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Insight Guide

Why choose Ruckus
for your school?

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When investigating the many options available for WiFi at your school, Ruckus should be on your shortlist. With a host of education benefits from guest access to reduced interference, a Ruckus deployment will help bring your institution into the future state of learning.

Why do you need fast, full coverage and secure WiFi?

There are a lot of reasons why your infrastructure needs to change. According to Commscope more devices are coming onto the network, stretching the limits of ageing infrastructure. 65% of international schools use live video lessons while over 40% surveyed faced significant challenges delivering distance learning through technology, such as problems with bandwidth. And the National Cyber Security Centre along with the London Grid for Learning completed research in 2019, looking into cyber security of more than 400 schools across the UK. Of the schools polled, 83% said they had experienced at least one of the types of cyber security incidents like Phishing. So, if you're trying to deliver learning in an antiquated digital environment, it's time to make a business case for a change.
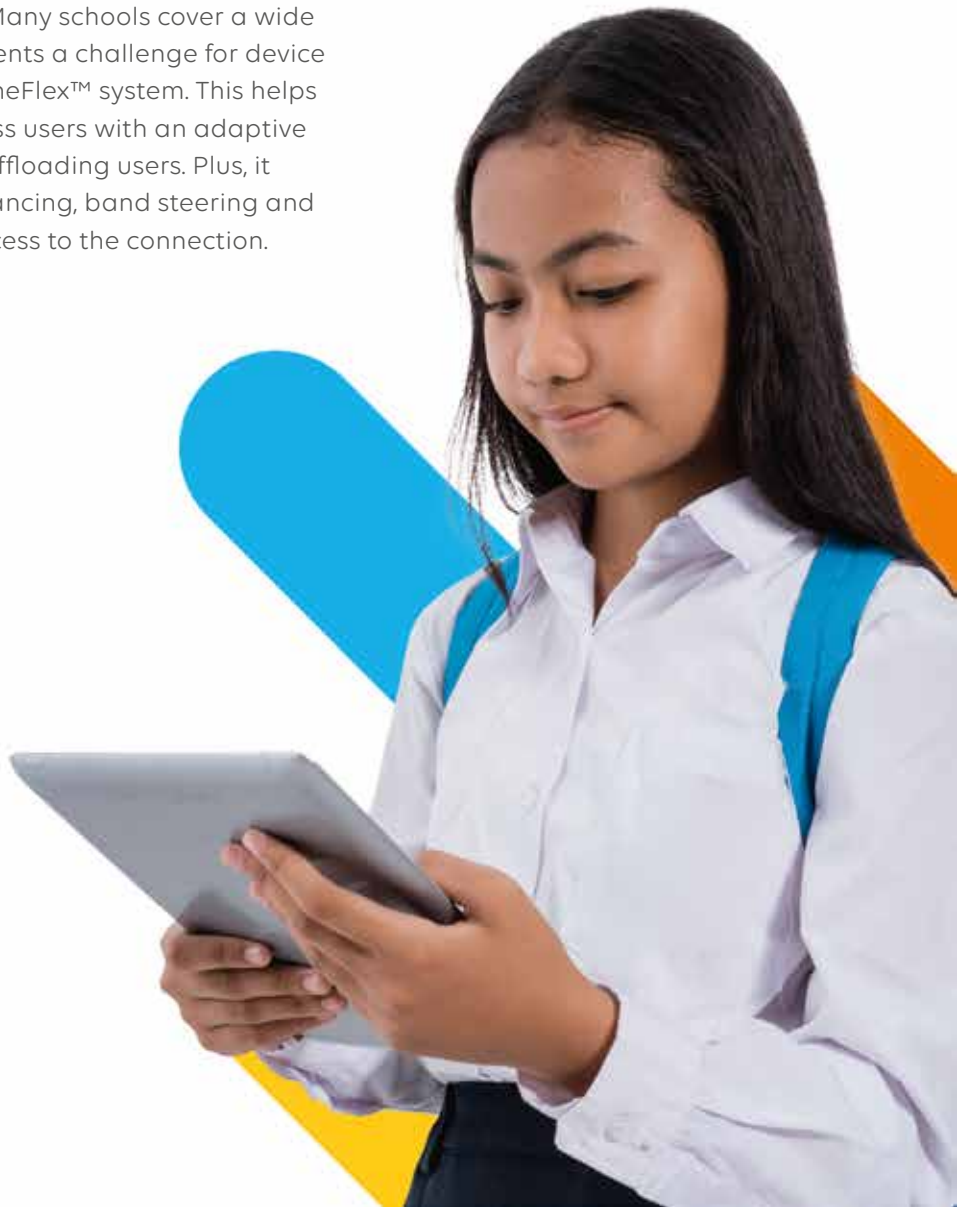
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Benefits of Ruckus for your school

Ruckus is a state-of-the-art wired & wireless networking equipment and software package designed to fast-track students into the digital future.

