How Beaconhills College went from paperwork calamity to automated school trip management, giving staff their time back, parental peace-of-mind, and anytime access to a single source of truth for medical data.
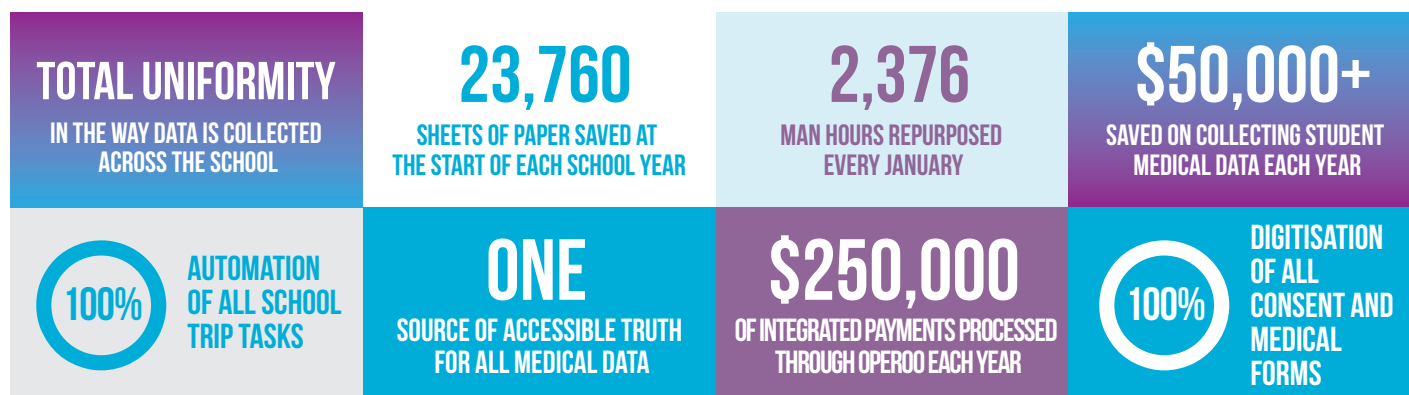
Beaconhills College
Eliminating recurring nightmares, safeguarding student wellbeing

Based in Victoria, Australia, Beaconhills College has around 1,200 staff and over 3,700 students spread across its Pakenham and Berwick campuses. Catering for early learning through to Year 12, including international students, the college offers its large cohort an extensive range of co-curricular activities, encompassing regular trips to East Timor, Vietnam as well as student exchange programs. However, safely and efficiently managing that burgeoning schedule was a mounting challenge. In particular, Beaconhills' Global Head of Outdoor and Co-Curricular Programs, Sam Maddock, found the recurring struggle of paper-based consent and medical forms increasingly problematic.

Maddock embarked on a mission to digitise and automate this traditional paper-based process in order to safeguard compliance, create a reliable single source of truth that authorised staff could always access, while reducing demand on school resources and parents.

Summary of Results

TOTAL UNIFORMITY IN THE WAY DATA IS COLLECTED ACROSS THE SCHOOL	**23,760** SHEETS OF PAPER SAVED AT THE START OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR	**2,376** MAN HOURS REPURPOSED EVERY JANUARY	**$50,000+** SAVED ON COLLECTING STUDENT MEDICAL DATA EACH YEAR
100% AUTOMATION OF ALL SCHOOL TRIP TASKS	**ONE** SOURCE OF ACCESSIBLE TRUTH FOR ALL MEDICAL DATA	**$250,000** OF INTEGRATED PAYMENTS PROCESSED THROUGH OPEROO EACH YEAR	**100%** DIGITISATION OF ALL CONSENT AND MEDICAL FORMS

The Challenge
Too much paper, too little visibility

" *Everything was manual and paper-based,*
recalled Maddock. "

"Every January, the school would request updated medical information about each student from parents. This entailed a minimum of three pages per student -- all of which had to be stapled, sent, chased-down and collated.

"Then, someone had to manually check and enter all the captured data into our database. It was a protracted process involving a lot of manual, repetitive and thankless tasks. To this day, I still know of some schools that employ 10 - 15 admins just to undertake this process at the start of each year. But, we wanted to put our people and resources to better use."

