



CASE STUDY

Marist College Bendigo

This is the story of one school's journey to create a comprehensive cybersafety ecosystem as a Linewize Partner School.



“Kids live their lives online now, so it’s very important to try to guide them - to show them ‘this is the right way to be living your life online.’”

Tony Hoyer
Technology Leader, Marist College Bendigo



Executive summary

Marist College Bendigo is a co-educational K-11 school of 800 students, located 160 kms northwest of Melbourne.

Under the College's 1:1 program, every student from Prep to Year 11 has their own school-provided laptop. Linewize's School Manager solution provides protection and filtering for these devices on the school network.

The resulting improvements in visibility and reporting accuracy have allowed at-risk students to be identified, and enabled targeted early intervention by wellbeing staff.

Mobile Zone protection for students' personal devices is also provided free to families on an optional basis. That initiative has been so successful that a policy change to compulsory use is presently under review.

When its existing content management suite was due for renewal, the College opted to become a Linewize Partner School, extending protection and control of student devices with the Mobile Zone app for Years 7-12. Currently, approximately 30-40% of parents have activated their Linewize accounts and feedback has been positive and encouraging.

“It is always a worry to supply devices to your kids. You don’t know what they are up to and when they are at risk.”

*Tony Hoye, quoted in The Age, 16 July 2017,
“How schools are tracking students using their mobile phones”*

The problem and its context

The School

Marist College Bendigo, located 160 kms northwest of Melbourne, is a co-educational K-11 school governed by the Roman Catholic Marist Brothers order. A learning community for 800 students, the College is on track for expansion to 1,200 by 2021 and the transition to K-12. Its mission is for every student to be “known and loved.”

There are over 50 Marist schools Australia-wide, employing 5000 staff in the education of more than 40,000 young people. Like all Marist schools, the College shapes its identity through the Marist tradition “to help young people, whatever their faith tradition and wherever they are in their spiritual search, to grow to become people of hope and personal integrity, with a deep sense of social responsibility to transform the world around them” (2017 Annual Report).

The Challenge

The College’s 1:1 laptop program provides a school-owned Windows 10-based device for every student, from Prep to Year 11 (expanding to Year 12 in the 2019 academic year). Admins were aware of an unacceptable level of risky activity that was bypassing the firewall, but visibility and reporting was cumbersome and inaccurate, rendering effective interventions by wellbeing staff impossible.

“Our issues were essentially visibility. The firewall we had just wasn’t really up to scratch. It had a lot of holes, and there was a lot of activity getting through. So we looked at various products and chose Linewize.”

Given the school’s ethos to know, protect and care for students, the lack of online safety for students was especially troubling.

The College was also starting to field an increasing number of calls from parents looking for more control over their children’s devices outside of school hours. (College policy requires students’ personal smartphones to be secured in their lockers during the schoolday.) Dating sites like Tinder, self-harm forums and apps idealising eating disorders were among the concerns parents were raising.

“I’ve had kids searching for suicide methods and means to harm themselves. Then there’s access to gaming sites like Fortnite, and the amount of time they’re spending on those sites. And then there’s adult content.”

The Linewize Journey

After reviewing numerous alternative providers, the College chose Linewize, introducing School Manager as a firewall and filtering solution for the school network, providing state-of-the-art pastoral care reporting and in-class student internet management tools. In addition, the College elected to provide free, optional Mobile Zone “family packs” to protect up to six devices per family when off the school network.

The new program was launched in March 2018 with a well-attended parent presentation by Linewize School Success Manager Jessica Hill and cyber expert Susan McLean of Cyber Safety Solutions.

