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Case Study

Bow School

Bow School is a vibrant multi-cultural boys' school in East London. We are quite small with a roll of 650 students from 11-16. We are very proud of, and value, the diversity of languages, cultures and experiences that the students bring with them. We are growing from strength to strength, experiencing success across a whole range of achievements.

When I started at Bow School – many years ago – the library system was Heritage and I found it very cumbersome. My ICT skills were not great then and I often struggled with it. In addition, like many school librarians I was, and still am, on my own and needed a system that was much quicker and easier to operate. I looked at several other systems but until I discovered Eclipse nothing else seemed to offer just what I needed... a system that did all the tasks necessary to run a library, single-handed, in a really straightforward way.

The added bonus was 'Magicat' which means that most books already have at least a basic catalogue record which speeds things up considerably. Now with 'Discovery' providing book jacket pictures and 'blurbs' it's even better...it would be absolutely brilliant if the pictures could be copied to produce display material!

As far as the borrowers are concerned, enrolment with Heritage was so laborious I actually brought my mum in one year to type in the details for me! With Eclipse it was so much quicker especially when the school moved to SIMS and the transfer of data each September became a job that took less than an hour and most of that finding a technician to help.

As I find it best to send overdue notices home, I've always had problems with casual admissions and students who changed address during the school year. I would have to ensure the individual records were updated each time I needed to send the letters. I have to admit because of this I did not send the letters as regularly as I would have liked and consequently some stock was never returned, so when I saw that MLS were bringing out 'Connect'...doing just that – connecting directly to SIMS for adding and updating records - I jumped at it! It's been brilliant! I wish it had been available a year earlier when we had weekly, if not daily, casual admissions when a school closed in a neighbouring borough. I have not used the automatic updating function yet, I've found it more suitable to my needs to do the update manually as a regular weekly task, but it's good to know it's there as and when I need it – and I will need it!

We have just purchased the Eclipse.net upgrade and I can hardly wait to see what benefits this will undoubtedly bring. We are particularly looking forward to having the catalogue fully networked as being a boys school we need to make as much use of technology as possible and we have found that searching for books online is an excellent motivator and if they can search for books that are actually in stock, that should work even better. I'm also hoping it will make the library more accessible to staff..



For more information:

Telephone: + 44 (0) 161 449 9357

Email: info@microlib.co.uk . www.microlib.co.uk

