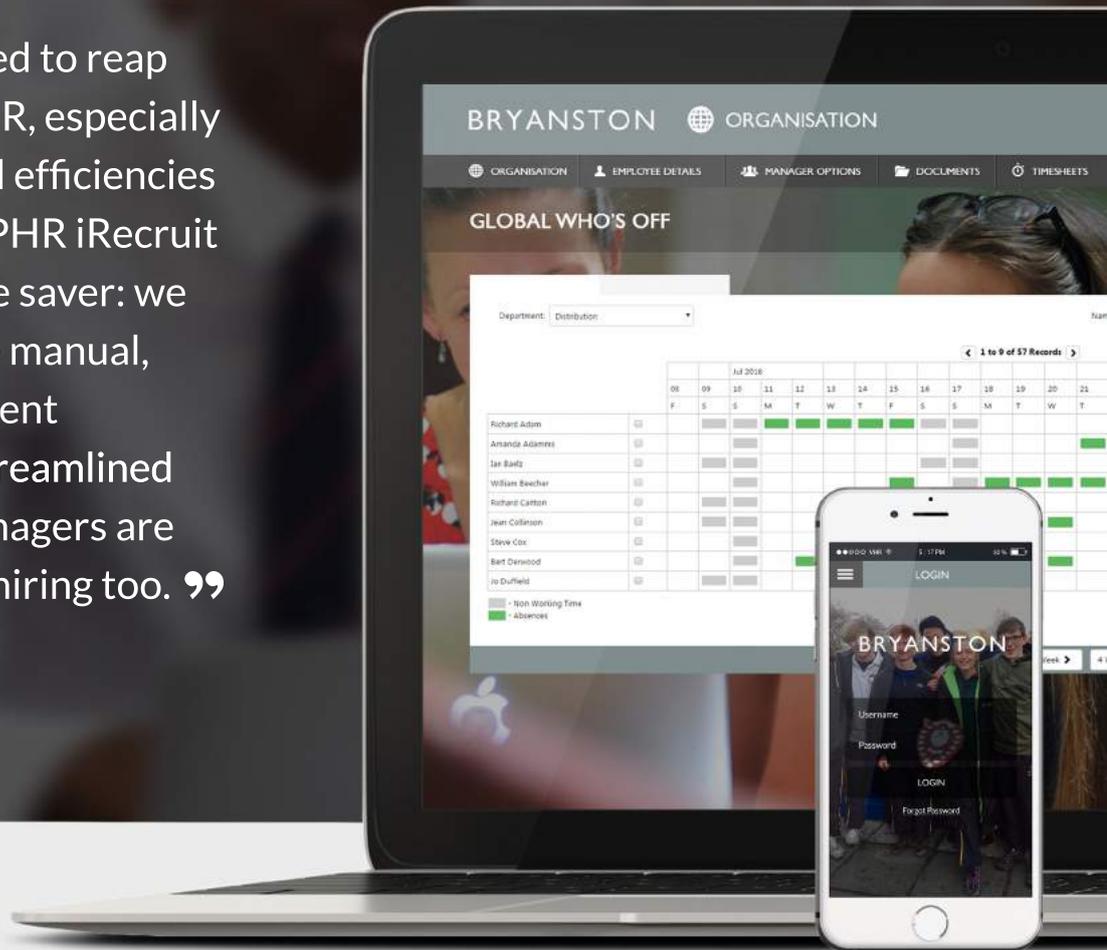


CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

“ We quickly started to reap the benefits of CIPHR, especially where reliability and efficiencies were concerned. CIPHR iRecruit has been a huge time saver: we previously had quite manual, antiquated recruitment processes and it’s streamlined everything. Line managers are more engaged with hiring too. ”



ABOUT BRYANSTON SCHOOL

Bryanston School is a co-educational boarding school situated in idyllic rural Dorset, with around 670 pupils aged 13-18. Founded in 1928, it was the first English school to adopt the Dalton Plan, and many of its principles remain in place today. Notable alumni include fashion designer Jasper Conran, actor Emilia Fox, and painter Lucian Freud.

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- HR team of three support around 600 members of staff
- On-site facilities include a boat house and equestrian centre; the school hosts conferences and other events outside of term time
- Head Sarah Thomas was named best head of a public school by *Tatler* in 2016
- Customer since summer 2016



UPGRADING AN IN-HOUSE HR SYSTEM

Bryanston School was using an internally developed and maintained Microsoft Access database to store employees' personal information, but "it was getting increasingly unfit for purpose despite their best efforts," explains HR advisor and CIPHR 'super user' Johnathan Fell. "It was becoming unreliable, which was putting a lot of pressure on the resources of our IT department – pressure that wasn't tenable. We gradually realised we needed a specialist system to replace it."

The school had a number of requirements they needed a new HR system to fulfil. "First of all, we needed reliability," says Fell, who is part of a three-strong HR team that supports around 600 staff. "It also needed to be more secure than our existing system, because we were storing all this incredibly personal and sensitive information, and we were just beginning to understand how the GDPR might affect that."

