



Bradon Forest Secondary School

Bradon Forest School is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school in Wiltshire. Bradon Forest School chose UniServity Parental Engagement to support the parental engagement aspect of whole school development, because of its seamless links with the existing school learning platform and school MIS. Importantly for us, we liked the way that UniServity Parental Engagement is not just about pushing more data at parents - every module allows us to provide context for parents, and suggestions on how they can further help their child at home.

Our Starting Point

At Bradon Forest School we already use our learning platform to share information with parents in a range of ways, growing over the last 4 years to include the school calendar, resources for parents (letters, newsletters, policies, news and homework), and communications (eg; snow closures).

This has been very popular with parents who appreciate the one-stop-shop for keeping up to date with their child's school. We wanted

to expand upon this as part of our Developing Parental Engagement agenda, to include information for parents which was increasingly personal, timely and appropriate to their own child. Our rationale for doing this is to support parents in being more informed about their child's learning, and equipping parents with ways to directly support that learning beyond school and at home.



“The learning platform enables students to access homework, parents to access information, and primary school pupils to take part in a range of activities before they transfer”.

“The school is very popular with parents”.

Ofsted

Start Small, Think Big: Our Plan

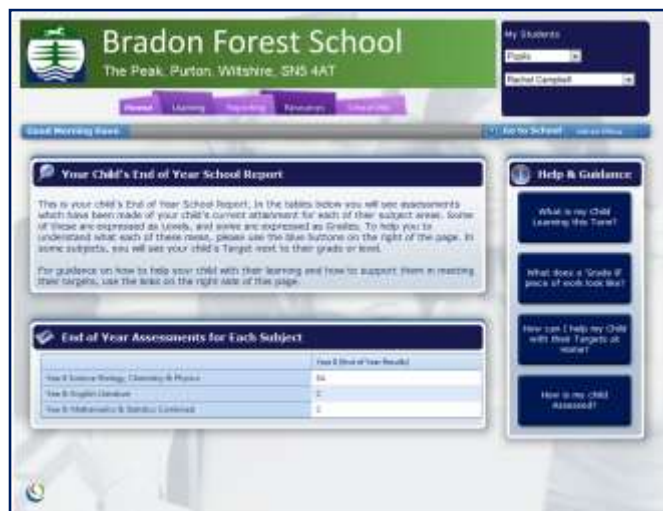
We have been using SIMS to collect and collate learner data for a number of years, including Attendance, Behaviour, Timetable and Assessment records, and so along with our learning platform calendar, these were the 5 modules that we decided to begin our journey with. There are a number of steps that we have taken to ensure early success:

- As part of our planning, we allowed a month for our office team to contact all parents to ensure that the contact details we held were accurate.
- As part of our planning, we chose 5 out of the 16 modules that we felt most familiar and confident to start with.
- One of the things we like about UniServity Parental Engagement is that it's not just the parents who can access the information. Teachers and the Learners themselves can be given visibility on either the same as parents, or additional information.
- UniServity Parental Engagement Support site contains film demonstrations which we used for our installation and setup.



Getting Going

Due to our extensive use of SIMS we found that for the Assessment Module alone we had 52 Result Sets and 2899 Aspects which our SIMS Administrator was able to reduce down to the specific data we felt would be useful for parents and rename key data for each year group. She was impressed that we can target data at specific year groups so that parents only see the data that is relevant to their child. We were able to use the word documents that currently go out with our traditional paper based reports to add context to the modules and we were easily able to make links to sections of our learning platform that provide relevant support, guidance and further resources for parents.



“UniServity Parental Engagement allows parents to be actively engaged in their son or daughter’s education and pupils to take ownership of their progress and target setting.

It means there are three parts to learning: the school, the pupil and the parent”.

Rolling Out to Parents & Students

We have used our e-newsletter to advise parents that they will be receiving their log in details. UniServity Parental Engagement sends an automated email out explaining to parents what they need to do next (eg; choosing their own secure password and logging in for the first time). At the Year 7 Introduction Parent's Evening we provide a drop-in session showing parents the potential of the Parental Engagement Solution. This is then repeated at Subject Parents Evenings throughout the year. We feel it is important to fully involve our parents to find out what they want, so we are setting up a focus group of teachers and parents to review what we should offer next.

The children will continue to work with the staff during tutor time to be shown how they can access their additional personal learning records, as well as developing their ePortfolio so they can discuss their progress and their best work with their parents. This way, the engagement is not just about teachers sending information to parents, but also about encouraging and equipping children with prompts to talk about their learning with their parents.



'How was school today?' is now being replaced by 'I was looking at your Science project at work today and thought it was brilliant!'
How powerful is that?

The time that the pupils are in school is a small proportion of their lives so the importance of continuing their learning at home with their parents is clear. There has always been a strong link between Bradon Forest School and most of its parents as evidenced by their strong attendance at parent's events but we are always looking at ways to extend this relationship and feel that online engagement is the way forward, allowing more 'real time' information to be shared with our school community including blogs and tweets. We look forward to working with our focus group of parents to determine our future path.

For more information about UniServity Parental Engagement
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