

Schools save money with DfE IT frameworks

Brigantia Learning Trust

There are currently 5 academies within the trust which caters for children aged between 2 and 19.

Simeon Cornelius, senior operations officer of Brigantia Learning Trust, was considering a cloud-based management information system (MIS) to manage the services needed across the Trust. This was not available with the current supplier.

The Trust used the Crown Commercial Service framework website to go through the procurement process and write the specification. Based on the requirements only one supplier was needed, and a contract was awarded for 2 years, with an option to extend for a year.

The Trust was paying around £110k a year for their service. The new contract value is approximately £50k a year, delivering a significant saving. There is an implementation cost, which the trust expects to recover within 2yrs. For example in one academy alone the new IT system reduces running costs from £50k to £16k per year.

The Trust found the procurement process simple and straightforward. Time was saved using the quick and easy tender process.

“The process was frighteningly simple compared to others.”

Simeon Cornelius, senior operations officer, Brigantia Learning Trust

The new service will result in the IT technical resource being able to focus on their job and there will be significant time saved from having a group wide information system.

The Sea View Trust

Nicola Chester, chief operating officer at The Sea View Trust, was keen to improve efficiency by moving to a single, cloud-based MIS.

She utilised DfE’s G-Cloud 12 framework and, having reviewed demonstrations and quotes from two suppliers, made an informed decision to secure a new contract.

“The framework was almost too easy; I kept doubting myself. I was confident as all compliance checks had been done.”

Nicola Chester, Chief Operating Officer, The Sea View Trust

The annual cost is around the same as the previous contract and includes the initial set-up cost of £10k. The benefits are an improved upgraded system that includes all the schools across the Trust. Time savings for gathering information will be significant as everything is now stored in one place and will not require telephone calls to each school.

The Trust felt that the framework was quick and easy to use and have confidence that the contract is compliant.

Maritime Academy Trust

The chief operating officer (COO) at the Trust was keen to ensure that the IT systems were updated and after checking the 'Buying for schools' guide on GOV.UK, contacted Everything ICT to request an independent audit.

Everything ICT reviewed the needs of each school and then went out to tender. They managed the whole process start-to-finish, adding value and challenging some aspects to ensure the trust got what was needed.

"Because we have Everything ICT, we don't currently need an IT Lead."

Susan Matheson, COO, Maritime Academy Trust

The Trust felt that the procurement process went very smoothly. As a result of the support they received from Everything ICT they now have a robust IT system using Google which allows very effective collaboration between schools, which wasn't possible before.

Overall costs remained in line with earlier IT spend. However, the better system meant that all staff could easily move to working from home during the coronavirus COVID-19 restrictions. The Trust also now feels they have a strong IT maintenance contract across all schools ensuring the system is running effectively.

You can access all of the DfE-approved frameworks at:

If you have any questions, contact the [Schools Commercial Team](#).

[Schools save time and money with DfE](#)

cleaning frameworks

The college needed to procure a new cleaning contract across two large sites.

They worked with the DfE to navigate an OJEU tender process and procure a new cleaning contract. The procurement consultant worked with the premises manager to create bespoke evaluation criteria to source the best possible provision, in terms of quality and value for money.

“The support was invaluable at a time when I was responsible for getting the site ready for reopening after the initial coronavirus COVID-19 lockdown. The process was straightforward and required significantly less time than I expected. I had a lead contact that I worked with who was always available, took time to ensure that each step was clear and prompted me to ensure that my target timeline was achieved. This is a service I recommend and I shall use it again in the future.”

Scott Fry, Premises Manager, Exmouth Community College

The new contract delivers a significant saving of £31,199 in year one and £89,888 over the full contract term compared with the incumbent supplier. There is no reduction in staff hours and site staff received pay rises in excess of 15% at the contract start with additional increases budgeted throughout the contract term.

Additional benefits include transparent pricing, use of client proposed monthly KPIs (not supplier proposed) and outsourcing of pension risks. Also the premises manager is now more familiar with the procurement process and feels confident in managing the contract.

Sherburn, Tadcaster and Rural (STAR) multi-academy trust

STAR multi-academy trust contains 11 schools and is located in Tadcaster. The existing cleaning contract was due for renewal and the Trust knew this would be a complex and high value contract to procure. They were also keen to secure a framework that would retain the current supplier.

Having looked at various sources, a proposal was put together for all frameworks and put before the Trust board for consideration. Having chosen to use the DfE approved YPO framework, a contact was immediately provided to support the Trust's operations and compliance manager, Louise Northrop-Clay, through the tender process.

“I've not used a framework before and struggled to understand how it worked. From the start YPO were very open and friendly. To have this support behind the scenes was excellent.”

Louise Northrop-Clay, operations and compliance manager

Louise worked with YPO to create a competition document that encompassed the compliant terms and conditions of the framework, but also included additional questions to understand who the provider would be and meet the bespoke requirements for the school. Meetings were set up providing the opportunity to ask questions and see what the providers were like in order to ensure a more rounded tender, personalised to the school.

