Previously known as Tividale Community Arts College, Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy opened in September 2009. Based in Sandwell, in the West Midlands, the Academy caters for 800 learners aged 11-18.

The Academy was built by Tipton County Borough Council in 1956 and started off as a Comprehensive School to serve the expanding Tividale area which by this date had expanded beyond Tipton's borders into Dudley. Since 1974, it was controlled by Sandwell Council before becoming an Academy in September 2009 and receiving funding from the private sector.

Darren Fones has been with Ormiston for the last 5 years as the IT and SIMS Manager and explains how Emerge has been implemented within the Academy.

"We were looking for a solution for our PE department where they could take registers whilst in the changing rooms and also when outside for the other sports facilities. We heard about Emerge via the Groupcall website and decided to take them up on their offer of a free trial of Emerge.

After a successful trial of Emerge, we purchased a site licence along with a mixture of iPhones, iPads and iPods for use initially within our PE departments. However, we can now see the benefit of all staff having access to the software and are currently in the middle of a phased roll out of iOS devices to all staff and we are least 60% there at the moment.

Emerge was installed remotely without any problems and the Groupcall team were extremely helpful along the way.

The remote training that we received for Emerge (which is included in the subscription) was excellent! The training is unlimited so we will be regularly training our staff as we implement more devices so that Emerge can be used to its full capacity.

The feedback we have received on the use of Emerge has been superb. It makes taking registers a breeze now for our PE department and now we are slowly rolling out iPads to all staff so this will eventually have a big impact across the Academy.

Having so much information from SIMS instantly available at your fingertips whilst walking around the Academy is excellent and perfect for taking remote registration especially when the attendance information can be written back to SIMS.

Emerge has made it so much easier to take registers outside of the classroom and also the ability to check student information easily is great. Taking devices with us on schools trips certainly cuts down on the usual paperwork that normally needs to be carried out and also taken on the trip too! Now, we just have a pocket-sized device that has all the information we need for every student and the medical and emergency contact information has proved useful too especially when being off site.

The Academy has site-wide wireless coverage so our teachers love the fact that they can carry all their student information with them at all times."

Darren concludes: "As a heavy user of Apple devices in our Academy, Emerge has been essential to moving forward with technology and not leaving SIMS behind. Our staff consistently ask when they will be able to do more with the App such as add behaviour and achievement and I understand this is available in the next few weeks, so we're looking forward to that!"

For further information on Groupcall's range of products, please call: 020 8502 7344, email: sales@groupcall.com or visit: www.groupcall.com