


# Dr Challoner's Grammar School

Dr Challoner's Grammar School is a boys secondary school and co educational six form in Buckinghamshire. The school caters to over 1000 pupils. Their core values are aspiration, kindness and resilience.

One of their year 7 (now year 8) pupils was absent for over six months. This is why they started using their first AV1. They loaned it from their neighbouring local authority, Hertfordshire County Council.

**No Isolation**  sat down with Shelley Mitchell, the school's Attendance and Welfare Officer, to talk more about their experience with AV1.

## **Q Why did you start using AV1?**

**A** One of our year 7 students was seriously injured back in February 2021. It became apparent that they wouldn't be able to return to school for quite some time so we looked into options around homeschooling. As an alternative, Hertfordshire Council offered us the AV1 which was completely new to all of us.

## **Q What was the initial reaction like from teachers and other members of staff?**

**A** Some of our teachers were very enthusiastic, especially our headteacher who was also a subject teacher for the student.

There were a few teachers who were apprehensive and concerned about

what AV1 could see and whether they could be recorded, or watched by a parent. We shared all the documents and agreements provided by No Isolation and after we explained that the stream would cut out if there were any attempts to record they were very reassured.





The first teachers who used them were able to ease the concerns of the more hesitant members of staff. In not much time the AV1 was in every lesson where it was practical.

**Q How did you introduce AV1 to pupils and teachers?**

**A** I communicated with staff to explain what AV1 was, how it works, and we discussed the compatibility with different lessons.

I offered the chance for staff to come and see the AV1 or observe other lessons where it was being used.

I also spoke to the student's form teacher and group before the first proper session. The students were super enthusiastic about it and even nicknamed the robot.

**“ One of the teacher's commented that he was as full a part of the lesson with AV1 as he would be if he was there in person. ”**

**Q How did the student use their AV1?**

**A** He was able to take part really easily by using the features in the app, such as the facial expressions or raising hand button.

One of the teacher's commented that he was as full a part of the lesson with AV1 as he would be if he was there in person.

The student really liked that he could interact with his peers during group work and paired tasks. I think that social link during lessons was really invaluable.

The AV1 was also taken to a couple of lunch time clubs, one of which was 'Dungeons and Dragons'. Being included in activities like this was a real mood-lifter for the student.

**“ Without the robot the transition back to school would have been far tougher as the student would be dealing with a mental recovery as well as a physical one. ”**

**Q How was the AV1 managed day-to-day?**

**A** Two of the student's friends carried the robot between classes. We also placed a laminated copy of the student's timetable around the AV1 neck with highlighted lessons.

The students' took the responsibility of looking after the AV1 very seriously and after a couple of weeks we slowly got the hang of things.

**Q What impact do you think the AV1 has had on the student's wellbeing?**

**A** Without the robot the transition back to school would have been far tougher as the student would be dealing with a mental recovery as well as a physical one.

Had he not had the contact with his friends that the AV1 gave him, I think he would have felt very disengaged with what was going on at school. The interaction with his peers and teachers meant that it didn't really feel like not being there.

**Q How has the AV1 supported the transition back into school?**

**A** When he started to come back the only thing we noticed was the physical difference because his participation was practically the same.

We started with a blended approach where some days of the week he accessed lessons through the AV1 then we slowly built back up to full time attendance.

When we sent the AV1 back the student was quite apprehensive at first, as it became such a big part of his life, but on the whole the return to school has gone really well.

**Q Did teachers have to do any extra work when it came to AV1?**

**A** We did send resources home via Google Classroom, which allowed the student to do everything the class were doing. Participating in things like science practicals weren't easy but he was still able to see what was going on and take part in the group discussions. It would be impossible for AV1 to be a full experience in every single area but it's still a lot more than a remote learning platform would give.

I don't think AV1 resulted in any burden on the teachers and it had no real impact on their workload. I've even had a couple of teachers request we get a couple more for other students that have been off!