

Innovative bar code wristband technology improves student safety on Kenya school trip

West Hill School is a comprehensive, secondary school in Stalybridge, United Kingdom. With over 60 staff members and 890 pupils, the school organises bi-annual trips as part of its extracurricular activity programme. Each trip may involve over 50 pupils and helpers, so there is an urgent need for the school to have a reliable and secure registration system in place to record attendance and monitor pupils' welfare efficiently, whilst providing this information in real-time.

Through Bar Code Data, a Zebra channel partner, the school deployed an innovative software recording system called Pupiltrak which uses Zebra wristbands and ID cards to identify students. This was first used on a trip to Kenya in 2011. Pupiltrak had originally been designed for day trips, so this 6-week African excursion was an interesting experiment for the school. Following the success of the trip, the school now uses this system for all school trips and activities such as "The Duke of Edinburgh's Award" scheme. (The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is the world's leading achievement award for young people and includes an expedition section as part of this).

The Challenge

The school arranges excursion trips overseas for pupils for around 6 weeks or more. This often involves large groups of pupils, teachers and trip helpers. Generally such excursions can be a logistical challenge for teachers, as they are responsible for pupils' health and safety and also need to ensure that they are continually accounted for. Travelling abroad for an extended period of time also adds pressure to accompanying staff and trip helpers. At times it can be very difficult and stressful keeping track of each pupil's movements, particularly in busy, crowded areas.

Previously, manual paper systems were used which had its set of challenges: students would often lose or damage their ID papers that contained important emergency contact information.

The Solution

The solution used by West Hill school consists of software connected to a Zebra HC100 printer which prints wristbands and Zebra P120i card printer for identification (ID) cards.

During the 2-month long West Hill School trip to Kenya, the solution was adapted slightly to suit the staff's specific needs. Both the wristbands and ID cards needed to contain a large amount of information, including emergency contact numbers for parents, teachers and contact details of pupils' overseas accommodation.

The wristbands contained personalised encrypted information and bar codes, which could be scanned, recorded. The system could immediately notify teachers if a pupil was missing. Parents were also reassured as pupils were



Solution Technology

- Pupiltrak pupil tracking software
- Zebra® HC100™ wristband printer
- Zebra® P120i™ card printer



given unique identification (ID) codes so that their names did not need to be printed onto the actual wristbands.

The Benefits

- Personalised and bar coded wristbands and ID cards provide students with easy access to parents and teachers' contact details in case of any emergency.
- Instant ID with the yellow wristbands enabled teachers to pin point their students quickly and easily, particularly in crowded areas.
- The easy tracking system enabled teachers to quickly scan the pupils' wristbands and be aware of any missing pupils.
- Secure data encryption protects students' personal details in public places.
- Customisable ID cards with the school's name and local safari park logo enabled teachers to easily identify pupils from their group. Equally it was also a memorable keepsake for the pupils once the pupils returned home at the the end of the trip.
- Durable and long-lasting wristbands minimised damage and loss, making it a safe and cost-effective way to ensure pupils' safety during the trip.

Quote

"This is the first time that West Hill School has used advanced ID technology in school trips. It certainly provided the extra support our staff needed to locate all the pupils quickly and ensure our pupils are safe at all times. The wristbands and ID cards were easy to use and contained useful information for our pupils which gave them extra reassurance in a foreign environment. We were able to print our logos on the wristbands, which made it a memorable keepsake for those who took part."

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