

With over 700 employees, Minerva Learning Trust, comprising of four schools formed a multi academy trust to provide the best educational experience to all the pupils, allowing them the opportunity to develop and achieve their potential.

Minerva Learning Trust is an ambitious Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) serving four schools across Sheffield. It was established as a Single Academy Trust in 2014 and rapidly expanded in the period December 2017 to March 2018 taking on three additional secondary schools. It was recognised that key operating functions such as Finance, Budgets and Curriculum were being handled separately across the schools and was neither practical nor efficient and definitely not future proof which is crucial in an ever expanding Trust.

Manual processes to maintain the various systems by the different teams wasn't conducive to the way that the Trust should be operating, meaning that key stakeholders were hindered, delayed and unable to make strategic decisions as they didn't have access to the necessary information when needed.

“

I wanted a solution that would connect all the different facets of our schools and mitigate against us having to continually make manual adjustments based on the information available.

Adele France, Chief Financial & Operations Officer

”

Access software has allowed Minerva Learning Trust to concentrate on what they know best - providing the best education for their pupils

“ *The best thing about Access software is that it's really affordable for schools. We are still able to afford specialist software that is sector specific and meets the need of the Trust and schools, within our extremely tight budgets.* ”

Adele France, Chief Financial & Operations Officer

Challenge

- Required a user friendly solution that could unify all the existing systems across the schools in the MAT
- Streamline operating procedures and processes
- Wanted greater reporting for management accounts needed within the Trust

Approach

Implemented Access Education Budgets, Education Finance and Education Curriculum

Results

- Reduction in manual finance tasks
- Increased efficiencies and help control costs
- Accurate long term planning

“

What I have found with Access is how easy everything is, from the sales team to the help desk – everyone is really easy to talk to and willing to help. I like the developments portal which I feel has really allowed Access to really grasp how I can see their software developing. That makes me feel really valued as a customer.

Adele France, Chief Financial & Operations Officer

”

Why Access Education suite?

Adele has worked with Access Education Budgets, formally known as HCSS Budgeting for many years and found the system easy to use and intuitive, she knew that the software could meet all of the Trust's needs plus help plan for the future especially in the uncertain climate that the education sector was currently facing.

With this prior knowledge, Adele and the wider business team implemented Access Education's Finance, Budgets and Curriculum software and improvements were apparent straight away. Efficiency gains were achieved immediately as duplicated processes across separate schools were eliminated, whilst reducing errors. Additionally, with this greater consistency, greater control was achieved across the Trust, which has helped improve data accuracy and reliability whilst providing the relevant information to support the Executive Team and Trustees in their decision making.

Freeing the Trust to do more

One of the biggest results that Adele has seen since implementing Access Education software is that it has allowed the Trust to tighten their processes and streamlined how they work. They have been able to standardise their workflow and processes - especially with the training that they received from Access, together with the user manuals on the software, Adele and the team have been able to develop and enhance the organisational Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). This has also resulted in better reporting which has really the executive team greater confidence that the strategic decisions being made are supported by evidence from these reports, with the systems interlinking and the easy to use dashboards have help provide support all the key decision making processes.

Due to the ease of the software, Adele has been able to give wider access to key staff; such as the Executive Team and Head Teachers, so they are able to access the budgeting software to help support their work in decision making. The software allows the drill down into the Trust's 'nitty gritty' to enable the Finance Director to analyse more detailed Management Accounts for presentation to the Trustees and reporting at school level.

About The Access Group:

The Access Group has been recognised in The Sunday Times Tech Track 100 in 2019 and is a leading provider of business software to mid-sized UK organisations. It helps more than 35,000 customers across commercial and not-for-profit sectors become more productive and efficient. Its innovative Access Workspace cloud platform transforms the way business software is used, giving every employee the freedom to do more.

Founded in 1989, The Access Group has an enterprise valuation of over £1billion and employs more than 2,600 staff.

0845 345 3300

www.theaccessgroup.com