



Instantly streamlining school efficiencies

The Angmering School, located in Angmering, West Sussex is a specialist Sports and Science College which caters for mixed learners aged between 11-18 years. Marc Ginnaw IT Manager explains the benefits of Groupcall's Emerge for the school following a successful trial with three users. They now intend to roll it out further.



Convenience at hand

I first encountered Groupcall Emerge after seeking a new handheld solution for register taking; we had previously been using Bromcom for registration and were using PDAs (personal digital systems) for PE registers on the field. However, we stopped using Bromcom for lesson registering as we started using the SIMS Learning Gateway (SLG) and needed lesson marks to show on it. The marks from Bromcom do not show in SLG but the marks from SIMS Lesson Monitor do. We had hoped to use SLG on our Windows Mobile Devices but the internet browsers we tested with it didn't work well enough.

Groupcall's Emerge particularly appealed due to immediately being user-friendly; it presented a fast and simple solution. I was instantly able to recognise its benefits for real-time registering as well as being able to take registers off-site and then to synchronise the data later.

In PE lessons, taking registers outside on the field with a laptop is impractical and inconvenient for the teacher. One alternative would be to mark students via paper-based registers but this can be difficult, particularly in disagreeable weather conditions, and being located near the coast we are often familiar with this! Therefore, the ability to conduct registration via a handheld device is excellent! We have successfully trialled Groupcall Emerge with 2 PE teachers and will soon be rolling it out to the rest of the department. The teachers are keen to start using the iPod, not just for taking registers, but also for education-related apps and having the ability to use the device for videoing evidence and playing it back on classroom projectors. Having this extra value makes it a lot easier to encourage staff to adopt a new process.



The emerging future

I can see Emerge will be particularly useful for off-site visits where there can often be a requirement for instant access to student's personal information, such as medical data. For example, should a student fall ill and require possible medical attention, the power of being able to immediately find these details regarding possible allergies is huge. Planning for off-site trips is time-consuming, yet with Emerge providing this information in a hand-held device, the teacher's workload may be reduced through not needing to compile a student file prior to each

school trip. The result is a far more efficient and faster process which means staff time can be better spent on activity planning for example.

Finally, some feedback from one of our Emerge users; Shaun Smith, Student Support Manager explains how using Emerge on his iPhone 4 has helped:

"I have been up and running with using Groupcall Emerge for approximately 12 weeks now. To get right to the point, it's been FANTASTIC!! I would at a guess say it saves me at least an hour a day and has proven useful while at home when I just need to call parents or give information out."

Below are the main benefits:

- Time saved
- All parents numbers at my fingertips
- The Emerge App is extremely intuitive and user friendly
- The speed I'm retrieving data is simply excellent
- Password protection works extremely well and it has become routine to come into school in the morning and update during forum, and then work off line for the rest of the day
- The ability to restrict access to contacts for staff but still have their timetable works well.

