

Experiencing the benefits of challenging the MIS status quo.

In Conversation With



Wyton on the Hill
Primary School



Overview.

Wyton on the Hill Community Primary School, based in Cambridgeshire, elected to change its MIS three years ago. Like many others in the Local Authority, they were disillusioned with the lack of progress with their previous provider.

Jason Tuxworth, School Business Manager, sat down with us to reflect on his time with Bromcom and the difference a cloud-based operating system has had on school processes.

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Opportunity for change

I have been the full-time School Business Manager at Wyton for about three and a half years. Previously, I was fulfilling the role alongside being a classroom teacher. In total, I've been at the school for 21 years so it's fair to say I've seen a lot when it comes to the world of MIS.

When the Cambridgeshire Local Authority elected not to renew their license with SIMS in 2019, we had the opportunity to decide what our future looked like. While a number of schools stuck to the status quo and continued with the provider they had been using for years, we decided to take a chance with Bromcom.

This change management process was under my control. My feeling, even then, was that SIMS had fallen far behind the times. Not having cloud or online capabilities was a real negative and they were clearly being eclipsed by competitors in the market.

One of the huge draws for me of a new system was the ability to work from home. With SIMS you had to log in to a central area and then go through other rounds of access. The process lagged and meant I could not access information readily. Cloud-based providers offered a better way of working and for me, Bromcom was the clear favourite.



Seeing in colour

As part of the Local Authority's MIS transition, we were invited to an event where companies were showcasing their offering to schools.

Immediately, the look of Bromcom stood out to me. The colour scheme was, and still is, incredibly logical, making navigation of the platform so straightforward.

Additionally, I really admired the willingness of Bromcom to embrace and listen to the feedback of their customers. It was clear from the outset they were open to changes recommended by their community of users. Going back to SIMS, that just wasn't happening. They thought their product was fit for purpose and wouldn't hear anything to the contrary. Bromcom continues to make changes, and these are often implemented quickly, which is great to see.

Above all, the simplicity of the product was great. I'm quite technologically minded but I know that many of my colleagues may not have managed a new and complex system with ease. Knowing that teachers, alongside their many responsibilities, would have to learn this new piece of software was of real concern. Bromcom looked like the kind of thing we could utilise from the outset.

Look, adaptability, and ease of use were the three main advantages of Bromcom and, honestly, I'd made my mind up fairly quickly that they would be our new provider.

Moving technologically and geographically

I'm trying to think back to the migration period now. It clearly went smoothly as we were also moving our school building at the same time!

From a finance perspective, Bromcom was still very much in its infancy, so some tweaks were needed there. However, the great thing about that was we and several other Cambridgeshire schools met with the Bromcom employees who made the finance module. We sat with them to undertake training and discuss plans and revisions for the future. Having the opportunity to work collaboratively here was fantastic.



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What we need

We really don't use Bromcom to its full potential, but it certainly helps us out with some key areas. At present, we don't harness the assessment dashboards. We know how good they could be but for the time being, a good old spreadsheet can do the trick.

One area where we do use Bromcom is Attendance.

