

About Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) is one of the largest not-for-profit multi-academy trusts in England. These trusts are charities that run schools focused on providing children with an excellent education. Educating over 30,000 pupils: across 6 regions in 31 secondary schools, 7 primary schools and 1 special school; OAT is one of the longest established trusts, sponsoring academies since 2009.

"Onecom provide our telephony service across the Trust and have proven themselves to be a supportive and flexible partner, always willing to go the extra mile and ensure the service they provide adapts to our needs and requirements."

Challenges

OAT faced several challenges before joining Onecom. Looking after 36 academies across the UK, they found that they had high telephone bills across multiple suppliers. The ageing telephone systems that were in place were also unsuitable for their requirements and expensive to maintain. It was critical for them to have resilient systems in place to manage safeguarding practices.

Solutions

Onecom now supply all academies with analogue/digital/SIP lines and manage their call traffic as part of the awarded tender; this was recently extended by 2 years testament to the strength of the partnership.

The new Horizon system enabled the schools to make immediate changes to their phone system at no additional costs. With safeguarding a priority for all schools, each school utilises the mobile app should the main system go down due to an internet fault, meaning parents can always contact the school.

With one supplier contact for any billing, technical or solution resolution, valuable time is saved, enabling the customer to be more efficient. Having a dedicated account manager creates a stable and productive relationship. The technical team are fully familiar with the setup of OAT, and the schools have also built great working relationships with a number of them when they need assistance.

The Benefits

The partnership with Onecom and OAT has led to many positive changes throughout the trust including:

- The academies have saved on costs across the board
- There is now a resilient phone system for parents/carers, pupils and staff to be connected
- An online portal allows access to analytics to monitor the schools inbound/outbound traffic.
- An out of hours message service is available for parents/carers

Several members of staff have been inducted with administration training of the portal but the simplicity of operating this system means the schools have become largely self-sufficient. They can administer their own changes in real-time, which is extremely powerful.

Each school had a project manager or project coordinator assigned to manage the delivery for each site. This in addition to a dedicated account manager to oversee the whole account, has been a key success factor. The programme has enabled OAT to rebuild ageing solutions from scratch, streamlining the way the schools operate their phone system. New features include an out-of-hours service to enable parents to leave a message, that is e-mailed to a contact at the school; confidence has been instilled that the schools aren't missing important messages.

Having a trusted telecoms partner and a reliable communications platform has made life much easier for staff. Combined with a synonymous tariff set across all the academies, means that management is now slick, streamlined and cost-efficient.