According to Schools Week, "The average secondary school now has 948 pupils, two more than last year. Primary schools have an average of 281 pupils. Again, this is a rise of two since last year. Special schools grew more, with average pupil numbers up from 110 in 2017 to 114 this year. The number of pupils in the school system has risen by 0.8 per cent overall, or just over 66,000 pupils, to 8,735,098. The number of pupils in state-funded secondary schools rose for the fourth year in a row, reflecting the move of a population bulge into the secondary phase." And this means the demand for WiFi to perform to high standards is higher than ever before.

Ruckus is up to the challenge. It has a wide range of applications, but for schools, these are some of the core benefits:

1. High-density areas

Schools are busy places. That's for sure. Many schools cover a wide area of dense headcounts, and this presents a challenge for device fair use and access. But Ruckus has a ZoneFlex™ system. This helps support high-capacity concurrent wireless users with an adaptive antenna technology for quickly on and offloading users. Plus, it also has airtime fairness, client load balancing, band steering and rate-limiting to ensure equal and fair access to the connection.

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2. WiFi security

At school, the risk of a cyberattack is still high. And network segmentation isn't enough to protect from the threat of guest access and BYOD environments. Ruckus has all the device provisioning and onboarding processes you'd expect but it also has device fingerprinting and access control features. These let your IT team enable different policies for device types and users. Plus you can see what's going on in the network for troubleshooting and future updates.

3. Full coverage

According to Ruckus universities and colleges often encompass large properties with multiple buildings. Getting reliable and complete Wi-Fi coverage within every square foot of each facility without deploying a huge number of access points has been a real challenge. The Ruckus ZoneFlex family of products delivers the best possible Wi-Fi coverage using our patented BeamFlex™ technology that directs signals toward associated clients, picking the best performing path and constantly mitigating interference. ZoneFlex delivers two to four times the coverage using fewer APs, costing less money, and requiring less deployment time. Institutions of higher learning may now deliver Wi-Fi to places where it's never been before — simply and easily.

4. Without cables

If your campus has outbuildings, fields, public spaces, and the like, you're probably not able to benefit from cabled ethernet in these locations. But the Ruckus SmartMesh means you can get WiFi just by accessing an outlet. Now plug and play to bring all your locations into your network. This is great for preventing data risks from staff accessing unsecured networks to make up for access black holes. And you'll benefit from the same centralised management and policy provisioning that Ruckus is known for even across these wireless WiFi boosters.
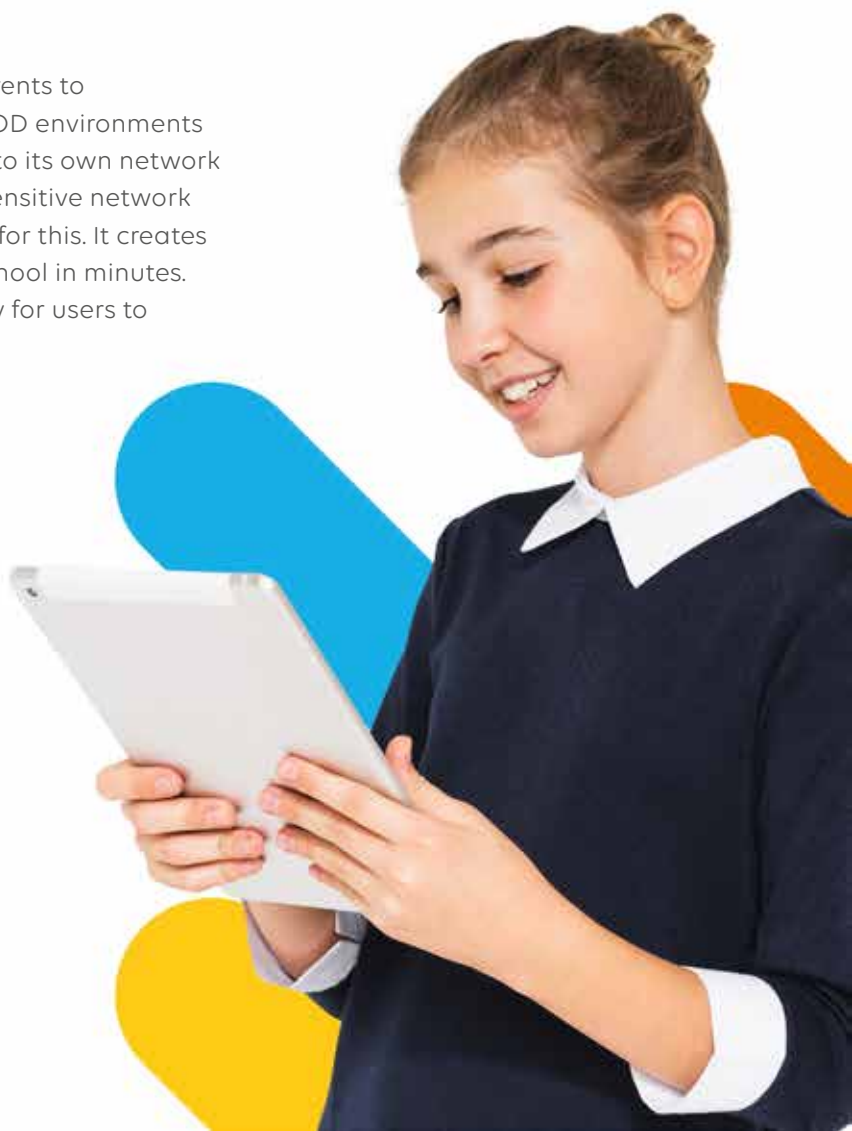
5. Streaming

