



# TP-Link Omada Transforms Learning Provision at The LEARNERS' Trust

Fast, Secure & Reliable School Wi-Fi Solution That Works Straight Out Of The Box



## Sites

2

## Infrastructure

Upgrade to High - Density Wi-Fi 6



### Goal

Deliver fast, reliable, school - wide connectivity to support individual learning plans and connect 30+ iPads to enrich the learning experience.



### Implementation

Separate V-LANs for staff and pupils plus guest network for peripatetic teachers providing access to essential services.



### Benefits

Remote network management enables IT Technicians to resolve most issues without visiting the site giving them more time to be proactive and improve productivity.

## Implementation Partner



“ Since installing Omada I'm saving several hours every week. I used to have to go to Walton Holymoorside at least once a week to manually reboot access points: since the upgrade, I haven't had to touch anything, and there haven't been any complaints about Wi-Fi speed or coverage. ”

Harvey Lewis  
IT Technician, The LEARNERS' Trust



### Empowering Learning Through Collaboration

The LEARNERS' Trust is a high-quality educational support and development community backed by excellent professional services and moral leadership. The Trust works in partnership with established service providers for professional development and operational support. There are 18 schools in the Trust's network, situated in Derbyshire, South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire.

IT Technician Harvey Lewis is one of a team of three networking professionals working across the Trust. He is responsible for six schools. When two of the schools needed Wi-Fi upgrades, Harvey looked for a robust, well-priced solution that would provide seamless coverage throughout the campus plus remote monitoring and management to prevent unnecessary site visits.

### Slow Wi-Fi & Patchy Coverage

Ashgate Croft School, an Area Special School in Chesterfield, was suffering from slow and patchy wireless coverage because the existing infrastructure was eight-years-old and only operated on the 2.4 GHz frequency. Providing education to 150 children aged between 4 and 19 years old with range of cognitive and physical ability needs, most children have personalised learning plans. Approximately 90 members of staff are employed to support class sizes that range from 6 to 12 pupils. "Multimedia learning content is a big part of every lesson and over the last two years, the school has moved from wired desktops to wireless laptops and tablets for everything from lesson planning to taking the register and accessing rich content on the web to support different learning styles. Even the interactive whiteboards are wireless and are used to stream content. Sadly, the access points couldn't stream video without lagging and left many areas of the school with wireless dead-zones."



## Free Site Survey

Book Now

## Total Cloud Managed Network



### Wi-Fi Dead Zones

Meanwhile, at Chesterfield's Walton Holymoorside primary school, 350 students, from nursery to year six, and 50 staff were struggling to make the most of the iPads available, because of poor Wi-Fi connections. "There are about 150 iPads at the school—so a whole class can use them together. But without reliable Wi-Fi that can handle 30+ simultaneously connected devices the whole class experience is compromised because of buffering and unacceptable delays in loading content. When this happens, teachers have to think on their feet and replan lessons on the fly, so students lose the benefit of interactive multimedia learning." As Walton Holymoorside is a new addition to the Trust, Harvey was keen to bring its Wi-Fi provision up to the standard delivered at other LEARNERS' Trust schools. "The network was so old it was even a struggle to log on to the management platform. Simply to manage the network remotely, we needed a more modern solution."

### High Density, Cloud Managed, Seamless Wireless

With a clear mandate from the management team and Governors, Harvey was given the task of finding a suitable replacement. As an existing XMA customer, he talked to his account manager to get quotes. Mindful of tight budgets and the demand for other IT project expenditures he was delighted by the quote for TP-Link's Omada solution. He says, "The TP-Link quote was half the price of competitor brands and I double-checked it was a like-for-like hardware comparison. It was a very easy decision, saving us several thousands of pounds that we can use on other vital teaching resources for pupils."



“ The TP-Link equipment is simple to use—it's plug-and-play and automatically sets itself up. There's also a lot of good information on the website that explains clearly what works with what, so you can be sure you're selecting the right products. ”

Harvey Lewis  
IT Technician, The LEARNERS' Trust



### Test Units

To ensure that the Omada solution met the Trust's needs XMA reached out to TP-Link to provide demo units for Harvey and his team to test and evaluate. "TP-Link sent us an outdoor and two indoor Wi-Fi 6 access points plus a hardware controller to test. It was reassuring to try it out and get familiar with the interface to make sure it was going to tick all the boxes. The whole team came to the same agreement that it's a great bit of kit."

### One Week Implementation

Harvey ordered a total of 26 Omada EAP 620 High-Density indoor ceiling-mounted access points and a cloud controller for each school. "At Ashgate, the on-site team installed them at their own pace over a week, with no disruption—once everything was in place, they tested and cut over to the new network." Specialists installed the equipment at Walton Holymoorside because of the unusually high ceilings. "It was a quick and hassle-free process", says Harvey. "I was on-site to do the configuration. I thought I would have to change frequencies for the access points—but I literally plugged them in and they configured themselves. All I have had to do is add our Wi-Fi network names."



## Secure, Reliable Wi-Fi For Everyone

At both schools, the new networks are used by everyone from admin staff and midday supervisors to staff and pupils. The guest network is particularly important at Ashgate Croft School. With a lot of specialist teachers and support workers regularly attending the school to provide learning support, the guest network gives them access to essential online services without compromising the core network. Harvey says, "We can now use all the iPads at Walton Holymoorside in any classroom without worrying about buffering and dropouts. At Ashgate Croft, we've solved the blackspot problem so people can use their devices in all the key areas of the school. The staff are very happy, as it's taken away the risk of Wi-Fi-related disruption to lessons."

"Using the Omada cloud controller, we can monitor the networks in real-time from one site remotely. I very rarely need to check it because there have been no issues! If anyone reports slow internet or problems with connecting, it's easy to investigate. Before we would have had to do more complicated testing to see if the issue was with the network or access point—now I can quickly look at a single performance dashboard and pinpoint the problem."

"Now, I don't get complaints about the Wi-Fi. That means I have more time for doing other planned work like rather than troubleshooting. It's easier to manage my IT time and productivity."

"Before this project, I thought TP-Link was designed for home networking infrastructure," Harvey adds. "But now I've seen the commercial range in action, I would definitely use them again. We've installed TP-Link switches at another school and found them cheaper than the competition and just as good quality, with all the features and capabilities we need."