



How St Peter's College digitized and automated school trip management to escape a paperwork avalanche, give teachers their time back, keep students safe and engage its parent community.

St Peter's College, Auckland

Paper pains, stressed staff and moth-eaten medical data

Located in Auckland, New Zealand, The Christian Brothers established St Peter's College in 1939. Today, the boys' school is attended by more than 1,300 students, from years seven to 13, who are supervised by 109 staff members.

A Catholic school founded on the values of Edmund Rice, the college provides a comprehensive academic education paired with an extensive program of extracurricular activities, in which students are expected to actively participate -- including music, sports, arts, cultural studies and drama. In line with the Catholic ethos of inclusivity and service to others, the school is community-focused, regarding the families of its students as part of one collective cohort.

But, maintaining and delivering the college's broad range of extracurricular activities, designed to build that sense of community, proved a constant and growing challenge. St Peter's ICT Services Coordinator, Margaret Miller, explains how traditional paper-based systems of planning and managing school trips and events, in combination with manual workflows for collecting consent and student medical information from parents, became impractical. And, therefore, why a digital solution was needed to streamline the whole process.

Summary of Results

1 SECURE SOURCE OF TRUTH A single universally accessible place for all student medical data.	100% MOBILE ACCESSIBLE Staff can access student forms and medical data via any device.	97% of students live in Operoo within two months.	1 WEEK → 30 MINS Parents respond to forms in minutes, not weeks.
235 TRIPS The number of trips managed through Operoo each year.	8,888 Digital permission forms are submitted via Operoo each year.	32,000 + Sheets of paper saved on consent and medical forms per year.	1,059 Different types of eForms created in Operoo since 2015.



The Challenge

The manual effort of paper-based processing

Predominantly operating with human-driven paper workflows, the way St Peter's organized its student trips meant a consistently huge logistical workload for teachers, admins and parents. Not only was this process an inefficient use of resources, it also left behind a long paper trail that was at odds with the school's ambition to be environmentally sustainable.

"Having a paper-based system of planning and managing school trips and forms was impractical; particularly for a school of 1,300 students," said Miller. "The cadence of trips and extracurricular activities was the other major factor. We often have up to 30 in a day, and never less than 12. We have trips going on all the time. The amount of time staff spent creating, distributing and chasing paper forms was enormous.

"We needed a way to efficiently collect and collate forms, parental consent and medical details -- a system that could streamline the overall process. We just knew there had to be a better way."

In 2015, Miller and IT Manager, Walter Alvarez, began assessing possible solutions.

"We were on a mission to reduce the amount of paper and manual effort required to process all the student information needed for our trips," said Miller. "We also wanted to remove the ability for human error and foible to cause delays and lower student participation rates -- such as students losing paper forms or leaving them crumpled at the bottom of their school bags."

Miller's investigations led her to Operoo. The team assessed Operoo's School Process Automation Platform and liked what they saw.

The Solution

Going digital: Safe, efficient school trip management

Miller, Alvarez and their team didn't waste any time, deciding to demonstrate Operoo to school leadership. St Peter's started using Operoo in November 2015.

"Right from the start, we were confident that Operoo could meet all of our needs; now and into the future," said Miller. "Operoo's interface is highly intuitive, so it's easy for staff to learn fast. It provides everyone with the impetus to engage with the platform and use it consistently across the board, creating uniformity throughout our school trips and activities."

Aside from digitizing and automating the distribution and collection of school forms, Miller said being able to identify kids with high, medium or low health risks -- both before and during camps and excursions -- was "extremely valuable".

"Operoo enables us to access student medical information and contact details as part of our risk management strategy and in case of emergency," said Miller. "Any authorized teacher can immediately find the specific information they need about each student -- from medical action plans and dosages for specific medications, to emergency contact details -- straight from their mobile device of choice; even when offline.

"The Operoo Mobile App makes it easy to fulfill our duty-of-care obligations to the highest standard, ensuring we always know what to do and who to call in order to keep our students safe."

"When dealing with sensitive information, like medical records, data security and privacy is critical," added Miller. "The ability to safeguard data access through Operoo is brilliant. We can also track usage throughout the system, so we know exactly which users looked at which student information and when."



