



2021

World class cybersecurity available for all

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BRING ON
THE FUTURE

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Affordable Kaspersky solutions, commitment to great customer service and fast deployment help leading UK sixth form college recover in style from damaging cyberattack.

Bolton Sixth Form College is one of the best performing specialist A Level colleges in the UK, delivering courses for 1,800 young people aged between 16 and 19.



Higher education

- United Kingdom
- Using Kaspersky Endpoint Security for Business Advanced, Kaspersky Endpoint Detection and Response and Kaspersky Security for Microsoft Office 365
- 1,200 protected endpoints
- 10 minutes to set up Kaspersky Security for Microsoft Office 365

The college, located in a state-of-the-art town centre campus in Greater Manchester in the north of England, is a beacon of educational excellence, consistently outperforming UK national average exam results.

Despite the teaching challenges created by COVID-19, in 2020 Bolton Sixth Form College recorded a 100 percent pass rate by its students in no fewer than 57 A Level subjects. As a result, the college has one of the highest progression rates into higher education of any sixth form in the UK.

Challenge

As a modern, high performance organisation, robust and fully functioning IT systems are vital to the smooth running of every aspect of college life.

As well as providing the digital tools that help students achieve great results, Bolton Sixth Form College uses the latest technology for most of its operational activities too, such as document management, interview and timetabling processes, and its lighting, air conditioning, building access controls and CCTV systems.

The college holds large quantities of personal, professional and financial data, including the priceless academic work that its young people are generating to achieve their career goals. Consequently, college managers take every step possible, within tight public sector budget constraints, to ensure that its IT and data protection is robust and fit for purpose.

With the practical impacts on students and staff caused by COVID-19 and sophisticated threats from cybercriminals, there are huge challenges facing IT professionals in the education sector. Even the best prepared, like Bolton Sixth Form College, are still prime targets.

The Kaspersky solution

Jon Evans, Head of IT and Estates at Bolton Sixth Form College, faced one of the biggest challenges of his career in the summer of 2020, when, at the height of the pandemic and during the busy exam result and student enrollment periods, he arrived at work to find that college IT systems had been the target of a serious attack.

"It was a total shock, our servers had shut down and we couldn't switch them on," recalls Jon. "When we did a thorough check, we realised it was a cyberattack and that our data had been encrypted. We immediately went into recovery mode, closed the college, explained the situation to everyone and, thankfully, through our cyber insurance, we very quickly got the technical expertise and support we needed.

"Fortunately, we were able to retrieve the majority of our most important data and, after weeks of long days and weekend working, we were able to recover. It was very stressful but, in the end, we only had to delay college reopening by one week.

"When you think of what's involved to enable 1,200 PCs and laptops to function normally, and for systems to operate smoothly, it was a fantastic effort by lots of people. But I was determined to identify a long-term solution that would provide the protection we need to prevent this from happening again."

"It was great to discover that not only was Kaspersky by far the best solution, it was also one of the most affordable within my budget."

**Jon Evans, Head of IT and Estates,
Bolton Sixth Form College**



Commitment

Extensive proof of concept builds trust and confidence



Affordability

World-class technology is available within public sector budgets



Peace of mind

Automation and dashboards provide visibility and control



Speed

Solutions can be rolled out in minutes

Quality on a budget

When Jon began exploring his options, a conversation with his local education IT solution provider, CC Communications, led to a meeting with Kaspersky. Despite being aware of Kaspersky's reputation and the quality of its technology, Jon was unsure if partnering with Kaspersky would be achievable within his budget.

"It was great to discover that not only was Kaspersky by far the best solution, it was also one of the most affordable within my budget. That was a pleasant surprise."

Jon selected Kaspersky Endpoint Security for Business Advanced for all PCs and laptops, with the added protection of Kaspersky Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR). EDR provides comprehensive visibility across all endpoints on the college network, enabling the automation of routine tasks to discover, prioritise, investigate and neutralise complex threats.

Then Jon added Kaspersky's bespoke security for the college's data-heavy Microsoft Office 365 estate, in particular for extra protection for the college's extensive use of email, thought to be the source of the original attack.

"I really liked being able to select the right combination of solutions and features to meet our precise needs, rather than having to buy packages that contain some things that we don't need.

"Then the proof of concept went into a lot of detail, nothing was too much trouble and this all gave me real trust and confidence both in the technology itself but also the advice I was getting. I felt that the Kaspersky team was really committed to me and the college and wanted us to get the very best from the solution.

"Kaspersky's team demonstrated exactly how features like patch management and EDR would operate – and the way the team set up the system is the way it's running to this day. It was impressive and a total contrast to other companies who seemed more focused on selling us things.

"EDR is a very automated system, it will stop things and let me know. It's learning all the time and the dashboard enables me to see exactly what's going on and what steps to take when and where necessary. Kaspersky Security for Microsoft Office 365 took me ten minutes set up, it's that simple and it's just working away constantly, scanning the background, looking for phishing emails and mass mails.

"Peace of mind is priceless and knowing that Kaspersky technology is working efficiently, with lots of built-in automation, gives us a level of visibility and control that we've just never had before."



Shared experience

The UK Information Commissioner has reviewed Bolton Sixth Form College event and has approved the enhanced security provisions that Jon Evans and his colleagues have put in place with Kaspersky.

“Other colleges have been in touch too,” explains Jon. “They want to find out what happened to us and how we recovered, so it’s been rewarding to share our experience and to help them keep their colleges and students safe in the future.”

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