

DEVELOPING HIGH QUALITY ICT FACILITIES AT BLYTHE BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

At Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form there is a firmly embedded culture of innovation and a real determination to provide the very best facilities for students.

Clearly set out in the schools development plan is the use of learning technologies where it will have a positive impact on student progress. Aligned with this is an ongoing investment to ensure the schools systems are in step with the increasing demands of administrators, teachers and learners.

"It's clear to see the shape of a traditional school network isn't always aligned to the demands of an increasingly dynamic environment."

"There is real need for well integrated, flexible, reliable, safe and secure wired and wireless network services within our schools."

Matthew Davies
Wave 9 Technical Director

With the rapid increase of tablet and smart devices, the school recognised that wireless was quickly becoming the primary method to connect to learning resources. The current wireless coverage was mixed; it wasn't easily managed or capable of coping with the anticipated density of devices needing to connect. It was certainly unable to support any form of bring your own device (BYOD) facility or provide the level of visibility, security, device control or reporting that would support the schools ICT and e-safety policies.

The decision was taken to seek a provider who could deliver a high performance, cost effective solution that would integrate with the existing infrastructure, all within a challenging budget. Wave 9 was one of a number of companies invited to discuss the requirement, with the conversation focussed on understanding the schools ambitions for teaching and learning, rather than the features of the technology itself.

Following a competitive tender process that balanced quality and price, Wave 9 emerged as a clear winner. The contract was awarded and the project moved into the delivery phase.

Throughout the project Wave 9 worked closely with staff on site to ensure a safe, high quality and trouble free physical installation of the chosen Cisco Meraki solution that integrated with the school LAN, Active Directory and Internet service.



"This was a significant project for the school and we were determined to secure the very best solution technically, operationally and in terms of value for money. E- Safety and Safeguarding were also key priorities."

"It was clear that Wave 9 understood the schools environment, had excellent project and technical capability and were clearly innovative too"

Wendy Keeble
Business and Operations Manager
Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form

THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

- Whole school indoor wireless coverage across the school campus
- LAN review presenting re-design options and critical refresh
- Active Directory integration
- Guest and BYOD facilities
- Proxy integration with Local Authority Wide Area Network (WAN)
- Dashboard & Mobile Device Management (MDM) configuration
- Pre and Post installation wireless site surveys
- Documentation, user guides and training

"It's been a very successful and enjoyable project. From our initial discussion, in the written tender response and during implementation Wave 9 have focussed on ensuring the solution was right for our school.

We have worked together on solving any issues that have arisen during what was quite a complex integration. Wave 9 have quickly earned "trusted advisor" status with us here at Blythe Bridge.

Andrew Lilley
Senior ICT Technician
Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form

On the day the service went live "like for like" facilities were made available across the new network to ensure it was business as usual for staff – albeit with a step change in capacity, coverage, network visibility and management capability.

With the system quickly operating successfully the additional features to enable guest access and the use of a wider school device estate have been configured. The flexibility and control offered by the Mobile device management (MDM) facility allow the flexibility to map the services to both the schools operational requirements and ICT policies. An example of this is the ability to ensure passcodes are being enforced on all school owned devices. Further capabilities to tag device profiles to curriculum departments and deploy volume purchased applications centrally are all well within the systems capability.

"Whilst fixed computer suites and dedicated IT rooms have their place, the opportunity presented by smart devices and tablets such as iPads is immense, both in terms of portability, speed of access and the opportunity to cost effectively move towards a 1:1 device ratio.

This is accelerated further by allowing students to make use of their own devices for learning in school or at home; devices that are equally or in some cases, more powerful, intuitive and up to date than schools can reasonably provide on an ongoing basis."

Andy Hvass
Wave 9 Business Development Director

The next stage is to begin connecting student devices in a phased programme to further explore the potential of BYOD in a safe and controlled environment.

It's all part of the plan to provide opportunities for students at Blythe Bridge to learn and achieve using the very best facilities on offer.

REVIEWING YOUR SCHOOL ICT INFRASTRUCTURE – WHY NOT PARTNER WITH WAVE 9?

At Wave 9 our people have many years' experience in delivering safe, secure internet access to schools, FE and HE establishments as well solutions to support learning at home or for looked after children. We understand that you want technology that just works, that will have maximum impact on student progress with minimum overhead for teaching staff.

We can evaluate your current environment, establish priorities and plan to address them as budget allows. We bring a lifecycle approach to developing network services that's proactive, innovative and professional. These things are essential in a modern improving school.

Our services encompass managed Wi-Fi, Mobile Device Management, Local Area Networks (LAN), Hybrid Cloud Solutions and high capacity broadband provision.

**Are you making outstanding use of technology in your school?
We think it's worth a conversation.**

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