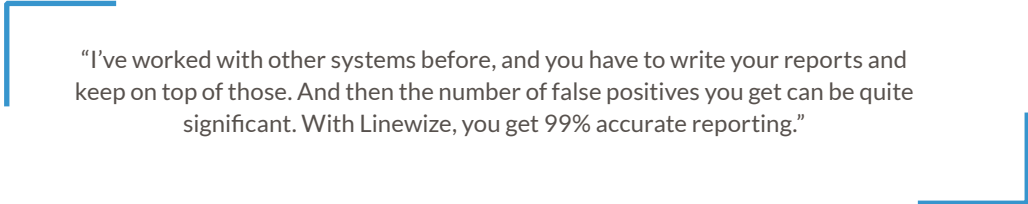
“Marist College Bendigo is excited to announce we will be running a Cyber Safety information evening with representatives from Linewize and cyber expert Susan McLean. This is a great opportunity to hear from one of Australia’s foremost experts in this field. Susan has extensive knowledge and skills in all facets of Cyber Safety. A member of the Victorian Police Force for 27 years, and was the first Police Officer in Victoria to be appointed to a position involving cyber safety and young people.”

Marist College Bendigo newsletter, 2 March 2017



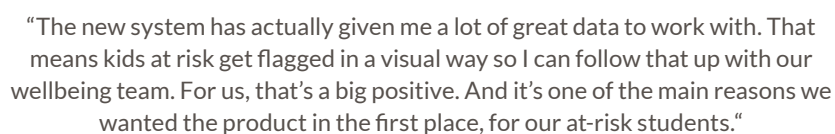
Outcomes

The School Manager solution “has solved a lot of the problems” with students accessing inappropriate and distracting content on their school-provided laptops, affirms Technology Leader Tony Hoyer. Hoyer has been particularly impressed with the quality and quantity of reporting data he can now access at a glance.



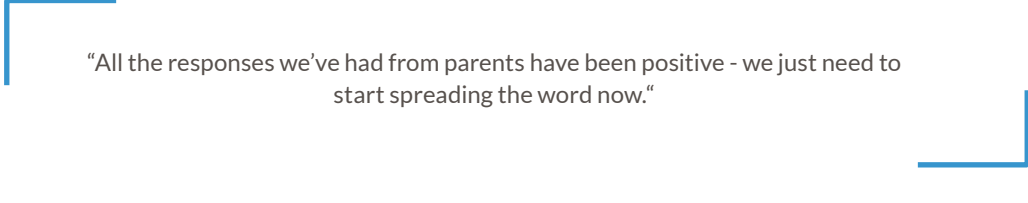
“I’ve worked with other systems before, and you have to write your reports and keep on top of those. And then the number of false positives you get can be quite significant. With Linewize, you get 99% accurate reporting.”

As a result, at-risk students can be identified quickly and accurately. On the basis of their online activity, such students can be referred to wellbeing staff for early intervention.



“The new system has actually given me a lot of great data to work with. That means kids at risk get flagged in a visual way so I can follow that up with our wellbeing team. For us, that’s a big positive. And it’s one of the main reasons we wanted the product in the first place, for our at-risk students.”

Currently, around 80 Marist families are making use of the school-provided Mobile Zone app for students’ personal devices - “It’s just hard to get 800 families in a room together,” notes Hoyer - yet the responses from those parents who are participating has been uniformly high.



“All the responses we’ve had from parents have been positive - we just need to start spreading the word now.”

Future prospects

Moving forward, the College is contemplating a policy change from optional parent participation to mandatory uptake of Mobile Zone on any student device that comes to school - a step he sees as an educational opportunity for families.

“This gives parents a bit of control back and visibility. The monitoring is to start a conversation between the parent and the child rather than a punishment type of scenario.”

Technology Leader Tony Hoye also expresses interest in deeper engagement with the school's chosen cyber expert, Susan McLean. “Her presentation was very good - we'd love to get her back.”

He also looks forward to comparing notes on student internet management with peers. “I'm really interested to hear what other schools are doing,” he said. He also raised the possibility of the College teaming up with another school or schools to get maximum value out of cyber-safety education initiatives.

With the latest version of School Manager installed only weeks prior, Hoye was looking forward to accessing even more improvements in reporting and visibility.

College teaching staff will get the benefit of Linewize Classwise: a simple dashboard that displays the websites and applications that each student is using. Live visibility over classroom internet use will allow teachers to identify which students are engaged with the lesson and those who are distracted or offline - and more importantly, to redirect attention by controlling access.



About Linewize

Linewize is committed to making student Internet management easy, and keeping students safe online on any device, anywhere, any time.

Learn more

Email sales@linewize.io
Visit us at linewize.io