D-Link improves learning experience at Cokethorpe Independent Day School

Cokethorpe Independent Day School was in need of a new wireless network to support the evolving learning requirements of its large body of pupils. The school approached IT supplier Quadsys to provide a network that would not only meet its current requirements, but also future-proof the school and provide an easily scalable network.

Quadsys recommended D-Link switches to provide the backbone to the network and now both pupils and staff alike are able to access a fast, smooth running network with their mobile devices.

"I looked at other solutions on the market that could provide me with the same reliability and performance as D-Link, but its competitors don't seem to be able to offer that same all round attributes with similar value for money, so I decided that D-Link would be the best solution for us."

— Richard Goodwin, IT Manager at Cokethorpe

Issues

Cokethorpe Independent Day School in Witney, Oxfordshire, was founded in 1957 with just 14 pupils. It is now a vibrant community of almost 700 girls and boys aged from four to eighteen. At the heart of the school is an elegant Queen Anne Mansion House, whilst much of the teaching, creative arts and sporting activities take place in a range of modern buildings, built around a series of courtyards.

Previously, the school was connected by a wireless infrastructure which was slow and in need of an upgrade in order to enable the full quota of students and staff to be able to access the network without problems. The old switches only gave the school 100Mbps and it could take as long as 15 minutes before a class of 20 could be connected to the network. It approached long-term IT supplier Quadsys to discuss its challenges and the options available to solve them.

Solution

Quadsys provided a variety of solutions for the school to choose from, including switches from both D-Link and Cisco. However, Richard Goodwin, IT Manager at Cokethorpe had used D-Link products in the past and had always been impressed. The project started in June and was fully implemented by September to minimise any disruptions to lessons. Quadsys conducted a site survey to determine the optimum locations for switches and access points before proceeding to installation.

The new improved wireless network set up includes switches from D-Link which are able to deliver performance, flexibility, security, multi-layer QoS and accessibility, along with redundant power solutions. With high Gigabit port densities, Gigabit SFP, 10-Gigabit SFP+ support and advanced software solutions, these switches can act as either departmental access layer devices or aggregation switches to form a multi-level network structured with backbone and centralised high-speed servers. Easily deployed and simple to manage, they can be stacked with any switch that supports D-Link's Single IP Management. The solution is also easily scalable to cater for the school's future capacity needs.

Benefits

Staff and sixth form pupils bring their own devices into the school and are now able to access the wireless network without problems, to enable them to work more productively in both lessons and independently. Speed and connectivity issues have disappeared and the network is able to cope with the additional demands now placed on it.

Designated staff at Cokethorpe are also able to manage the switches and access points themselves, thanks to the simplicity of the interface – only calling on Quadsys for any more complicated technical support issues they may have.

Richard added, "The new switches, combined with our new wireless network, have ensured everyone at the school can carry out their work productively without having to worry that they won't be able to connect and once connected the network won't be slow or cut out. The fact that our new switches are all PoE enabled also means that our Voice over IP telephones are more efficient as well."

Chris Cope, Quadsys, added, "D-Link offers the best products for education. It provides a quality product that is exceedingly well priced and allows schools to upgrade their equipment within budget in these tough economic times. The equipment is also very easy for schools to manage by themselves, so they don't have to call on more costly technical support."