE
  - Cat 6A UTP cabling
  - Sufficient built-in storage to support a network outage of at least 48hrs

## Access Control

Where possible all readers should be cabled back to the controllers, although for distance or logistical purposes some readers can utilise wireless.

Gate or door intercoms should be compatible and where possible utilise IPv4.

The solution should be synchronised with the MIS system. This allows for cards to be deactivated once their record in the MIS is set as a leaver.

## Visitor Management

- Resilient LCD touchscreen, with built-in camera
- Sign in system for Visitors / Staff / Students
- MiFare card support
- Support MIS for e-registration
- Fire register reporting
- Staff swipe in / out reports
- Central database for school staff
- Printing of cards
- Email notification to the visitor's host

## Cabling Specifications

This section supplements the DfE guidance on meeting the Network Cabling standards here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/network-cabling-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

### Copper Cabling

Category 6A LSZH UTP 4-pair cable should be used in all cases, terminating to suitably rated patch panels and data outlets. All cabling should be supplied with a manufacturer backed 20-year warranty and certificate supplied on completion of the installation.

Full testing should be carried out to the Class E Permanent Link standard as set out within BS50173 & BS50174 within the last 2 weeks of the construction period and appropriate certification provided at time of handover. (e.g. 'Fluke Full & Summary reports). Handover refers to the handover of the building to The School IT Team/IT Installation Contractor for the installation of active IT equipment.

One cable should serve one RJ45 data socket; e.g. if a quad outlet is required then 4 cables (each being 4 Pair Cat 6) should be used.

Individual Category 6 copper cabling runs should not exceed 90m (not including patch leads at either end). Including the patch leads the entire length should not exceed 100m.

### Data Outlets

Copper data outlets should be Category 6 RJ45.

Outlets must have clear, protected labelling (through the use of a plastic window).

### Fibre-Optic Cabling

All fibre-optic cable must conform to OM4 standards for multi-mode fibre.

All fibre-optic cabling must be terminated within an appropriate breakout box with LC type connectors.

A primary fibre-optic link of 16 cores is required from each patch room (containing either a single or multiple cabinets) to route directly back to the data cabinets in the server room.

### Cabinets and Security

Within the ICT Server Room provision will need to be made for 1 x server cabinets to be delivered and installed by the IT Installation Contractor after the data cabinets have been installed by the cabling contractor.

Data cabinets should house the patch panels and leave space to house the active network equipment. Refer to Appendix B for details.

Server cabinets require 2 x 16Amp mains power supply presented with "commando" type socket. It should be located above the centre of the cabinet position on the ceiling.

Data cabinets must have 19" adjustable mounting profiles, and be 42U in height, 800mm (wide) x 800mm (deep) minimum, with lockable side panels and combination lockable front and rear doors.

Data cabinets must allow a minimum of 150mm between the front of the UTP patch panels / fibre termination panels and the back of the Data Cabinet door when closed. This is to allow for the minimum bend radius of fibre-optic cabling.

Data cabinets must have at least 500mm clearance between the front and rear adjustable mounting profiles to allow for active network equipment to be mounted.

Data cabinets should not have any cables, cable ties or other items which invade or impede the space required by the active network hardware and UPS units (where required) which will be installed within the cabinet. The full depth and full width between the adjustable 19" mounting profiles in data cabinets must be clear of all obstructions.

Data cabinets will require a 16 Amp mains power supply presented with a "commando" type socket. It should be located above the centre of the cabinet position on the ceiling.

Data cabinets should be provided with 1 x 12-way vertical PDU without surge protection. If a UPS (uninterruptable power supply) is installed in the cabinet, the PDU should have a C14 connector, to 12 standard 3 Pin UK plug sockets (BS 1363). If a UPS is not installed, the C14 connector should be replaced by a 16 Amp commando plug.

Data cabinets should incorporate a fan tray, located at the top of the cabinet to assist ventilation. This fan tray should incorporate a minimum of 4 fan units.

Where multiple data cabinets are required within a single location then the cabinets should be securely connected together without internal side panels but retaining side panels on the outside extremities.

There must be a minimum access space of 800mm around all sides of the data and server cabinets (or connected series of cabinets) to allow for internal access from all sides and to allow for the opening of doors and installation / maintenance of hardware.

Data and server cabinets must be fully earth bonded in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and national standards.

All data cabling must be terminated within the data cabinets on suitably rated 19" patch panels.

Each RJ45 patch panel and fibre break-out box should be supplied with horizontal cable management facilities (1U in height) to facilitate managed cable access (see diagram in Appendix B).

