



Ark Alexandra
Academy

Customer Stories

Analysing progress with Power BI.



Overview.

Ark Alexandra Academy, part of the Ark Schools Trust, prioritise students gaining outcomes that match their talent.

The Academy, located in Hastings, has been with Bromcom for a number of years and we sat down with Data Manager, Sandra Brasier, to understand how Power BI has improved reporting and where the MIS has improved the work-life balance for staff.

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He loves the way we can analyse and present data to effect change.

Moving to the Bromcom School MIS: veterans of the system

We've been with Bromcom for approximately eight or nine years. There was a trust-wide migration from SIMS by all ARK schools, so we were part of a huge transition programme to move to the cloud.

At the time, I was working in reception, so I didn't use the system to its capacity. Despite this, the advantages of Bromcom were clear from the outset. I was able to search and retrieve information on pupils in seconds, as opposed to toggling through various different menus. If I needed to print off medical details in the event of an emergency, this was readily accessible in Bromcom and allowed us to move quickly and safely.

In general, the migration went smoothly but there was certainly an element of convincing teachers that change could be positive. As soon as staff got to grips with the interface and realised how easy it was to log information about pupils and automate messages home, they were on board. The MyChildAtSchool (MCAS) app was also a real selling point. This was simple and straightforward to use and allowed all the key stakeholders to feel more connected to the school.

Power BI and Behaviour: a constantly evolving picture

Now we're so firmly established with Bromcom, it's involved in everything we do on a day-to-day basis. This is particularly the case for senior leadership who are now utilising Power BI to make informed decisions.

In truth Power BI is a fairly new addition. We had planned to roll it out a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, due to Covid, this process was discontinued as the data would have been skewed and not an accurate reflection of a fully functioning school.





The Vice Principal is a former maths teacher and he's really taken this integration to new heights, as he loves the way we can analyse and present data to effect change. At present, we're only using it for behaviour but plan to introduce it for attendance and other core datasets.

The great thing about Power BI is that all the data is live. The picture is constantly changing and the information emerging becomes more and more specific with every entry. Now, we don't have to trawl through a million different spreadsheets and create pivot tables to get the information we need.

It's definitely making a huge difference. SLT have recently rolled out the information to HoDs so they can utilise the information in their subjects. The filtering is easy, and they can examine departmental trends with teachers. This can then inform collective intervention to improve outcomes.

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Reporting for teachers: redressing the work-life balance

Speaking of teachers, I know that one of the Bromcom functions they love is the registers. When a new class enters the room, they immediately know who has detentions, which students are SEN, PP or EAL, and who may have had a tricky day up to that point. All of this is located on one interface meaning teachers can approach topics with sensitivity while also giving all of their students the best chance to learn effectively.

I think the introduction of Bromcom and recent developments have improved teachers' work-life balance. Our SLT team have taken the time to look at the host of capabilities on offer within the school MIS and have actioned some automations which make day-to-day tasks that little bit easier. Last year, our behaviour system was quite complex, and it relied on staff logging information during lessons. There were downfalls here, as teachers often didn't have the capacity to log at the time and occasionally, events were forgotten. Now the interface has been stripped back, making it easier for staff to enter details as they teach. The information is now accurate and populated in BI, and people are not staying late logging numerous events from the day. Ultimately, it's all on one screen, making the entire process straightforward.

Communicating with stakeholders: moving with the technology

When it comes to home, we have a large cohort and ended up spending thousands on text messages.

This was the main reason behind rolling out MCAS. We wanted to reduce the number of paid messages across the school. Having completed some research, we noticed that we didn't get a particularly good response from emails so, even though this was free, it didn't have the desired effect. Essentially, we need to move with the generation, the app works in much the same way as social media, so we set up alerts to notify about specific events. Parents were immediately more responsive, and this was also of massive benefit during the tail-end of the pandemic when we could notify parents about compulsory enrichment sessions after school.

Now, our teachers log behaviour events (negative) and golden tickets (positive), so home are constantly up to date with how their child is progressing.



We also use MCAS for Cadets. At the moment, we have 130 on roll so it's great to be able to share information about the group digitally and know that parents will readily pick the information up.

The thing I love about MCAS is the student reports.

