

Romans Field School



Nurturing responsible learners and supporting reluctant writers with 1:1 iPad.

In a nutshell...

Who are they?

Romans Field is a small school based in Milton Keynes for five to 11-year-olds with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. All 56 children on roll have complex needs and some follow a bespoke Romans Field curriculum, with high adult ratios and small classes of no more than eight pupils.

What did they need?

Secure 1:1 mobile devices to foster independence and responsibility and to best support pupils for an increasingly digital life.

How did we help?

After consulting on the different Apple devices and speaking to the senior leadership team about their vision and goals, we provided 1:1 iPad devices and delivered a bespoke staff training programme that included sessions on different iPad features to ensure all teachers and support staff were confident using the devices.

What are the benefits?

- Every pupil has their own iPad.
- Children can use their iPad in every subject to record their learning and then present their work to their peers on Apple TV.
- Reluctant writers are more engaged and have different ways to record their work.
- Both children and teachers have become increasingly digitally confident, with staff developing new skills, upskilling and working towards their Apple badges.
- Teachers can assess in different ways thanks to apps such as Seesaw and iPad features like video Slo-mo.
- Microsoft compatibility has been seamless.
- The transition to remote learning was smooth and children were well prepared.

Despite being a successful special school and an active member of the Inclusive Learning Federation, Romans Field wanted to do more to encourage pupils to become digitally independent and responsible learners. The answer? A 1:1 iPad deployment. Although the school was predominantly Windows-based, they decided iPad was the best device as it's easy to manage, portable, secure, user-friendly, and would help them with their aspiration to become an Apple Distinguished School. We spoke to Executive Head, Dr Diane Elleman, and CPD Lead and Year 6 teacher, Mike Warner, to find out more.

Although the school had purchased some iPads previously, they weren't benefiting from the education pricing and training we could offer – so when they needed more devices, they approached us to see how we could help.



The Jigsaw24 advantage

As an Apple Authorised Education Specialist with nearly 30 years' Apple experience, we visited Romans Field to discuss their needs and how we could assist them with their vision and goals. It was apparent they needed staff training and guidance on how to get the most of their devices and incorporate Apple technology into the curriculum, so we offered a comprehensive on-site training programme over the course of 10 days. This entailed an initial session with our Apple Professional Learning Specialist to discuss the school's vision, followed by a second session on planning. Subsequent bespoke sessions over the course of the academic year followed, where we observed teaching and use of the devices in the classroom and recommended tailored advice based on our findings. With our support, the school is working towards Apple Distinguished School status, training new staff members and planning a media pilot which will see us set up a media studio and deliver six newsroom-style sessions in the classroom.

Engaging reluctant writers and recording learning experiences

Since starting their iPad journey, Romans Field have enjoyed great results across all subjects. However, writing has really taken off. "We had an issue with boys being reluctant writers and not wanting to write, so we looked at different ways to engage them as a blank piece of paper can be very off-putting," explained Diane. "Using the iPad to formulate their ideas and write their narratives has been very successful and they were much more interested in using them. The children also enjoy using their devices to record their experiences on educational visits. One of the classes went to the Sea Life centre and used their iPads to record the trip, from the

journey on the train to everything they saw there. It was fantastic to see the achievement on their faces and the learning that had come from the visit when they came back to school and presented PowerPoint presentations of their experiences and what they had learnt. Without the iPads, they wouldn't have been able to record their experiences, let alone produce the presentations."

 *My iPad helps me present my work in different ways, and using apps like TT, Rockstars and Prodigy has improved my maths knowledge.* 

Fin, Year 6.

Staff development and reduced workload benefits

Mike explained there were staff benefits too: "There were some colleagues who weren't as digitally confident before we got the devices, but as soon as we got the iPads, completed staff training and they realised we could save to the cloud, their workloads and worry about losing work reduced. Staff are by far more confident now. It's given them a real boost in terms of their development and most are working towards their Apple badges."



To ensure teaching and staff benefits continued, the school booked an additional ten days of subject-specific on-site training with our educational team. Teaching staff who have completed the mentoring training also train new co-workers.

Assessment advantages

Having an iPad and subject-specific training has enabled staff to assess children in different ways. "We can now video children during PE lessons and use Slo-mo to analyse their skills or use different apps like Seesaw to track and comment on different pieces of work. It's also helped the children to really show off their skills. Because we have Apple TVs, the children can mirror their screens and share their work with their peers. When we asked children to read a sentence from their book, they were much more hesitant, but they have a real sense of enjoyment from making something on their iPads and mirroring their work on the screen. Differentiation has also benefited, becoming much easier thanks to multiple differentiation options on each device. We follow two curriculums – the national curriculum and our own Romans Field curriculum – and being able to differentiate what apps are on each device and which children choose to use has been great," Mike added.

Saving the Christmas performance

Mike continued: "There have also been some surprising benefits. Because of COVID, we actually made our whole Christmas performance on the iPads. Each class filmed different sections that we put together in iMovie and shared with the whole school at the same time. Without the devices or training from Jigsaw24, we wouldn't have been able to do that."

 *Since using technology to enhance his learning at Romans Field, my son has been able to learn new skills that could be developed when he's older and used in careers such as research, game design and movie making.* 



Louise, parent.

Rollout success

Giving expensive devices to children with SEMH needs could naturally worry school budget holders and IT leads, but the school's experience paints a reassuring picture. Diane talked about the success of the rollout and how the pupils treasured their new technology: "We've provided each pupil with an iPad, Apple Pencil and keyboard and the rollout has gone really well. Despite some of our children being previously excluded because of behaviour, we've had no incidents or issues and they have been incredibly responsible and really taken ownership of the devices, taking good care of them. We didn't have any issues when lockdown hit either because the children were already more confident using online learning, so it wasn't a huge hurdle for them."

Considering rolling out a 1:1 scheme of your own?

Mike has some key advice: "Prepare your internet and ensure it can handle the additional devices. We needed to install additional WiFi points around the school to increase our bandwidth to ensure our network could handle an additional 50 devices. Sharing iPad expectations with pupils and parents and keeping devices onsite to charge and update them overnight has also been helpful in ensuring they're looked after and always good to go and you're not several devices down because they have a flat battery or need updating." Reflecting on what they'd do differently if they rolled out 1:1 iPad devices again, Mike added: "Two things we didn't do but would if we went back in time would be to give the devices to staff first, so they have time to familiarise themselves with iPad before using them in the classroom. I also wish we took advantage of the 200GB of free storage you get with Managed Apple IDs, which is something we're currently looking into adding."

 *Jigsaw24's support and Apple knowledge have been fantastic. When we have a question, it's great to know we can drop an email and arrange a call or meeting quickly and have that ongoing level of support. The children really respect their devices, and the impact they've made on attendance and motivation has been brilliant. We can't wait for the next step in our journey when we start our media studio project.* 

Mike Warner, CPD Lead and Year 6 teacher.

Start your 1:1 journey today.
Get in touch on the details below.

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