In recent years, streaming and video conferencing for the classroom are now commonplace. For instance, Google Meet provides a very attractive option for schools. Throughout the past two years, Google has added features to satisfy the needs of education, including background obfuscation so students don't need to share their living conditions with the rest of the class to participate, plus improved whiteboards, breakout rooms, attendance tracking, "mute-all" for teachers, hand-raising for students, multi-language captions, and improvements to mobile apps to best support students across the digital divide. And so, you need to have WiFi which can support lag-free streaming for continuing digital instruction in 2022 and beyond.

6. Reduced broadband costs

If your school has multiple sites, you're probably paying through the nose to get fixed broadband lines to each one of them. But with Ruckus 5GHz, 802.11n high-performance bridges you can cut out these costs. This will save your institution tens of thousands in recurring fees every year. Plus, where you need to keep a legacy connection, Ruckus can work with and can supplement that infrastructure to keep costs lower going forward.

7. Guest access

Guests to your campus expect free WiFi. From parents to prospective students or guest lecturers, make BYOD environments safer with Ruckus. Easily section off this traffic onto its own network and prevent guest devices from accessing your sensitive network data for more peace of mind. Cloudpath is great for this. It creates a Set-It-And-Forget-It Wi-Fi experience for your school in minutes. This allows BYOD that's scalable, secure, and easy for users to tap into.

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8. Scalability

You need to be able to grow your WiFi net at any time. The Ruckus ZoneFlex WLAN system configures in minutes and is essentially plug and play. Add new areas into your system with the SmartMesh quickly and safely. Apply the same policies and manage it all from one central control point for easy, safe, and secure provisioning. Since the entire WLAN configures in minutes and the APs self-configure by automatically discovering the controller, you can get up and running faster. Also, the Ruckus Smart Wi-Fi systems can be remotely configured and managed across all of your sites, meaning you only need one central IT team - reducing headcounts.

9. Reduced downtime

It goes without saying that the WiFi needs to work. Thankfully, Ruckus benefits from a very high uptime. And that's important. HR Review explains the impact quoting three-quarters (74 per cent) of leaders of businesses saw their staff experience negative emotions towards internet outages. Under a third of companies (32 per cent) reported 51 per cent of their employees showing greater impatience due to internet failures. Nearly a quarter of leaders (24 per cent) who suffered an internet outage at their company reported that 48 per cent of employees were more restless and showed an inability to concentrate. Furthermore, 40 per cent of workers at a fifth of businesses (21 per cent) became angrier because of internet failure. In terms of monetary loss, Beaming calculated that almost 60 million hours of working time were lost due to UK internet outages in 2018 which, overall, cost businesses £742 million in lost productivity and extra overtime. So, there are real financial penalties for not deploying a robust WiFi solution like Ruckus.

10. Less interference

With so many devices competing for attention and the WiFi networks present in every home or business within a one-mile radius creating noise for your network to deal with, you need a system that won't get bogged down. Ruckus has clever tools in place that help devices cut through the clutter and maintain a stable connection to your network regardless of how many other WiFi signals are at play. This is important because interference can really slow down or impact the quality of lesser WiFi configurations leading to the same levels of dissatisfaction seen in the downtime examples above.

Summary

It's clear that you need a fast, scalable, and secure WiFi infrastructure at your school. We've shared why you should choose Ruckus for your school from the ultra-fast setup to superior high-density performance. And we've explained the potential losses you could face if staff or students are subjected to poor-quality internet.

This includes a lack of access to award-winning teaching tools like Google Meet and poor team morale. There's even a financial impact to consider as internet outages were found to cost businesses £742 million in 2018 alone. And the upsides include the ability to manage the whole WiFi infrastructure from a centralised point. This requires less headcount to provision without costing you anything in terms of performance or security.

If you're ready to have a look at Ruckus for your school, talk to us today.

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