Additionally, Maddock said the College found itself requesting the same sets of medical and consent paperwork again for most camps, excursions and other extracurricular activities throughout the year.

"On top of that, managing compliance, accountability and liability was particularly resource-intensive," added Maddock. "We wanted a digital system that could automatically date stamp every permission received and each form collected.

" *We needed to be able to easily track and*
prove exactly when certain information was
requested and submitted. "

As a multi-campus K - 12 school, Maddock said that maintaining consistency regarding how information was requested, managed and accessed required constant management.

"Beaconhills prides itself on offering enriching experiences to, and managing the wellbeing of, all of its students," said Maddock. "To meet strict compliance standards for student duty-of-care

during trips and extracurricular activities, we needed to ensure that consent and medical data was collected in a consistent and compliant manner. Instead of having separate, human-reliant processes and systems used across multiple sites and departments, we needed one system that would force everyone into line, and streamline our workflow."

The Solution
One digital platform, one source of truth

Initially, Maddock wasn't sure where to begin his search for a systemised solution for managing forms, consent, medical information and school trips.

"We then realised that our outdoor education provider, OEG, was already using Operoo -- and we liked what we saw," said Maddock. "Families could submit forms and medical information once, which addressed a huge pain point for our parents. From the school's perspective, we saw that we could automate the collection of data and provide complete visibility of that information to authorised personnel throughout the college.

" *For the first time, we'd also be able to ensure*
total uniformity in the way data was captured
too, without any manual effort. "

"Eliminating the possibility of disparity between different locations and departments -- from outdoor ed, to school nurses, or other campuses -- was a game changer."

In order to create that single, reliable, universally accessible view of student medical data -- as well as consent requested and received -- Maddock said Operoo's ability to synchronize with the College's database was "critical".

"Operoo's Synergetic integration has been paramount to our success," said Maddock. "The ability to automatically sync data to and from

Synergetic, our Student Information System, ensures everybody always has the same view of the most up-to-date information."

In terms of product features, Maddock said that a number of specific capabilities factored heavily in Beaconhills' decision to implement Operoo.

From a time-saving and tracking perspective, the digital nature of Operoo's eForms were revolutionary," said Maddock

"All that manual effort, and the uncertainty that went with it, disappeared.

"At a more granular level, the fact that no trip proposals from staff, or forms from parents, could be submitted without all the required fields completed -- and necessary documentation attached -- was an enormous relief. Not only was the process now failsafe and automated, the pain of chasing people for incomplete or inaccurate data just melted away."

Maddock cited other favorite features as multi-channel communications, integrated payments and internal approval workflows.

"Before Operoo, we didn't have a formal process for submitting and approving proposals for extracurricular activities," said Maddock. "Now, we have the uniformity and visibility we've always craved. We know who is organising which trips and when, which activities are pending approval, what stage in the approval process they're at, who designated approvers are, and which activities have actually been approved. It's a great control measure."

The ability to integrate payments within the permission process itself has also significantly reduced confusion and strain on staff, removing the need for manual reconciliation.
"Integrating digital payments as a component of collecting parental consent through Operoo is huge for Beaconhills," said Maddock. "There's no

more manually matching permission slips to payments -- which was an enormous task when you consider that we process around $250,000 in co-curricular payments per year.

"In a single motion, I can select a group of students in Operoo and see who's paid and who hasn't for sports uniform purchases, or camp t-shirts, which are required for particular trips. Calling the uniform shop to get a separate spreadsheet of payment information is a thing of the past.
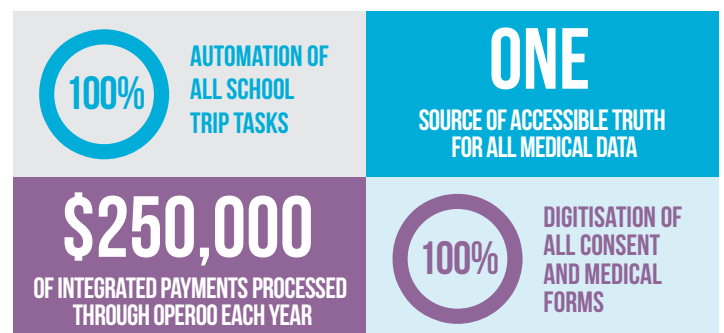
"Chasing payments is easy too. You can just select all students from whom you haven't received payment and send a reminder email. It's that simple.

