

King Edward's School

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*Director of Information and Communication Technology,
Brian Turner*

Located in Witley, Surrey, King Edward's is an independent co-educational school with approximately 480 pupils, 300 of whom are boarders. Educating boys and girls from 11-18, King Edward's strives to stay ahead of its time without losing sight of its traditional strengths. With its strong pastoral and caring philosophy the school creates an environment in which all pupils can thrive and develop.

King Edward's approach to teaching ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is to allow pupils to experience the technology through the various subjects that they study, making ICT a part of their overall learning, as opposed to a separate academic discipline. This means that the technology and IT infrastructure within the school is an essential element of the way the school's education system functions.

Over the years, as King Edward's School advanced its use of technology, the complications of maintaining the school's IT infrastructure increased. Director of Information and Communication Technology, Brian Turner explains, *"The IT infrastructure within the school grew to the extent that our staff and IT technicians felt the need for additional support*

in the maintenance of the network system."

The school computer system includes 300 laptops, 100 desktops, 12 servers and 80 wireless access points and a huge number of software applications are used by pupils, teachers and office staff. With technology akin to that of a SME sized business, King Edward's School decided to seek specialist advice from an expert IT consultancy.

ICT department and IT consultancy working side by side

ramzac, an IT solutions company based in Surrey, was chosen. Mr Turner comments, *"ramzac support our systems and provide us with telephone and onsite support as and when problems occur. This removes many of our IT related headaches, providing*

us with swift and effective response when it is needed."

As well as providing remote support, ramsac provide a network consultant who spends a day at the school once a month to offer additional knowledge to assist the school's ICT staff in managing and maintaining the network infrastructure. In addition, ramsac also provides strategic planning and direction through a monthly meeting with one of their Senior Technical Consultants. These visits give an opportunity for day-to-day IT issues to be discussed alongside the forward planning of future projects. Mr Turner explains, *"Having an external consultant coming to these meetings gives us fresh ideas, perspectives and approaches. It helps us to prepare fully before embarking on any new projects. The result is faster, smoother and better executed implementations."*

ramsac fills the skills gap

In addition to providing an outsourced IT service to the school, ramsac was also able to offer King Edward's its expertise in recruiting specialist staff. When a vacancy for a ICT technician arose within

the school's technical department, it requested ramsac's assistance to find a suitable candidate. Taking responsibility for the entire process ramsac advertised for applicants, short listed the best-qualified candidates for the job and conducted telephone interviews before presenting its recommendations to King Edward's School. The school then undertook the closing interviews and successfully filled the position.

Today ramsac is an integral part of King Edward's School's ICT department, as Mr Turner adds, *"Combining ramsac's skills and expertise with our own has ensured that we provide pupils and staff with a reliable, usable, secure and evolving IT infrastructure."* He concludes, *"Above all, ramsac provides the school with peace of mind. IT has become paramount in how our education system functions, and it is of great importance that this runs flawlessly. Looking ahead and developing our IT infrastructure with ramsac means that we can plan and budget accordingly ensuring that the high-pedigree and modern outlook of the school is reflected in its IT infrastructure."*