

CASE STUDY

Honiton Community College

Effective Engagement and Communication

BACKGROUND

Honiton Community College is a rural secondary school in East Devon with a sixth form setting. The college converted to an academy in 2011 and currently educates around 750 students. It aims to provide a caring and supportive environment for each individual so that they can achieve their full potential, both academically and socially. In 2016, it was rated Good by Ofsted.

“ We found the advice and knowledge of the Scomis team invaluable during the implementation of the SIMS Parent app. ”

Matt Burrell, Director of Finance and Resources,



THE CHALLENGE

Central to the college's strategy is working in partnership with parents and carers. Matt Burrell, Director of Finance and Resources at Honiton Community College explained that they had implemented SIMS Learning Gateway as a parental engagement tool but were only partially successful in getting parents to use it. Both parents and the college found the password management time consuming, complex and prohibitive. In addition, it was not available as an app but only accessible through a web interface.

With the event of GDPR and Data Protection the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) undertook a comprehensive review of their processes and identified data collection as a risk due to printed student information being sent either by post or given to the students.

The challenge for the college was to find an effective parental engagement tool that would be easy to use for parents so that they could participate and be informed in their child's progress and

education and give them an easy secure route to update home and student personal information.

THE SOLUTION

The college became aware of SIMS Parent Lite as a solution for data collection. It met the challenges of being available as an app and easy for parents and the college to use. Parents register and set their own passwords so there was no overhead for the college. In addition, SIMS Parent Lite was free.

SIMS Parent Lite enabled the college to publish the data collection sheet and the parents to view and make changes to it online through the app. These changes are immediately visible in SIMS for approval by the administrator and when approved the information is updated in SIMS.

The take up by parents was encouraging. Within 2 days of sending out initial invitations to parents, over 130 had registered. This rose to 400 within 2 months.

Currently there are over 500 parents signed up and using the product. The college regularly send out invitations to those not already registered to trigger more registrations. It is also advertised at parents evenings and in their newsletters.

Following the success of SIMS Parent Lite, the college engaged Scomis to demonstrate the features of the full version, SIMS Parent app. SLT quickly realised the potential of the product and the college are currently using it to effectively share attendance, achievement and behaviour information.

Matt Burrell explained "We found the advice and knowledge of the Scomis team invaluable during the implementation of the SIMS Parent app. In addition, Scomis were able to help us set up and tailor what parents were able to see via the app. All reports are uploaded as pdfs for parents to view. Parents and students also use it to view their timetables."

THE IMPACT

As everything can be viewed through SIMS Parent app the college has mitigated the risk of printed data collection sheets going astray. The same applies to student reports. Those parents who wish to have printed copies are required to collect them from the college. An additional bonus for the college is the huge cost saving in administrative time and printing costs.



The college is measuring the use and impact of implementing SIMS Parent app on parent involvement in their child's education and teachers are already reporting that they are noticing increased awareness in parents leading to more informed discussions, which indicates that it is already making a difference. They are currently looking at refining the use of it to increase the use of SIMS Calendar so that they can publish events to parents and are investigating the use of using SIMS Homework.

ABOUT SCOMIS

Scomis partners with schools to create tailor-made solutions to meet their needs. For more than 30 years, we have operated as a not-for-profit service providing ICT Services to educational establishments from Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) to small rural primary schools. We support over 730 schools in 27 LAs across the UK.

Get in touch to find out more!

T: 01392 385300

E: scomis@devon.gov.uk

W: www.scomis.org

SCOMIS
Your ICT Partner



Certified
proactive
service desk
☆☆

