

Harrogate Grammar School Manages and Secures Educational iPads with AirWatch

The Client

Harrogate Grammar School (Harrogate) is an independent, co-educational specialist language and technology school in North Yorkshire, England, which offers an enhanced language learning provision. The school, which was founded in 1903 when the Municipal Secondary Day School opened in Haywra Crescent with 44 pupils, has grown into an educational community of 1,850 students and around 230 teaching and operational staff members.



The Challenge

When Harrogate considered introducing mobile devices to facilitate e-learning inside and outside of the classroom, its initiative was influenced by a desire to open up the horizons of digital literacy to students and reduce their reliance on dedicated computer suites, creating a more flexible learning environment. The school was also eager to teach students the skills needed to safely navigate social networking sites and provide best practices for online research.

After consulting with various key stakeholders, Harrogate decided to use iPads to enable its mobile learning initiatives, and devised a voluntary parental contribution scheme that allowed each student to have access to a mobile device. However, for the students to safely use their iPads to access educational resources remotely, the school needed an enterprise mobility management (EMM) solution to manage and secure the devices.

Harrogate initially implemented a free mobile device management (MDM) solution to manage its devices, but as soon as the school enrolled around 200 iPads, the solution completely ground to a halt. "We experienced major issues with our first MDM solution," said David Burns, network services manager, Harrogate Grammar School. "Because the solution was free, there was no support for the back end, which forced us to consider a better product. We researched and evaluated a few MDM solutions and found that AirWatch[®] by VMware[®] was the one that stood out for us."

The Solution

Harrogate currently uses AirWatch to manage, secure and push applications to 1,850 iPads and plans to increase its device count to 2,000 within the next six months. Because the deployment was on-premise,

Solution Overview

- Client: Harrogate Grammar School
- Industry: Education
- Geography: UK
- Features: MDM, MEM, MAM
- Infrastructure Integrations: MAG, Active Directory
- Devices: 1,000 – 5,000



securing the hosting environment was not an issue. "Once we evaluated and assessed that AirWatch was capable of managing all the servers and server requirements, the installation and setup processes were easy. It only took us around four hours from start to finish for the solution to be ready for use," explained Mr. Burns.

Depending on their user profile, students and staff are assigned separate settings that allow access to different applications within the AirWatch[®] App Catalog. Instead of pushing the same application to everyone at the same time, which could cause bandwidth and storage space problems, Mr. Burns is able to provide students with a Web page to download the apps without further assistance from the IT department. "The AirWatch[®] App Catalog gives our students and staff the flexibility to download applications when they need them, saving us the cost of buying extra licences and reducing the demand for IT support," said Mr. Burns.

Going forward, Harrogate plans to deploy AirWatch[®] Browser to enable students to use the security and school filtering roles even when they are outside school. This is particularly useful in managing pupils' access to social media sites that might not be appropriate for their age group. "AirWatch gives us the confidence that the devices are safe for students' use," emphasised Mr. Burns. "If a particular student needs to access a specific site, we can easily make it available for them, which both students and parents appreciate."

Up Next

Harrogate is testing AirWatch[®] Secure Content Locker[®] with plans to migrate its educational and administrative resources to a platform that can easily be accessed by students and staff through their iPads. Deploying this application will help students beyond the classroom, by enabling them to access information, collaborate on projects and distribute reports through a secure platform. Employees in departments like finance and HR will be able to reduce their reliance on email and access information securely when they are outside the school or working from home.

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– David Burns
Network Services
Harrogate School

