



CASE STUDY

Chase High School

Full IT
Support



Unified
Communications



Cloud



Security &
Compliance



Network &
Infrastructure



REQUIREMENT: SKYPE FOR BUSINESS AND SIP

Chase High School required a collaborative learning environment and to enable savings via migration to SIP.



THE CLIENT

Established over 100 years ago, Chase High is a secondary school and sixth form college in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, providing academic studies and extracurricular activities to almost 1200 students aged between 11 and 18 years. The school has students from 44 different countries and prides itself on its international contingent. Focused on cementing relationships on a global scale, Chase High has existing partnerships with schools as far reaching as Ghana, San Francisco and Australia.

Chase High wanted to provide a modern learning environment for its students which allowed for greater collaboration and flexibility. Its existing outdated legacy PBX system - for which the lease had expired - was ill-equipped for this; its features were significantly limited, and it was expensive to maintain and operate. It was also inflexible in terms of ability to integrate features and to move or change the system in any way and did not allow students to benefit from a collaborative learning environment enabled through technologies, such as remote learning or smart boards.

In order to adopt new teaching and learning techniques, Chase High School needed to transition to an integrated Unified Communications platform. Another ambition that the school had was for external and inter-school communications; its existing system was not set up for this capability, which made it difficult to connect efficiently with its partner schools in Ghana, Australia and San Francisco, or even other educational institutions in the UK. The school asked GCI to implement a solution to help solve these issues.



TECHNICAL SOLUTION

GCI identified Microsoft's Skype for Business as the solution that not only supported Chase High's needs best but was particularly cost-effective thanks to Microsoft's licensing discounts for educational organisations. A leading Unified Communications (UC) platform, Skype for Business delivers streamlined communications for users by combining instant messaging, voice over IP, video conferencing and other collaborative features like desktop sharing - all integrated with the Microsoft suite of apps including Office and Outlook for email. Through this integration, its Presence feature allows users to see when other users are busy or available to answer an instant message, voice or video call. With its ability to deliver audio and video conferencing, Enterprise VoIP services and Skype for Business mobility, Skype for Business represented a scalable solution that mirrored Chase High's future goals. It also allows the school to communicate easily with external organisations, with an emphasis on collaboration as well as extending the education environment beyond the school walls with remote learning.

The transition to Skype for Business enabled a migration from Chase High's traditional ISDN phone line set up to a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) system - a communications protocol that allows for IP telephony for voice and video calls, as well as instant messaging. The transition to SIP further allowed for potential integrations and expansion, future-proofing Chase High's communications system as well as bringing the benefits of lower call and maintenance costs. GCI provided a dedicated Project Manager to oversee the migration project, ensuring delivery against schedule and specifications as well as handling all communications with Chase High. Additionally, project management involved a comprehensive approach to user adoption, ensuring correct training was in place for users to move across to the new system seamlessly. Post installation, full testing and verification throughout the school was carried out to ensure that all handsets and features were working correctly. This was combined with full training and documentation for Chase High's IT team.

SUCCESS AND COMPANY BENEFITS

Chase High School now has a state-of-the-art Unified Communications platform in Skype for Business, which offers improved flexibility, allowing communications from any location or device. Additionally, Skype for Business allows for better internal collaboration between faculty, students and staff through Presence, desktop sharing and video conferencing, as well as the much-needed external collaboration through the federation with other services such as Skype and Google Chat. It also offers the ability to tailor equipment dependant on its use with custom setups for classrooms, conference rooms, the reception and common areas.

Chase High has experienced a number of cost benefits, including reduced call costs using SIP compared to ISDN, plus reduced maintenance costs compared to disparate legacy systems due to the adoption of one integrated platform for voice, video and other collaborative communications features. Chase High has also reported improved economies of scale as a result of using one end-to-end communications partner in GCI.

Jeremy Vince, Network Manager at Chase High School, said: *"As we were moving from predominantly outdated legacy hardware to a fully-fledged Unified Communications system, we knew that the transition would be complex. We knew we needed a partner that had expertise in that kind of migration, and the team at GCI with their heritage in voice and expertise in Skype for Business fitted that bill perfectly. They were there not simply as a solution provider, but to manage the entire process and hold our hands through the changeover."*

For more information regarding our services, please contact us at: