University Technical College Norfolk
Case Study

> " 20 years ago, you could employ one person to do everything in terms of school ICT, but today, it's far too complicated to expect just one person to be able to manage all the requirements that a school has.
>
> Now, you need a range of specialists. And that's what Dataspire provides. If we need help with a wireless issue, we can call on support from the Dataspire wireless expert. If it's something to do with Microsoft 365, they've got someone who can do that. Being able to deal with experts has been hugely important for us. "

Alex Hayes, Headteacher -
University Technical College Norfolk (UTCN)

About University Technical College Norfolk (UTCN)

University Technical College Norfolk (UTCN) provides a comprehensive educational foundation for 14-19 year olds with an interest in engineering, science, technology, maths or computing. The UTC ethos and curriculum is supported by local and national STEM employers who also provide work experience for students to reinforce the skills learnt in school.

After attending UTCN, most students progress to university or higher level apprenticeships. In 2020:

- **60% of Year 13 students went on to apprenticeships or full time employment**
- **40% of Year 13 went on to university or further education**

About Dataspire Solutions

Dataspire Solutions is an Education Technology (EdTech) company that provides a host of IT services and support to schools and academies across the country - helping to create confidence in the use of technology and to improve outcomes for children and young people.

While for over 16 years, Dataspire has primarily helped schools and academies with their technology, its ethos has always been led by education and the personnel that deliver it, and as a result, Dataspire staff fully understand, react and respond to schools' operational priorities in a manner that is the most appropriate and the most effective.

- Strategic ICT Planning for Schools
- Education Focussed Broadband Connectivity
- Cloud and Network Infrastructure Support
- Wireless Networking
- New School Build Services
- Audio Visual Support
- Managed ICT Support
- Safeguarding Support
- Technical and User Training
- Project Management
- Procurement Management
- Telephony Services

The Challenge

Prior to working with Dataspire, the IT support at UTCN was being delivered by a non-specialist ICT group for 5 years. During that time, a long-term strategic solution hadn't been developed and key parts of the IT infrastructure were becoming vulnerable.

In need of a new provider that could create ICT confidence for both staff and students, UTCN began their search for an effective and efficient IT provider. After a thorough tender process, Dataspire were chosen.

The first step was to review and assess the current IT infrastructure, then devise a long-term strategy. With many items reaching end-of-life, a significant amount of equipment was due for replacement. This was a huge job that was scheduled and project managed by Dataspire in its entirety.

> **"** I've always said that Dataspire has treated our money as though it was their money, so not simply taking the easy route by telling us that we need to replace everything - we have always received exceptional value for money.
> When Dataspire arrived they reviewed our ICT infrastructure and advised where new equipment was needed but where we might also get better use out of existing kit. It has always been fairly and expertly done. **"**

Why Dataspire Solutions?

Before deciding to go with the Dataspire service, UTCN went through a thorough tender process and employed an external consultant to ensure that the next IT provider met the school's requirements and was chosen without bias.

