BROMCOM CLUSTER GROUP
REFLECTING ON THE FIRST YEAR WITH BROMCOM MIS & FINANCE

OVERVIEW

A number of schools in the Fenland area of East Anglia joined forces to form a Bromcom cluster group, having all gone live with our One-Stop-Shop Cloud-MIS and Finance products early in 2019.

As they approach their first anniversary with Bromcom, we caught up with them to discuss their experiences and reflections.

"People should be more questioning of the processes they follow and the systems they use and whether they make financial sense – if they were then they would see that a move to Bromcom makes so much sense."

WENDY WHISTLER
BUSINESS MANAGER

Bromcom

HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO BRING STAFF ON BOARD?

The key to success was the intuitive nature of the software which from the outset felt more accessible than our previous solution. It no longer required lengthy step by step process guides to support its use. We were surprised at the reaction from the teachers.

We did of course drip feed them a little bit in the beginning as they don't always have time to focus on new things like this, but they got straight into it with no problems at all which is a testimony in itself. They've taken to it with dinners, registers and logging behaviour events really well.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BUY-IN

When introducing a new MIS, you're relying on it being used by a wide range of people within the school. Especially when you consider the fact that Bromcom can be used by parents, students, governors and so on. Due to this, it's important to get buy-in from all of the stakeholders and engage with them from the beginning.
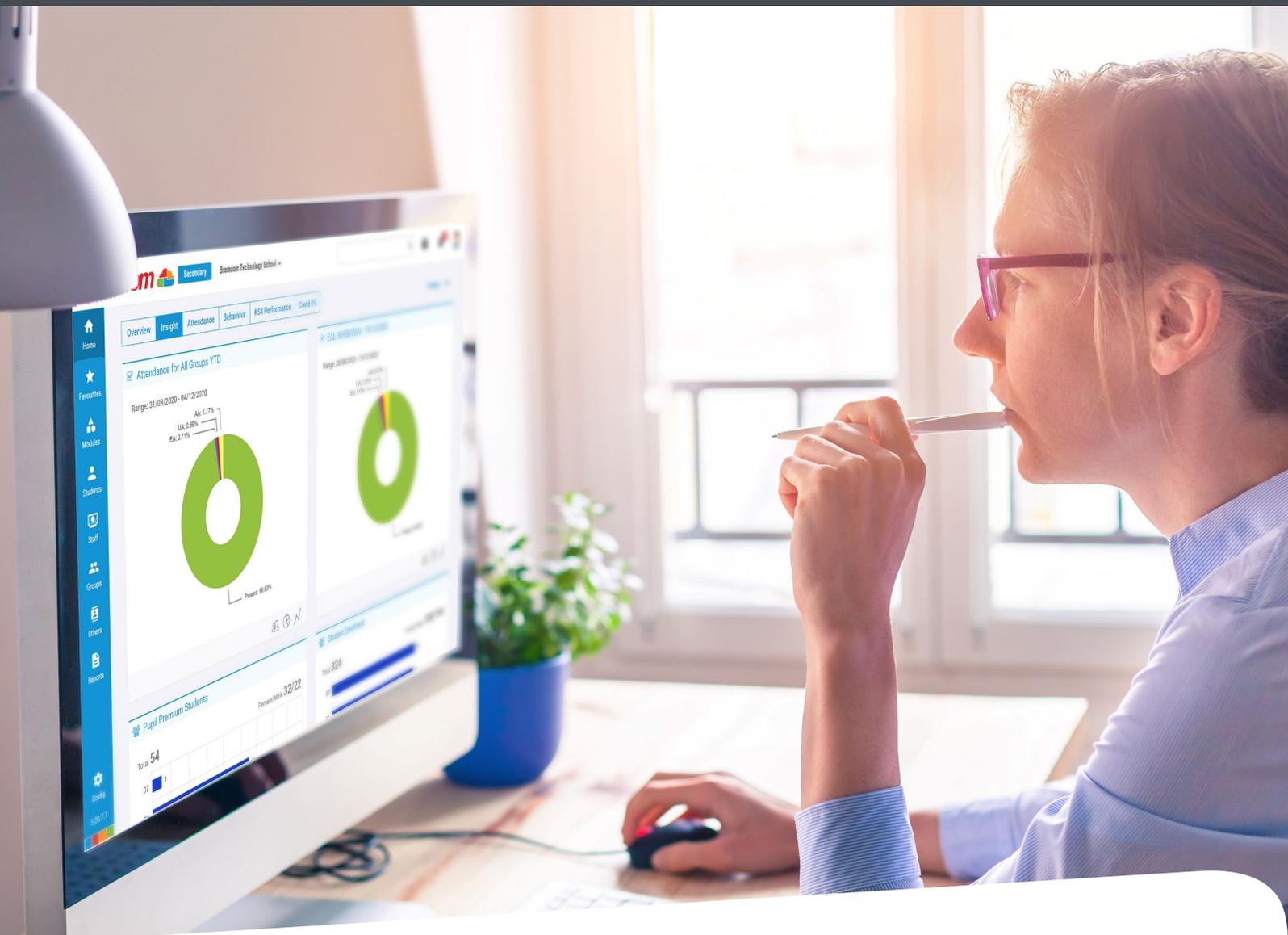
WERE THERE ANY TEETHING PROBLEMS?

There were some, but surprisingly few considering that a change of MIS and the introduction of a new finance package is such a big change, especially if you do what we all did and go live at the start of a new financial year. I think we'd perhaps all underestimated the scale of change – but that's not specific to a move to Bromcom, that would have been true of us moving to any new system.

We were also aware that the finance package was a pretty new offering at the time and we would be amongst the first users so inevitably we knew there would be tweaks and changes. Bromcom have really listened and we've already seen a number of our suggestions make it into the product. It's interesting to see how much the software has already moved on from what we first used.

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WOULD YOU GO BACK TO YOUR OLD SYSTEM?

Definitely not! Of course, when we first changed, a few people moaned in the beginning that it wasn't exactly the same as the old system – but that's just a fact of life and people don't always embrace change! It's amazing how quickly people forget though. Recently we've had to go back into the old system to check something from the last financial year and then it hits you how clunky the old software was. The process was so slow with a series of unnecessary clicks to drill down to what you needed. On Bromcom finance the same process was really easy.

Of course, ditching our old system, server costs and expensive support means that from the smallest school of 90 pupils in our group to 400 pupil primaries and the secondaries, we're all financially better off too. No, we would definitely not go back – not even the people who moaned in the beginning!

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WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A SCHOOL WHO HAD NOT YET MADE THE MOVE TO BROMCOM?

Through a move to Bromcom we've been able to ditch separate logins to a range of individual systems – for example Communications, Online Payments and Behaviour management. Having a single sign on means ease of use and fully integrated systems, but most importantly considering our current budgets it means substantial financial savings as these separate systems are all part of the Bromcom One-Stop-Shop solution.

There's always a group of people who don't ever question their own processes or the systems they've inherited or whether a contract they currently have makes financial sense. Instead they just continue along with what they have or with what's always been done. For them, the thoughts of doing something different doesn't cross their mind and of course 'change' is a scary thing. To those people I'd say "Be brave – you can live without your old systems and you can save money".

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WENDY WHISTLER
BUSINESS MANAGER

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GET IN TOUCH TO SEE HOW WE COULD HELP YOUR SCHOOL OR MAT

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