“Frameworks are there to give that confidence and know that due diligence has been done. Being able to use further competition to adjust it to meet our specific needs was an added advantage. A school buyer can feel isolated and the DfE webinars are great little lifelines and so useful.”

Louise Northrop-Clay, operations and compliance manager

The new contract commenced 1 April 2021 and though it is more expensive than the previous one it is demonstrating added value. The company is local, listens to what people say and support is there for the staff. Cleaners are an extremely important part of the school and have a big impact on how the school functions and how it is perceived.

Brigantia Trust

The Trust was keen to consolidate the cleaning contract across their five schools. They chose the DfE approved YPO framework. A £1.2 million three-year contract with the option to extend for one year was procured.

“The support throughout the tender process was invaluable at what was an extremely busy time for a small trust.”

Simon Cornelius, senior operations officer, Brigantia Trust

The trust felt that the time saved by a number of staff across all sites was invaluable, as freeing up time for core staff was one of the biggest reasons to outsource. They felt that working with YPO and the support they offered ensured a specification and ultimately a contract that fully met the needs of the Trust.

You can access all of the DfE-approved frameworks at:

If you have any questions, you can contact the [Schools Commercial Team](#).

Change of British High Commissioner to Lesotho: Harry MacDonald

Press release

Mr Harry MacDonald has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Kingdom of Lesotho in succession to Ms Anne Macro.



Mr Harry MacDonald has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Kingdom of Lesotho in succession to Ms Anne Macro who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr MacDonald will take up his appointment during September 2022.

Curriculum vitae

Full name: Harry MacDonald

Year	Role
2019 to present	Kinshasa, Deputy Head of Mission
2018 to 2019	FCO, Full Time Language Training (French)
2015 to 2018	Jakarta, Counsellor, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Politics and Security
2014	FCO, Counter-Daesh Task Force, Multilateral Lead
2009 to 2014	UK Mission to the United Nations in Vienna, First Secretary
2008 to 2009	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, Assistant Head, Debt Management and Banking Strategy
2007	FCO, Law Enforcement Policy and Programme Lead, Afghan Drugs Unit
2005 to 2006	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, Strategic Projects Adviser
2004 to 2005	Her Majesty's Treasury, Policy Adviser, Environment and Transport
2003 to 2004	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, Policy Adviser

Further information

All the latest news is available on the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office page of the gov.uk website at: www.gov.uk/fcdo

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[Look, no hands! Watch as dangerous drivers are caught on film by officers in unmarked HGV](#)

In new footage released today, a van driver is seen talking on his phone and looking at his sat nav as he travels along the A500 in Stoke-on-Trent. He transfers the phone to his left hand and picks up a drink in his right hand, leaving just two fingers on the wheel.

But he then takes both hands completely off the wheel to put down his drink and move the phone back to his right hand.

Still chatting away on his phone, the driver remains oblivious to the fact he is being filmed as he takes the exit off the A500 – followed by police travelling behind who had been alerted by officers in the National Highways HGV cab.

[Driver caught driving with phone in one hand and drink in another](#)

In a second clip, a lorry driver has both of his hands in a tobacco pouch and then rolls a cigarette as he drives along the M40 in Warwickshire before looking over to see the camera rolling in the HGV next to him.

[Look no hands! Driver seen rolling a cigarette while driving a HGV on the motorway](#)

Other footage shows the moment a driver who is not wearing his seatbelt is spotted by Warwickshire Police. He was followed off the motorway by police officers travelling behind and dealt with.

[Careless driver caught not wearing his seatbelt at the wheel by police](#)

These are the latest in over 28,000 offences which have been recorded by officers in the Operation Tramline HGV cabs since the national safety initiative was launched by National Highways to support its partners in roads policing.

The unmarked HGV cabs are now being used as part of a multi-agency Week of Action on the M6, taking place from Monday 13 June to Sunday 19 June, which aims to reduce the number of incidents on the motorway.

The campaign takes place along the length of the M6, the longest motorway in the country, and so has been labelled Operation Vertebrae.

National Highways deals with almost 180 reported incidents on the M6 every day. These include a large number of traffic collisions with 3,484 reported on the M6 in 2021 – despite the impact of lockdown at the start of the year.

More than 28,100 offences have been recorded by police partners in Operation Tramline since its launch in 2015. The most common offences are not wearing a seatbelt (8,375); using a mobile phone (7,163) and not being in proper control of a vehicle (2,083).

National Highways Head of Road Safety, Jeremy Phillips, said:

Through this week of action we want to make all of our roads safer by raising awareness and encouraging motorists to consider their driving behaviour – not only on the M6 but on all of our roads.

