

# Bridgnorth Endowed School Eclipse Case Study

Bridgnorth Endowed School is a Specialist Technology College, there are 1050 students aged 11 – 18.

A summary of the facility on my appointment six years ago was that the whole library seemed stuck in a time warp and everything needed a radical overhaul including the library management system, which was from Micro Librarian. At my previous school I had successfully used Heritage, even though I did at times find it and the support system behind it quite cumbersome, a bit like using a sledgehammer to crack a walnut. I was quite prepared to replace the MLS system with the Heritage one with which I was familiar.

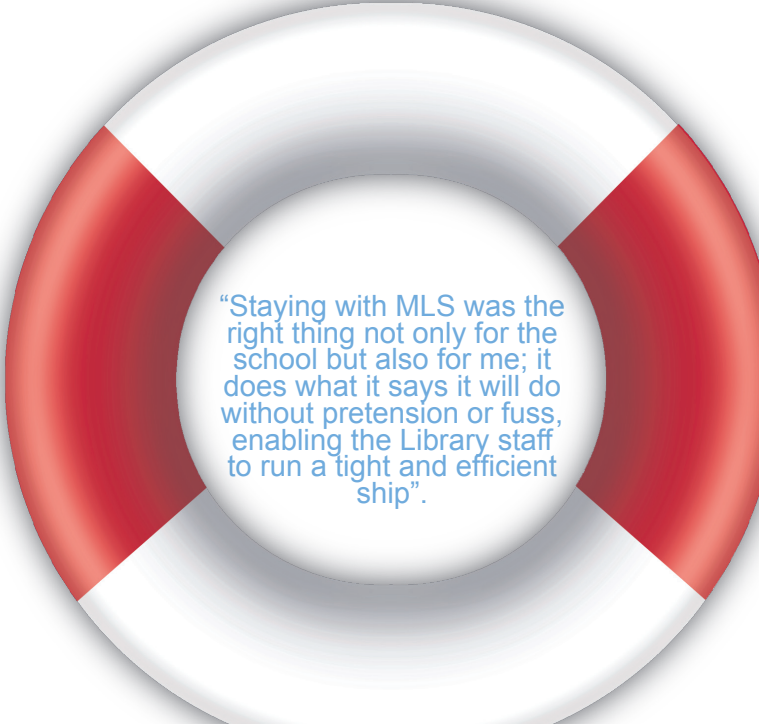
I had been appointed specifically to drag the Library and Resource Centre into the twenty first century and knew that the Senior Management would support whatever I wanted to do. Shortly after I started work here I received through the post some information on Eclipse. It was impressive, simple and straightforward so even though no one else in the County had the system I decided to explore further.

Since that initial contact we have not looked back, it became obvious from the first few conversations that I was dealing with 'computer people' with good interpersonal skills who actually communicated using 'normal' language. No one tried to blind me with science and I was listened to. When the time came for the upgrade and for the data transfer everything went without a hitch. The training although short was useful and the user manual is a manageable size and written in plain English it even has pictures. Knowledgeable people on the help line desk deal with any queries that I may have.

The operating system we have is Windows 2000. I have the package installed on my main computer and SearchStar is on all of the library computers and as we speak, being put onto the other computers across the school site around 320 in all. The I.T. department is pleased with the system because apart from a hiccup using Discovery there have been remarkably few problems.

The use of biometrics with the thumb print recognition facility, the floor map with a flashing resource locator, the images of book covers being displayed alongside the catalogue record. The students and staff love everything about the system. The sixth form, in particular appreciate the links to the Public Libraries databases.

All of these tools only reinforce my opinion that Search Star is a system that facilitates and enables the users to become independent researchers. The ease of access to information on SearchStar is appreciated, as are the quick links to other related resources and websites. The Views make life so much easier particularly with low ability groups, the research can be done before hand and displayed on the toolbar with an icon which once selected ensures the students success in their search.



“Staying with MLS was the right thing not only for the school but also for me; it does what it says it will do without pretension or fuss, enabling the Library staff to run a tight and efficient ship”.

# Bridgnorth Endowed School Eclipse Case Study

Cataloguing (especially now that keywords are unlimited), searches, statistics, overdues are all accomplished quickly and accurately. It is a dream to use and instructing beginners in the delights of Eclipse is easy, it even makes me look good, and believe me school librarians' need all the confidence boosting that they can get.

The Library is the first stop on a tour of the school, both it and the Eclipse system are seen as resources that the school can be proud of and they are flagged up when we have open days or visitors of any kind. There has been a lot of media attention. Even the local constabulary came out to see it such was its fame in our small town, they wondered if a hand print identikit might be the way forward for them!

New pupils are given instruction and encouragement to use the system within their first three weeks. They especially like the Identikit equipment and even though they are assured that they won't feel a thing, the boys can often be heard discussing the sensations in their thumb as they registered for the first time!

Occasionally I am given time to work with members of staff to help them get the best from the system. All new members of staff have instructions for the use of SearchStar in their starter

packs. There are of course those pupils and members of staff who would rather come and ask where things are rather than find out for themselves but with patience and Eclipse I'm sure their numbers will dwindle.

I can and do recommend the equipment and the Company to everyone I meet. I firmly believe that technology in and for its' own sake is not enough; it must have practical and purposeful applications. I would end this case study with a favourite quote of mine from Leicestershire County Council:

“The school library resource centre is not merely a physical space in which various media are stored; it is a concept, a tangible expression of the school's ethos and values, its approaches to equality of opportunity, the moral and spiritual development of children and young people and its educational purposes. It has the potential to introduce young people to the world of literature and information and to enable them to develop skills that will enhance their lives as adults. The school library can provide staff and students alike with an unrivalled resource with which to support learning in school.”

“The Eclipse library management system enables us, who work in the library, to provide that ‘unrivalled resource’ and thereby support in a real and effective way learning within the school environment.”

Jane Peeler, Librarian  
Bridgnorth Endowed School

