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“Ericom has always been extremely supportive and helpful”

The construction of a new academic campus in 2007 gave The Arthur Terry School (Arthur Terry) the ideal opportunity to review the way it delivered applications and data for pupils and staff.

A NEW APPROACH FOR A NEW SCHOOL

Based in Birmingham, Arthur Terry had commissioned the construction of a brand new school campus, which would replace 95% of its existing buildings. This mammoth project gave the secondary school the opportunity to look at its IT infrastructure in a new light and consider new ways to deliver better ICT services, more cost effectively. The school wanted to embed ICT more tightly into teaching and learning across all curriculum areas and all subjects, not just IT and business. To do this, it knew that it had to make IT applications and data much more accessible to both pupils and teachers.

The school planned to position PCs in most of the 90 classrooms on the new campus, as well as in dedicated IT and business work rooms. In addition, all teachers had laptops, and the new school had a couple of design studios equipped with Apple Macintosh computers. With such a large, dispersed estate of computers, the IT department wanted to find a better way to centrally manage and support applications. At the time, IT technicians were being dispatched to classrooms every time application issues arose, and this wasted considerable time and money.

While Arthur Terry planned to acquire a couple of new servers, it didn't have the available budget to purchase hundreds of new PCs, so it planned to move the computers it already had from the existing

buildings over to the new buildings. Consequently, the school needed an application delivery solution that could work across a complicated mix of aging computers with different specifications.

The school's primary IT contractor initially considered Citrix applications to address the school's needs, but this technology was quickly ruled out due to its high cost and complexity. The contractor then proposed Ericom's PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView, and the school discovered that this comparable solution met its requirements for significantly less money. Chris Butler, Head of IT Delivery at Arthur Terry, explains: "Ericom was tens of thousands of pounds less expensive than Citrix and delivered everything that we were looking for."

AN OUTSTANDING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Arthur Terry installed PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView in the new school building just before the pupils and staff moved in. From this central system, the IT team now serves out all of the applications and data needed to support lessons. Wherever pupils and teachers go in the school, they can log into any PC or laptop, in any classroom or work area, and see exactly the same screen. They can then easily find and open the applications they need, complete tasks and save their work.

But the benefits of PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView aren't

confined to the new school campus; it also enables pupils and teachers to access applications and data remotely from home, a library or an Internet café. This means that pupils no longer need to have (and pay for) their own copies of multiple different software applications on their home PCs. They can simply log into the solution via a highly secure Internet connection, access the

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Technical Services Manager
The Arthur Terry School

application that they were using in class, find the work they started in a lesson and complete it at home.

Teachers too can log into PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView from home to prepare lessons, check timetables and mark assignments. Previously, teachers had just a basic remote access solution that enabled them to access their work, but not the applications used to create it. "Now, whether teachers or pupils are working in school or at home, they have a completely seamless experience," Butler says. "Almost everything that they can do at school, they can now do at home too."

The year after installing Ericom's application delivery system, Arthur Terry was inspected by Ofsted. In its assessment, Ofsted pronounced the school to be 'outstanding' and awarded it the coveted 'grade one' in an incredible 37 out of 39 criteria. The school's exemplary use of technology to improve teaching and learning is likely to have contributed to this success.

