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EMPOWERING SCHOOLS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

HELPING SCHOOLS MEET

The DfE's Broadband Standards



SONICWALL SHOP
A Breathe Technology Business

DfE School Guidance – Meeting Broadband Standards

Is your school meeting the DfE's Broadband Standards?

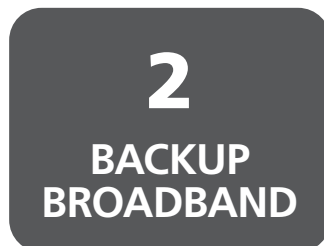
In March 2023, the Department for Education updated their guidance to schools regarding how to meet digital and technology standards. This standard specifies the minimum requirements for your schools broadband connectivity type, speed and resilience, to promote a safer and engaging learning environment.

With an emphasis on digital learning and practices, it's important that your school works towards the DfE's Broadband Standards to ensure usage of the right digital infrastructure and technology.

These guidelines emphasise your school and college needing a full fibre connection alongside a backup broadband and sufficient security and safeguarding processes in place.

We are able to guide you through these guidelines and help you implement a digital strategy most suitable for your school.

The DfE set out three standards your school needs to meet:



[See back page for a special offer.](#)

1 FULL FIBRE CONNECTION

Schools and Colleges should use a full fibre connection for their broadband services

This guidance highlights the importance of having a **robust connection** and infrastructure in place, with **full fibre connection** (FFTP / Leased Lines) now a necessity.

A full fibre service provides the capacity and speed needed for effective use of online learning tools, as well as flexibility to future proof your school through more cost effective cloud-based solutions.

*It is recommended that you upgrade to **Full Fibre Connectivity** as soon as possible.*

Importance of meeting the standard

Full fibre services provide the capacity and speed needed for effective use of online learning tools.

Getting the fastest speed you can afford has a wide range of benefits including:

- enabling teachers to have the confidence to make full use of online resources as integral parts of teaching and learning
- saving money by using cloud-based solutions instead of on-site technical infrastructure, products or services – for example VOIP telephony

Full fibre services provide flexibility to future proof schools and colleges as demand for internet services increases.

When to meet the standard

You should be looking to implement this standard as soon as you can. This is usually at the end of any existing contract term or as soon as full fibre is available.

Ensure that any new contracts or contract extensions using other non-full fibre connection types provide the opportunity to change to fibre services as soon as possible when they become available.

How to meet the standard

You should ask your supplier or in-house support team to investigate the availability of full fibre broadband services and speeds.

Primary schools should have a minimum 100Mbps download speed and a minimum of 30Mbps upload speed.

Secondary schools, all-through schools and further education colleges should have a connection with the capacity to deliver 1Gbps download and upload speed.

Technical requirements to meet the standard

Broadband should be provided using a full fibre connection.

Full fibre connections are sometimes described as:

- a leased line
- fibre to the premises (FTTP)

Note: copper connections, while widely used in schools at present, do not meet this standard.

Dependencies to the standard

The speed of your internet services may vary depending on your:

- internal network cabling and switches
- internal network equipment such as routers and wireless access points

Broadband Internet Standards for Schools and Colleges

2 BACKUP BROADBAND

Schools and Colleges should use a backup broadband connection to ensure resilience and maintain continuity of service

The internet is now an essential service throughout the entire education sector, an automatic failover to an additional backup connection of a different type to your main connection is now required to provide internet continuity. You should ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate against a single point of failure.

All of our broadband contracts come with the option to include a backup line to ensure resilience and prevent any disruption.

Importance of meeting the standard

With increasing reliance on internet-based services, broadband internet is an essential service. You should ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate against a single point of failure.

When to meet the standard

Resilient services should be implemented alongside, or as soon as possible after a new connection is installed.

How to meet the standard

You should investigate which backup internet services are available and implement appropriate systems.

Your broadband provider will be able to advise on possible solutions and costs.

Technical requirements to meet the standard

This standard requires a combination of the following:

- multiple broadband connection services (of different service types)
- multiple routers and appropriate associated router programming to provide automatic failover to backup services as and when required
- redundant power options on core active network equipment

3 SECURITY & SAFEGUARDING

Schools and Colleges should have appropriate IT Security and Safeguarding systems in place, under both child and data protection legislation

Safeguarding your students and staff from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online is essential and your school needs to implement site wide procedures for this. This includes ways to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

We have an extensive cyber security offering for schools. From complete cyber

audits to conducting penetration tests and implementing firewall and web-filtering, we are able to help safeguard your students and staff.

In addition to this, we are also able to work with your school on an education support partnership where we monitor your entire infrastructure.

Importance of meeting the standard

It's essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school and college approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate students, and staff in their use of technology. It establishes ways to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

When to meet the standard

You should already be meeting this standard as a part of the ongoing safeguarding requirements as set out in the statutory safeguarding guidance on keeping children safe in education.

How to meet the standard

You should talk to your supplier or in-house support team to ensure that you have a content filtering system in place which meets the requirements outlined in the online safety section of keeping children safe in education, paragraphs 123-135.

You should also ensure that you have a firewall as part of your internet and network system. This could be an on premises' device directly protecting your network and directly managed by the school or college. It also might be an 'edge' service provided and managed by your supplier or in-house support team.



The Department for Education has advised that you should be looking to implement these standards as soon as you can.

Breathe Technology simplifies the task for you to ensure your school is meeting the standards.

We specialise in delivering an affordable broadband network to the education sector, equipped with a superior high-performance software programme.

Built to sustain the pressures of a demanding school environment, an upgrade to Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) or Single order Generic Ethernet Access (SoGEA) is essential.


Whatever your size and budget, we are committed to making high-speed wireless broadband simple, affordable and available for every school.

SPECIAL OFFER

We are currently offering a free of charge cost-savings audit where we review your system set-up and billing specifically for:

- Telephone system (physical PBX or cloud)
- Internet connections (broadband, FTTP)
- Company mobiles

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