# Instant, tailored communication

KINGDOM TECHNOLOGY
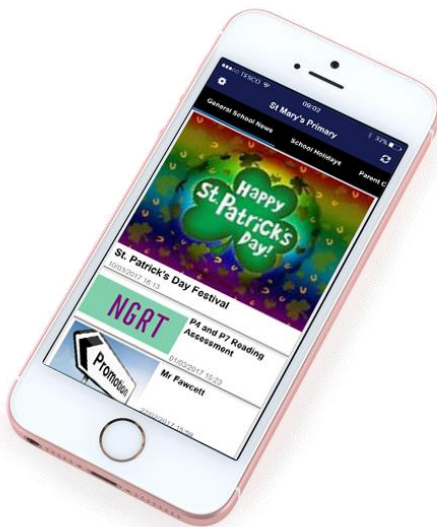
smartNews

With an estimated 90% plus of the UK population using smartphones as their communication tool of choice, SmartNews app for Schools is the ideal solution for your school or nursery to keep parents informed of all general and key information, news and events in their preferred communication medium of choice, as well as giving your school the capability to send unlimited messages in an instance, including important notifications and reminders for free.

Designed in collaboration with primary schools and nurseries, with key involvement from both the parents and teachers, SmartNews app is much more than a typical newsapp; it is both easy to administer and use, and negates the need to depend on outdated, less effective and costly alternatives, such as paper, text alerts and emails. It is also a far more effective than communication through social media.

## Reliable and Secure Service

All content and data is hosted in fully secure and resilient servers within a Global leaders Data Centres, ensuring optimum quality of service, reliability and security.

## Administration

You can securely manage content of your own branded smartNews app from any desktop, laptop or tablet, with admin users set up with various rights to add content, along with the setting up of user groups (i.e. departmental, staff, other….) with ease. Content can either be set to go live instantly, or time-lined to appear and end on chosen dates/times as required. The diary feature is also of great benefit to schools, allowing parents to view relevant events and safe these to their phone's calendar.

## Cost Savings

You can also instantly delivery unlimited instant alerts to every subscriber, groups or to individuals in real time at no cost (unlike the typical alternative of purchasing costly text bundles ).

KINGDOM TECHNOLOGY

# Features & Benefits

**smartNews**

| | |
|---|---|
| Efficient Method of Communication | App saves money on costly text service and printed materials, as well as the staff cost and time implications associated with communications by phone |
| Ease of Use | Very simple to administer and use for all users, irrespective of IT knowledge or skills |
| News & Events | Keeping parents informed of all news, events, dates etc, in real time and time scheduled |
| Instant Notifications | Keeping parents informed of school closures, issues, reminders, etc. in an instant for free |
| App School Branding | App is branded with your School or nursery's logo |
| Multi-Lingual | App content can be provided in a number of languages to meet the diversity in your area |
| School Contact List | Contact list of staff and other relevant details can be included at no cost |
| Schools Documents & Policies | Access to documents for parents, carers and staff |
| Absence Notifications | Instant notification of your child's no show |
| Affordable to School | Very low annual cost and no long term contract |
| Free App for Parents | Free for parents to download for their iPhone or Android phone |
| Parents Specified Information | Parents can choose the areas of the school that they want to be kept informed of, i.e. their children's classes, specific years, sports clubs, parent/teachers forums etc. |
| Positive Message | Demonstrates that your school or nursery understands what parents require and is investing in the latest technology to meet their needs |
| Twitter Feed | Twitter feed option is also available as a no cost option for schools |
| Calendar Integration with your Smart-device | Relevant dates will automatically sync'd with phones calendar, and reminders can be set |
| School Diary | Parents can view and save to calendar all diary entries of interest to them |
| Software Assurance | Ensuring your school app is continually evolving to meet future demands |
| Two-way Communication | Parents can also communicate directly with the school through the app. This option can be disabled / enabled as required by your school |

KINGDOM TECHNOLOGY

# The Next Step

**smartNews**

SmartNews app has been designed to be used on any Apple and Android smartphones, and is available for subscribers to download for free from the iTunes Store and Google Play.