In conjunction with significant efficiency gains and robust data security, Operoo gave St Peter's the tools it needed to keep student medical and emergency information up-to-date and easily accessible in one place.

"The school nurse loves using Operoo to access student medical data," said Miller. "Because Operoo is updated all the time as part of collecting parent consent for each trip, we can rely on it to provide that single source of truth. Parents and staff love it. Everyone has access to the same view of the world and the freshest information possible."

On a personal note, Miller highlighted the ability to organize students into dynamic groups, which automatically update in response to data being updated in the system, as particularly important.

"I absolutely love Operoo Smart Groups," said Miller. "I can easily set-up different groups of students based on the severity of medical conditions, such as anaphylaxis, epilepsy and other high risk categories. This way, supervising teachers can see at-a-glance the number of high risk students in their care and instantly access accurate life saving information anywhere, anytime."

Since adopting Operoo, St Peter's has seen a huge change in its operational processes.

1 SECURE SOURCE OF TRUTH

A single universally accessible place for all student medical data.

100% MOBILE ACCESSIBLE

Staff can access student forms and medical data via any device.

The Results

Safe students, happy teachers, engaged parents

Not everyone was ready to embrace Operoo at first but, after a two month trial period, staff and parents saw the benefits.

"When we started, there was some resistance to change," explained Miller. "Initially, some staff -- who didn't bear the brunt of the paper-based administrative burden -- didn't see the need. Those people also didn't understand the lack of visibility, accessibility and reliability of student information and medical history throughout the college. They simply didn't know what they didn't know."

"Operoo then came along and shone a spotlight on the associated safety risks and liability concerns. After those became clear, things took-off quickly. I know that teachers use the mobile app a lot because I can see the student profiles they've looked at through the system. Staff have really embraced Operoo -- particularly its mobile capabilities."

St Peter's had a soft launch to its parent community at the end of 2015, making it compulsory for all students to have profiles in Operoo by the start of the 2016 school year.

"97 percent of our students were live within Operoo by the end of February," said Miller. "It was adopted very quickly. Our parents love the convenience of the mobile app. They can see details of all trips and information relating to their child in one place. Parents can sign digital forms and return information faster than ever before -- from any device and from wherever they are."

"We now receive responses within 30-minutes of sending out forms and permission requests. The response time has gone from days or weeks, to hours or even minutes."

Initially, St Peter's found Operoo especially useful for its annual Year 9 Camp, which includes upwards of 220 students across five days.



The new ease of organizing and conducting school trips saw Operoo quickly adopted across all the college's trip planning processes.

"Last year we set-up 235 trips through Operoo," said Miller. "Across those 235 trips, there were 8,888 permissions submitted via Operoo. By conducting permission form creation, distribution and collection digitally through Operoo, we saved over 16,000 sheets of paper! On top of that, there's the labour cost of handling that paper, which has been completely eliminated."

But the annual resource savings are actually far more impressive than that -- about twice as good, to be precise.

"In addition, the school used to have to create, distribute and collect paper medical forms too, which comprised a separate physical form and manual process for each and every trip," said Miller. "Now, it's all automated in one seamless workflow within Operoo."

"Parents love the convenience. It's much easier for teachers too, who no longer have to chase paper forms and make dozens of phone calls home thanks to Operoo and its automated reminders."

In fact, St Peter's have created a staggering 1,059 different types of eForms in Operoo since the end of 2015.

Aside from the bigger picture outcomes, Miller said that there were always day-to-day anecdotes that made her thankful for implementing Operoo.

"For example, a teacher emailed me last night regarding a trip that was taking place today," said Miller. "They needed to add a student at the last

minute. With our old paper-based system, this would have been near impossible. With Operoo, I could act on that late night request immediately from home.

"In the past, this would have been a nightmare, which would have meant scanning and sending paper forms at midnight!"

Together, Miller and Operoo have transformed trip management and planning at St Peter's from a laborious process to an enjoyable experience.

"It's improved the efficiency of all trips. Planning and hosting trips is now a positive, stress and hassle-free experience for teachers and parents. Everyone's happy."

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