



Mylnhurst Preparatory School and Nursery

Mrs Riddle and Mrs Hunt

Tell us a little about your nursery...

Mrs Riddle: (Nursery Manager): Mylnhurst Nursery is attached to an independent school in Sheffield. The school has about 250 pupils altogether, with a maximum class size of about 22. Children join us the term after their 3rd birthday and we have 43 on the register for this September. From September 2022, we will also start using ReallySchool in Reception, so the children who have progressed through the nursery will follow on into Reception with ReallySchool. The nursery serves other local schools too, so we have printed off all the ReallySchool reports and sent them to the schools the children will be going to.

What were the main challenges you faced with the observations process before you used ReallySchool?

Mrs Riddle: Before COVID kicked in, we all had an hour's 'file time' a week to try to keep up to date with our beautiful books and learning journals. However, with six members of staff, this meant we were losing six hours of contact time per week.

Mrs Hunt (Deputy Manager): Even before that, we had to do stickers for the observations, take the photos, download and print them off and all that is extremely time-consuming.

Mrs Riddle: Sometimes, by the time you enter the observation in the book and pair it with the photograph, you've forgotten a bit of what happened at the time. For us, the fact that ReallySchool is immediate and spontaneous is just brilliant. We loved creating the books – they were beautiful and a great gift for parents when the children leave – but the turning point came when COVID hit and when three of our staff members were furloughed. At that point, we simply didn't have the time or the staff, so we needed to do something differently. So, we looked at Tapestry, we've already got Seesaw, we've used 2simple previously, we looked at something else and then Mrs Hunt came up with ReallySchool and it immediately looked like 'the one'!

Mrs Hunt: I think what we liked about ReallySchool is that it looks just a little bit more modern – and when you printed things off from the others, it just looked old fashioned.



What tasks has ReallySchool helped you with?

Mrs Hunt: It's made everything so much simpler. When we start in September, the transition will be even easier. Our staff members are each 'champions of learning' in a specific learning area so we can give them a list of skills to get evidence for and an iPad to record all this on ReallySchool. Even though we are key workers to different children, it's just going to be easier to condense the evidence collection, so we won't repeat assessments and waste as much time as we have done in the past.

Mrs Riddle: And I think at this moment in time, we're not even using it to its full potential!

How has using ReallySchool changed your observations?

Mrs Riddle: I think they are more 'in the moment'. I mentioned earlier that we had to pair photos with stickers, but it often happened that someone else wrote them, so you weren't sure what they were writing about at the time. But because ReallySchool is spontaneous and you are physically 'doing it', you understand it more and you have the background, so you can fill out observations with more relevant information. I also think we're managing to get more done in a day than we did previously.

Mrs Hunt: **Definitely!**

What have been the main benefits of ReallySchool?

Mrs Hunt: Time saving, staffing, not redoing the same observation repeatedly.

Mrs Riddle: Also, if we're taking a picture collage, let's say for Chinese New Year, we would have to print out that photo 20 times for 20 children and do a sticker for each of those 20 children. However, in ReallySchool we can create one picture collage and one observation that goes to everybody. So that is brilliant. The reduction in printing costs is a benefit and we no longer have to use paper or glue sticks. The books were beautiful, but the expenditure has gone. We've also got free space in the cupboard because there are no books there! The biggest thing for us is time, resources, staffing – and communication with parents. Before, parents would come in and have a look at the learning journey whenever they wanted to, but it was generally at parents' evenings. Now, they can follow progress each day. The communication with home during COVID has been a massive part of keeping parents happy by keeping them informed.

What have been the main benefits of ReallySchool?

Mrs Hunt: The parents have just absolutely loved it; they've given such positive feedback. Because you know, you ask a three-year-old what they have been doing and they say "nothing". But every day the parents can see a photo. It's been really good.



Would you recommend ReallySchool to others? If so, why?

Mrs Riddle: Definitely!

Mrs Hunt: Yes, absolutely. As Mrs Riddle said, we did a lot of research to see what would suit us and ReallySchool seemed like an excellent fit right from the start when we trialled it for those few months. It's really easy to use. We've got a broad spectrum of staff and it's been easy for everybody of all ages.

Mrs Riddle: It's very easy to use. I like the dashboard, that's lovely. Aesthetically, it's very nice to look at and use. The staff are really enjoying it, I know we said they have been finding it easy to use but also, they are really enjoying using it.

Mrs Hunt: Another good thing about ReallySchool is having support from the Product Manager. We can speak to Kat if we have problems and that support has been invaluable.

Mrs Riddle: The parents also love it and we've loved getting their feedback. We've been able to print out the learning journals and give those to parents too. I think it's more than cost-effective when you think about all the time and resources we have saved. We'd definitely recommend it.

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Mrs Helen Riddle, Mylnhurst Nursery Manager

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