



Central Bedfordshire Council gain greater control & confidence over quality of data

Central Bedfordshire Council became a Unitary Authority 3 years ago. Cathy Piotrowski, Education Data Management & Development Officer looked to Groupcall Xporter for a more efficient method of extracting data from schools.

Cathy explains: "After learning of Xporter through the Company Groupcall, we were looking to reduce the burden of data extraction for schools and find flexibility in the range and frequency of data that can be extracted. With approximately 2,200 employees in the Council, we were also looking for ways to improve efficiencies in data collections.

Prior to Groupcall Xporter, an administrative person would need to run a report every six weeks, with each one taking at least 20 minutes to run, check and send to the authority. This task would be performed over 8 times a year, over 139 Central Bedfordshire Council schools which equalled to 370 hours of staff time at a cost of almost £4,000 a year.



We now have a more professional method of data exchange using Groupcall Xporter. With the Xporter processes being run behind the scenes, it does not disrupt the workflow in schools. Data is now extracted from schools using Xporter, so that a comprehensive picture of pupils is maintained within the Local Authority.

Xporter has enabled us to obtain regular data feeds from schools which in turn have ensured that our central MIS is up-to-date with pupil movement details. It has also enabled us to highlight data discrepancies, irregularities and inaccuracies in a timelier manner.

From a technical point of view Xporter has proved invaluable. We have so far achieved the basis upon which the automated data extraction from a schools' MIS works effectively. Xporter has also provided us with opportunities to explore achieving greater efficiencies through interoperability with central MIS.

One of the main reasons we chose to purchase Xporter was due to our long standing excellent working relationship with the company. Groupcall also offer a certain degree of customisation to ensure that the product fits the local context.

The actual implementation of the software and setting up the process of Xporter was straightforward.

However, particular requirements imposed by our own ICT policies and structure did cause some delays. With this, there were some initial tasks that had to be undertaken by ourselves. We had to ensure the SIMS schools had all upgraded their local instances of the Xporter software to the correct version. Throughout the whole process issued raised with Groupcall were addressed reasonably quickly.

The training that was offered met our needs as the process demanded. We value the help of the Groupcall team who have always been proactive and responsive in dealing with any technical issues. It is also helpful for us that the same team members are assigned to our Local Authority and by retaining knowledge of our local context they are able to monitor and quickly resolve any issues that arise.” We know that if we require further training and trouble-shooting that Groupcall will be on hand to help.

Cathy concludes: “Without Xporter, certainly more time would be spent supporting schools in running the extract reports and assisting with processes for sending the reports securely to the Local Authority. Coverage of pupil data received, now leads to improved intelligence and preparedness for data sharing with other service areas and reporting on performance.”

“ With Groupcall Xporter, we now have an improved workload for staff with greater control and confidence in completeness. From a Local Authority point of view, time is now more productively targeted towards improving data quality and performance! ”

If you would like further information on our products and services, please call us on: 020 8502 7344, email: marketing@groupcall.com or visit: www.groupcall.com/xporter