



Westerings Primary Academy

Going serverless with Google for Education

This small Primary Academy in Essex invested in Google Apps for Education, refreshed their old devices at no cost and removed their servers; saving them time and money and improving collaboration and learning experiences in a serverless environment.

Westerings Primary Academy is a smaller than average school of approximately 240 pupils, located in the beautiful and quiet surroundings adjoining Hockley Woods in Essex. Part of the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), Westerings is a forward-thinking and morally driven academy, dedicated to ensuring the best opportunities for its pupils.

Saving time and money

Westerings were experiencing slow connection speeds when children and staff were trying to use ICT in their lessons, often taking up to 10 minutes to log onto the computers in the ICT suites.

With tightening budgets, an old ICT suite that needed replacing and a goal to cut down the reliance on slow and old servers Adam Stainsbury, Vice Principal at Westerings, started to look for innovative solutions. Google Apps for Education was chosen as it provides a completely free suite of productivity tools hosted in the cloud, removing the need for an expensive server.

Collaboration with other academies in AET also allowed Westerings to rebuild the old computers and laptops in the academy as Chromebooks – meaning that old Windows devices, which would otherwise

have been discarded, could be re-used in a minimal Linux Environment to give the end users instant access to Google Chrome.

Westerings also invested in RM Integris, a cloud-based MIS system, to remove their reliance on an administrative server.

Access to both Google Apps for Education and RM Integris has been greatly enhanced by the academy's recent switch to RM Broadband, which both reduced cost and provides faster access to staff and pupils throughout Westerings.

As an individual academy, Westerings have saved in the region of £30,000 just by not replacing their computers and servers in the ICT suites.

“We want them to be excited by learning and we don't want them held back by things that don't work properly.”

Elizabeth Atay, Principal

Impact on learning

Westerings use of Google Apps for Education has not only saved them considerable money but also encouraged greater collaboration between pupils and staff and an increased engagement with learning.

The pupils at Westerings work collaboratively on documents, comment on each others work and support peer-to-peer learning all through Google Apps for Education.

As Google Apps for Education is cloud-based it also enables anytime, anywhere access to tools and documents; expanding learning beyond the classroom. Pupils and teachers at Westerings can access their work from home; allowing staff to lesson plan and mark from home, and pupils to collaborate with their peers for homework or revision.

A pupil in Westerings today can gain access to all of their work, create various formats of documents or presentations, collaborate with their teachers and peers and research online in a safe environment – and all of this is accessible in less than 60 seconds.

Michael Hartley, AET Key Account Manager, has worked closely with Westerings Primary Academy to support them in achieving their strategy and vision for technology.

“Education shapes the technology, technology’s not shaping education anymore, and that’s something which has been very apparent at Westerings.”

Michael Hartley, AET Key Account Manager,
RM Education

To find out more about how RM has worked with Westerings Primary Academy take a look at the video:

www.youtube.com/rmeducation

“These actions have freed up funds to buy new chromebooks and other tablets and devices that can then go into the classroom and impact on the pupils learning.”

Adam Stainsbury, Vice Principal

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