

Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust Nene Park Academy, Peterborough - NetSupport DNA



IT Director - Matthew Sampson

Tell us about Nene Park Academy and the Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust

"CMAT was set up six years ago to promote outstanding education at the heart of the communities that we live in. Nene Park joined the Trust four years ago (previously known as Orton Longueville School) and since then we've had a new building and brand new facilities to really improve the education in this area."

What are some of the main IT challenges you face?

"Within CMAT we currently have eight schools that are running at present (with primary all the way through to secondary) and we've got two new developments which are coming in the next couple of years in two new towns to be built north of Cambridge.

"It's important for us that staff can move across all of our sites with no IT challenges. They need to be able to take a laptop and deliver a lesson wherever they are within our Trust and organisation. We have the IT challenges to support that - from a Wi-Fi point of view, from devices in the classroom - but also of how do we manage the strategic development of those devices and how do we plan a refresh plan? How do we know that those devices are fit for purpose and they're doing the job they need to do? DNA helps us to achieve that by understanding the specification of those machines, how long we've had them, managing those assets through - and truly understanding the use of those devices."



Customer Service Manager - Jonathan Emery

How has NetSupport DNA helped at CMAT?

"We know all about our assets: we know what's on them, we know what operating systems are on them, we know what patches for the operating system are on them, we know exactly what the specifications of the computers are - and we can quickly look in the console and see exactly what that is. DNA also helps with the power: so we know when PCs are turned on, when they're turned off - and if they're not used, they turn themselves off. It's really helped us and saved some money."

How have you found the remote support tools in NetSupport DNA?

"The remote control tools in NetSupport DNA are really useful for us. We're a large academies trust and we're spread over many sites. We have lots of LAN and WAN links and we can use the remote control tools to control computers from our central core, from any of our schools, and we can even do it from mobile devices. It really means that our IT team can be anywhere within the Trust and support our users."

How has NetSupport DNA helped with supporting your safeguarding efforts?

"NetSupport DNA is a great help to us. It means that we can empower our safeguarding teams to look at alerts themselves; the IT team don't have to do it themselves. The safeguarding team can look to see what alerts are produced and see what the trends are. They can see if there are any concerns and use the word clouds to see if there are commonly used phrases that are appearing - and they can use that to pick up patterns and then deal with the situations properly."

What do the IT staff across the Trust think of NetSupport DNA?

"The IT staff love NetSupport DNA. They love the ease of it: they can easily log in with Active Directory and they can see everything neatly ordered. All the computers are synced, all the users are synced. It's really intuitive. They don't have to have a long drawn-out training session; they can quickly get in, it makes sense to them and they can find exactly what they want."

NetSupport DNA includes NetSupport School classroom management - what are the main benefits to teaching?

"NetSupport School has made a big difference in our classroom. Teachers love the fact that they can, just with a few clicks, actively monitor the students. They can assess them and use the collaborative tools to easily provide an outstanding lesson. They love it because it's just so easy. It's all from one console and they can just do everything with a few clicks."

What's it like working with NetSupport;? Is the support good?

"NetSupport's support team are great. The few issues we've had, we've rung up or sent a ticket in; they've been great: every issue has been resolved."

How does NetSupport DNA compare to previous solutions schools within the Trust have used?

"The Trust has taken over a number of schools. And each of those schools has had their own provision, each with different bits of software – and NetSupport has replaced all of those. All of the feedback has been positive: everyone loves the new product much better than the old ones and it's really improved our teaching and learning. I would recommend NetSupport to another school or Trust. It has already saved us money. The IT team love it, the safeguarding team love it. It really has made a big difference to us."



IT Director - Matthew Sampson

How do you see the next few years for CMAT?

"CMAT is going to grow over the next few years in multiple different ways. From an education point of view, we're bringing more primaries and secondary schools into the Trust. But from an IT point of view, we need to grow the IT estate to manage those schools more effectively."

"We have an extra business with primary schools that we support that aren't part of our Trust and we need to ensure that that part of the business grows to support them as well. NetSupport DNA will help us to support the growth of CMAT by enabling us to manage those assets more effectively and, more importantly, help the teacher in the classroom."



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