All the cost savings and additional benefits of this very effective market leading schoolapp can be provided for as little as £400 per annum for primary schools / nurseries, and £1 per pupil (max £1,200) for high school.

For more information on how SmartNews App for Schools can make a difference to your School, or for a product demonstration, please contact Kingdom's customer hotline on 0800 612 0935, or email _info@kingdomtech.co.uk_.







KINGDOM TECHNOLOGY

# Case Study

## St Mary's Primary School, Coatbridge – February 2017

St. Mary's Primary School, Coatbridge collaborated on a pilot project of Kingdom Technology's smartNews App for Schools in February, 2016. Until then our main means of communicating with our parents were via Newsletter, email and using our Twitter feeds. We were keen to trial a communication system which was more efficient i.e. a system which reduced our printing and photocopying bills and a system which made efficient use of the manpower available to us. The app appeared to offer what we were looking for.

During the initial months of the pilot (from February- June 2016) we developed our use of the app., with Kingdom adding new features and functionality based on our own experience of using the app and also based upon parental feedback.

Parental uptake was slow at first but began to pick up as more and more parents spread the word about its effectiveness. One of the biggest selling points for parents was the 'Push Notification' facility. Parents also reported that they found the 'Add to Calendar' feature to be very useful.

During this period we were still using the app alongside our existing communication systems. We made the decision in August 2016 to streamline our communication systems, making our app the primary source of information about our school and nursery. We announced this to our parent body with the caveat that parents could still sign up to receive 'hard copy' of communications. Only 20 parents in the school and 3 in the nursery signed up to receive 'hard copies' i.e. over 250 families bought into using the app. We also started using the 'Diary' function of the app this session which, again, has received very positive feedback from parents.

Parent Council Chair, Sandra Ferguson, commented 'I think the app is an incredibly useful tool for staying informed of school activities. The app is very easy to navigate and the information is very clear and easy to find within it. Personally my favourite part is the diary, I check this every Sunday night to check what's happening during the week ahead and I haven't missed anything since this came into place!'.

KINGDOM TECHNOLOGY

Teresa Devlin, former parent's council treasurer added – 'I have used the St Mary's Primary School smartNews app since it was first introduced and consider it an excellent means of communication.  The app is very user friendly and makes it much easier to keep abreast of all events and activities within the school and nursery than when paper newsletters, notes in school bags and twitter were used.

The app also provides a much greater level of information and transparency on the day to day operations within the whole school and nursery'. 'smartNews also assists with planning, particularly at busy times within the school terms, e.g. Christmas.  Features such as the diary, push notifications and add to calendar are particularly beneficial and save parents considerable time manually updating calendars and planners. The financial savings coupled with the administration time saved by the School and Nursery ensure resources are being used in the most efficient way possible, allowing them to be allocated most effectively for the benefit of the children's education'.

George Hollas, Kingdom Technology, has worked in close collaboration with Brendan throughout the smartNews pilot and commented 'like the majority of schools, St Mary's also used to communicate with parents via a text messaging service, as this is one of the most effective communication methods. Unfortunately due to the prohibitive monthly bills, this was sadly no longer a viable or sustainable option for St Mary's. The good news with smartNews is that St Mary's can now send an infinite number of push notifications for free, thereby improving the quality of service and communication provided to parents, while saving the school money (note: to quarter end 8th March 2017, St Mary's sent 59,602 push notifications, which would have cost £1,788.06 with their old text messaging service!). Every school that invests in smartNews should make a return on their investment within two to three months and make four figure savings each year'.

Our usage of the app has saved us over £2000 alone this year in printing and photocopying. Support and clerical staff no longer spend hours photocopying and distributing letters to go out parents. At a time of staff cuts this has been a huge positive for us all, and we appreciated that this would benefit all schools.

KINGDOM TECHNOLOGY

.

The smartNews App for Schools has been a fantastic resource for us in St. Mary's. Our pilot is over but we will not go back to our old communication methods. smartNews is now an embedded part of our practice and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Brendan Duffy
Head Teacher
St Mary's Primary School and Nursery
Coatbridge
March 2017

Kingdom Technology – delivering excellence through innovation