

EDUCATION CASE STUDY



BACKGROUND >>>

Neville Lovett School serves the catchment area in and west of Fareham in Hampshire. Three and a half years ago, Neville Lovett was awarded specialist school status for maths and computing. It currently has 860 pupils and 50 staff.

OKI Printing Solutions gets top marks at Neville Lovett School

THE CHALLENGE >>>

Like most schools, Neville Lovett has a number of key objectives. It wants to provide an excellent learning environment, to attract new pupils, and its pupils to excel, both in the classroom itself and through the exam grades that they achieve.

This means that the school is continually looking at ways to improve the facilities it provides. As a maths and computing school, it is proud of its seven IT suites and of its Design & Technology suite containing some of the latest hardware and software packages on the market today.

However, it was becoming increasingly clear that its printing facility wasn't doing justice to the work being done by the pupils. Andrew Stevens, Assistant Headteacher IT systems, explained: "The pupils were doing a lot of really good work on our CAD (Computer Aided Design) packages but the output on our previous machines was poor. They were A4 printers and they just didn't do the work any justice at all."

THE OKI TOOLKIT

Printer:
OKI C9600

Software:
OKI's Template Manager

Media:
A3, Banners,
Wrist-bands,
Membership cards,
A3-A4 Newsletters,
A4 Water/tear-resistant paper



This was a particular challenge for those pupils doing their exams as part of their Key Stage 4 work as this typically requires A3 documents as an output from the design work. As Andrew explains: "It was massively frustrating. If we were trying to print out a 2D drawing, we would have to load the plotter with the right colour pens then wait up to 15 minutes a time for the drawing to plot. Furthermore, output quality was poor when solid blocks of colour were required. It just wasn't fair on the pupils. They would do excellent work but this wouldn't necessarily show when you saw the printouts. And it also meant that there were ridiculous queues to use the printer, which again added to the frustration."

THE SOLUTION >>>

Previously an HP product-led school, Neville Lovett turned to OKI Printing Solutions to solve that problem. "We had heard good things about the OKI A3 colour printers so we thought we should try one" said Andrew.

Andrew chose the OKI A3 C9600 and he wasn't disappointed: "It's made a huge difference. We can now print straight on to colour without having to mess around with the pen plotter. It means that the pupils aren't hanging around for 15 minutes, late for their next class, waiting for their work to print out. And the output quality is unbelievable, really professional."

Another benefit is the capability for the pupils to show their creative side: "With the OKI A3 printer we can now print lots of different types of media onto the one page, whether that be text, photos, or even information from spreadsheets."

Unexpectedly, there have been three new applications.

Firstly, Andrew is now using the OKI printer to improve school-wide assessments: "One of my most important jobs is to provide full reports on pupils' performance, highlighting outstanding performers and those that need more help. This used to mean a stack of A4 mono sheets that managers and head teachers had to wade through to find what they needed to know. Now I print these on A3 sheets with colour, using features like traffic lights to help head teachers quickly find what they need to know."

"By the very nature of their work, teachers have to assimilate a lot of information. If I can present this in an easier-to-read fashion then I am making it less time-consuming for them and thereby helping them to make the right decisions."

Secondly, the printer is being used for promotions around the school: "By using OKI's Template Manager software, which comes as part of the package, we can print media like banners to highlight things like special events."

Thirdly, the OKI printer allows curriculum slides with text and photos to be printed out onto A3 card and kept in a ring binder. These can then be used as displays during lessons to increase understanding. They also support slower workers or pupils that have missed a lesson because they can review the clear photos at their leisure," said Andrew.

THE RESULTS >>>

The A3 colour printer from OKI has been a massive success. Pupils are able to see the true results of their hard work, thanks to a high quality output.



Andrew Stevens identified three clear benefits: "Firstly, there is the quality of output; secondly, the speed of this output; and thirdly, the wide range of media that you can use with it. That's a pretty compelling combination."

Andrew also added that running costs seemed to be very reasonable: "That's a very important thing for a school, for obvious reasons."

But, perhaps, most importantly, the real benefit of the OKI A3 9600 is the positive advantages that it brings for the pupils: "Having this new printer has meant that the pupils produce better course work. And, in turn, this means that they have an improved chance of passing their exams. That's the difference this printer makes," said Andrew.

So, what next? Well, it seems that other departments are starting to take note of how well the OKI printer is performing in the Design & Technology department: "We already have an OKI A4 printer in the office, but our resources department, who do all our school promotional work, is starting to take a real interest in what we are able to achieve. And I've noticed that the art department is throwing envious glances our way!" said Andrew.

For Neville Lovett, its new OKI printer has taken printing to a whole new level: "I never realised how important it was to have a quality printer, one that can make a huge difference to the output of our work. It's not just about having a printer; it's about having a print solution. And that's what we now have."

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Andrew Stevens

Assistant Headteacher IT systems

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