> **"**
> We actually had a preferred supplier in mind, but following the advice of the consultant and the scoring in the bid process, Dataspire came out on top out of a group of four.
>
> Very quickly after taking on the Dataspire Managed Service, there was a clear and evident improvement as issues were dealt with urgently. Communication has always been first rate and we're always kept updated. **"**
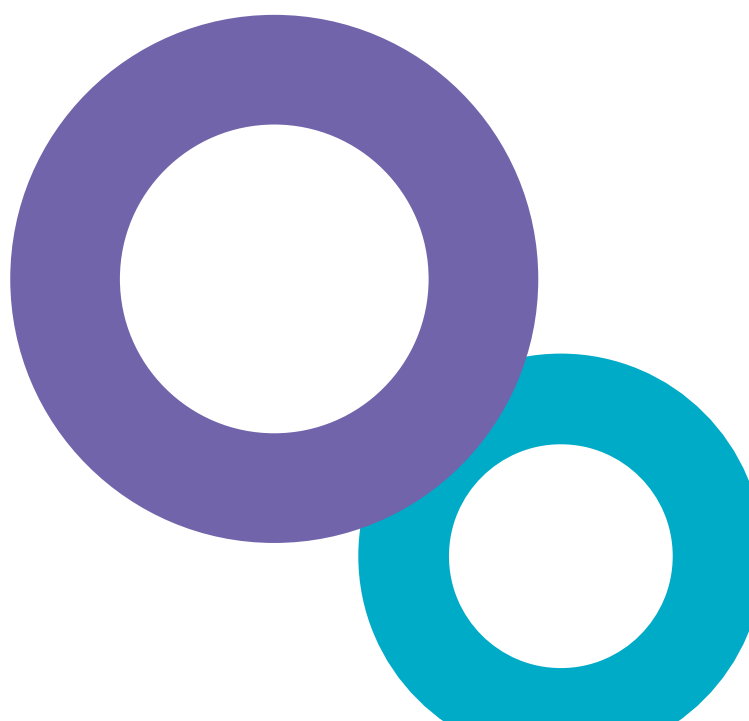
> **"** Since taking on the Dataspire service, IT is one less thing to have to think about, as now it just happens efficiently in the background. As a Senior Manager, there's plenty to worry about on a daily basis, especially under current circumstances (pandemic) but I am now confident that if there's a problem with the IT, it'll be resolved as opposed to previously when IT issues were an integrated part of my day-to-day existence. **"**

What part of the service have you found the most helpful?

Of all the services that have since been put in place, UTCN is particularly keen on the support provided through the Dataspire helpdesk. The school hadn't previously used a ticketing system and even with previous processes in place, staff would go directly to the onsite technician and so there was never any record or audit trail of requests.

"

The Dataspire service has managed to restore the staff's faith in IT, particularly during the pandemic and lockdown. During the first lockdown, we moved to Teams, which was new to us, and it happened seamlessly. So when we were advised of a second lockdown, we were able to communicate with staff, parents and students and were able to start lessons the very next day.

"We've had lots of positive feedback from students and parents about our provision throughout, and that is built on the backbone of the Dataspire provision.

"We delivered a full curriculum with live online teaching, and staff and students followed the same timetable as they would have done on-site. This has had a positive impact on our students' progress and, arguably, their mental health because we've been able to provide structure. In fact, 20% of our students were further ahead of projections because they were able to access all the resources they needed without interruption to their daily routine"

"

And the Results?

A year ago, UTCN staff took part in a staff survey and the results showed that IT was the number 1 concern. UTCN is yet to do another survey, but Headteacher, Alex Hayes, reports that he is no longer receiving the complaints that he used to.

We've been really impressed with Dataspire.

From the tender stage, Dataspire asked all the right questions and really got to understand our requirements. They also identified opportunities to add value in a way other bidders did not even try to. I felt they treated our money as their money and proposed solutions which were always considered and cost-effective.

During implementation, we have found Dataspire to be extremely organised and pro-active. Despite the challenging times, Dataspire staff have worked hard to keep to deadlines and have always kept me in the loop. Their management of 'tickets' has been outstanding and really helped to restore staff's faith in IT. In summary, we've found the Dataspire experience first-rate."
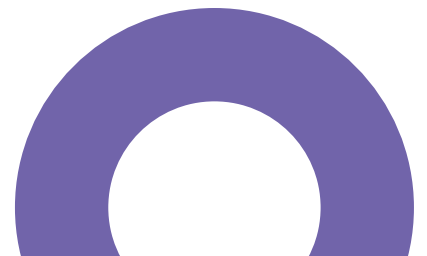
The Dataspire Promise

We will work closely with you to understand your needs

We will help you to deliver your ICT Vision, now and into the future

We'll provide best value on our services and solutions, to ensure you get the most from your investment in technology

We will provide reliable support that you can trust

Contact us today and see how we can help you:

Email **info@dataspire.co.uk**

Call **0345 603 1233**

Or visit **www.dataspire.co.uk** for more details

Dataspire
Creating ICT confidence for schools