

Copleston High School in Ipswich is an oversubscribed, mixed comprehensive school for students aged 11 to 18. It has 1803 students, 371 of whom study within the Copleston and Holywell Sixth Form. The Sixth form also acts as the post-16 centre for a neighbouring secondary school. The school achieved specialist Sports College status in September 2001.

The principal aim of this school is to enable all students to achieve their best. This is brought about by continually developing a stimulating curriculum supported by the highest standards of teaching and learning.

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# Copleston High School

Case Study

## The Challenge

The challenge for Copleston came in the wake of disaster. Two days before the start of the school year 2006, a fire started directly above the communications room, destroying most of the IT equipment and a major part of the infrastructure.

Keith Morton, ICT Manager at Copleston High, recalls the time vividly, “It was pretty scary. All our telecoms and data networks were completely taken out as the seat of the fire was above our main comms room, so in addition to fire damage, there was a lot of water damage too. Our immediate challenge was to establish some communications before the academic year commenced”.

Prior to the disaster, the school network, which had grown in an adhoc manner, consisted of over 400 PCs and 200-300 lap tops with all the associated peripherals and voice equipment. The infrastructure was a mixture of a cabled Ethernet network, to which successive additions had made it difficult to manage. There was also a wireless network.

The challenge was to rapidly establish communications and to plan a state-of-the-art network to meet the current and future needs of this progressive school.

## The Solution

Excell arrived on site within hours of the schools request for support. Keith recalled, “Excell were fantastic. They responded immediately, I was expecting to wait a couple of days, but to have guys on site the same day was a real lifesaver”.

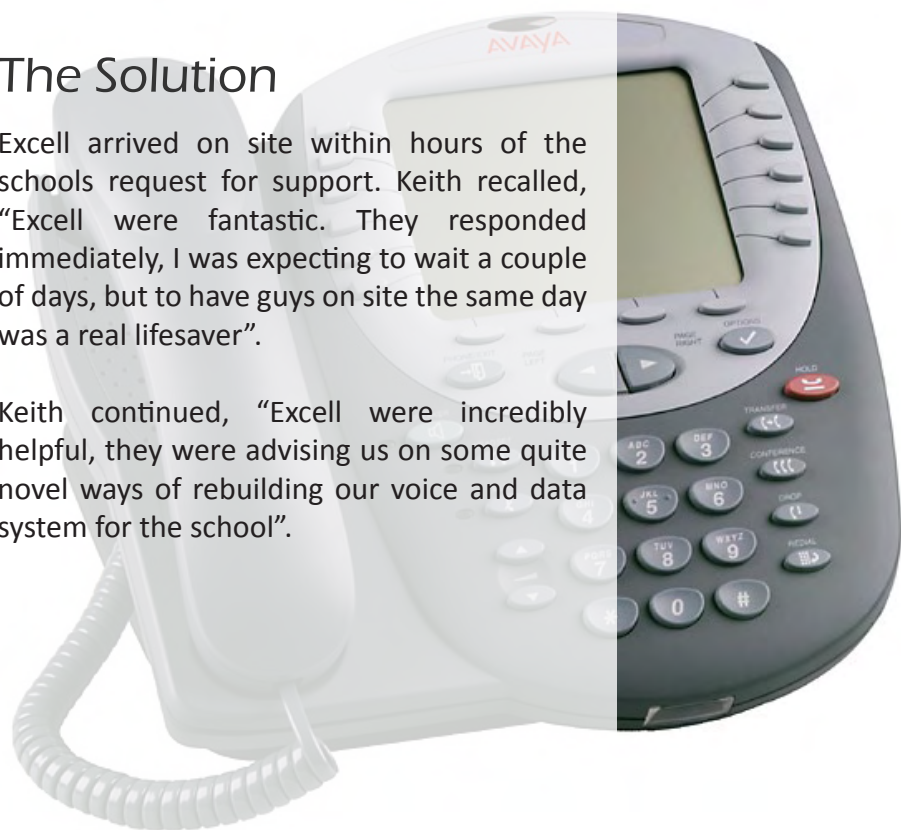
Keith continued, “Excell were incredibly helpful, they were advising us on some quite novel ways of rebuilding our voice and data system for the school”.

Phase one was to establish voice communications within the school. VoIP, using the surviving data network, together with a new fibre backbone was the only option, given the urgency of the situation.

Keith commented, “My team, working with Excell were able to get the data network up and running relatively quickly, albeit fragmented. Also, by using VoIP it was possible to provide voice communications to strategic places within the school site. This gave us an acceptable communications system. I don’t know how Excell got the hardware to us so incredibly quickly – but we had telephony to the outside world in four days, and that was from nothing at all. This was some achievement”.

Phase two is in progress now, consisting of the installation of a new communications network to meet the current and future needs of the school. The new infrastructure will include over 400 Cat 5e cables together with a fibre backbone linking 15 data cabinets. The core of the new system recommended by Excell is the Avaya Office IP switch. Avaya IP Office is a highly modular system providing a high level of scalability, allowing the system to grow economically as required.

Built on Avaya’s latest advancements in converged voice and data technology, IP Office provides the school with all the benefits of VoIP, providing maximum flexibility and resilience to the network.



*“Their enthusiasm, expertise and support have been phenomenal. I believe that Excell are probably one of the best service providers I have dealt with in over 30 years”*

Key features of the Avaya IP Office system in this installation are:

- **VoIP functionality:** Enabled the customer to use the data network to carry voice traffic to remote areas of the site
- **Modular design:** Allowed the customer to grow as areas of the site were cabled
- **Increased functionality:** Flexibility to offer enhanced auto attendant facilities to relieve pressure from reception
- **Administration:** On site self administration for adds, moves and changes as required



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Do something amazing**

## The Results

Communications were rapidly reestablished. The use of VoIP technology allowed voice communication to be reestablished across the school within days, utilising the surviving elements of the data network and digital phones.

The school was able to open for the new term. The new infrastructure together with Avaya's IP Office has delivered a marked improvement in communications. The feature rich Avaya IP Office switch has allowed the school to provide improved service and information to parents and staff.

Excell audited the schools existing call plan and on their advice, the school has moved to a BT tariff which is on target to show a continuing reduction in call costs and an improved level of service response.

In addition, the new structured cabling infrastructure together with the fibre backbone will allow for easy 'shifts and changes', simpler maintenance and faster access for data networks.

## The Future

Rebuilding work at Copleston High School continues. Currently the ICT team at the school are fully involved in the implementation of the new voice and data system. Keith is emphatic that however ICT at Copleston High develops in future, it will involve Excell. "They have given me impartial advice throughout this project; they offered me a range of solutions and then advised me on the best way to exploit them. Their enthusiasm, expertise and support have been phenomenal. I believe that Excell are probably one of the best service providers I have dealt with in over 30 years".

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