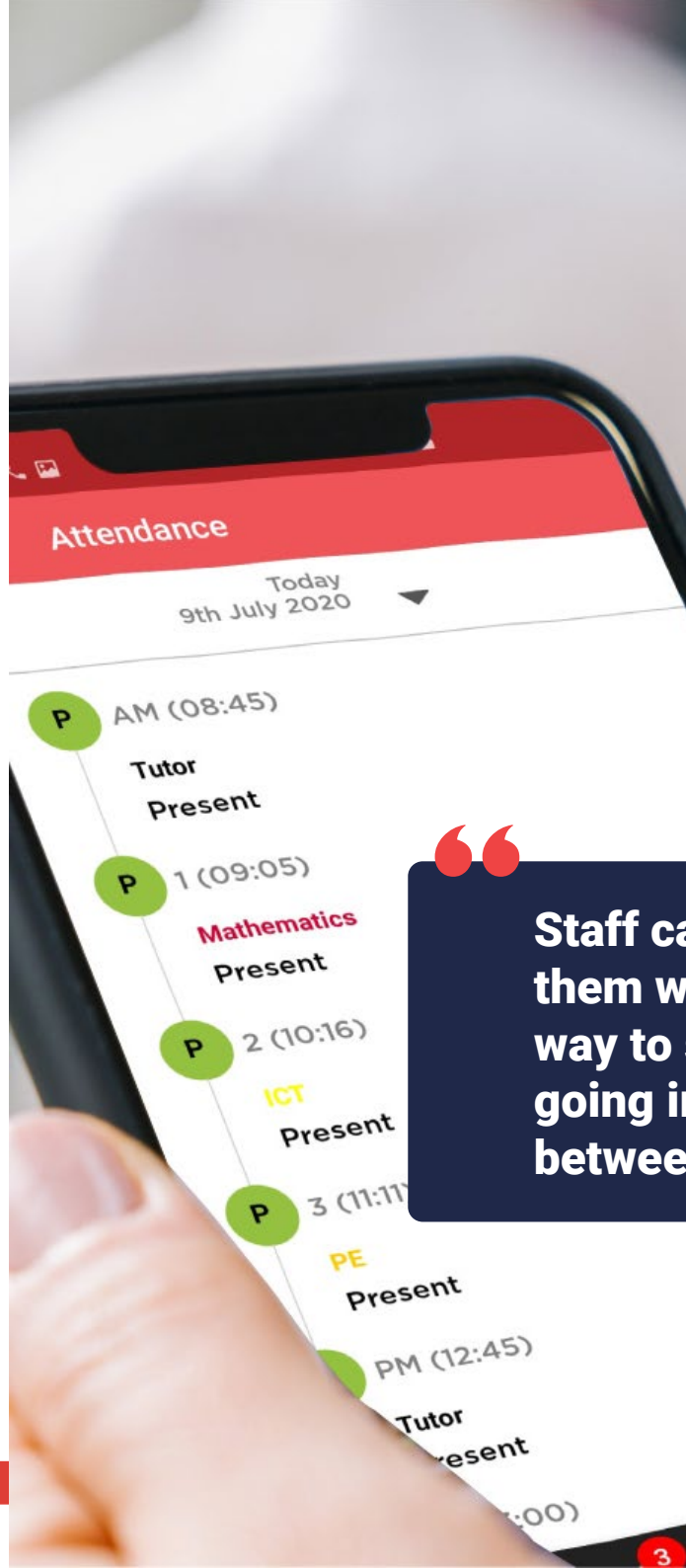
For some of our older students, there is the ability to look at archived reports as far back as their first year in secondary school. Instead of having piles and piles of paper, there is now an accurate digital record of a child's schooling history which parents can access to assess progress at any time. It's all there, in the palm of a hand.

It's great to be able to share information about the group digitally and know that parents will readily pick the information up.

Targeted groups: interventions in a flash

Regarding other wins with Bromcom, I really love the 'save to selection' lists.

When you're on a student page and you've got the entire school to contend with, you can filter by groups specifically created for intervention or observation. At Ark Alexandra, we've got ALE 66 which is a group of Year 11 students who are not quite where they need to be before their examinations, next year.



Key members of staff in charge of monitoring these pupils can simply click into this selection list and see this specific group without having to manually filter each time. The added advantage is we can send group communications home or to the students by selecting them from within the list.

Additionally, the homepage is great. Staff can see information relevant to them with tailored widgets. It's a great way to see what's coming up without going into granular detail or switching between multiple tabs. It's your daily activity at a glance!

Would you recommend Bromcom?

Absolutely. I think the Bromcom School MIS is simple to use, saves staff time, and supports the school in managing and analysing data.

Staff can see information relevant to them with tailored widgets. It's a great way to see what's coming up without going into granular detail or switching between multiple tabs.



Book a demo and begin your journey.



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Bromcom Cloud-MIS

Prepared: November 2022
Version 1

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