

# Desktop Virtualisation & Datacentre Refresh for Kimbolton School



***“Our virtualised infrastructure is now live and we are already seeing the benefits. System management and administration have been simplified, allowing us to provide a more efficient computing environment that can better meet the needs of our users.”***

Andy Walker  
IT Director  
Kimbolton School

[www.eacs.com](http://www.eacs.com)



## Kimbolton School

Situated in Cambridgeshire, Kimbolton School is a charitable company and an HMC co-educational day and boarding school with approximately 1000 pupils aged 4 to 18.

Over the last decade Kimbolton School has seen many improvements to its facilities and is currently in the middle of a five-year School Development Plan.

### The Challenge

Kimbolton School's existing IT infrastructure had served the school well over the years but was starting to show its age. The continuous cycle of imaging, patching and upgrading the large number of physical devices dispersed throughout the school was costly, time consuming and diverted the IT department from its core objectives of providing an efficient computing environment that met the requirements of staff and students.

The School recognised the need to provide its 1100 users with a high quality, high performance desktop experience. Aiming to become far more efficient in delivering new operating systems and applications, such as Windows 7 and Office 2010. They also wanted to allow access to information remotely.

Kimbolton School was acutely aware that its back-up and disaster recovery capabilities were not as efficient as they could be, leaving open the possibility of discontinuity of service and/or data loss in the event of a serious system failure. Finally, as with all educational establishments, there was a need to carefully manage and monitor costs, particularly those associated with replacing and increasing the number of PCs on the network.

Although the school had a small internal IT team, they sought advice and assistance from EACS, an award winning provider of IT services, to work with them on the implementation of this strategic project.

“It was clear that Kimbolton School would achieve its objectives and realise many additional benefits from a virtualised environment,” explained EACS' Managing Director, Mike Dearlove. “EACS has a

strong track record in designing, installing and configuring server, storage and network components to provide a solid, future-proof IT infrastructure to organisations of all sizes across the public and private sectors.”

### The Solution

Working closely with Kimbolton School's IT department, EACS' consultants evaluated the School's existing and long term objectives and put forward recommendations for a fully virtualised infrastructure, which would centralise and simplify the management of computing resources, resulting in reduced ongoing costs and an increase in operational efficiency. The solution included HP Blade Servers, NetApp shared storage, Citrix XenDesktop, Citrix XenApp, VMWare vSphere and AppSense.

To demonstrate the capabilities of Citrix and AppSense technologies for the School's unique environment, EACS implemented a Proof of Concept (POC).

“Conducting a proof of concept is an important way to quickly validate assumptions regarding the use of desktop virtualisation within an organisation,” explained Mike Dearlove. “It included four Citrix technologies - XenDesktop, XenServer, XenApp and Provisioning Services - which together provide a centralised and standardised desktop and application delivery infrastructure. AppSense was used to extend the Citrix infrastructure by providing additional levels of personalisation and management to user environments.”

The proof of concept convinced Kimbolton School that virtualisation was the way forward. With close involvement from their internal IT department, EACS project

***“The introduction of virtual desktops has also delivered significant improvements, including secure and remote access for staff and pupils and the ability for us to manage applications, install updates and roll out new applications far more easily and effectively.”***

Andy Walker, IT Director, Kimbolton School



managed, designed and implemented the entire IT infrastructure, providing knowledge transfer to ensure that the IT team fully understood the virtualised technologies and would be able to manage and maintain the system internally.

The existing server workloads were virtualised, making it easier and more cost effective for IT staff to administer the server environment. With storage issues being addressed via NetApp SAN/NAS shared storage solutions, VMWare vSphere provided the virtual server infrastructure, further enhancing the school's secure backup, increasing availability, improving business continuity and ensuring that the server environment could recover rapidly from disasters. "Simplifying the deployment and management of servers introduced significant improvements and long term cost savings, allowing the school's IT department to provide a more efficient computing environment that can better meet the needs of both staff and pupils," added Mike Dearlove.

The virtual desktop environment allows the school to defer the costs associated with replacing desktop PCs. They can now centrally deploy and manage desktop images from the datacentre resulting in a consistent user experience throughout the school. "The solution allows the school to manage applications, install updates and roll out new applications far more easily and effectively," explained Mike Dearlove. "It has also enabled them to invest in more cost-effective devices, such as thin clients that have a longer life, consume less power, and require less on-going

maintenance."

To ensure that staff and students were able to work efficiently, EACS implemented AppSense to provide critical user profile management capabilities and optimise the virtual environment. AppSense Environment Manager allows Kimbolton School to give users a consistent, contextual and responsive working environment regardless of the way in which they access the system.

Andy Walker, IT Director at Kimbolton School said "Our virtualised infrastructure is now live and we are already seeing the benefits. System management and administration have been simplified, allowing us to provide a more efficient computing environment that can better meet the needs of our users. The introduction of virtual desktops has also delivered significant improvements, including secure and remote access for staff and pupils and the ability for us to manage applications, install updates and roll out new applications far more easily and effectively."

Kimbolton School continues to partner with EACS which, in addition to on-going consultancy to enhance the virtualised infrastructure, also provides helpdesk and onsite technical support services.

"We found that EACS were able to provide the experience to allow us to rollout the service with minimal impact to the user base. Inevitably issues did occur in the early stages but I found the management team at EACS quick to respond and resolve them," concluded Andy.

#### Benefits:

- Proof of concept delivers confidence and peace of mind
- Server virtualisation maximises available server resources, enabling dynamic resource management, faster server provisioning and improved desktop and application deployment
- Desktop virtualisation provides staff and students with a high quality, high performance and consistent desktop experience whenever and wherever they log onto the IT environment
- Virtualising user policy and personalisation enables simplified and consistent desktop delivery
- Desktop support costs are reduced and application rollouts and updates simplified
- PC lifecycles are extended and desktop refresh costs can be deferred
- Simplified systems management and administration
- Improved business continuity measures



Certified Solution Partner

#### For more information, please contact:

EACS Limited  
7 Ramsay Court  
Hinchingbrooke Business Park  
HUNTINGDON  
Cambridgeshire PE29 6FY

T: 0845 3379 146  
F: 0845 3379 147  
E: [information@eacs.com](mailto:information@eacs.com)



[www.eacs.com](http://www.eacs.com)