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Education and culture

Bocholt schools receive nationwide WLAN



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Bocholt - Pupils in Bocholt have had completely wireless internet access for a few weeks now - at all 24 school locations. After the necessary devices ordered at the beginning of 2022 were delivered in the middle of this year, all locations are now equipped with Wi-Fi. "A milestone for school digitalisation," says Bocholt's mayor Thomas Kerkhoff.

"We have rolled out a self-contained system here over the last three years," says Kerkhoff. Thanks to the comprehensive networking, pupils' devices can now be used for lessons at all school locations in Bocholt.

"This is a huge success and a huge step forward in the digitalisation of schools," says Hany Omar, Head of the city's Digital and IT department. His team has been working over the past weeks and months to set up and install the devices at the schools. "We're talking about around 700 access points that need to be managed in the future," says Omar.

In addition, all municipal schools have now been equipped with digital whiteboards and around 4,000 tablets have been issued to pupils and teachers.

Fibre optic expansion continues to progress

Meanwhile, the fibre optic expansion at Bocholt's schools is continuing. A connection to the gigabit network is necessary to enable high-performance use of internet services for all pupils in addition to networking the devices within the schools. Completion is planned (as of December 2023) for the second quarter of 2024.

The expansion of the wireless network was subsidised with funds from the Digital Pact, explains Mayor Thomas Kerkhoff. "Our media development plan and also the digitalisation plan envisage the provision of Wi-Fi as a necessity in order to connect all devices - including those that we procure for children and young people in the future - to the network and to be able to control and manage them securely," says Kerkhoff.

In this context, Kerkhoff also refers to the *Bocholt model*: "We procure the devices uniformly on the part of the city, we administer them, support the schools with maintenance and knowledge transfer, and we also make the devices available in a budget-friendly way by letting the parents share in the costs," says Kerkhoff.

