



Facility - A new start for a great school High Storrs School

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Mike Chapman, Headteacher
High Storrs School

High Storrs School is at the very earliest stages of becoming a Facility school but headteacher Mike Chapman has no doubt that the change will bring benefits – he has used Facility in his last two posts and is firmly convinced of its power.

He is the former head of Driffield School in East Yorkshire, one of the five largest schools in England, where he introduced Facility as the management system. From there he went to be director of the United Nations School in Vienna, which also uses Facility.

The United Nations headquarters in Vienna houses a number of specialist sections and has many staff who travel all over the world as part of their work, while their families remain in the city. Their children attend an English-speaking school that caters for the UN and diplomatic staff.

“It is a complex, international school that provides education for the families of UN personnel. Many of the staff are based there but work abroad so they are not always able to keep in touch with their children’s education,” Mike said. The answer was to install ePortal to provide easy access to information whenever it was convenient for the working parents.



"The issues are very similar in a large secondary like this. High Storrs is a high performing specialist school that has won many awards but we have taken the decision to put Facility in here. We particularly want ePortal because it helps in our partnerships with parents," Mike said.

"We wanted them to have ePortal so that they could check their children's progress wherever they were, just by logging on to the Internet." Facility is also in use in Geneva where the UN's International School has more than 4,500 students, making it one of the largest schools in the world.

When he returned to the UK Mike became headteacher of High Storrs School, a specialist performing arts school in Sheffield that is currently aiming to achieve a second specialism. It is a leading edge school and already has a good reputation, but he is determined to have Facility there too. He sees parallels between the two schools in spite of their different situations. In Vienna the school had around 1600 pupils of all ages, High Storrs has 1600 11-18 year olds.

"Parents can log on using a secure access code and see all the information about their child, assessments, attendance, rewards, praise, sanctions, whatever is relevant. It is a huge plus in our communications."

He also believes that Facility can help create more time for teachers to concentrate on their teaching. "It is such a sophisticated and integrated database that it will have drastic effects on the staff workload. Data is put in just once and the way it produces reports is straightforward.

"That frees up time for the teachers and we want staff to focus on the classroom, on teaching and learning, not on administration. This will enable their efforts to be targeted on the most valuable area - teaching."

The installation will be part of an overhaul of the whole school environment.

High Storrs is just starting a £24 million building project to restore it to its former glory. The 1932 building is listed as of architectural and historical interest and is full of Art Deco details. Many doorways, window frames, walls and light fittings still have their original features, which will be conserved as part of the project. Consultations with architects are already underway in preparation for the improvements.

The work is part of the Building Schools for the Future scheme and will take around two years, starting in 2007. "When it is finished the surroundings will equal the education standards. We shall be a 21st century school in an Art Deco setting," Mike said.

Facility will be an integral part of that change. "It's very user friendly. It's fit for its purpose, it has a proven track record and it works. Plus it's well supported. When we had a demonstration for the users the overwhelming response was 'wow'," Mike said.

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