

SECURUS

Case Study

Preparing children for a digital future

When St Luke's Catholic Primary School in Cheshire discovered that one of its pupils had been uploading explicit images to its learning platform, staff realised they needed to monitor the children's computer use more closely. With Securus installed, the school is better equipped to protect its pupils and prepare them for life in a digital world.



The need for monitoring

As a Catholic school, the Catholic faith is a fundamental part of life at St Luke's. There are 193 children from a range of social backgrounds and the staff are rightly proud of the care they offer, both spiritually and educationally.

It was during a review of children's content on the school network that ICT co-ordinator, Simon Johnson, came across some pornographic images, almost by chance. He says: "While we had the County's internet filtering system, it was basically down to me to check the children's work and learning platforms for anything else. On that day, I just happened to click on this particular child's folder."

The images found by Simon had been uploaded by a school pupil. While this drew attention to some problems the boy was having, it left a concern at the school that if a similar situation happened again the staff may not be aware of it.

Supporting e-safety

Following a suggestion from Cheshire Councils, St. Luke's agreed to take part in a pilot scheme of Securus, which was installed in June 2007. The monitoring system works by recognising any inappropriate words or images, either typed in by the child or found on the internet. It then takes a record of the incident as a screenshot to show exactly what was happening at the time.

For Simon, the new system was a big relief: "I felt partly responsible for what had happened on the learning platform as I had pushed for the learning platform in the first place. I felt a sense of relief that there was a monitoring system now in place that would help us to stop that type of situation ever occurring again.

"The children know that I am monitoring them," he continues "and they know that it will come up on my laptop as soon as they push a button. But for us, Securus is a great learning tool. It supports what we do every year in terms of responsible use of the internet and helps us keep our pupils safe."

Benefits of Securus

- Supports Ofsted e-safety criteria and Every Child Matters requirements
- Helps identify and support vulnerable children
- Reassures parents and staff
- Reduces cyberbullying
- Helps adopt Becta best practice on e-safety
- Increases awareness of e-safety issues
- Helps enforce AUPs
- Teaches pupils how to stay safe

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*“Don’t think about it. Do it.
Securus is a fantastic tool”*

Simon Johnson, ICT Co-ordinator



Complete internet protection

For the staff at St Luke’s, their greatest concern is the internet. As Simon explains: “I am concerned about the children going on to the internet to do research projects, clicking on sites that they think are completely innocent and finding something they shouldn’t see. With Securus, if a child does go onto something they are not supposed to, it will come up as a violation on my laptop.

“We’re certainly not going out to catch people,” he continues. “It’s more the fact that Securus is a monitoring system and that we can then educate from what we find. If a child types in a word that is inappropriate, or accesses an inappropriate website, we can use it as a learning opportunity.”

And because Securus detects explicit images as well as inappropriate text it is a very comprehensive way to protect pupils. “One of the fantastic things I like about Securus is the image analyser. I think it’s a fantastic piece of kit, it is brilliant.”

Preparing pupils for the future

The school also believes it has a responsibility to teach its pupils how to keep themselves safe online. As Simon says: “I think we are preparing our pupils and putting the building blocks in place. A number of our year 6 children already have accounts on Facebook even though they’re not supposed to have them until they are 16.

“If we can instil to them at an early age that when you go onto places like this, that you never give out anything more than your name, we are preparing these children for the potential dangers that are out there. It is very, very important.”

This is why Simon believes it is worth taking a little extra time every day to ensure the pupils at St Luke’s are acting in a safe and responsible way. “I’ve got a routine that when I switch on my laptop in the morning, the first thing I do is click on Securus,” he says. “It takes me five minutes to go through it in the morning and I do the same last thing at night. It does take a little bit of time, but it’s just part and parcel of the day.”

And what advice would Simon give to any school considering Securus? “Don’t think about it. Do it.” he says. “Securus is a fantastic tool.”

Easy to use

Securus is a network solution that is quick and easy to install. While it can be configured to run on its own dedicated server, primary schools often prefer to use a subscription service to implement monitoring without the hardware overheads.

“The installation took about two minutes. Literally plug and play. It took longer to be shown how to log-on than it took to install the system. It’s just fantastic.”

Simon Johnson



**See how Securus could protect your pupils
and how easy it is to use**

To book a short online demo
call +44 (0)1932 255 480, email schools@securus-software.com
or visit www.securus-software.com

