

High school reaps benefits of affordable and scalable IDIS video solution, with low TCO



Industry

Education

Customer

St Peter and St Paul Catholic High School

Region

UK

IDIS Partners

Apex Network Solutions

Background

Coeducational secondary school is known for inclusivity and commitment to excellence



St Peter and St Paul Catholic High School in Widnes, Cheshire, is a coeducational secondary school offering a comprehensive education for children aged 11 to 16. Known for its inclusive community and commitment to excellence, the school also provides support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, helping them to access the curriculum and enjoy school life.

More than twenty years ago, St Peter and St Paul was one of the first schools to adopt CCTV, putting cameras to good use to protect facilities from intrusion and vandalism. However, by 2016, the original analogue system had fallen into disrepair, and the cost of an upgrade was daunting.

Challenges

Upgrade of cabling, cameras, NVRs and VMS completed in just weeks

For several years, the school had no camera coverage, but in 2019, the governors decided to invest in the latest video technology. They wanted to restore the security of the premises and follow the example of the many other schools now using video to keep pupils safe, encourage positive behaviour, and ensure the smooth running of their busy communities.

However, because technology had advanced since the original coax-based analogue system was installed, a completely new data infrastructure would be required, and a video solution would need to be cost-efficient and within the school's limited budget.



Solution

Upgrade of cabling, cameras, NVRs and VMS completed in just weeks



Apex Network Solutions had already proven itself as the school's trusted IT service provider, and Mike Hussey, the school's network manager, invited the company to do a proof of concept demonstration of possible video technologies.

A growing number of secondary schools now used IDIS video surveillance, so with permission from another nearby school during the school holidays Apex director Matt Fleming was able to remotely demonstrate how the system worked, showing the quality of images and ease-of-use of the VMS management software.

The IDIS solution offered the best value, and Apex conducted a full site survey to identify priority areas for coverage, including corridors, stairwells, communal areas, and exterior points of vulnerability such as entrances and approaches. A completely new IP Cat 5 and Cat 6A cabling infrastructure was run, a new server room was created, and the end-to-end IDIS solution was installed – with rapid, easy installation possible during school opening hours thanks to plug-and-play compatibility of all devices.

These included:

- 72 cameras: including 8MP IR bullet cameras, and 5MP IR dome cameras with IP67 rating for exterior use, true WDR for image capture in variable light conditions, and IR night vision to 40m; and 5MP IR Fisheye cameras for complete scene coverage of expansive areas.
- 3 x 32 channel H.265 4K IDIS NVRs supporting UHD display and one-click configuration.
- IDIS Solution Suite VMS – a licence-free, feature-rich management platform with user-friendly tools for real-time monitoring, footage review, and system configuration.
- The IDIS Mobile Plus app makes it easy for authorised users - including senior teaching staff and facilities staff - to monitor and control cameras on the move.

Results and benefits

Improved security and school safety – and easy, affordable system expansion

The upgraded surveillance solution was completed within six months of the original enquiry and worked precisely as intended. It provided an immediate deterrent against intrusion and vandalism out of hours. It quickly helped to reinforce positive behaviour in the school community, with the assurance that any incidents could be quickly reviewed and all issues dealt with fairly. During holidays, facilities staff use the Mobile Plus app to check on the premises 24/7 without travelling to and accessing the school grounds.

Crucially, in addition to meeting its primary objectives, the system also delivered additional benefits. Because the IDIS solution has a minimal maintenance burden, low TCO (total cost of ownership), and is easy to adapt and expand, the school has been able to use its budget to make further investments in surveillance since 2020. More cameras and storage capacity are being added each year, steadily removing blind spots—and with plans being considered to expand the school, this flexibility is a major advantage.



With support from IDIS, Apex now provides an affordable maintenance contract, working with the school to ensure that its new video system is sustainable, affordable, and always fit for purpose. This allows the phased investment to continue, and unlike the original system, the IDIS solution will never fall out of use.

“ When we initially put the new system in, we didn't have expansion in mind, so it's been fantastic that IDIS technology is inexpensive to maintain and easy to adapt and scale up. This flexibility is priceless for schools like ours, with budgets to manage and priorities that can change year by year. ”

Mike Hussey
Network Manager
St Peter and St Paul Catholic High School



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