



Newbury-based The Winchcombe School provides quality teaching and learning for children aged between three and 11. The school has two specialist centres onsite for Speech and Language and Language and Literacy, plus an onsite before and after school club and independent pre-school.

Future-proofed technology

A comprehensive audit of the school's legacy audio visual technology infrastructure, the design of a tactical acquisition strategy and installation of new state-of-the-art technology solutions engineered for classrooms; has enabled the school to leverage the benefits of the latest educational learning tools both in the short- and long-term, and maximised its return on investment.

The brief

The merger of the infant and junior schools to create one new school, involved a major refurbishment of the main building as well as building works to create four new classrooms to accommodate the new two-form entry.

This process highlighted the need for additional audio visual technology in the new classrooms as well as a pressing requirement to replace legacy equipment that had reached end of life. Recognising that significant investment was needed, Business Manager Sheilagh Peacock was keen to move away from a break/fix/replace

model and adopt a more strategic approach to the acquisition of new technologies.

She explained: "It was time to sit down and create a rolling programme for investment, we wanted to have a much clearer idea of what was needed both now and in the future and to have a plan in place whereby we could budget and plan ahead our investment year on year."

Having worked with Reading-based office technology provider Reflex Digital Solutions previously, Sheilagh invited the company to recommend a solution.

Reflex solution

Reflex's approach was to conduct a comprehensive technology audit across the school which revealed that a lot of the equipment was out of date; there was no consistency in the software versions deployed across the school; and more importantly the need to appoint a champion to take ownership of the infrastructure to ensure that the school fully leveraged the potential and future-proofed its planned investment.

Reflex recommended Casio UST (ultra-short throw) projectors to be used in conjunction with SMART M680 Interactive Whiteboards which also feature the award winning SMART Notebook collaborative learning software as well as dual touch capabilities and gesture control, all of which combined, offers a truly engaging and collaborative experience in the classroom.

"Our investment was significant and we wanted to ensure that we really made it work hard for us," said Sheilagh. "After attending a demonstration of the equipment and seeing the potential, we were convinced adopting the latest technologies would make a huge difference in the classrooms and that it would be money well spent."

In addition to providing the hardware, Reflex mapped out exactly where in the school the new equipment should be sited, professionally installed all of the new technology and even provided custom-built retractable wall mounts that enabled the whiteboards to be lowered specifically to support learning in the foundation areas of the school.

The school also invested in three new SMART Board 6065 interactive flat panels. This ultra HD, 4K interactive flat panel is designed to offer even more collaborative capabilities while ensuring lessons run seamlessly. The display has a low friction coated surface that delivers natural touch functionality, which keeps lessons running seamlessly as the display's responsiveness is immediate, and the smooth glass is cool to the touch. With multi-touch interactivity, multiple students can work together or independently at the panel with fingers or a pen.

Key benefits

Reflex went beyond simply supplying replacement hardware; creating a comprehensive audio visual acquisition strategy, demonstrating the range of solutions available from its technology partners SMART Technologies and Casio, illustrating where and how the school would benefit most from deploying the latest educational tools and what legacy equipment should be retired.

This approach meant that the school's audio visual technology solutions were bang up to date and that teaching staff now had access to the very latest tools to support learning and encourage collaboration in the classrooms.

"We found Reflex's approach refreshing and it was really helpful to have an independent specialist evaluate our legacy equipment and tell us what was needed to bring us up to date. The staff have all embraced the new technology and I no longer have to manage a steady stream of complaints that projectors or whiteboards have broken down," said Sheilagh.

In addition the software was standardised throughout the school and a three-year licence adopted, ensuring the school would have instant access to upgrades and future-proof its investment.

A technology champion was appointed and Reflex led a detailed training session that fully explored all of the functionality that the new technology offered.

This meant that moving forward everyone would continue to make the most of the new resources as the IT champion could provide ongoing support to the staff.

Sheilagh added: "We now have a clear plan in place, know exactly what we need now and in the future, and this has enabled us to budget ahead for a rolling acquisition plan."

About Reflex

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and this has enabled us to budget
ahead for a rolling acquisition plan

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