"We didn't previously have any form of self-service HR, so we needed a system that would bring HR into the 21st century, so to speak, and give staff control over their own personal information. We also wanted to reduce the burden and reliance on our own IT department, and find a system that just made our processes more efficient – and, in time, might reduce our costs."

Adds Fell: "Reporting was also a key factor for us; we needed a system that could flexibly report on more and more data. We were also looking for an integrated recruitment portal that could make our hiring more efficient and improve the candidate experience."

Armed with this comprehensive wish list, Fell met with CIPHR – and a number of other HR software suppliers – at the CIPD HR Software Show, before going out to tender. He says several factors made CIPHR stand out as a provider of choice. "CIPHR was really competitive where costs were concerned. We also like the flexibility of the product; a lot of what HR does in our sector is around compliance and regulation, so we don't have much discretion or flexibility where those things are concerned. We needed a system that would be flexible to meet our needs, not one that required us to compromise."

"As part of the tender, we asked each vendor to respond to a number of detailed technical questions and specification, and CIPHR delivered pretty highly on those, too."

REAPING THE BENEFITS OF PURPOSE-BUILT HR SOFTWARE

Fell says that Bryanston School's HR team "quite quickly" started to reap the benefits of introducing CIPHR. "The whole move to getting a purpose-built HR system was around trying to move away as much as possible from fire-fighting, so we could become more proactive and strategic. The system creates efficiencies and frees up resource for us to be able to pursue the thing we need and want to be doing in terms of our HR goals."

CIPHR tools used

- eRecruitment (CIPHR iRecruit)
- Onboarding
- Policy acceptance
- Employee self-service
- Reporting and analytics
- Assistance with safeguarding compliance
- API integration with iSAMS

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Implementing CIPHR iRecruit, CIPHR's applicant tracking system (ATS), has made a significant difference to the school's hiring processes at a time when teacher recruitment is a major challenge for all state and independent schools. "Things like bulk status changes, email notifications, and automated acknowledgements – these are all huge time savers," says Fell. "If, for example, we have 50 applicants for a job, we can now reject them – with an email thanking them for their application – with just three or four clicks. Our processes used to be very manual and quite antiquated, with lots of paper applications and photocopying, which resulted in delays getting information to line managers. Now, managers can access applications online as they come in, which has been brilliant for improving their engagement with the whole process."

The system's onboarding functionality has also helped to boost the school's employer brand. "We use it to communicate really simple, useful information such as campus maps, welcome videos, useful tips, photos of different areas of the school's estate, and other useful information for new starters' first day, which has been really great. We're also enjoying the benefits of the policy acceptance functionality, too."

Another key challenge for the HR team is compliance. "The regulations requiring schools to evidence best practice where safeguarding is concerned are constantly being revised," says Fell. "Keeping on top of those changes, and being able to evidence that we're meeting the requirements, is really key for our clients – the parents – who want to know we are a school that takes compliance and safeguarding seriously, and is very good at it."

CIPHR is "much better" at compiling the school's single central record (SCR) than their previous database, he adds. "It's now a lot faster to produce, and because it's in Excel we can filter and organise the information in a way that we hope will be a lot more user-friendly for inspectors. It's all about making their job as easy as possible – and the way the SCR is formatted and produced now hopefully does just that."

Bryanston School has also integrated CIPHR with iSAMS, its management information system, so key information from CIPHR – such as employee name and email address – is automatically updated in iSAMS when any changes or additions have been made. "The integration works really well. The two systems are connected by an API, and changes in CIPHR are updated in iSAMS nightly. Having that information current on a live basis – so long as we've put it in CIPHR – works well."

Employees' reception to the introduction of self-service has "been very good" says Fell. "We have a diverse workforce here, so we were fully aware – going into a cultural sea change like introducing self-service – that there were going to be limits to what we could achieve in a short period of time. But we've found that most people who are even mildly technology savvy are able to navigate their way around CIPHR on the mobile and desktop sites."

"Asking people to record their holiday and absence themselves through CIPHR has helped with the engagement. Once people are there initially, they find out they can also access personal information, update emergency contact details, change their photo, view the employee directory and look at the organisation chart. All of those things have been really useful."

CIPHR'S SUPPORT

"You sent trainers down to us in Dorset, and we were really grateful for that flexibility," says Fell. "Schools have quite a unique HR structure; we have so many idiosyncrasies and nuances that being able to have a focused session with just our organisation, where we can ask potentially odd and challenging questions, was great."

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“I speak to the service desk almost every day – they probably each know me by name,” he adds. “They are always willing to help and recognise when issues need to be escalated, and when they are less time sensitive. Someone always picks up the phone and you’re never on hold.”

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Work continues on fully implementing the CIPHR system, with a paylink between CIPHR and the school’s payroll provider, the introduction of a health and safety reporting module, and appraisals functionality all on the horizon. “Convergence is really important: we want our staff to have everything in one place as far as possible,” says Fell.

“Overall, we’ve had a really good experience with CIPHR. I would recommend it to other independent schools – and I have done already. We’re really happy with it.”

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