

Coconnect

Governors guide to School Broadband



A guide for Governors and Trustees on choosing a School Broadband service.



Connectivity



Safeguarding



Filtering



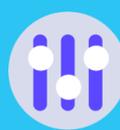
Cyber Security



Dedicated Support



99.95% Uptime



Flexible Options



Colocation



VoIP



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Introduction

School broadband can be confusing, with many different things Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts need to consider when finding the solution that best fits their requirements. As Coconnect specialises in providing Broadband and Cloud Managed Services to Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, and Multi-Academy Trusts, we felt it was a good idea to produce this guide on Schools' broadband. We will cover why reliable broadband is essential for Schools and Trusts plus everything you need to consider when selecting a broadband provider and the best package for their requirements.

A School Governor has three main functions:

- Planning the school's strategic direction
- Overseeing financial performance
- Challenging the school leadership team for improvement.

What you should expect from your School Broadband provider is good performance, security reliability and scalability for future growth. Your provider should be clear and transparent, providing you with broadband that precisely meets your requirements plus all the support you need, whether that is technical support or help with the installation and setup.

Why are speed and reliability important for Schools and Trusts?

Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts alike are high usage establishments. School broadband now plays a crucial role in educating students. Filtering and monitoring services act to stop students from accessing harmful material plus analyse a student's online behaviour, therefore, playing a crucial role in active safeguarding. Additionally, reliable, and fast broadband plays an essential role in students' education, allowing quick and reliable access to valuable learning resources and finally broadband plays an essential role in the day-to-day operations in every schools.

A good quality broadband system will always be:

- Fast - School should always have adequate capacity even at the busiest times for students and staff. Having slow broadband can reduce the amount staff and students can achieve.
- Reliable – Schools broadband should always be reliable. Unreliable broadband can cause disruptions to your day-to-day operations and can lead to security and safeguarding issues. Broadband should have an uptime of better than 99%.
- Protect schools from online threats – Cyber Security is an essential component of your broadband. Having measures in place protects sensitive data like staff and pupils' data from cyber-attacks.
- Safeguard students from harm – Schools broadband should have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to protect students from unsuitable material and proactively monitor students' online activity.
- Scalable Schools broadband should be easily scalable to grow to suit the school's requirements. Scalability impacts how well a school will be able to keep up with the ever-evolving demands.

Some Questions Governors should be asking when deciding on a broadband provider

Budget

- How much does it cost?
- What are the payment options?
- How long is the contract?

It is essential to work out which provider provides the best value for money and suitable payment options for your school, and the length of the contract is equally crucial for long-term development.

Functionality

- Is it fit for our requirements?
- How many devices do we use?

As previously mentioned, your broadband should meet your exact requirements based on the size and number of devices that require connectivity. Your provider should be transparent and work with you to ensure you get broadband that fits your requirements.

Safeguarding

- What are the filtering, monitoring, security, and safeguarding options available?
- How much do these features cost?

Most School Broadband providers have filtering and monitoring, security, and safeguarding options as part of their packages. It is worth considering what options you need from the provider as add-ons and the additional expenditure.

Reliability

- What is the reliability of the technology and the service from the supplier?

As mentioned before, Schools need reliable broadband. Governors should consider the balance of cost, performance, and service levels, particularly if it is worth paying a little more for a provider that offers better reliability and quality of support.

References

- What are the schools in the area using?
- What do they think of them?

Talk with other schools and trusts about providers you are looking at. What is their opinion of them what have they learned?

Installation

- Can it be installed at the right time?

You want your new broadband installation at a time that does not cause disruptions to the schools' day-to-day activities. How much notice is needed and when a provider can install it. Most schools would like this to be in the summer holidays so that can be a busy period.

Technology and Service

Connection Type

Schools need to consider the type of connection that is best A school can choose from many different connection types; the following are the different connection types we usually suggest:

FTTC – Fibre Optic to the Cabinet. Coconnect works with Openreach, the UK's leading broadband infrastructure provider, to provide superfast broadband with a minimum line speed of 15mbps. FTTC is suitable for small Schools.

EoFTTC- Ethernet over Fibre to the Cabinet. Ideally suitable for small primary schools and backup lines for secondary schools, EoFTTC provides superfast broadband via an uncontended line with further boosts from your local exchange when required. A guaranteed line speed, even at peak times and regardless of how many users are online.

FTTP – Fibre Optic to the premise. It is ultrafast broadband providing your school with ten times faster speeds than EoFTTC and FTTC.

Dedicated Leased Line – A leased line will provide your school with your Fibre connection that you won't have to share with anyone else, often known as 1:1 contention. Suitable for secondary schools and large primary schools it is very easily scalable to suit your schools' requirements. All our dedicated lease lines come with SLA's starting from 4 hours fix time.