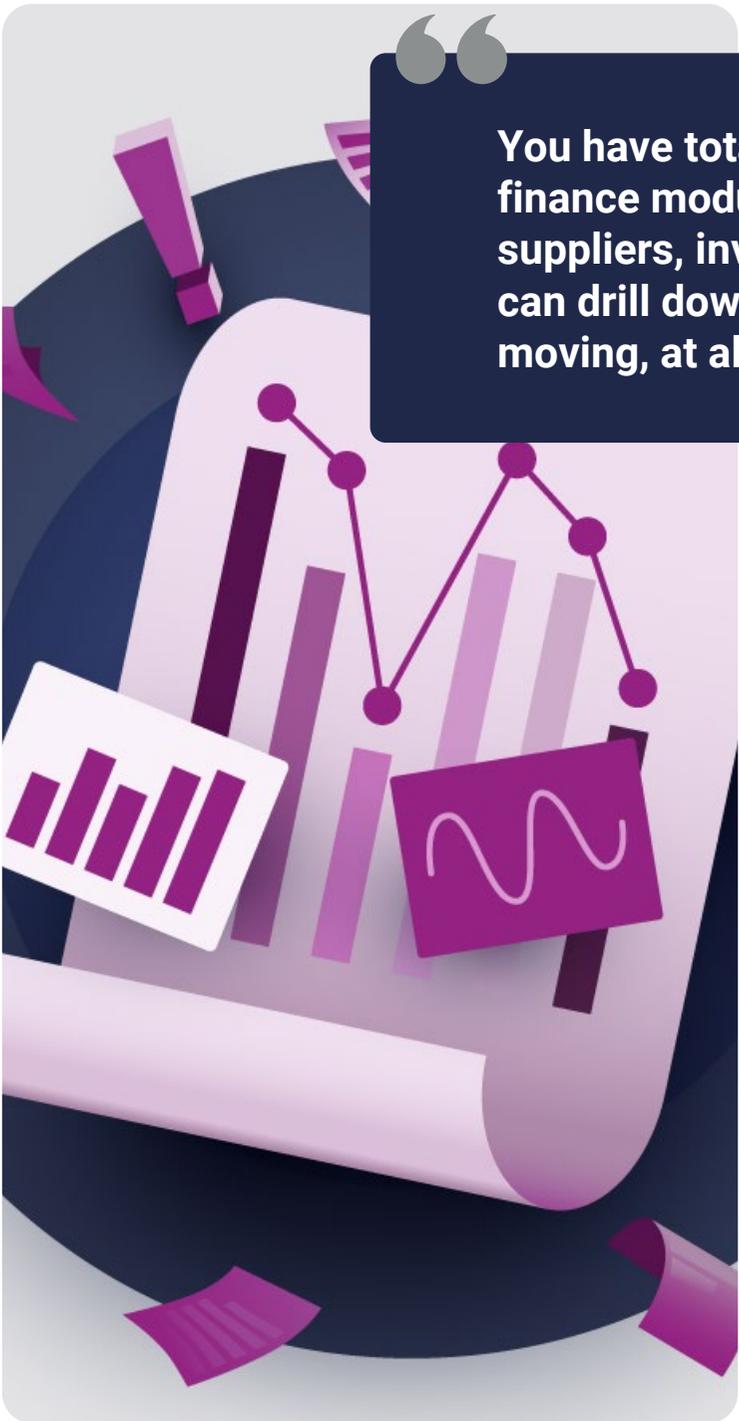
It's a really simple process which the secretary maintains on a day-to-day basis. The dashboard is not too technical or analytical, it's live data which is easy to read and process. Previously data was having to be uploaded and manually saved, the advantage of the cloud is as soon as it's entered, it's there waiting for you.

We currently have three separate letters designed for parents when attendance is dipping below desired levels. This is regularly monitored and it's immediately clear where we need to engage.

On top of this, I often have to report information to our key stakeholders. I can simply dip in, export the information and forward this through to governors. There's no need to manually collate anymore which is ideal.

An SBM's take

Bromcom is just a simpler way of doing things. Again, I go back to SIMS and there was a lot of manual saving and going through long-winded, complicated



You have total visibility with the Bromcom finance modules. Whether it's links between suppliers, invoices, or product catalogues, you can drill down and see where money is moving, at all times.

processes just to access different parts of the system. With Bromcom's finance module that is completely removed.

Areas are grouped according to colour meaning navigation is nice and easy. Even if you can't remember what you're looking for, the colour will often prompt you and take you to your desired location. Ultimately, it doesn't require days of training because so much of it is self-explanatory.

There are numerous bits of functionality I enjoy. Entering the budget at the beginning of the financial year is great. Setting up ledger codes and cost centres is all routine and the buttons for invoices mean that elements of my job are just automatic nowadays.

You have total visibility with the Bromcom finance modules. Whether it's links between suppliers, invoices, or product catalogues, you can drill down and see where money is moving, at all times. You can attach invoices to a transaction too, which is an added bonus. When it comes to auditing, you can evidence every spend.





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Finally, bank reconciliation. It's so much easier when you're just ticking off different transactions and slowly whittling them down to see what is still outstanding. It's all very logical!

Future savings

At some point, we will look to remove all third-party programmes. Bromcom has already allowed us to eradicate some, but we still do use ParentPay. When we migrate to My Child at School, this will save us more money and, as Bromcom was cheaper than our previous provider, we have freed up more funds for the school.

Embrace change

I would absolutely recommend Bromcom, and I have done so already! I think people ultimately have to decide for themselves and there is often a reluctance to change and embrace new tech in schools. Ultimately, it's about getting people to give something else a go and experience the advantages they can gain from moving. I'm happy to invite anyone down to my school and I can show them what Bromcom can do!



Book a demo and begin your journey.



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