

Case Study

School statistics

Number of children: **220**
Number of staff: 10
Number of classes: 8



Versatile, flexible ICT, available for everyone... ...at St Albert The Great Catholic School, Herts

Achieving ICT for everyone...

With just a small suite of 8 networked PCs, St Albert the Great Catholic Primary School in Hertfordshire was not able to provide ICT training to an entire class. The classes had to be split into groups, requiring extra support from teaching assistants. The resulting process was complex to manage and made consistency within year groups difficult to apply.

The 8 system suite was only ever meant to be a stopgap. However, it took the school sometime to find a solution that they felt offered them the flexibility that they needed and represented 'best value'. They eventually found what they were looking for from Leverstock.

Headmaster Robert Mundy said, "many of the solutions we reviewed meant that 'we got what we were given' and we had to try and fit it around our requirements. Leverstock offered us a versatile and flexible solution, where we could choose our software, choose how our desktop

looked and influence the overall configuration of the system. The kit was also more aesthetically pleasing than others we saw and on top of that, we felt that Leverstock offered us a more open and partnership based relationship than some of the other suppliers."

Delivering best value

Having taken one year to find an appropriate solution, the system was up and running in less than 6 months (covering the summer holiday period). Robert says "the solution was not the cheapest that we looked at, but clearly represented the best value for our school and the Governing body". Funds were sourced from the devolved formula budget and then leasing costs are budgeted for, year on year, from school budgets.

Motivation through learning together

With the new system from Leverstock, each class now has its own slot for ICT teaching, then the plan is to use the rest of the time for teaching across the curriculum. Robert explains, "this is

really phase 2 – we are focusing firstly on raising the children's ICT skills and with the new system, this is going well. We are aiming for 90% usage of the system within 3 years of installation and we are well on target to achieve this."



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“The children are really excited, very proud of the new equipment and are much more motivated through learning together”, explains Robert. He goes on, “more than this, the staff are also highly motivated. The previous equipment was not always reliable and ensuring the systems stayed up for the entire lesson was sometimes pot luck. Now the staff have absolute confidence that the kit will work – meaning they can focus on the lesson content, not the systems.”

Professional development for all

The school particularly appreciated the training that Leverstock provided. Skill levels ranged from experienced use of ICT through to no use at all, so bringing them all up to the same level and familiarising them with the system was one of the school’s challenges. Robert explains, “staff have gained enormous value from the skills they have learned, both in terms of delivering ICT education for the school and in terms of their own personal development”.

“Leverstock support is first rate,” says Robert. “Whilst staff have confidence in the systems themselves, they also have the peace of mind from knowing that Leverstock are only ever one call away”. He goes on “I really can’t rate their staff highly enough – they are professional, competent, polite and a nice bunch of people. They are welcome at our school at any time.”

Looking forward

St Albert the Great are taking great pride in the success of the new suite. They have hosted a range of visits, from both Catholic and other schools. Robert says, “lots of heads have been looking at what we are doing and the systems have enhanced the reputation of our school immeasurably”.

He goes on, “the current solution is all still new, but as we gain confidence we are already making tentative plans for the future. These may include additional terminals and digital cameras for each class, Interactive Whiteboards in each class and use of laptops with wireless connections, to use away from the suite for research and data

handling. In terms of our educational goals, we are aiming for all children to achieve a Level 5 in ICT, by the time they are in year 6.”

GREAT NEWS – STOP PRESS

The school was awarded the NAACEMARK QA standard for excellence in ICT in December 2005.



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