Vertical cable management is required within the data cabinets on both sides.

All Server Rooms and adjacent ICT staff areas should be securely lockable complying with the relevant Access Control system and / or utilising a more traditional 5-lever lock mechanism (this is to protect against unauthorised access). The expectation is that this room is used for server & data equipment only.

Computer desk key suiting – all computer desks should be on a key suite so that there is one key per room.

Server room & patch rooms – should be on one key suite separate from the master key suite so that access to these areas can be controlled.

Server room & patch rooms – doors should not have vision panels.

The server room must be kept to a sensible operating temperature, using a suitable cooling/heating method, within the external design temperature of the building. The room must be kept at a maximum of 24 degrees Celsius (regardless of temperatures outside of the room). There should be no hot spots in the room.

The patch rooms must be kept to a sensible operating temperature, using a suitable cooling/heating method, within the external design temperature of the building. The room must be kept at a maximum of 24 degrees C (regardless of temperatures outside of the room). There should be no hot spots in the room.

## Patch Panels

Patch Panels must be rated to Category 6A standards.

Patch Panels must be supplied fully assembled by the manufacturer.

Patch Panels must be 24-port only, and therefore multiples should be applied where appropriate.

## Patch & Fly Leads

Fibre-optic patch leads will be provided by the IT Installation Contractor to connect the active equipment to the LC fibre patch panel(s).

Cat 6A patch leads will be provided by the data cabling contractor to connect the active equipment to the UTP patch panel(s). The School IT Team will confirm the quantity and lengths of these, for budgeting purposes, it should be assumed that 2 x 2m UTP Cat 6A patch leads will be required per terminated Cat 6A cable.

## Containment

Power and data must be segregated in separate containment channels with any dado, vertical, floor, or basket trunking.

Primary containment shall comprise closed type / lidded galvanised, galvanised tray or basket type containment. Where contained in a ceiling void the requirement for lidded containment is negated.

Containment must be sized to allow at least 30% spare capacity for future expansion.

The containment must allow for the requirements for the stipulated minimum bend radius for Cat 6A and OM4 fibre-optic cables, as appropriate.

Cables installed in the containment shall, wherever practicable, be laid with the heavier size of cables at the bottom.

Separation distances must meet those specified in BS EN 50174. If BS EN 50174 is superseded, then the latest, subsequent standard should be adopted.



## Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS)

Data cabinets will be supplied with a UPS supported feed, providing active conditioned power and be rated to serve 1800 Watts / 3000 VA per Data Cabinet. Provision of the UPS for the data cabinets is an IT Installation Contractor responsibility.

Provision of the UPS for the server cabinets is an ICT Installation Contractor responsibility.

## Labelling

A clear and concise labelling scheme must be deployed. This must provide unique identification of each port to each patch panel and cabinet. What is listed below is the recommended labelling scheme, however, alternatives will be considered, providing that every data point is labelled uniquely in the school and can be readily identified back to the correct patch panel port in the correct cabinet:

Each cabinet across the site should be given a unique letter of the alphabet beginning at the server room with cabinet "A".

Where multiple cabinets are in a room, the cabinets should be labelled left to right (when standing facing the patch panels), starting at "A".

Each block of 24 patch panels within a cabinet will be given a unique letter per cabinet starting with the top block of 24 being labelled "A".

Each block of 24 ports should be labelled up as ports 1 through to 24 (manufacturers numbering can be used if 1U 24 port patch blocks are used).

This will allow each port across the site to be uniquely identified with a four-character code.

For example:

- Port "AA23" is in cabinet A, at the top in the first block of 23 points, Labelled as "23"
- Port "BA09" is in cabinet B, at the top in the first block of 24 points "A" Block, labelled as 9 or 09
- Port "DD12" is in cabinet D, in the fourth block of 12 points from the top "D" Block, labelled as 12.

In all cases the following scheme should be followed:

- cabinets should be labelled left to right (when standing facing the patch panels), starting at "A"
- within each cabinet patch panels should be labelled from top to bottom, starting at "A"
- 48 port patch panels should show the manufacturer's port numbering (i.e. 1-48)
- electronic labelling devices should be used.

## Cabling Provision for Additional Equipment

Note: Additional information may be required for each site where any of these items are to be included now or in the future. This provides general information only and further detail may be required when some of these items are to be included.

### Digital Signage

Digital Signage will generally be a large LCD television screen ('display') that will provide information at key locations around the site. Each of these devices will be connected back to an active hardware device that is providing the output for the screen. The device supplying the media will be attached to the network and will generally be situated in the server room or nearest data room to the display. In some cases, the device may be located at the rear of the screen.

