Empowering Minds Academy Trust

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Establishment type: Multi Academy Trust
Academies: 5 Primaries
Located: Doncaster
Products: One-Stop Shop, Vision

Bromcom has already delivered far more than our old provider promised.

Empowering Minds Academy Trust is a small multi-academy trust (MAT) consisting of five primary schools in Doncaster. Last April the trust made the decision to switch to Bromcom's One-Stop Shop MIS and Bromcom Vision, our central data hub solution for MATs and local authorities (LAs). We sat down with the trust's Operations Officer, Daniel Smeaton, to discuss why they decided to switch to Bromcom, their experience during the switching process, and how they've been getting on with Bromcom so far.

Why they chose Bromcom

In 2020, Empowering Minds Academy Trust made the decision to switch from their legacy MIS to a cloud-based system under the promise it would bring everything they need into one MIS. But they quickly realised that this cloud MIS provider was underdelivering, as Daniel explains.

"They said that everything at some point would be available on one system, but that point never came and we were still relying on our third-party apps. As soon as we could, we looked at moving away from them. We were very keen to find something that could actually meet all our needs and put everything we required in one system. And that was Bromcom."

Bromcom

As well as the opportunity for cost savings by getting rid of their third-party apps, the trust also wanted to reduce the number of systems they used to make it easier for staff to complete their day-to-day tasks and improve parental engagement.

“If parents have to use lots of different systems for various tasks, whether it’s booking parents evening slots, paying for clubs and trips, or receiving communications from us, we find that they don’t tend to respond to them very well. It’s much easier for them if everything’s on one system, especially if it’s in an app on their phone.”

> **Bromcom had a very popular, reliable app was yet another thing that sold it to us.**

Bromcom’s parent app, the MyChildAtSchool app – which has a 4.4 star rating on the Apple app store based off of over 71,000 reviews – was a particularly strong draw for the trust given their poor experience with their previous MIS supplier.

“They did have a parent app but it only worked for a couple of months and then it never got fixed. Knowing that Bromcom had a very popular, reliable app was yet another thing that sold it to us.”

When their contract began to draw to a close and they were finally able to consider different providers, Bromcom quickly became the obvious choice.

"After seeing the demonstration, we realised Bromcom ticked all the boxes for us, both in terms of what the staff at the schools and the trust needed, and what our parents needed. Bromcom is truly a one-stop shop MIS."

But what really clinched it for them, was Bromcom MIS' reporting capabilities: "Once the CEO saw the reporting side of things, it was no longer a close decision between providers. Reporting was difficult and confusing with our previous provider, and we struggled to pull across what you wanted from it, but you can easily pull off exactly what you need in Bromcom."

Empowering Minds Academy Trust also opted to have Bromcom Vision, our central data hub solution which pulls together data from its schools' MIS and provides an overview of the trust's performance, as well as enables the central team to easily implement policy at individual schools. Just like with their previous MIS, they did have a central system for the trust, but yet again, it didn't deliver.

"It didn't pull data very well," Daniel says, "and it was a bit confusing to use. We wanted a way that we could get the data quite simply, and for that reason Vision was a plus point for Bromcom."

Their onboarding experience

As their previous MIS didn't read to Bromcom, the trust had to manually migrate all their schools' data to Bromcom MIS. But according to Daniel, the switchover was still a relatively easy process.

"Once all the data was in the system, it was a smooth transition. The onboarding staff helped a great deal during the migration process, too, particularly when we had an issue migrating in the historic attendance data."

Throughout the process of getting set up with Bromcom, the trust has benefited from Bromcom's comprehensive support offering, especially the phone support, as Daniel explains: "I can't fault the phone support. When you ring up, they deal it with the problem right away."

Looking ahead

The trust and its schools have been live with Bromcom since September 2024 and is now in the process of building out the additional modules which will enable them to finally get rid of their third-party apps.

"We're currently in the process of activating online payments, and Trips and Clubs are going to be moved onto our MIS soon. We're looking forward to getting more engagement with the parent app in the future, too, and will be fully utilising it soon."

Daniel is especially keen for the trust and its schools to start using the parent app more which he says will make communicating with parent both easier

and cheaper: “We were using text messages but they cost money, so we’re encouraging parents to use the app as much as possible so we can ping them on that instead.”

Although its early days with their new systems, the trust and its schools are already feeling the benefits.

