



Delivering digital learning with Microsoft 365

About Cheam School

Cheam School is a traditional preparatory school for 3-13 year olds based in Newbury, Berkshire. Founded in 1645, the school today represents around 375 students and 75 teaching staff, and is committed to delivering a teaching and learning environment focused on traditional values with a modern ethos.

Business Drivers

“IT has two functions here at our school,” explains **Adam Hynes, Director of Digital Learning at Cheam School**, “one being curricular, for teaching our pupils, the other is IT services, to manage staff and student devices as well as the effective running of the school’s IT.”

The two functions of IT at Cheam are both driven by the need to offer the best education possible to pupils. The first strand is the need to learn about IT in order to function in today’s society. Skills such as digital communication, collaboration and logical thinking sit alongside more traditional IT learning including coding, robotics and AI. At the same time, the school cherry-picks the best opportunities for learning through technology to enhance learning in all subjects. The use of digital tools to aid assessment for learning, for example, drives the standards across the school. The second strand is the use of IT as an administrative tool. This is focused on making life easier for teachers to do their jobs as well as making the school a safe digital environment.

The school was operating a hybrid model, heavily reliant on local servers and services running on Windows 7. All content was stored locally and all devices were locally managed - there was very little cloud presence. The school even had two IT suites which could not be used at the same time.

Adam continues: “We needed a holistic view of IT across the school to support and improve the delivery of both functions, which at the time, was simply not possible. In line with our school mission statement around modern thinking, we really needed to modernise our IT services to deliver on these core values.” While the school had already been moving towards a cloud focus, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and initial lockdown saw the rapid introduction of remote teaching. **Adam reveals:** “Our teaching staff suddenly found themselves having to deliver lessons from home. Forced to work remotely using Microsoft Surface Pro laptops on a local network, many teachers were starting to struggle and we quickly recognised we were just not ready to support home learning.” Teaching remotely with Microsoft Surface Pros which were still locally networked highlighted the shifts in both the educational and IT infrastructure areas. Staff grew into teaching remotely, but needed to feel that the technology was not going to let them down when they were trying something new.

The AspiraCloud Solution

Microsoft Gold and Cloud Productivity partner, AspiraCloud, worked with Adam and the Cheam School to build a secure bridge between teachers and the school, in order to deliver an effective learning environment for pupils. **Adam continues:** “We had planned to migrate to the cloud and deploy a device management solution – the Covid pandemic simply pushed us to adopt it sooner rather than later.” Staff laptops were collected and each device was moved onto Microsoft Intune, a cloud-based service that

Key Benefits



Tech rich teaching environment



Modern, sustainable learning environment



Deliver secure remote learning



Powerful endpoint management

focuses on endpoint and application management. “With Intune,” **Adam explains**, “we can keep all data protected while working remotely and staff can access corporate data and applications, such as email, in order to remain productive.”

With the support of AspiraCloud, Cheam School also implemented Microsoft Teams to drive both communication and greater collaboration between staff and students. Teams has been integrated with Microsoft School Data Sync, which has allowed teaching to successfully continue from any location. The lockdown also saw the launch of the “121 device programme” and rollout. **Explains Adam:** “We wanted to issue every student with a Microsoft Surface Go device so they could effectively learn from home.” To get these devices rolled out quickly, Cheam School deployed Windows Autopilot, where the devices were preconfigured and ready to go. Using this tool, the technology becomes less of a barrier to digital learning.

Business Benefits

“We had to adapt quickly and embrace new tools,” **Adam explains**, “but AspiraCloud completely understood the situation and were with us every step of the way, recommending ideal solutions to swiftly address all our challenges and enable continuous learning.” Teaching staff and students have been able to teach and learn remotely – and securely – throughout the lockdowns.

Adam goes on: “These new tools have also changed our ways of working - we now offer every student a device on arrival which they can enrol themselves when they start the school.

It’s a real, hands off approach. We are quite flexible and can even enable BYOD, using Microsoft Company Portal, where children can bring in their own device if they wish to do so.”

This new, blended environment has enabled the school to drive forward new methods of teaching. A number of school departments now deliver completely paperless teaching, where teachers use Microsoft One Note to deliver content which is always available for pupils.



Our school is focused on communicating and collaborating better. Migrating to Microsoft 365 and deploying new devices, combined with powerful endpoint management has really achieved this for both staff and students.

- Adam Hynes, Director of Digital Learning, Cheam School



Why AspiraCloud

AspiraCloud has a broad spectrum of Microsoft 365 knowledge coupled with a strong skill set. With extensive experience acquired from working in schools, the AspiraCloud team also comprehend the requirements of the education sector. **Continues Adam:** “AspiraCloud listened and showed us the best way to achieve our digital learning objectives for the school. The team is extremely personable, responsive and were a real guiding light throughout the project.”

Future Plans

“Microsoft 365 is a stable platform for our school that includes set of powerful tools that can really bring out our skills,” **concludes Adam.** “We will be looking at rolling out Power BI to manage pupil data next term and offer valuable insights to influence teaching. With the ability to quickly identify key data, such as learning support requirements or sporting talent, Power BI will be a real time saver as all the data will be available from one simple dashboard. Sitting alongside plans around Viva Connect, we aim to put the right tools in place where it matters.”



AspiraCloud empowers organisations with the best-in-class productivity of Microsoft 365 Cloud solutions and services, such as Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, and Azure, to confidently kick start your cloud journey for today’s modern workplace. Combined with advanced security and device management capabilities to help safeguard your business, we can work with you to build the right, most cost effective and productive Microsoft Cloud solution.

Trusted Digital Delivery.

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