

Case study

On Track Education



On Track Education delivers specialist education for children and young people and runs nine independent schools across Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Wiltshire and Devon. Through personalised learning, it supports more than 350 students, helping them re-engage with education and build brighter futures. A central finance team oversees all the financial operations across the nine schools.

The challenge



Leave behind frustrating manual processes and a slow system

As On Track Education continued to grow, it became clear that its existing finance system was no longer fit for purpose. It was outdated, clunky and slowing processes down, creating unnecessary challenges for the team.

"We had outgrown our system," says Louise Holland, Head of Finance. "It simply wasn't supporting us in the way we needed it to."

Producing profit and loss reports for each school was "incredibly time-consuming". Deferred income and fixed asset depreciation had to be journalled manually into the system. Purchase orders from Amazon also had to be manually typed into the finance software. Staff logged their expenses on spreadsheets, submitting receipts via email or in the post, a lengthy process which could leave staff out of pocket longer than necessary.



We took our time to choose the right system, and I can confidently say it has delivered on its promises and exceeded expectations.



Louise Holland,
Head of Finance, On Track Education



The solution



System has automated complex work and cut many tasks in half

Louise met with three potential suppliers before narrowing the options down to two that offered very similar solutions. "With one of the options, everything we wanted seemed to come as an add-on rather than part of the core system," she explains. "I got the sense that if we wanted to expand or make changes in the future, we'd need to purchase additional packages."

After choosing iplicit, the team was reassured by the implementation process, handled by iplicit partner SoMax and its Head of Consulting, Veronika Zalivska.

"I liked the fact that there was a very clear timetable, setting out when the meetings were and exactly what they were about," says Louise.

With the new system in place, productivity improvements were immediate. "Being cloud-based, it processes tasks much faster, so there's no lag," says Erika De Jager, Finance Manager.

Louise adds: "Many of the processes and tasks we used to do have been streamlined — in some cases, the time required has been cut in half."

1

Visible audit trails.

The team can easily examine the detail behind the data in the accounts. "There's an audit trail for everything so you can look at an invoice and find the relevant purchase requisition including any documents linked to it," says Erika.

2

Automated prepayments.

When schools are invoiced for a whole term's education, there's no longer any need to journal the prepayment in a spreadsheet to recognise it in the correct period. It's done automatically.

3

Importing of Amazon POs

iplicit imports a record of all Amazon purchase orders, eliminating the need to key them all in. "That's a huge time saving," says Louise.

4

Simplified expenses.

Expenses are no longer filled out in spreadsheets and emailed or posted in. The 250 staff can photograph their receipts in the iplicit app, which then fills in much of the claim. "Once their senior leader signs it off, they are paid within the week," says Louise.

5

Self-service access to data.

Directors can now view their own dashboards and drill down into supporting details, eliminating the need to request figures directly from the finance team.

6

Termly reporting.

It's helpful to see school P&L's each term rather than by month or year. That's possible with iplicit. "Click and it's there," says Louise.

7

Simple fixed asset management.

Instead of posting depreciation, disposals and impairments manually, the team has imported its fixed assets register into iplicit. This automation is a "huge time saver", says Erika, removing the need for a big adjustment at year-end. "As of this financial year, we'll be reporting with the depreciation already accounted for," she says.

The outcome

A 'clear, up-to-date view of everything'

The team was wary about whether a new system would deliver what was wanted. "It's reassuring to find a system that actually works" says Louise.

"In the past, we've been disappointed," says Louise. "Sales calls often focus on how wonderful a system is and how much time it will save — but then it turns out to be very different from what was promised, and the salesperson disappears. That wasn't the case with iplicit. Every team we worked with, the SoMax implementation team, support team, and customer success team, worked seamlessly together.

"After spending a long time making the decision on a new system, I'm pleased it was the right one," she adds. "Producing management accounts and reporting for the Directors is now much faster and we have a clear, up-to-date view of all our finances."

On Track Education is set to grow — and as it does, it can have confidence in the system and the data. "Because information is so visible now and because I have more time, I can make sure the data integrity is spot on, with nothing in the wrong places or in the wrong periods," says Erika. "We have the time to do those extra checks."

- 200–300 invoices a month processed in iplicit
- 'Huge' time savings with many tasks cut in half
- 250 staff can submit expenses via mobile app

