



## De Zande Community Institution: Special youth care institution's campus safe and more accessible thanks to NEC

De Zande Community Institution has three sites in the north west of Belgium. Communication has become simpler for its personnel since switching to a new telephony system from NEC. "Their DECT handsets mean colleagues can be contacted at all times, and they also feel safer thanks to the MobiCall alarm system, which is activated by pressing a button on the device," says Erik De Corte, Assistant Director and Technology and Security Coordinator for the institution. As well as the existing campuses in Ruiselede and Beernem, the community institution is soon opening a third campus in Wingene. This expansion was the main reason behind its decision to modernize the outdated telephone exchanges. Realdolmen was responsible for the implementation.

The community institutions provide support to young people with problematic situations at home or who have committed a crime. De Zande Community Institution is comprised of the campuses in Beernem (closed campus for girls) and Ruiselede (semi-open / semi-closed campus for boys), with a third campus opening in Wingene mid 2014.

### CHALLENGES

Good communication is essential on De Zande campuses, which house young people with problematic situations at home. It's crucial that all members of personnel can be contacted anywhere on site at all times to ensure continuous, good and safe operations. They therefore carry cordless telephone handsets with them at all times, including during various outdoor activities. This means the devices need to be robust and shock-proof too.

Above all, the safety of personnel needs to be guaranteed at

all times. It's important that all employees, often in different departments, can quickly make each other aware of possible problems in emergency situations, so that appropriate assistance can be provided quickly.

De Zande's expansion with a third campus in Wingene forced it to review its existing telephony systems and underlying network. The institution decided to replace its two existing exchanges with a single, central telecommunications system for all three sites.

The size of educational institution's sites meant it was very important to install a powerful and robust system. The system also definitely had to be user-friendly as members of personnel are not always trained with technical backgrounds.

### SOLUTION

De Zande Community Institution teamed up with NEC. "There are historical reasons for this choice. We originally chose Philips as a partner thirty years ago, and this is still the case; we've remained a loyal customer throughout the gradual takeover of Philips activities by NEC," explains Erik De Corte. "A tender for our telecommunications system has since led to a framework contract between NEC and the Flemish government, which we are benefitting from."

De Zande opted for the robust NEC DECT I755 as the standard cordless devices for its personnel. These are shock-proof which is useful for the various activities performed by members of staff. The DECT handsets also increase collaboration between the various campuses: "We used to communicate mainly only to arrange administrative affairs,"



## OUR APPROACH

### Challenges

- Install one wireless communications system for the three separate campuses
- Migration to an efficient alarm system via the telephone exchanges

### Solution

- A new SOPHO IS3000 telecommunications system from NEC connects the three campuses
- The MobiCall alarm server integrated with the telephone exchange supports all messaging
- Distress signals are sent to cordless handsets via the MobiCall alarm server
- New NEC I755 DECT handsets are ergonomic and shock-proof

### Results

- Increased safety on the campuses
- Better collaboration and communication between the three campuses
- Possibility for own configuration of MobiCall and subscriptions for DECT handsets
- All members of staff can be contacted at all times
- Immediate assistance in the event of an emergency situation
- Single number system for all campuses

says De Corte. “Now we have a single number system for all our campuses, which are all connected with fibre optic cabling. And the external lines for the separate campuses have been removed, so it’s free to make phone calls between them. A unique, closed number plan has been created for the three sites, which all have the same prefix. The sister sites make external calls via internal connections to the main site, which results in a significant saving on the cost of leasing the network lines. It’s also possible to have a single, central telephone reception (Auto-Attendant), both during the day and at night. The multi-site DECT facility also improves access to employees operating in all three sites.”

The new DECT handsets also have a positive effect on both the young people’s and employees’ safety. This is because De Zande has activated MobiCall, a modular and scalable alarm server that is fully integrated with the NEC telephony system. Erik De Corte: “We have to protect the young people from themselves, each other and other people on a daily basis. This is why we attach so much importance to security. Anyone can send a distress signal by calling a number or pressing the red button on the DECT handsets.”

MobiCall then sends the signal to other members of staff, who hear an alarm and receive a message on their device. The first two people to respond to the alarm can listen to what’s happening at the other place where the call was made.

“In contrast to our previous Messenger system, we can now fully configure the alarm server to satisfy our requirements. You can for example contact external organizations and add new numbers,” says De Corte.

### RESULTS

The telephone exchanges are already operational on the Beernem and Ruiselede campuses. “Our employees can now be contacted at all times, and the communication between the two sites is very smooth. De Zande is also saving a lot of money thanks to the single number system.”

Security has improved too. Erik De Corte: “One member of staff pressed the red button on their DECT handset by mistake. We noticed that everyone sprang into action straight away and all procedures were followed to the letter. Looking at this as an exercise drill, we can now be 100% confident that the system works as it’s supposed to. Members of staff feel calm, and that’s a big bonus in our sector.”

“The collaboration between NEC, system integrator Realdolmen and our institution has been very smooth. We chose this type of device and the alarm server in consultation with our ICT partner. Everything was prepared in great detail: the installation in Ruiselede only took ten days, for example. The switch to using the new numbers was also very smooth,” concludes Erik De Corte.