



Case Study

King's Bruton, UK

“9ine have always been prepared to have a discussion to understand the way we work and our risk appetite in order to tailor their support to match us”

King's Bruton is an independent school in the UK, always striving to “punch above their weight” and helping students to achieve to the best of their abilities both inside and outside the classroom. The school came to 9ine with two primary objectives, “firstly to improve security against digital threats and secondly to enhance the approach to data protection and ensure compliance with the new regulatory framework in this area.”

“Our initial goal was to improve data security. 9ine were able to conduct an audit which gave us immediate prioritised targets to work on. By tackling the highest priority first, we were able to get quick wins and significantly improve our security,” says James Pearce, Director of Information Systems at King's Bruton and Hazlegrave Prep School in the UK.

Incident Management with 9ine

The independent school came to 9ine after “the school had been subjected to a well planned and systematic attempt at defrauding some of our parents.” With this attempt of system compromise, “the school wanted to understand in detail the processes that had been used by the fraudsters in order to protect ourselves in the future. This coincided with the emergence of GDPR. The School therefore wanted to be able to understand exactly how personal data was moving and being stored through the various school processes, so that we could manage it in accordance with GDPR and give it the appropriate protection.”

Pearce notes that some of the major pain points for King's before working with 9ine were, “Understanding where our data was and the processes being used by staff to process it, training staff to appreciate what GDPR compliance looks like and why it is important, training staff about the cyber security risks and how to avoid them, prioritising data privacy and data security, finding capacity in a very small ICT team to commit resources to data security and cyber security and understanding how much risk we were taking.”

A Thousand Point Audit

In using 9ines Systems & Security Essentials subscription service, King's Bruton were able to undertake an audit with a thousand point checklist to evaluate their systems and identify vulnerabilities. “The periodic audits and testing of systems have been immensely useful in prioritising effort, demonstrating progress and giving confidence. They have also helped in



securing affordable insurance and supporting governance of the school," says Pearce. The school also benefits from the Data Protection Office Essentials subscription, utilising time with 9ine's consultants to advance their data protection programme.

Pearce mentions that "the key benefit has been scoping the problem and then providing a plan and structure to be able to tackle the issues systematically and progressively. All backed up by expert advice and support and tools to help us through the process" and "the detailed analysis of the schools' data processes has uncovered all sorts of areas where it has been possible to make improvements and streamline activity." King's is a prime example of 9ine helping schools tackle their pain points directly, and proactively utilising the resources and services provided to them.

Understanding Data to Boost Productivity

From using 9ine's services, Pearce says that "Productivity has been improved because the analysis of how data moved through our processes meant we had a much better understanding of how we are actually doing business and where inefficiencies lie. The audit of our processes identifies areas for improvement, but also when followed up by subsequent audits prove that the governance is in place when the number of issues raised is seen to decline." 9ine's audits help IT professionals in schools benchmark their progress, and allows them to take the evidence to a Board in a comprehensible way.

"Prior to 9ine's involvement the school's data privacy culture was reliant on the staff's limited understanding of the Data Protection policy. The involvement of 9ine in the process meant that the Heads of both schools became involved and led the process from the top. This ensured engagement by the process leads to conduct full data assessments of their areas of responsibility. This wider knowledge has percolated through the School reinforced by training given to staff."

An Improved Data Privacy Culture

The privacy culture has also been improved at King's, with Pearce saying that "there are still occasional minor data breaches but the culture is now that they are reported immediately by staff, assessments are conducted and processes are then adjusted where necessary to eliminate the possibility of recurrence. We now have a system of continuous improvement because most staff appreciate the importance of the issue and know they have to report breaches."

Having tackled their pain points effectively and advancing their compliance programme, Pearce leaves us with a proactive piece of advice. "The key advice therefore is not to hide from what is a very complex subject but to engage and start the journey and 9ine will provide the appropriate level of support as it is needed."