



Great Torrington School is an academy in Torrington, Devon. As one of many newly-formed British academies, they have faced the challenge of breaking away from Local Education Authorities and choosing their own ICT infrastructure.

GTS has 730 students with 440 wired and wireless computers. There are 5 dedicated ICT suites with an additional Apple Mac music room.

The Academy have future plans to deploy a 1:1 device policy. Network Manager Jon Buss oversees the IT network and ensures the present and future IT needs of the Academy are met.

The Challenge

Like many schools, GTS had constant problems with students using anonymous proxies to bypass the filtering. Their previous solution was “no longer current technology” and Jon was finding it hard to control network access.

There were further problems with the use of video streaming, media sharing and music download sites taking over network bandwidth. He needed to be able to monitor and control network bandwidth and save IT resources for learning purposes.

With the possibility of a future 1:1 device policy Jon needed to be sure that both on-site and off-site devices could be controlled with the same policies:

“The ability to offer off-site filtering was key in our decision making process”.

The Outcome

After evaluating two web filtering solutions, Jon chose Smoothwall Filter: "The level of control, along with the detailed reports that we can achieve, are absolutely outstanding".

The students have a better web experience as a result of the breadth of features of Smoothwall: "It's saving students time as websites are more accessible giving them increased time to learn".

Specifically, Bandwidth Management has allowed Jon to control and optimise network bandwidth for critical learning resources: "It's so powerful, you can do anything you want with it".

He can also keep a close eye on students' online activity through the granular reports: "We can have a quick look each day and keep the students safer online".

The excessive use of anonymous proxies has now been brought under control: "Smoothwall has locked down anonymous proxies significantly better than ever before".

Jon was particularly impressed with the support he received during the configuration process: "They went completely above and beyond, and got everything working incredibly well".

As far as Jon was concerned – with the benefits it has brought to the school – the choice to deploy Smoothwall was an easy decision to make: "With the feature-set, the performance – with absolutely everything – it was a no-brainer".



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Jon Boss

Network Manager


Smoothwall is a leading provider of digital safeguarding solutions. For more information, visit our website or get in touch with our team of experts.


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