Working together with our road safety partners, we are spreading our safety messages and raising awareness that those who put themselves and others at risk can expect to be spotted. Operation Tramline enables our partners in enforcement agencies to identify that high-risk minority and take action to bring their behaviours in line with the safe and law-abiding majority.

The types of behaviour identified are typically those of a minority of motorists and whilst the number of people still using their mobile phone at the wheel or not wearing a seatbelt is disappointing, thanks to the Tramline HGVs we've been able to stop people who could have caused serious harm on the road.

From their elevated viewpoint in the unmarked HGV cabs, police officers are able to spot people driving dangerously – whatever vehicle they may be in. Consequences for drivers range from warnings to fixed penalty notices, court summons or arrest.

Five forces are taking part in Operation Vertebrae – Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire, Warwickshire Police and Central Motorway Police Group, as well as the North West Commercial Vehicle Unit and local road safety partnerships.

In addition to the HGV cab patrols, partners taking part in the M6 week of action will be present at motorway services offering advice to drivers and carrying out vehicle checks. Among those taking part at motorway services will be the DVSA, Health and Safety Executive, HMRC, the Home Office and Immigration Enforcement.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Roads Policing Operations, Commander

Kyle Gordon, said:

We have collaborated with National Highways on the Operation Tramline roads safety initiative for many years. We all recognise that being distracted while driving increases the risk of a collision and the potential to leave families and communities devastated, particularly with the sheer size and weight of some of the larger vehicles on our roads. We really welcome the opportunity to identify any driver who would put themselves and others at risk by being distracted, it is totally unacceptable.

David Collings, DVSA's Head of Enforcement Delivery, said:

DVSA's priority is to protect everyone from unsafe drivers and vehicles.

We always welcome the opportunity to support other agencies with our enforcement teams' wide-ranging expertise. By using the latest technology and techniques we can target drivers and vehicles who pose the greatest risk to road safety.

This week of action alongside our partners will help drivers, operators and businesses better understand what they can do to help keep our roads safe.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Thousands more school and sixth form places to be created

Thousands of new school places will be created for children in England, including for those who are living in disadvantaged areas, have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), or require alternative provision.

The government's 55 Education Investment Areas, the local authorities where

outcomes for pupils are currently weakest, will be prioritised for up to 15 new mainstream free schools. This will include a targeted number of high-quality, standalone sixth forms, designed to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds fulfil their potential.

The first of the new wave of up to 60 special and alternative provision free schools will begin opening from September 2025, creating approximately 4,500 new places, and boosting choice for parents.

The new alternative provision (AP) schools will help keep those who have been excluded, or are at risk of exclusion, engaged with their education, as well as offering more behaviour and mental health support.

These school places build on commitments set out in the government's recent education reforms, including the Schools and Levelling Up White Papers and the SEND and AP Green Paper, which aim to radically raise the national average attainment in English and maths, with investment and energy focused in areas of the country previously left behind, and to end the postcode lottery in the SEND system.

Through these reforms every young person will be supported to gain the education and skills they need to get a good job and help the economy to continue growing.

Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi said:

All children have the right to a high-quality education. Parents should feel confident that their local school works for their child, no matter where they live or their ability.

From mainstream education which can provide for every need, to specialist teachers and equipment in tailored settings, our new schools across the country will continue to make sure that every child, in every corner of the country, gets the support they need to succeed.

Special schools will offer specialist support and education for pupils with needs such as autism, severe learning difficulties or social emotional and mental health conditions. The schools can be built to be more accessible, including with specialist fixtures like ceiling hoists and wheelchair ramps, or acoustically adapted classrooms.

The government is making sure that talented children from disadvantaged backgrounds have access to a college, school sixth form or 16-19 academy, with a track record of progress on to leading universities, such as Harris Westminster Sixth Form and Sir Isaac Newton Sixth Form Free School in Norwich.

The new special and AP free school waves come as Government consult on ambitious proposals for a more inclusive, consistent, transparent and accountable system for children and young people with special educational

needs and disabilities (SEND), and for those who require alternative provision.

Part of a £2.6 billion investment of funding for more specialist places and support for children with SEND and who will benefit from AP over three years, the special and AP free school waves follow continued increased investment in local authority high needs funding, worth £9.1 billion overall for 2022-23.

Guidance about the process for applicants has been published on Gov.uk for [special free schools](#), [alternative provision free schools](#) and [mainstream free schools](#).

LAs across England will be able to bid for the special schools and funding will be allocated according to demonstrated need for specialist places, and where new free schools are most needed.

For alternative provision free schools, we will also be prioritising LA areas where none of the existing AP schools are currently rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, or where no AP schools currently exist.

The new special and AP free school waves build upon the 60 schools already in the pipeline, from waves launched in 2018, which launched 37 special and 2 AP free schools.

The [SEND and AP green paper](#) is open for consultation until 22 July.

Applicant groups have until 16 September to register their interest. Further guidance on the mainstream application process will be published in July.