

Case Study: Matthew Arnold School enhances network security with iboss

Matthew Arnold School, part of Acer Trust, is a co-educational academy and sixth form. With 1100 students - from years 7 to 13, it is located west of Oxford and has a 'good' Ofsted rating.

The Challenge

Matthew Arnold is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which students can flourish when using on-site PCs and their own mobile devices. Faced with new counter-terrorism and security guidelines, the school had to deliver on its Prevent Duty requirements, where staff identify students vulnerable to online radicalisation and understand what to do if this occurs.

The school also has to protect against threats including; online grooming, cyber-bullying and ransomware attacks. Adherence to Ofsted compliance was another key requirement, which involves retaining detailed records of all staff and student online activity.

When its existing network security system proved ineffective, there was an opportunity for the school to refresh this technology. Change was necessary as the system was cumbersome to use, poor at reporting and lacked the sophisticated filtering and security capabilities required to counter an increasingly complex, threat landscape.

Solution

After evaluating various web filtering products, the school's network team chose iboss' Secure Web Gateway (SWG) appliance. This system promised to support the school's duty of care activities by offering advanced protection, monitoring and reporting on all traffic, intelligent blocking of harmful content, evasive protocol blocking and real time alerts. SWG was favoured as it possessed the most user-friendly interface, was highly scalable, comprehensive user training was provided - and ultimately offered the best value.

Purdicom, iboss' value added distributor, helped implement the SWG with their reseller on the school premises, over a holiday period - which minimised impact on student activities. To ensure the strongest level of protection, SWG was deployed with the school's existing firewall, as a completely transparent inline device on their network. Installation was completed on time and Purdicom provided full training for the school's technical staff and also deliver first and second line, ongoing support.

Benefits

The school now has a highly secure, compliant, network environment. SWG's granular filtering, its comprehensive traffic monitoring - that also covers social media control, applications and live dashboard, forensic-style reporting, all deliver a significantly better experience for the school's network staff and students. Multiple device types can be easily managed and all harmful, undesired content is instantly

blocked - whilst different levels of student or staff online access are provided. With more students using the network, the SWG has enabled the school to experience better performance - and more available bandwidth.

Ruth Wilbraham - ICT Service Manager at Matthew Arnold said,

"With iboss, we now possess greater insight into all network intrusions than before and can quickly identify and manage high risk factors - all the way down to individual students. Purdicom provided very insightful training that equipped us with new skills so we maximise the SWG's advanced features. We would recommend iboss to any school that requires a great value system that can optimise its network security and ensure the complete cyber safety of its students."

