

CASE STUDY

PORTFIELD PRIMARY ACADEMY



Portfield Primary Academy replaces an ageing Wi-Fi network with a modern solution, complemented by content filtering and a firewall, to provide robust and secure connectivity.

Portfield Primary Academy is located in Chichester, West Sussex, and serves the needs of more than 160 four to 11-year-olds. The school is part of The Kemnal Academies Trust.

Portfield needed a **new Wi-Fi network**. Their existing solution was more than 10 years old and was suffering from poor coverage, which made roaming with laptop, tablet or other mobile devices very difficult. The network was also struggling to cope with the increasing number of devices using it.

As with any local area network (LAN), Wi-Fi is also susceptible to the issues caused by ageing hardware. Anything more than five to seven years old, will no longer be supported at manufacturer level, which means it will be out of date and vulnerable to security threats. It is similar to a mobile device that is too old for the latest software updates, but while we change our mobiles every couple of years, LAN hardware is often forgotten.

The school also had a need for a **new content filtering service** and was interested in the Smoothwall solution being used by sister academy, Front Lawn Primary Academy.

swcomms have worked with schools for more than 35 years and have a range of education-focussed services so we were able to provide advice and solutions to meet both their needs.

We installed a Ruckus wireless LAN using 11 access points (APs) with superior wireless AC technology called WAVE2, which uses the first true multi-user (MU-MIMO) wireless access as standard.



smoothwall[®]

This not only gave the school the **coverage and capacity** it needed, but future-proofs them with a secure and scalable solution that should last at least five years.

The IT team can also manage the Wi-Fi network via the Ruckus controller hosted in our data centre. Accessed via an easy-to-use web app, the school has **visibility of all the devices using the Wi-Fi network** and whether there any issues with the APs.

For content filtering, we installed a virtualised web filtering primary school package from Smoothwall. Their solutions comply with the Department of Education's (DfE) Keeping Children Safe in Education and Prevent Duty Guidance requirements to protect pupils and staff from online threats and harmful content.

It offers flexible **age-appropriate filtering** with bring your own device (BYOD) monitoring and control, plus real-time live content and analysis filtering to ensure pupils are constantly protected from any harmful content regardless of how new content is to the internet.

It has a pre-built policy set up specifically designed to meet the safeguarding needs of primary schools. This policy is constantly updated against all the latest web-borne threats but can also be customised to an individual school's needs.

Our engineers deployed the solution during the summer holidays, so it could be tested and ready for use on the pupils' return in September.

"The installation of Smoothwall and Ruckus has enabled our academy to provide a reliable, safe and secure network. It has revolutionised the way the faculty use technology to enhance the education of our students. The installation was professional, fully tested, and completed to a high standard within a limited time-frame. Thank you swcomms!"

Andrew Matthews, IT manager