

Kesteven & Grantham Girls' School Eclipse Case Study

Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School is a selective school for 11 - 18 year olds in Grantham, Lincolnshire, with 1059 on roll and has Science Specialist Status. The school will celebrate its centenary in 2010 and the buildings reflect expansion since the old school and its original boarding facilities in Harrowby House, were first opened.

Although a small library existed for many years at KGGS, a part-time librarian was not appointed until the 1980s. As the library needed to accommodate a growing student population, it was 're-housed' in a staffroom/classroom and was fitted with furniture in keeping with the old school area. It exists in this form today, a long room, separated by two archways into Reference, Fiction and Non-Fiction sections.

Today there is 'open' access from 8.15am until 4pm and it is a popular choice for students at lunchtime where activities such as 'Cool Reads Club', a book group for '14 plus' students, readers testing the Red House Book Award Longlist, sessions for the Y9 Reading Challenge and Y7 Reading list, book sales and the PTFA shop, to name but a few, are on offer.

As the library card system became outdated and a full time library assistant was appointed the DOS based 'Heritage' Management System was purchased. By 1998 when I joined as the

Library Manager this system was operating, but not effectively recalling overdue resources, circulation statistics or identifying redundant and more importantly missing stock. Updating procedures proved a 'headache' for our ICT technicians on this 'stand alone' system, complete with one machine for students to 'search' the catalogue. Adding enrolment details was an extended and laborious process.

An attempt to update the system with the new millennium saw the 'Heritage' shifted to a windows system, yet still we found the system lacking, especially in the way support was given to individual school librarians. There was a system in place whereby a 'cluster' of schools had a representative who spoke to the Heritage helpdesk. Individuals were not able to contact the desk directly. We found that this impeded efficiency and we were left, often for days, without the system operating.

In recent years I have been encouraged to develop ICT in order to improve systems management and was given the necessary resources to choose a new set up. I attended a SLS meeting where reps. from Heritage, Limes, Alice and others demonstrated and visited other school libraries with alternative systems.



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I was particularly impressed when I visited another local school and saw how easy it was to operate Eclipse, being assured that MLS helpdesk were always available to sort out queries. I was given examples of 'operations', particularly with OPAC facility SearchStar and discussed these with ICT technicians and my line manager.

So, we purchased Eclipse and opted for a training day and the software was installed. I was particularly happy to welcome a woman as our trainer for the day, who did not talk in 'computer jargon' but tailored the day specifically to our needs and around our questions.

We were given helpful documentation in the form of an extensive, easy to follow user guide, a range of external programs available and 'talked through' Help Desk procedure. I was amazed how easy the transition was and the student librarians all remarked how effortless and uncomplicated operations were.

My 'brief' was to improve systems management, so what better than to investigate Discovery as a means of retrospective cataloguing. I cannot over-emphasise how much time this saves, yet it is convenient to adapt keywords, locations etc. This facility is constantly updated on-line.

After a couple of years or so we began to think about 'tightening up' procedure with regard to missing stock and after purchasing a security system, decided to opt for Identikit. Reader cards were abused and outdated as a system and typing surnames a prolonged transaction. Identikit is, in my opinion, the answer, eliminating doubt as to the identity of the borrower and 'tightening' up the loan system. We do not yet use LabelPrint as we have purchased bar codes but hope to use this when the situation necessitates.

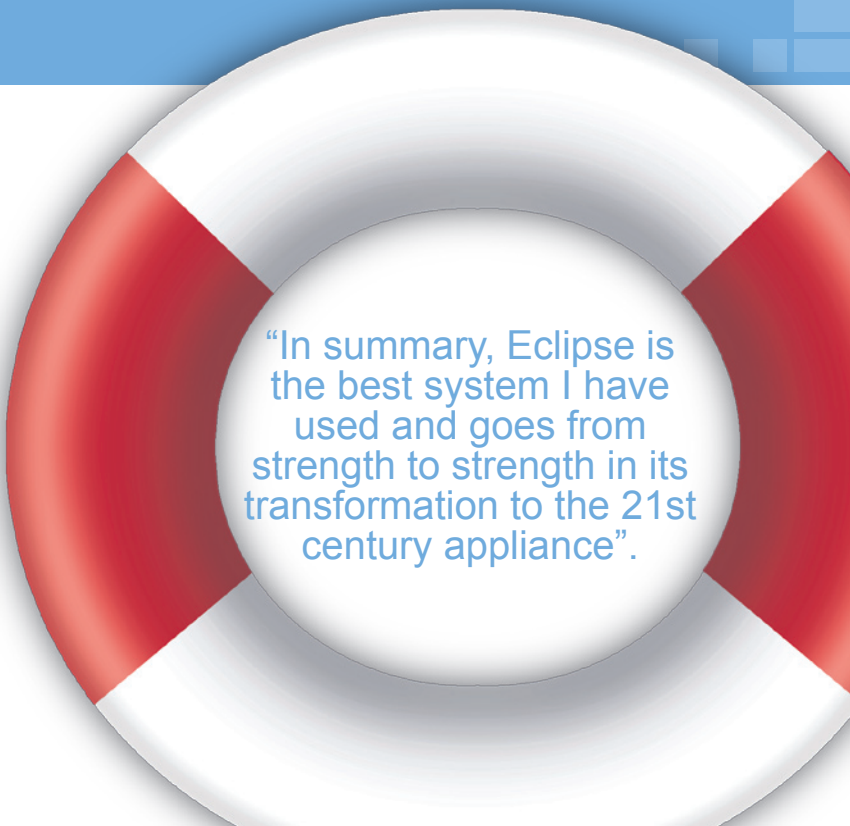
Val Mansley
Librarian Manager

On the program, the variety of forms statistics can take (charts, graphs etc) can be easily retrieved in report form, for both inspections and, more importantly, self evaluation.

SearchStar, which now we have Eclipse networked, is on every machine in school and is an invaluable tool, extending the use of the library far beyond its physical perimeters. The image of book covers, summaries of the content of resources and 'meet the author' adds an extra dimension.

"The Help Desk is fantastic and is the best facility offered. Prompt, efficient service is the norm and in my experience the problem is always solved whilst you are on the phone line".

Another box ticked on the systems management improvement is the fact that Sims can be easily 'imported' which saves time on enrolment and overdue notices. Housekeeping, reservations, reviews and overdue features are all great and easy to operate and adapt.



"In summary, Eclipse is the best system I have used and goes from strength to strength in its transformation to the 21st century appliance".