The school converted to an Academy in 2011 after receiving an 'Outstanding' Ofsted inspection. As a specialist school, Aston Academy not only enhances the learning and teaching of Maths and Computing but creates exciting opportunities across the whole curriculum.

The Challenge

ICT is an important element in today's learning environment and Aston Academy has several computer classrooms for students to use to increase online learning and aid their studies. Richard Clough, Network Manager at Aston Academy quickly realised that with their previous Web Filtering solution, teaching and learning in the classroom was made extremely difficult due to unreliable delivery of Internet content and incorrect categorisation of Websites. In addition, anonymous proxy sites were not being blocked by the filter, allowing students to bypass any filtering and visit any Website.

In 2009, the academy turned to Bloxx for help.

Key Benefits

- ✔ e-Safety compliance
- ✔ blocking anonymous proxies
- ✔ AUPs enforced and monitored
- ✔ Boost productivity for students
- ✔ Extensive Reporting
- ✔ Quickly stamp out Internet access abuse
- ✔ smooth installation
- ✔ real-time dynamic categorisation
- ✔ Simple management of solution
- ✔ Reduced IT Management time

Richard Clough, Network Manager

"Now that we have Bloxx Web filtering at the academy we have extended the use of the Internet as an educational tool as we are 100% sure that our students will be protected from accessing productivity-draining and unsuitable Websites by accident or via proxy sites."

"Bloxx Web filtering is helping us with our e-safety compliance. I no longer need to block inappropriate content or shut down anonymous proxy sites as Tru-View Technology does it automatically for the academy and we can track Web access more effectively. The Web content delivered is now much more appropriate for a school learning environment,"

The Solution

The academy decided to install a Bloxx Web Filter to provide better Internet content filtering and enhanced online safety for 1700 students and 200 staff. Richard explains, "I wanted to improve the Web filtering at the academy to deliver better online protection for our students, enable teachers to utilise the power of education content on the Internet in the classroom and to automatically block our students from using proxy sites to circumvent filtering technology. Bloxx Web filtering does all of this and more."

A key differentiator is the real-time content analysis and filtering provided through Bloxx's patent-pending categorisation engine, Tru-View Technology. "With our Bloxx Web Filter, we now have total control over the Web browsing. Students can no longer use anonymous proxy sites to circumvent our Web security restrictions to surf the Internet unprotected and our staff are no longer frustrated through the blocking of legitimate education sites," adds Richard.

The Results

Aston Academy is delighted with the benefits Bloxx Web Filter has brought. The academy has implemented Acceptable Use Policies that enable staff and students to have specific Internet access rights dependent on student age, study group or staff member. Richard remarks, "We can ensure that students are unable to access content that is unsuitable or not related to the studies they are carrying out. We are convinced that the academy has eradicated the use of anonymous proxy sites by our students. This helps students stay on track with their studies."

The Bloxx Web Reporting application is used extensively at the academy. "Now we have Bloxx Web filtering, I schedule routine reports to run automatically to provide information to staff on which Websites students have visited or where attempts have been made to visit Websites. I can also quickly carry out ad-hoc reports when asked for more detail. We can now quickly and effectively stamp out any forms of Internet access abuse." Using Bloxx Web filtering has made the IT team's job much easier. "Having real-time dynamic categorisation of Web pages means that we rarely have to re-categorise a Website that is either blocked or allowed. This has drastically reduced the number of support requests from teachers asking us to block Websites.

We have saved valuable IT resources by not having to manually search through logs to identify and block access to inappropriate sites. This means that we have more time to spend on other more important IT projects that keeps us ahead of other schools in terms of ICT development," explains Richard.

Richard Clough, Network Manager

"We have extended the use of the Internet as an educational tool at the academy as we are 100% sure that our students will be protected from accessing productivity-draining and unsuitable Websites by accident or via proxy sites. Teachers can safely leave students to research online without the need to constantly monitor them to ensure they aren't accessing anything they shouldn't."