

Case Study

Dogsthorpe Infants' School

Tell us about your school...

For 2019-20, we have approximately 270 pupils from 4 to 7 years of age, with around 50 per cent speaking English as an additional language. Our school is in a low socio-economic area, so this means we have probably more low level safeguarding concerns than the average primary school. However, we strive to meet the children's needs by offering breakfast clubs and nurture groups and so on – to support them as best we can.

What were the main challenges you faced with the observations process?

Observing and assessing each pupil every day to gauge their progress is a huge task. We tried several different solutions to try to make the process easier, but most of them only partially suited our needs, which caused more problems than they solved. So we ended up going back to paper journals for a while, until we could find a solution that fitted what we needed. However, creating paper journals is a really time-consuming process – so we really needed to find a solution that worked for us.



What were your first impressions of ReallySchool?

As soon as we saw ReallySchool, we thought it looked remarkably uncomplicated. For some of us, new technology takes a while to get to grips with, but the ReallySchool app is clear and uncluttered – it's obvious where you need to click. Once we tried the app ourselves, we realised that it is, in fact, very easy to use – and it's quick, too!



How did it go down with teachers and TAs?

As I mentioned, some of our staff aren't wholly confident with new technology, and one TA in particular was reluctant to try it. But once she saw how colleagues were completing their observations and assessments so quickly, she eventually summoned up the courage to try it - and hasn't looked back since.

How has using ReallySchool changed your observations?

Because ReallySchool allows us to link to so many different things in just one observation, it really helps us get the whole picture of each child's progress. Our observations are now more comprehensive and of a much better quality than before.

And your assessments?

The fact that all the assessment criteria for a whole range of different frameworks is built into ReallySchool means that it's easy to apply a judgement to an observation as you go. There's no need to be looking up the different assessment points to see if they apply to a pupil's activities, as it's all laid out in front of you in a clear list to select from.

What are the main benefits for your school from ReallySchool?

We knew that, in theory, ReallySchool would save us a lot of time - but it was great to test that out and prove it to ourselves. Our teachers now have much more time to dedicate to teaching each day.



In terms of benefits, there are three that stand out: firstly, being able to see from **timelines and reports** where learning gaps are is such a time-saver. Before, we had to look back over each child's records to see what they had and hadn't done and work out the gaps for ourselves. Now, ReallySchool shows them to us straight away!

The second big benefit is the protection of data – and that fits in with our requirement to **conform to the GDPR**. All our teachers' and TAs' iPads are locked with passwords, so the children's data is much more secure than when we were using paper journals.

The third benefit is the added value it has brought with its reports and insights into our children's data. We can now tailor our teaching and learning so much more and be more **active with planning, instead of simply rushing to complete our observations each day**.

“My first impressions are that ReallySchool is a well laid out method of recording observations within the EYFS. I'm particularly impressed by the ease with which video and audio clips can be added – plus the fact that several children can be rapidly included in one observation.”

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School