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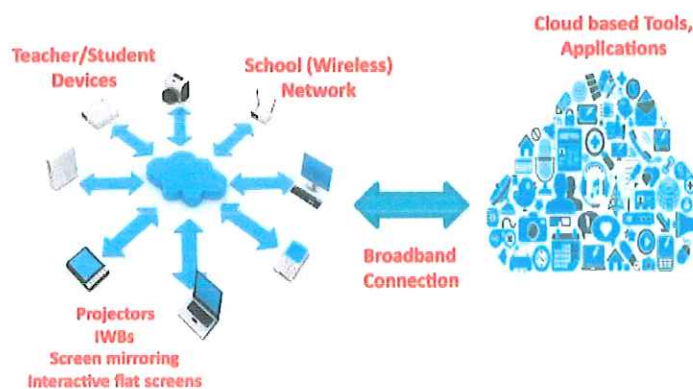
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Technology Overview in Schools - ICT Infrastructure

This section provides an overview on ICT Infrastructure in Schools. If you have a specific query please email these to ictadvice@pdst.ie.

This article provides a brief overview of some of the main ICT Infrastructure areas that are becoming more relevant to support teaching, learning, assessment and administration in schools. The article also highlights some shifts and trends that are happening in how schools are using ICT.



Overview of ICT infrastructure areas for schools

The image highlights some key ICT areas for schools, including school wireless networks, which connect teacher and student mobile devices via broadband to cloud based tools and applications. While each school is unique in terms of size, location and where they are in terms of using ICT, there are some common shifts and trends that are happening in how schools are using ICT. These include:

- Increased use of **cloud based tools and applications** by schools
- The importance of **fast/reliable broadband** to connect with cloud based applications
- Use of **mobile computing devices** by teachers and students, including in SEN areas
- Importance of suitable **wi-fi networks** within schools to support **mobile learning**
- Changes in how **screens are being mirrored** and **alternatives to projectors** in classrooms

Cloud based tools and applications

Schools are increasingly using a wide range of useful cloud based tools and applications to support teaching and learning. Many are free and provide a diverse and evolving range of possibilities to enhance learning. For more refer to our advice section on ['Cloud based Tools/Applications'](#).

Broadband

Fast, reliable broadband is critical to accessing online resources for learning. All Post-primary schools have high speed 100Mbit/sec broadband. For Primary schools over the coming months the DES plans to go to tender to procure faster

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broadband for Primary schools to respond to ever-increasing demand. While broadband is dependent on availability from regional providers, upgrades will begin from Sept' 2015 where possible locally. The Schools Broadband Service Desk remains the single point of contact for schools at broadbandservicedesk@pdst.ie or 1800 33 44 66. For more information refer to our advice section on [Schools Broadband](#).

Mobile Learning Devices / BYOD

Increasing numbers of schools are now using mobile devices in classrooms in preference to desktop PCs. Also tablets are being purchased increasingly in preference to laptops as they provide schools with alternative options to support mobile learning. A shift which is gaining momentum is to allow pupils to bring in their own devices (BYOD) for learning. For more refer to our advice section on ['Computing Devices/Tablets'](#).

Wireless / Wi-fi Networks

To support effective learning using mobile devices a 'fit for purpose' wi-fi network is now critical in schools. Wi-fi systems connect mobile devices to online resources via the broadband connection and as such mobile learning, school wi-fi, broadband and use of cloud applications are all inter-dependent. It is important that if schools are purchasing a wireless network that they seek independent advice. For more refer to our advice section on ['Networking/Wireless Networks'](#).

Presenting in the Classroom

Teachers are using a range of interactive approaches for 'presenting' in classrooms. While interactive whiteboards (IWBs) are still fit for purpose when used effectively, technologies such as Apple TV or other mirroring approaches can enable teacher or student screens to be mirrored wirelessly to a large screen. Also large interactive flat screens (though more expensive to purchase) can provide an alternative to IWBs and/or a projector for new purchases. For more refer to our advice section on ['Presenting in the classroom'](#).

More information:

A range of **additional advice on ICT infrastructure areas** is available on our website at www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/technology. Schools are also welcome to email their queries to ictadvice@pdst.ie.

School **Good Practice Videos** show how teachers are using ICT to support learning, and are available at <http://www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/en/Good-Practice/Videos/>.

The e-Learning Handbook provides a guide to developing a school e-Learning plan. For more see www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/elearningplan.

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