



# Encryption joins forces with flexibility

Lawnswood School keeps data protected while enabling staff to be at their best with a zero-touch encryption solution on laptops



## Customer profile



<b>Company</b>	Lawnswood School
<b>Industry</b>	Secondary Education
<b>Country</b>	United Kingdom
<b>Employees</b>	150 staff; 1,200 students
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://lawnswoodschool.co.uk">lawnswoodschool.co.uk</a>

## Business need

For personnel to focus as much time as possible on operations and students, Lawnswood School wanted an encryption solution on laptops and external media that was simple to use and ensured data protection.

## Solution

The school installed Dell Data Protection | Encryption (DDP | E) to safeguard laptop data while giving staff the flexibility to work securely outside the internal firewall.

## Benefits

- IT manager saves two hours a week when storing encrypted data
- Staff can focus on students instead of IT
- Compliance with government data security guidelines is assured
- Simplified usage and zero workloads for end users
- Easy scalability enables rapid extension of solution as laptops are added

## Solutions at a glance

- Data Security

“The major advantage for us is that teachers and staff will be able to dedicate more time to supporting students and running the school instead of worrying about encrypting their data because we have DDP | E.”

*Noel Reynolds, IT Manager, Lawnswood School*

Educators can't compromise on data security. There's too much at stake when you consider the role schools, colleges and universities play in securing the future of a country. In the U.K., the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) can pass or fail a school based on its levels of data protection.

A school that fails not only faces major disruption but also loses its prestige and possibly the confidence of parents.

Lawnswood School in Leeds, U.K, takes data security very seriously. The secondary school, which educates children from 11 to 18 years of age, has built a local reputation for high-quality education and prides itself on its vibrant and harmonious community. When the school issued a number of staff with laptops, Noel Reynolds, IT Manager at Lawnswood School, wanted to ensure data stayed safe inside and outside the firewall. He understood the risks of locally stored data being accessed by non-authorised individuals and the damage this could do to the school, as well as well as to staff and students.

#### **Lack of flexibility prompts search**

On any given day, staff members could take their laptops home to complete tasks in the evening. In some cases, they transferred data onto USB drives, which they would then plug into their personal laptops when they arrived at home. Reynolds wanted to encrypt all data whether it was stored on the machines or on USB drives. The challenge was finding a solution to meet the school's specific needs and budget. Reynolds explains: "Encrypted external drives can be expensive, plus there's no flexibility in terms of storage capacity. Once you reach your limit, you have to delete files before you can save anything else."

Reynolds had plenty of experience in using encrypted drives at the school for backing up data and taking it off-site, and he wasn't impressed. He says: "Apart from the expense, I found it time-consuming to manage external devices that were encrypted. I could spend a couple of hours a week transferring data to an external device." The IT Manager was clear that any encryption solution had to be low-touch. As he says, staff at the school are there to teach and run the institution, not to lose time trying to learn new IT skills. "I wanted the technology behind the encryption to be hidden, to be working in the background while the end users just got on with whatever they were doing," he comments.

#### **Not all encryption solutions are alike**

Reynolds began looking for a solution. He approached both Symantec and DESlock, but neither provider offered the right level of service or functionality. "I evaluated an encryption solution from DESlock, but it didn't provide the ease of use I hoped for," he says. At this point, Reynolds began looking at alternatives. "I did some research and Dell came up again and again. I got in touch with a local Dell reseller and we discussed Dell Data Protection | Encryption as a possible

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*Noel Reynolds, IT Manager,  
Lawnswood School*

#### **Products & Services**

##### **Software**

Dell Data Protection |  
Encryption (DDP|E)

solution. After this, I downloaded a trial version onto my laptop. I was immediately impressed. It met our needs in terms of encryption and simplicity, and would run on any Windows or iOS device."

The school launched a proof of concept (POC) for Dell Data Protection | Encryption (DDP | E), using the support of a Dell Data Protection specialist. "The service we received around the POC was excellent," remembers Reynolds.

"We were working with someone who really knew DDP | E inside and out. I must have sent off 20 to 30 questions about the solution and Dell emailed me back straight away."

#### **Close support helps ensure successful trial**

During the POC, Reynolds identified a minor issue with the laptops. When end users finished a session and shut down the devices, the machines took a little longer than normal to switch off. Dell sent one of the laptops to its DDP | E team in the U.S. to study. It was the first time the team had come across the issues, but it quickly set about updating the DDP | E solution to overcome the problem. "We sent off the laptop and in about two weeks it arrived back. Dell had fixed the problem and everything was running well again. I thought it was a great response and showed an excellent level of customer service," says Reynolds.

The POC lasted three months, at which point the school chose to install the full edition of DDP | E on senior staff members' laptops. "We just bought the DDP | E licence and downloaded the software onto the machines. It couldn't have been easier," comments Reynolds.

#### **Saves two hours a week for greater productivity**

The IT Manager no longer spends up to two hours each week encrypting data onto external drives for him to then take off-site. He simply drags and drops the data onto his laptop where it is immediately encrypted through DDP | E. Reynolds explains: "Sometimes I need to take school data off-site when

I'm working at home, for example. Now I simply save it to my laptop instead of to an encrypted device. It saves me a couple of hours a week. This is time I can now spend working on improving the school's IT."

#### **Staff can focus on students instead of IT**

Reynolds estimates that each staff member saves at least 30 minutes a week through DDP | E. He says the school will gradually add DDP | E licences, helping Lawnswood School become more efficient due to the time it saves across the board. "The major advantage for us is that teachers and staff will be able to dedicate more time to supporting students and running the school instead of worrying about encrypting their data because we have DDP | E," says Reynolds.

#### **Zero training for end users**

The school found DDP | E easy to deploy and liked the fact that no end-user training was required. "The truth is that many people don't even know that DDP | E is running. It's hidden in the background. Essentially, whatever data is stored on the laptops is encrypted. It doesn't have to be stored in a particular folder. If it's on the machine, it's protected," says Reynolds. "Staff don't need to do anything. Once DDP | E is installed and running, that's it."

If employees need to move data from their laptops to a USB drive, the data is immediately encrypted. The data is then password protected to avoid unauthorised access. "We have found DDP | E to be convenient on many levels. It doesn't get in the way of staff doing their work, but keeps our data highly secure," Reynolds says.

#### **Complying with school inspectors and government guidelines**

Lawnswood School operates safe in the knowledge that it is complying with Ofsted on data security. According to the Ofsted e-safety inspection framework, one indicator that a school isn't complying is when "personal data is often unsecured and/or leaves school site without encryption." With DDP | E,

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*Noel Reynolds, IT Manager,  
Lawnswood School*

Lawnswood School can be confident that data is safe. "We're meeting our responsibilities around data protection as requested by Ofsted through our deployment of DDP | E," comments Reynolds.

#### **Simplified expansion points to bright, secure future**

The school will expand the DDP | E solution over the coming years to give an increasing number of staff the flexibility and peace of mind around working with data while outside the

internal firewall. As the solution scales, Reynolds will be able to keep tight control on the infrastructure using the enterprise level management, auditing and reporting through DDP | E. He says: "When I started out on this search, I didn't think I'd find a product that could meet our needs as well as DDP | E. I'm looking forward to using DDP | E for years to come as we expand the encryption software across our school laptops."



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