The display will be in the form of 42in to 50in LCD TV displays which may be mounted on device specific brackets and will typically be wall mounted. Typical dimensions of a 50in display are: (WxDxH): 1350mm x 170mm x 800mm

Each display will be mounted at as high as possible from floor level, subject to clarification with the school. Note - If a suspended ceiling is to be fitted, then this will typically be at 2700 mm. If this is the case, the display should be fitted below the suspended ceiling.

Provision should be made for screens to be wall mounted.

Displays could weigh up to 50Kg including mounting brackets.

Each display will require 1 x standard data point and 2 x standard power points – all services should be presented above agreed location of the display.

In special circumstances, provision may be needed for external speakers – detailed requirements should, therefore, be discussed with the School IT Team.

### Teacher Wall (incl. Interactive Displays & Teacher Desk)

The teacher wall is specified as the wall designated for locating the interactive whiteboard and, where possible, the teacher desk. Interactive Displays are input devices which work in conjunction with the teacher's workstation. The teacher's workstation will be located on the teacher desk, subject to agreement with the school. In order to deliver a robust and guaranteed service, the Interactive display and Workstation must all be connected via specialist cabling and therefore not be wirelessly connected.

Details about the dimensions for IWB & Projector patressing are in Appendix F of this document.

For Primary & SEN schools then Interactive display wall mounts should be height adjustable. The wall mount should allow the display to move over any trunking/dado. The display will have an adjustable wall mount.

It is a D&B responsibility to ensure that sufficient containment is provided to facilitate the IT Installation contractor installation team to pull through 2 x HDMI cable. This connection will be from the teaching position to the display position.

It is a D&B responsibility to ensure that sufficient containment is provided to allow the IT Installation Contractor to pull through 2 x 3.5mm audio cables. These cables will run from the teaching position to the display.

The USB specification limits the length of a cable between full speed devices to a maximum of 5 meters. Therefore, the total length for any teaching wall USB cable runs (including any USB patch cables) must not exceed 5 meters.

## IP Telephony

IP Telephony will provide for any voice calls required across the site and for access to voice mail and external PSTN calls where permitted. It does not provide for any legacy analogue devices to be connected such as modems, facsimile machines or non-IP telephones.

Each Wired IP telephone will require an RJ45 network point. Power will be provided via the RJ45 Network Socket. (PoE)

IP Telephones will not share an RJ45 socket with other equipment.

Any DECT wireless base stations that are IP enabled will require both power sockets and RJ45 Sockets.

## Wireless Access Points

Each Wireless Access Point will be mounted at high level and will require a Cat 6A network point. The device will be powered by Power-over-Ethernet (PoE).

Exact location will be determined by a wireless site survey, to be facilitated by the IT Installation Contractor.

A number of external antennae to facilitate campus coverage of wireless will be required, the exact location of these will be determined as part of the wireless survey mentioned above.

## CCTV (Security) - External

External cameras will be connected to UTP Cat 6a data cabling provided in accordance with the details elsewhere in this document

External cameras will typically be mounted on the external facade of the building, connected to an internal data point located on the inside of the building adjacent to the camera

External cameras will be powered via a PoE connection to the closest network hub / server room

## CCTV (Security) - Internal

Internal cameras will be connected to UTP Cat 6A data cabling provided in accordance with the details elsewhere in this document

Data points will be located adjacent to the camera locations

## Network Printers / Photocopiers

Each of these items will require a Cat6A data point

Each of these will require the provision of 2 x power points

## Power socket allocation associated with LAN points

Power will be provided for ICT peripherals as follows.

- Each Floor box will have 4(no) x 13Amp sockets irrespective of the number of Cat 6a data points
- Each Wall Cat6 data point will have 2(no) x 13Amp sockets
- Each Digital Signage Cat6 data point will have 2(no) x 13Amp sockets

## Glossary

LAN	Local Area Network	UTP	Unshielded Twisted Pair cable
POE	Power Over Ethernet	PSTN	Public Switched Telephone Network
RJ45	Registered Jack number 45	MFA	Multi Factor Authentication
IP	Internet Protocol	FTTP	Fibre To The Premises
USB	Universal Serial Bus	HDMI	High Definition Multimedia Interface
LCD	Liquid Crystal Display	LED	Light Emitting Diode
OU	Organisational Unit	SSID	Service Set Identifier
RADIUS	Remote Authentication Dial-In User Service	Gbps	Gigabits per second
SAN	Storage Area Network	DNS	Domain Name Service
DHCP	Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol		

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