

Engage case study

British International School of Jeddah

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

About the school

The British International School of Jeddah is a leading school in Saudi Arabia. It has a busy waiting list for places and accommodates 1500 children and students in its creche, nursery, primary and upper schools. Students progress through to IGCSEs and the International Baccalaureate.

Website

www.bisj.sch.sa

Information Systems Manager

Vik Paw

"The way in which our school data is presented is quite unique on the Engage client app – it's so easy it wiped out the need for the many reports we had to run manually in our previous system. You can just re-arrange columns, show data and hide data – it's so flexible that it was a leader by far compared to the other options that we considered."

So states the British International School of Jeddah's Information Systems Manager Vik Paw, who joined the school six years ago, after undertaking a similar role in England. Since then BISJ has massively developed the usage of its online information resources and a number of systems now manage tasks that were once handled on paper. It's Vik's job to make these systems work well for the school – and together.

The school's decision to adopt Engage at the heart of its complex data requirements came out of the blue.

"We weren't really looking for a new management information system, we were looking for a full virtual learning environment," Vik explains. "On analysis we required it to communicate with our parent community and with the students as well as to set basic homework and manage lesson planning. We found we didn't need a VLE for that

because most current MIS systems provide a portal to handle those tasks.

"And so we realised that it was probably a better option at that time to opt for an MIS with those features. It meant that everything could be linked to other key data such as the timetable."

The search began to replace the incumbent MIS. "There weren't many systems that could offer what we wanted, suitable for the region, with appropriate support," Vik remembers. "Having seen Engage last year we got a few demonstrations and our questions were answered quickly." With the decision made, the implementation commenced in the summer of 2013.

"The roll-out has been pretty smooth," Vik relates. "It's been a massive turnaround in how fast we got the systems running."

"Up until recently the primary school was still using paper registers. It's only since we changed to Engage that teachers have taken to attendance marking electronically. It's been an absolutely fantastic response – after just one hour's training during an inset day in September, 95 per cent of primary staff have been marking attendance through the Portal."

"The reporting system is fantastic. I like the fact that I can run my own query on it and get any data out. The Support Team have been great – if I've had a problem and logged it they've addressed it straight away and they are very responsive and receptive to new ideas that I've had."

