

Chromebooks: The foundations for success

How one school is starting its journey with Google for Education

School at a glance

Small but mighty could be the perfect way to describe John Calvin School in Launceston, Tasmania. With just 127 students, and a 21-strong team of teachers and staff, the 55-year-old education establishment is entrenched in the local community and aims to instil a well-balanced attitude to technology in the classroom and beyond.



Challenge

Principal Daniel Coote says the school's primary challenge was changing the status quo. "The systems and devices we used were familiar, the teachers used them personally, and we were comfortable with them. But then we started to question if they were the best for our needs. Probably the most important step we took was incorporating IT provision in our strategic plan. We analysed the strengths & weaknesses of digital technologies, and the Google offering stood out for us as a clear winner. That led us to consider whether Google offerings were a better option for us."



We are transitioning to Google slowly, but if I was going into a brand-new school and had to start it from scratch, I would use all Google products, devices, and platforms.

Daniel Coote,

Principal, John Calvin School

Solution

While John Calvin School had been a "digital" school for over a decade, Daniel admits it's only over the past five years that IT and digital technology for education were properly strategised. "We started to be more forward-thinking and strategic in how we could use technology and the best devices, apps and platforms available. About three years ago, we started to hear more and more about Google from teachers and other local schools we work closely with."

Opening the teachers and their well-established processes up to something new and different was going to take time. But Daniel admits that while the first step can often be the hardest, it's starting the journey that's important. "We are taking the transition slowly to maintain the best quality of care and education for students, while supporting teachers and their process. If I was going into a brand-new school and had to start it from scratch, I would use all Google products, devices and platforms."

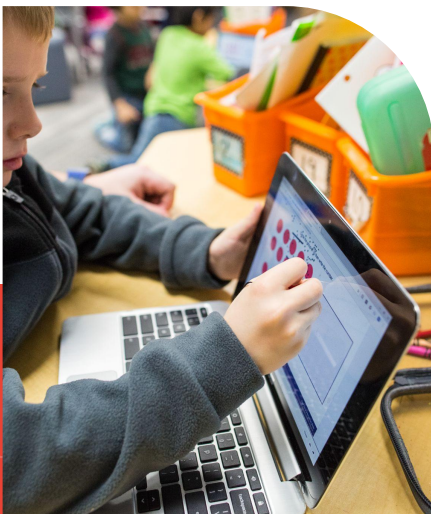
A simpler digital strategy

Solution deep dive

Creating a more strategic plan for IT deployment through the school wasn't an easy challenge to solve for John Calvin School. Keen to improve access to digital devices across the upper primary years, in reality the exercise was proving expensive and time-consuming. Management needed a cost-effective, seamless solution to their digital problems.

The answer came in the shape of Chromebooks. "We'd previously been using tablets. They were expensive and not as robust as we needed them to be. Refreshing a device so it looked new to a student was time-consuming and overly complicated. It was just harder than we wanted it to be. Chromebooks were simply better overall, and we could buy one at the same price or less than the other device for a far better experience and outcome."

1:1 Chromebooks with the Chrome Education Upgrade were deployed across Years 3-6 with great results. "The screens were bigger, there was a fully functioning keyboard, the devices were robust, intuitive, uncluttered, and simple to use."



Small steps towards big changes

What they wanted

- Devices that suited the specific needs of the cohorts using them
- Seamless refreshes of existing devices when transferred to a new student
- Guidance and advice from IT partner InScope IT
- Greater cost efficiency across the IT budget
- A well-devised plan for IT deployment to be rolled-out over the coming years
- A way to streamline processes to reduce the substantial time being spent on IT management

What they did

- Sought help and advice from InScope IT to investigate better options for devices, platforms and apps
- Liaised with other local schools on how they were using Google to compare outcomes and cost efficiencies
- Introduced IT partners InScope IT to teachers to provide professional development around Chromebooks
- Purchased new Chromebooks with Chrome Education Upgrade for all students in Years 3-6
- Transitioned over to Chromebooks for all younger cohorts with a view to extend into Years 7-10 in the future

What they achieved

- Reduced hardware costs, in purchasing more robust devices that need less repair and requiring less onboarding costs, meant funds can be invested in future innovation
- A multi-platform, hybrid digital school that provides the most suitable type of technology and digital education depending on what that specific cohort needs
- Substantial time savings for both IT and teachers
- Development of a strategy that will see all primary school grades and students using Chromebooks exclusively

Key Benefits

Still in the early stages of their journey with Google, John Calvin School has already seen a myriad of benefits. Students across the upper primary grades, teachers, and management have all seen improvements thanks to the introduction of Google Workspace for Education, Chromebooks with the Chrome Education Upgrade, and the school intends to further adopt Google technology over the coming years.

1

Substantial cost savings

Due to the value Chromebooks and how robust they are, the school has seen significant cost savings. "What we're getting with a Chromebook is far better than what we had with other products, such as a proper screen with a decent keyboard, for either the same price or cheaper. So, we're either making a saving or we're getting a much better product – or both." This enables the school to invest the funds for more strategic purposes; improving the teaching and learning experience.

3

Streamlined IT deployment resulting in significant time savings

Frustration with deployment of devices to new students was part of the reason John Calvin School transitioned to Chromebooks. "With deployment and imaging at the beginning of the year, particularly refreshing all of our school devices so that they look like a fresh device for students on their first day – with PC's that takes time and other products were worse. Our experience with the Chrome Education Upgrade has been straightforward and simple."

2

Ongoing support from an IT partner

Without an IT partner that truly understands the unique needs of a school, it's hard for teachers and management to feel confident when adopting a new device or platform.

"That's been the most powerful thing, having an IT partner that understands our context and what we're trying to achieve, and is therefore looking for solutions that suit us. InScope IT's sensitivity to our context was fantastic."

4

A hybrid approach to IT deployment

With grades 3-6 currently with the Chrome Education Upgrade and a plan to extend that use to grades K-2 John Calvin School will then consider Google products for the High School section of the school. "We want to equip our students with digital fluency where they can use any device with confidence, so we're considering extending Google across all grades."



Reach out today

Contact InScope IT on 1300 557 312 to find out how Google for Education can help achieve your teaching and learning goals.