School Connects Staff, Classrooms, and Students with Unified Communications

St. Saviour's School achieves curriculum and proficiency goals by improving communication and learning opportunities on campus.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">ST. SAVIOUR'S SCHOOL
• Industry: Education
• Location: Ikoyi, Lagos
• Number of Employees: 70</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">BUSINESS CHALLENGES
• Meet British curriculum requirements for students in Nigeria.
• Improve communication between main office and classrooms.
• Improve responsiveness to emergency situations.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">NETWORK SOLUTIONS
• Unified Communications brings together all voice and data communications on a single network.
• IP Phones deliver voice communication to every classroom, greatly enhancing the school's ability to respond to emergencies.
• Wireless access allows students and staff to extend learning and sharing beyond the classroom.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">BUSINESS RESULTS
• Students are more engaged in learning, and staff teamwork, collaboration, and productivity have improved.
• School is now meeting its goal of bringing the full British curriculum to pupils.</td></tr>
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Business Challenges

St. Saviour's School is an independent British primary school that serves about 320 children. Over the years, the school's highly respected Board of Management and Board of Trustees have guided the school in delivering the English National Curriculum in a Nigerian context.

The boards were concerned about the school's ability to meet the requirements of the British information and communications technology (ICT) curriculum. The goal of ICT initiatives is not simply for students to learn technology, but to incorporate technology into all facets of education to enrich the quality and impact of the educational experience.

St. Saviour's new ICT director, Geraldine Donnellan, faced significant challenges bringing the school into the digital age. Only one of the seven buildings on the school campus had telephone service. There was no data network or Internet connectivity in the classrooms. Power management was a constant problem. Even the rainy season disrupted communications.

Without phone service in all of the classrooms, teachers dispatched foot messengers, usually students, and then waited for information or assistance. The lack of voice communications made it difficult for staff to interact and collaborate, and created a sense of isolation. In the event of an emergency in the classroom, staff lacked adequate means to quickly get assistance.

Donnellan chose Cisco Unified Communications and wireless connectivity solutions to create a digital learning platform that would not only meet curriculum requirements, but also truly transform the learning experience at St. Saviour's. The new solution would improve collaboration and emergency response by placing a phone in every classroom, providing instant communication with the head office or other teachers.

> **"Our pupils have embraced the technology enthusiastically and with ease. The staff is elated by the wealth of learning that digital access has brought into the classroom, and how it has extended the learning experience beyond the classroom."**
> **– Mrs. Geraldine Donnellan, ICT Director, St. Saviour's School**

Network Solutions

Donnellan was empowered by the school's Board of Trustees to select the best technologies to achieve their vision for digitally integrated learning. Donnellan chose Cisco because of its reputation and leadership role in voice over IP technology. Donnellan selected BI Trax Axxent, a Cisco® partner specializing in ICT solutions in Nigeria, to assist her in the planning and implementation of the network.

Oladele Adedoyin, the BI Trax project manager, worked closely with Donnellan to develop the design for the network. "Our goal was to help Mrs. Donnellan realize her vision," says Adedoyin. "We also wanted to give her a foundation that would allow the school to continue to expand its ICT resources over time."

"Our vision was to make the presence of computers pervasive in the school in order to enhance the learning experience," says Donnellan. "The Cisco solution not only helped us provide a better learning experience for students, we are taking learning and teaching to the next level and preparing our students for life."

Each classroom is networked, in addition to a new new fixed and a new portable computer technology lab. Classrooms are equipped with desktop computers or laptops, printers, and interactive whiteboards. All of these computing tools are connected using wired or wireless technology, so that, for the first time, teachers can access educational resources located anywhere on campus.

Business Results

Prior to deployment of the network, communication across the seven buildings on campus was difficult and required a "runner." Now there are IP phones in every classroom. In fact, St. Saviour's is the first school in Nigeria to use IP telephony. "Information is flowing much easier across, and within, all departments in the school," says Donnellan. "We have alleviated the sense of worry that hung over our staff. Now they feel much more connected and prepared in the event of an emergency."

One example is how the school can now deal with health emergencies in the classroom, whether teacher or pupil. "Now a teacher or student can pick up a phone in the classroom and call the administration building or School Nurse on their direct lines for assistance" says Donnellan. "Having communication readily available is safer for the teacher and much less worrisome for students." Teachers also feel reassured about the ability to keep track of students. The school nurse can immediately inform a teacher if she is holding a pupil for treatment. The Head Teacher is constantly informed about issues or incidents anywhere in the school.

This improved sense of awareness and connection has created a stronger sense of community and teamwork among staff members. "Our staff is communicating with each other in a much more enjoyable and collaborative way," says Donnellan, who also feels that students are influenced by these more positive relationships. "Children are very sensitive, and they pick up and often mirror what they see around them. The stronger friendships and enthusiastic teamwork of the staff influences how children relate to the world."

Using laptops and wireless access, pupils are freed from the constraints of learning in a dedicated classroom environment. Students can take their laptops into the field and enjoy the immediacy of learning, rather than gathering data for later analysis.

Even small things, like wireless printing, have had an impact on learning. "The ability to access high-end colour printers from any classroom means that students can see the output of their work in colour, which fills them with pride," says Donnellan. "At the same time, printer sharing means that we can use expensive resources more cost-effectively."

"Our pupils have embraced the technology enthusiastically and with ease. The staff is elated by the wealth of learning that digital access has brought into the classroom, and how it has extended the learning experience beyond the classroom. I would say that morale has increased significantly. In a culture that may resist change, it has been exciting to see how everyone has embraced these developments wholeheartedly."

Next Steps

The ease of adding capabilities to the network has accelerated the school's interest in even more sophisticated communications tools, including video conferencing for distance learning. It is also part of the requirement of the ICT in the United Kingdom that all children have the ability to access their work electronically. "Now that we have the foundation, everyone is so excited about moving forward," says Donnellan. "These are just some of the things that the school would not have imagined having when we started out a mere two years ago, but we should have them integrated by the next academic year. It is a tremendous and very gratifying achievement."

For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco solution, visit http://www.cisco.com/go/smb or contact your authorized Cisco partner.