

# QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL CROWNS WHATSUP GOLD KING OF THE NETWORK MONITORS

## Company Background

The Queen Elizabeth School in Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria is a large comprehensive school with Performing Arts College status. Founded in 1591, the school has grown significantly over the last 15 years and now has around 130 staff and over 1,300 pupils aged between 11 and 18. Lauded as an “outstanding school” and complimented for “the leadership and management of the school [being] excellent” in the most recent Ofsted inspection, the institution has a proud history of providing high-class facilities for its pupils.

“IT is central to the school and as such I always try to implement the best available solutions to ensure the smooth running of the education process,” explains Queen Elizabeth School ICT Support Manager, Pat Close.

## Customer Issue

Previously, Queen Elizabeth School used the diagnostic tools within Microsoft Windows 2000 Server and its own bespoke scripts to monitor its network. The school however, wanted a solution that was easier to use and have the ability to work in the background without the requirement for user intervention.

“We also sometimes have problems with pupils trying things like connecting two network points together. We therefore needed something that would immediately alert us to when switches were in trouble, help us locate the source and rectify the problem sometimes even before it has even been reported by the users,” comments Close.

## The Solution

Queen Elizabeth School purchased a copy of Ipswitch’s flagship network monitoring solution WhatsUp Gold Premium, currently used to monitor over 50,000 networks worldwide. Designed for organisations that need to monitor their network 24/7, WhatsUp Gold Premium features all the core functionality network administrators need to assure the performance and availability of their network. It can be implemented in any environment in under one hour and is easily configurable to any specific environment.

With WhatsUp Gold Premium, Close discovered the school’s network in a matter of minutes using the in-built intuitive wizards to scan for routers, switches, servers, printers and other networked devices. All network information was then stored in a relational database to enable easy and efficient device management and reporting.

## The Benefits

“WhatsUp Gold Premium has become an integral part of our standard procedures and made the monitoring of our networks easier and much more effective,” explains Close. “We were quickly able to baseline our systems and set up a variety of thresholds enabling us to easily spot any deviations and identify potential problems.”

WhatsUp Gold Premium allows the five members of the ICT support team to see the network as onscreen icons and reconfigure the map design on the fly with drag-and-drop functionality. The team utilise WhatsUp Gold Premium on a daily basis to check if everything is properly connected to the network and running, alerting to possible network outages and monitoring traffic density through its switches.

“At the start of each day, we check the map view in WhatsUp Gold Premium to ensure every machine in each of our IT suites are up and running and able to access the network. During school hours we then run spot checks on the density of network traffic. Then, at the end of the day, we utilise WhatsUp Gold Premium’s scheduling functionality to ensure that all the suites have been switched off as intended,” explains Close.



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Queen Elizabeth School ICT Support Manager, Pat Close

“There is no doubt that we have managed to saved valuable internal resources since installing WhatsUp Gold Premium,” enthuses Close. “WhatsUp Gold Premium’s graphical interface is much nicer to use than wading through the scripted reports as we used to. This means we can be much more proactive and spot problems developing before the teachers and students are even aware there is a fault. For us this is crucial as we want staff to be able to rely on the network infrastructure.”

Ipswitch’s WhatsUp Gold Premium has meant that Close and the team at Queen Elizabeth School can undertake checks remotely and cut down the amount of times they would have to visit the various computer classrooms across the site. “WhatsUp Gold Premium has meant we can channel our resources better and check areas of the network remotely and hone in on any problems without having to manually check everything individually,” Close adds.

“WhatsUp Gold Premium is both easy to use and a highly functional networking monitoring product for schools and colleges looking to reduce their annual opex,” says Ipswitch Regional Sales Manager, Mike Silva. “Queen Elizabeth School can now proactively manage its network infrastructure to ensure that problems are nipped in the bud before they impact on lessons.”