Speed and Performance

Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts will often have many users trying to access the internet at once. At peak times, a quality broadband system should not drop in speed and performance. Schools should know the difference between upload and download. Download speed is the speed at which schools can download data from the internet and, upload speed is the rate at which schools can upload data to the internet, which is becoming increasingly important with the move towards living in a cloud first world. A leased line connection will allow you to download and upload at the same speed.

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Filtering and Monitoring

It is paramount that Schools and Trusts broadband includes some level of filtering and monitoring. It is also equally important to finding the right balance between over-blocking and safeguarding. Filtering and monitoring give schools the confidence that students and staff are surfing the internet safely and not at risk of seeing harmful content. Coconnect works with Smoothwall and Netsweeper to provide industry-leading filtering systems.

Recent changes to UKSIC guidance of appropriate monitoring meant many schools and trusts have recently learned about proactive monitoring. Schools and Trusts should have appropriate monitoring systems in place in which high risks alerts are captured in real-time and analysed with assistance from the provider. Coconnect works with Senso and Smoothwall to provide proactive monitoring, matching the recommended guidance UKSIC on appropriate monitoring.

Security

School's Broadband must be secure and protect from online threats such as malware and targeted attacks. A fully managed service with multi-layered security as part of your Broadband package will help protect your school from any cyber-attacks, therefore safeguarding staff and pupils' records the school holds.

Support

Schools and MATs should consider technical support and transition support. Consider the level of technical support you require.

- Transition support – changing connectivity can be quite challenging. The school might need help throughout the migration process, which we will go into more detail in the next point.
- Technical Support – If your broadband becomes faulty, who at your school can fix it. The provider can fix any issues with little impact on your school in an efficient manner.

Installation and setup

As previously mentioned changing connectivity to a new provider can be challenging. To make life easier for Schools, providers can offer support and assistance with migration to their network. Complete installation and setup; the provider will take all the responsibility of the transition and is often the preferred choice with Schools.

Service Level Agreements (SLA)

Schools and Trusts should consider the type of Service Level Agreement (SLA) they would like. The SLA is an agreed level of service between a provider and their client. The focus of an SLA usually revolves around maintenance and repairs. When a service, product or system becomes faulty the time for the provider to fix the solution.

Contracts

Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts need to think about the length of contract they would like. Broadband plays an increasingly important role in the day-to-day operations of Schools. It is essential the broadband package is tailored to meet your current requirements but also your future requirements. Choosing the correct contract length to match your future requirements will allow the option for future development. Different contract lengths come with price variations, which impact your school budgets, so it is essential to pay the right amount for the right amount of time.



Summary

School Broadband providers should be providing you with fast, secure, and reliable broadband which meets your school's requirements. We have looked at the importance of considering speed, reliability, and security in safeguarding and educational performance. The provider should be transparent and work with you to determine your School broadband requirements to get what your school requirements. If you need support, it is worth considering what support you need.

If you believe your School Broadband could be improved, read why you should choose Coconnect on the next page, or get in touch on the detail below for honest advice.





Why choose Coconnect?

We deliver **safe, secure, reliable** Internet and Cloud services to **schools and trusts** across the UK, without compromising on **quality or reliability**.

- **Speed and Performance** - Coconnect offers a range of packages with tailored speeds to suit your schools' requirements, offering up to 10Gbps on all packages. The speed will be dependent on the connection type your school decide is the best suited for your requirements.
- **Reliability** - Coconnect leads the way with uptime, built with redundancy and resilience in mind, maintaining over 99.95% uptime on all core services since its inception.
- **Filtering and Monitoring** - Coconnect works with Smoothwall, Netsweeper, and Senso to provide Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts with leading industry filtering and monitoring systems with unparalleled reporting and security features.
- **Security** - Coconnect offers layers of security and defence against a digital world, including ransomware, DDoS mitigation, Virus and more. We have solutions to protect, mitigate and recover from any cyber-attacks. Recently partnering with Barracuda to offer 365 back-ups ensuring data is backed up and secure when a cyber-attack occurs.
- **Installation and Support** - We have highly skilled engineers to help resolve any technical issues you might get in a time-efficient manner. We offer fully managed installation and setup from the word go with a dedicated account manager and migration team. We will plan out the timeframes and our project management tool provides you with clear visibility of progress during the onboarding phase.
- **Leading SLA and SRT's** - As Coconnect is a reseller of services, we offer Service Resolution Targets (SRT) rather than agreements. For Services where Coconnect is the sole provider, we offer SLAs. Coconnect provides leading industry SLAs and SRT's starting from 4 hours; our trained support desk prides itself on maintaining over 98% customer feedback and 100% SLA Resolution times.
- **Flexible Contracts** - Coconnect offers 1, 3, and 5-year contracts with a 99% renewal rate. We believe we can offer your School Broadband to fit your current requirements and future requirements.



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