



The Positive Impact of Physical Security in Schools

HELSEBY

High School



"A number of students have indicated that they feel far more secure knowing that there is a far more accurate CCTV system in school. I would recommend any head at any school to look very seriously at D-Link's products."

John Dowler, Head Teacher at Helsby High School

Safeguarding Pupil Welfare

Helsby High School is a state-maintained secondary school in Northwest Cheshire, for pupils aged between 11 and 18. Founded in 1897, Helsby has grown significantly over the years. The school prides itself on high quality teaching, conducted within a good, safe learning environment. At the centre of the school ethos there is a highly effective system of pastoral care, enabling each child to develop and fulfil his or her full potential.

The Head Teacher, Mr John Dowler sets the scene well, "Safeguarding our young people is a prime priority for any school and it is here at Helsby as well. We don't want to create a prison mentality with great big high wired fences, and so it's getting the balance right, therefore a good quality CCTV resolves this by enabling us to monitor the entire school site."

Ensuring Security of Students, Staff & Property

The issue of safety has always been of paramount importance to Helsby, and the school had an existing analogue CCTV system in place as one of its security measures. However, the system was dated, had high maintenance costs and the image quality was pixelated. Steve Ford, ICT Manager at Helsby High school stated, "Before we had in place an analogue system that was quite old and antiquated, we had several repairs done but it was never fully successful, the quality of the images were very grainy which made identifying students very difficult".

With poor quality images, the system was not fit for purpose, as individuals could not be identified, making the school vulnerable to vandalism, theft and behavioural issues. Additionally, knowledge of black spots, where cameras were not functioning effectively, soon spread. These areas had the potential to become troublesome areas for the school and so in an effort to minimise risk, the school took action.

With the security of students, staff and property at the forefront of his mind, Steve Ford turned to Rapid Technologies, a specialist education solutions provider and a trusted partner with whom the school had already enjoyed a fifteen year relationship.

The New Complete End-to-End Solution

Rapid Technologies recommended D-Link as the vendor to Helsby as they offered the entire security solution. Colin Birchall, ICT Consultant at Rapid Technologies, noted, "The school was looking to improve its infrastructure - we knew D-Link offered enterprise class solutions, having the switches, having the CCTV cameras and having the storage, it ticked all the boxes to work with D-Link on this occasion."

Following an extensive survey of the school both by Rapid Technologies and the D-Link pre-sales team, Helsby selected a range of 72 D-Link IP Surveillance cameras, which include those suitable for both indoor and outdoor use. The school needed a complete surveillance solution, one that would provide a smart, practical and proactive approach to school security and an upgrade on infrastructure including switches, cameras, storage and software.

Rapid Technologies undertook the installation in two phases – the indoor cameras were installed in July 2014, followed by those outside in August 2014. The ability to install the D-Link solution in stages was a real benefit as it did not disrupt day-to-day functions of the school.

A Closer Look at the Cameras Used

The cameras installed were a range of Day/Night full HD Dome network cameras. They offer professional surveillance encased in a rugged design, providing an extremely reliable solution that is capable of monitoring an area 24 hours a day through pan and tilt zoom functionality and night vision.



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The key aspect of the installation process revolved around the school's infrastructure; in particular improvements were needed to support the additional data traffic generated by the cameras. Rapid took time to analyse the connectivity of the schools network and recommended how Helsby could improve the network infrastructure to ensure it was robust enough better handle the additional traffic.

Far Reaching Benefits of IP CCTV

Immediately impressed with the new security solution, the staff at Helsby High School list a number of ways in which the system has benefited the school, its pupils and staff.

The new CCTV system acts as a powerful deterrent against incidents of vandalism, such as broken windows or acts of graffiti. It is also playing a vital role in minimising the risk of theft and assisting subsequent investigations, should an incident occur. With excellent image quality and powerful zoom capabilities, the ICT Manager is now well equipped to investigate any suspicious activity and have quality evidence, should it need to be called upon. Taking a hard line on any acts of vandalism, there have already been a number of incidents captured that have been resolved efficiently and effectively in a way that wouldn't have been possible with the previous system, saving both time and money.

Howard Woodfine the Site Manager at Helsby acknowledges the benefits since implementation of the new security solution, "We've seen a reduction in the level of vandalism in and out of the school, there's now more awareness that there is a presence of cameras which has led to that reduction." Since implementation, the system has saved Howard approximately 20 hours every month where he would ordinarily be undertaking repair work. Such savings in terms of both time and money allow the Site Manager to focus on more constructive tasks.

Over and above any desire to safeguard property, is the school's commitment to safeguarding its children. With the D-Link

solution in place, Helsby has the additional peace of mind that the children are in a safe environment that will allow them to focus on their learning and ultimately their future.

Andrew Mulholland, Business Solutions & Marketing Manager, D-Link UKI, said, "It has been a pleasure working together with both Helsby and Rapid. The education space has always been one of D-Link's best markets in the UK. But it has been a great learning experience for me personally to see the impact that this technology has had on the teaching and learning environment in such a short space of time".



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