

Derby College

Derby College Signs On with Sign In App for Visitor Management Solution

The Derby College Group (DCG) is one of the leading further education colleges in the UK, supporting around 20,000 students each year across four state of the art colleges; from teaching Hospitality and Catering at The Roundhouse to the high-tech science labs at the Joseph Wright Centre and the Equestrian Centre at Broomfield Hall.

With 20 thousand students and a high volume of staff and visitors to the Colleges, security is a significant factor for DCG. Each individual must display their identification at all times, so in the event that someone is not displaying a badge whilst on site, the standard policy is to challenge them immediately. DCG therefore required a technology solution that would not only provide a way to efficiently manage visitor sign-in, but also provide a backup system for students in the event they forgot to bring their identification.

Alex Holmes, IT Services, Derby College comments: *"As well as printing identification badges for visitors, we also issue identification cards to every student and staff member, but in the event that someone forgets to bring their ID, a regular occurrence when it comes to the students, we still require a way to provide temporary identification so they can walk around the campus securely. The solution from Sign In App provides a seamless way for us to manage both visitors and students effectively as they can sign in via the portal and print an ID badge with their photo, and move about the site freely."*

Previously, the Group utilised a visitor management system but the onus was still on the reception staff to ensure that each person signed in and out, and their details were inputted correctly. Moreover, the old sign in system could only process one person at a time which could result in queues of people waiting to sign in at reception. With the Sign In App solution, multiple people can be dealt with on arrival as the main flagship College has two iPad portals.

Alex continues: *"We looked at a handful of providers, but the solution from Sign In App was the first one that we demoed and we saw immediately how simple it was to use and how smart the system looked – it creates a great first impression for visitors. It's also intuitive, so it's easy to use even for someone unfamiliar with technology, unlike other alternatives that can really over-complicate the process."*

Another consideration for DCG was the speed and ease in which staff records could be updated. The previous system demanded a manual upload, where entries had to be typed in one by one. Naturally, in a workplace with a high volume of staff and students, this could take a significant amount of time, so having the ability to bulk upload via a spreadsheet is a far more streamlined process for staff to administer.

Safety is also a significant factor for DCG, so instead of relying on an unreliable pen and paper visitor sign in book, the app provides a single view of all personnel on site. In the event of an emergency, the fire marshall can instantly view an entire list of people in the building by logging into an online portal through any mobile device, eliminating the risk of leaving someone unaccounted for.

DCG has also been proactive in suggesting additional feature ideas for the app, to enhance the visitor experience and also allowing for notices to be shown to visitors. For example, the College required a function where depending on the type of visitor to the campus; contractor, student or visitor, different terms and conditions would need to be signed to cover policies such as no smoking on site or fire alarm procedures. To streamline this process, the Sign In App team quickly added a group function to the system to enable different notices to be shown depending on the category of person.

Dan Harding, Director, Sign In App comments: *"It's been a great experience working with the team at DCG to deliver a solution that fully meets their needs – not just providing a streamlined visitor management system but also one which solves their student IT card requirements too. We're looking forward to working more with the Group to implement additional functionalities – such as making the app accessible for people with a visual impairment – which will also be rolled out to our entire customer base so every client can make use of the new features."*

Alex concludes: *"The team at Sign In App have gone above and beyond in quickly incorporating new function ideas, often within a matter of days which has been a refreshing experience, so we've been very impressed with the levels of customer service. Since implementing the Sign In App solution, we've received nothing but praise from colleagues, students and visitors to the site who have found it to be incredibly user friendly. It has revolutionised our visitor and student management processes."*