



FIREFLY & MICROSOFT

Case study



Introduction

The events of 2020 brought a number of challenges for many schools and highlighted the need for technological solutions that worked seamlessly together. Schools such as Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools and Wimbledon High School have been at the forefront of this digital revolution, working to produce an online ecosystem that meets the needs and expectations of their students, teachers and parents. The continued partnership between Firefly and Microsoft has given these schools the tools to navigate a fast-changing digital world.



The Challenge



Founded in 1880, Wimbledon High School is a forward-looking school in the heart of London, offering a stimulating environment for its 1000 girls. A Microsoft Showcase School, they have been using Firefly, along with OneNote and OneDrive, and more recently Teams to support their BYOD strategy. Rachel Evans, Director of Digital Learning & Innovation, was clear that she did not want technology to lead teaching and learning, but to allow teachers to use the best tools available to meet their goals. However, Rachel was keen to avoid platform overload and bring clarity to their digital ecosystem. She wanted technology to support the real-time business of learning, whilst at the same time simplify the storage of, and access to learning materials.



Educating children since 1694, Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools is now the largest family of Independent schools in Europe, working with 2700 students. As Director of ICT, Stuart Jackson's task was to simplify the digital ecosystem at ESMS. Microsoft Teams made it possible for their teachers and students to interact in an online environment, but they needed to find a way to make sure that parents were also part of the learning conversation. Crucially they needed to do so in such a way as to ensure that parents weren't overloaded with a plethora of platforms and logins.

“ ...Firefly is so simple, and it just works...”

Stuart Jackson, ESMS



Our Solution

Firefly integrates seamlessly with Microsoft 365, OneDrive and Microsoft Teams. With Firefly learning resources available in Teams through the Firefly on Teams app, students can access a range of content to support their assignments and classroom learning, whilst teachers can easily collaborate on, and re-use materials year on year. The Firefly Seating Plan in Teams gives teachers classroom management tools and student data at their fingertips, simplifying the organisation of activities and helping them to understand their students' particular needs, all from within the Teams environment.

“ The ability to access student data through the Seating Plan enables teaching staff to better understand student learning needs, and supports our neurodiversity awareness policy.”

Rachel Evans, Wimbledon High School

Integrated with the school Management Information System, alongside Microsoft 365, OneDrive and Teams, Firefly enables teachers to use their Microsoft tools for teaching and learning, whilst at the same time making sure that parents have visibility of the learning process and can engage fully with the school. To support those families for whom English is not their first language, Microsoft Immersive Reader is embedded within Firefly pages.



The Benefits



With Microsoft Teams providing the teaching conversation space for teachers and students, and allowing the rapid distribution of learning material, Firefly's rich content management tools, allowed teachers to combine and curate the best materials from third-party providers, along with their own resources and assessments, whilst also allowing that content to be available in Teams. With 100% of senior school teachers at WHS using Firefly on a monthly basis, they had the freedom the school wanted them to have, to use the tools that best suited them and their subject, whilst still providing a coherent experience for their students across all learning spaces.

“ Using the new Firefly on Teams facility, the workflow throughout the lesson is richer and easier to manage”

Rachel Evans, Wimbledon High School

Working with Firefly and Microsoft, Stuart has been able to leverage the immediacy of Microsoft Teams for classroom teaching alongside a structured resource library and communication tools in Firefly that is available to parents without adding to the workload of teachers. The 4000 parents at ESMS loved the transparency of curriculum that Firefly brought, with over 80% of parents at the school accessing Firefly on a weekly basis. Teachers had more time to teach, students more ways to learn, and parents had the resources they needed to support their child's learning at home.

“ Taking the best of these two products (Firefly and Microsoft) and giving teachers the scope and opportunity to use both, has really supported their teaching at ESMS.”

Stuart Jackson, ESMS



Powering the Modern Learning Experience