

To many of us, internet-based video technologies like Facetime and Skype may feel like novelties – but, to young people with speech and language problems, they’re an essential daily lifeline.



The students at St Mary’s are already facing their own communication struggles. When the connectivity they relied upon in lessons and to keep in touch with family became unreliable, it made things unnecessarily challenging. Our solution has genuinely improved the lives of the young people, their parents and staff alike.

Challenges

All schools today depend on good internet connectivity for teaching and administration purposes. The difference with St Mary’s is that many pupils are residential and use video call apps in the evenings to keep in touch with their parents. It’s the invaluable extra support they need in their care and education. When staff were forced to limit the number of users, it became apparent that the existing system was at capacity. In fact, not investing in connectivity was limiting the school’s use of new technologies that could support students and teaching. The school’s ICT Manager, Chris Thorncroft, explains how bad the problem had got. “For example, in the past, if we were going to run a YouTube video – just something quite basic that’s available to everybody – when downloading it, we’d never be sure about how the internet was going to hold up. Knowing that we needed to host an important Skype meeting was even more worrying – you’d set up the equipment and always be slightly concerned in case it didn’t go ahead as planned.” It also put paid to many of the school’s ambitions: “For quite a while, we’ve been hoping to hold webinars, but they never went ahead because we weren’t sure our system could handle that amount of traffic.”

St Mary’s School and College

St Mary’s School and College in Bexhill offers education, therapy and support on a residential and non-residential basis for young people aged 7 to 19 with speech, language and communication difficulties.

Challenges

- Slow and unreliable internet connectivity
- Restricting the students’ crucial video calls with family
- Limiting the school’s ambitions

Solution

- Installation of a 100Mbps leased fibre line to the main school building
- Installation of secure VPN links to the school’s two satellite sites

Results

- Capable and robust internet connectivity
- Unlimited communication between students and their families via video call apps
- The confidence to integrate technologies into lessons and other aspects of the school’s operations
- Opening doors to new technological possibilities

Solutions

We've been working with St Mary's since 2011, and we were acutely aware of the increasing pressure being put on their old internet connection. Fortunately, the school was recently turned around by an interim management team who prioritised the need for better connectivity. They gave us the green light to install our proposed 100Mbps leased fibre line to the main school building and link their two satellite sites via secure VPNs.

Results

The upgrade has given the school the confidence to use technology whenever they need it and in all kinds of new ways. "The students are now enjoying unlimited and trouble-free Facetime, and we're even using Skype in signing lessons," says Chris. "We've also just opened a brand-new assessment centre. Recently a parent couldn't attend a session in person, so we simply set up a laptop, and they joined the meeting via Skype. It was brilliant to be confident enough to promote that option to the school."

But, as always with Beaming, dependable technology is only part of the benefit. Chris describes how reassured he feels with us as a partner: "If there's ever a problem, it's Beaming who get in touch first – as they're monitoring our system continually. And they're all really good at what they do – without fail, you get to speak to someone who knows what they're talking about."

“

It was always going to be Beaming to help us with the upgrade – it wasn't going to be anybody else. They'd given us such brilliant support over the years – it was a no-brainer.”

Chris Thorncroft,
ICT Manager,
St Mary's School and College



Helping you thrive in a connected world

Beaming specialises in designing and implementing reliable voice and data products to a range of businesses and provides ongoing support for long-term success.

T: 0800 082 2868 | E: hello@beaming.biz | www.beaming.biz | @BeamingNews



Certificate Number 9849
ISO 9001, ISO 27001