

HOW THE LARGEST SCHOOL IN THE WORLD TOOK CONTROL OF ITS DATA



City Montessori School (CMS) is a co-educational English school in Lucknow, India. Founded in 1959, it's well known for being the world's largest school, with 55,547 pupils (as of January 2019) across 18 campuses. Affiliated with the University of Cambridge and the Associated Board of the Royal Schools for Music, and the recipient of the 2002 UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, CMS has a global reputation for excellence.

The challenge

Until January 2018, City Montessori Schools had been using the same management information system (MIS) for five years. However, each campus had customised the MIS over that time, to suit its individual needs. This meant silos of inaccessible, inconsistent, incomparable data – pupil assessments, for example – were trapped in each campus.

Without consistent, comparable data, it was impossible to evaluate the performance of individual campuses.

As a result, the school leadership team was unable to make effective decisions for the school as a whole or meet its education technology goals: the standardisation of assessment and reporting formats across all schools, and to have a set of consolidated management dashboards.

After a lengthy review, Capita was chosen to implement our SIMS education software, to create a singular, school-wide, standardised and cloud-hosted MIS.

Our approach

Due to the size of the school, standardisation and repeatability were absolutely key – assessment and report card formats, for example, had to be standardised to fit one template. And a single, centralised management reporting dashboard would provide a full view of critical information, such as admissions and assessments, across the campuses. These would allow the school's management team to make data-driven decisions.

There was a huge volume of data and only a short time available to handle it. Eighteen school campuses held information for almost 56,000 pupils, which needed to be converted from all the different existing systems into one SIMS system – in just seven months. And because the school year was in progress, the generation and use of pupil data was ongoing. Timely and transparent communication and teamwork within Capita – and between Capita and CMS – was essential.

We set up a single project management office, involving all the key school stakeholders, to oversee the schedule and manage and a global project team with identified resources in India and the UK. And to address the challenge of working during term time, we staggered our approach across the campuses.

“Capita presented us with a data management software solution that was perfect for our needs. I now feel totally confident that we have control of the data of the 56,000 pupils we work so hard to serve.”

*Ms Jayashree Krishna,
Principal,
City Montessori School*

The impact

Several targets were set at the beginning of the process, which we have either achieved, or are due to achieve, within the specified time frames:

- a single cloud-hosted SIMS solution is now available in all 18 campuses, with a decision-making platform holding the information from all campuses
- input of data is standardised by a singular platform, which will help to scale their business as it expands
- campuses are now able to generate their report cards through SIMS
- an admissions module has been implemented successfully and is being used actively across all the campuses
- assessment has been standardised successfully across all the campuses
- the parent app is being rolled out to give better insights to the parents and strengthening parent/school collaboration.

By the end of 2019, City Montessori School will also have a standardised and centralised dashboard to generate whole school metrics.

Roshan Gandhi, Director of Strategy, City Montessori School Group, said: “Working with Capita was a revelation from day one – the team came to us fully prepared with in-depth knowledge of our business, and dedication and enthusiasm for helping us to provide our business with an innovative way forward.

“Many management information issues had arisen for us over the years due to the complex, unique way our school works, as well as the scale of our business. Capita presented us with a data management software solution that was perfect for our needs. I now feel totally confident that we have control of the data of the 56,000 pupils we work so hard to serve. In terms of implementation, we really appreciate the commitment of the Capita SIMS team in India. They worked with us as partners to ensure timely migration of all our schools to SIMS as well as working closely with all of them to achieve the significant milestone of annual report card generation, which required intensive collaboration and often working way beyond the call of duty to meet the extremely tight and non-negotiable timelines. CMS and CAPITA-SIMS have developed a valuable relationship that helps us to achieve our vision of delivering quality education.”



Trapti Dwivedi, school principal, said:
“SIMS Discover provides valuable insights into whole class as well as individual student performance that helps me to channelize efforts to make effective changes in teaching-learning process that helps to improve learning outcomes.

The Capita SIMS team has helped us to get a good understanding of analysing our school’s data. Henceforth, we will be using this for performing real-time whole school analysis.”

“The award-winning features of SIMS help us to strengthen our overall curriculum and succeed in implementing transformational vision in providing world class education for our students. I appreciate the real-time information that SIMS Assessments provides to my teachers. They are now able to instantly view the whole class performance, which was not possible before, thus helping our teachers to quickly identify the needs of our students and simplifying lesson plans to improve teaching.”

*Mrs Jayashree
School Principal*

Discover more about SIMS by getting in touch

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