All payments for any non-classroom activity are now automated through Operoo.

When conducting trips, Maddock said that Operoo's communication features meant it was easy to keep parents abreast of changing circumstances.

"We run heaps of trips across weekends," said Maddock. "When you're packing a lot into a couple of days, it's pretty common for the return time to be pushed back. To communicate new pick-up times to parents, we used to literally call someone into the school, they'd fire-up a computer, access our database, then distribute a note to parents. It was a crazy way to work.

"Now, any staff member supervising the trip can send an SMS or push notification through Operoo -- to any group of parents, from any device -- in minutes."

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The Results
"Operoo has kept Beaconhills well-above industry standard"

Maddock said that Operoo had given Beaconhills a central, consistent and systematic approach through which it could automatically request, collect and access student permissions and medical information all year round.

"We performed a basic analysis of the time and money we were saving each year by using Operoo to automate just one recurring task -- the collection of student medical information at the start of each year," said Maddock. "I worked out that we used to use 23,760 sheets of paper on medical, consent and outdoor ed forms at the start of each school year. The admin staff said the total processing time for each paper form was six minutes, which equates to 2,376 hours of work we're now able to repurpose. Without giving away salary figures, that's well over $50,000 worth of manpower to process those start-of-year paper forms alone.

" *So we know that, by automating just this one recurring process, Operoo pays for itself many, many times over each year.* "

"Operoo also eases the workload for parents. Now, parents only need to confirm that medical information provided at the start of a new year is still accurate -- or provide specific updates as required -- rather than completing all the same paperwork every year and for each trip throughout the year."

Beyond the basic ROI calculations and year-round benefits, Operoo also provides Beaconhills College with a single platform through which it can seamlessly and efficiently manage and track the entire lifecycle of a school trip.

" *Operoo delivers everything we need in one place -- it's our start to finish excursion and emergency management platform," said Maddock.* "

"Operoo collects all the information we need for any extracurricular activity, automatically links it to each students' profile, and keeps both parents and teachers on the same page by giving them access to that same source of truth.

"Those capabilities are particularly critical on-the-go, during a school trip or camp. Whether in East Timor or on a single-day excursion, my field staff can access everything they need that relates to each specific student and the particular trip. That's anything from forms and travel documents, such as passports, to payment confirmations, medical information and emergency contacts. They can do all that, and even log incidents, straight from their phone -- even when internet access drops out.

"Previously, we used to carry around huge binders of paper files on every trip. Now, with the Operoo mobile app, all our trip supervisors literally have everything they need in the palm of their hand.

"As a school, when you take on the responsibility of caring for someone's kids, it's critical to get it right. Operoo allows us to put more time back into designing our trips, looking after the children and providing a better experience for everyone."

When asked to summarise his experience working with Operoo, Maddock said the relationship and the solution itself had transformed operations throughout the college.

"Operoo has enabled us to solve a number of significant challenges in one platform," said Maddock. "This includes the ability to: Streamline and fast-track the effective distribution and collection of school forms and parental consent; integrate all trip planning, payment and management tasks into one seamless workflow; as well as attain and verify universally accessible and date-stamped medical information."

Maddock explained that ensuring the accessibility and accuracy of student medical data delivered a number of critical outcomes.

"Not only does Operoo allow us to confidently meet our duty-of-care obligations and mitigate liability concerns from a risk management perspective, we know we're easily exceeding compliance standards too," said Maddock.

Speaking of standards, Maddock said that Operoo had "become a standard in itself" at the college:

" *Operoo is so deeply ingrained at Beaconhills, it's simply at the core of how the school operates now.* "

"From a technical perspective, Operoo's iterative product release schedule means the platform stays current to meet our evolving needs. Operoo has kept Beaconhills well-above industry standard in terms of managing school trips, medical data, digital forms of any kind, and student duty-of-care generally."

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