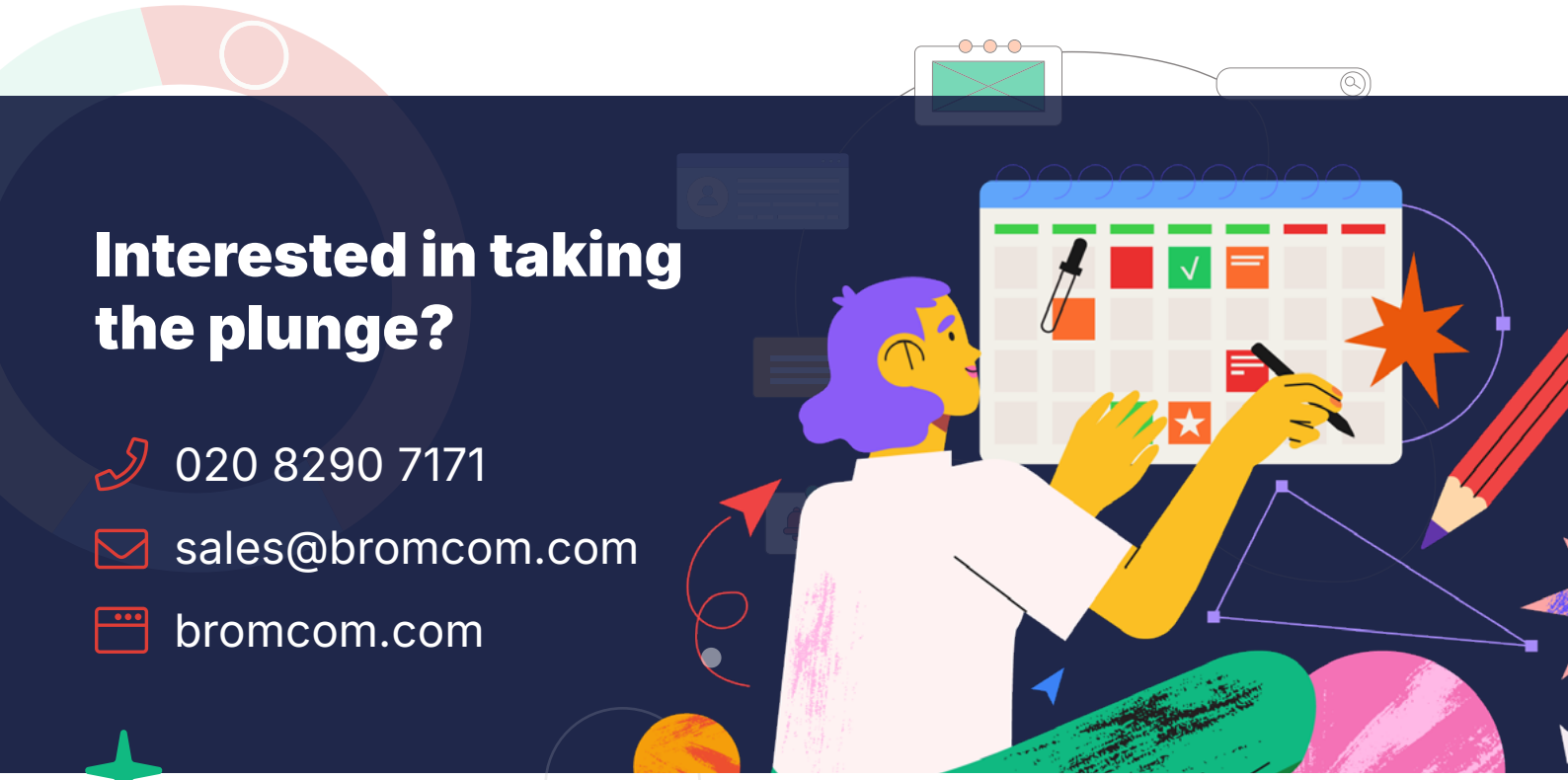
“I’ve mentioned how impressed we were with the whole reporting side of things and it’s definitely lived up to our expectations. I’ve found Quick Reports in particular really useful. The systems have also been very easy to use and once we get everything fully into the system, I’m sure the MIS will fully deliver on Bromcom’s promises.”

While it may be too soon to recognise the full impact of switching to Bromcom, Daniel could decisively say that Bromcom has been a far better alternative to their first cloud-based MIS provider.

“Bromcom has already delivered far more than our old provider promised. If you’re looking for an MIS that has everything in one place and is easy to use, I’d advise you go with Bromcom. Like I said, it’s truly a one-stop shop MIS.”

Learn more about Bromcom

If you want to find out more about Bromcom MIS and Bromcom Vision and how they could benefit your establishment, book a 15-minute discovery call with our team. We offer our services to a range of establishment types, so whether you’re a primary or secondary school, or are/are with a MAT or LA, our range of solutions can work for you.use, I’d advise you go with Bromcom. Like I said, it’s truly a one-stop shop MIS.”



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