Aldridge School

Case Study

BT's ComputAbility programme
helps enhance the teaching and
learning experience

Making 1:1 student devices a reality without impacting school budgets

Background

In 2013 Aldridge Trust Board committed to investing £100,000 in a new wireless infrastructure that was capable of running in excess of 1,500 devices simultaneously.
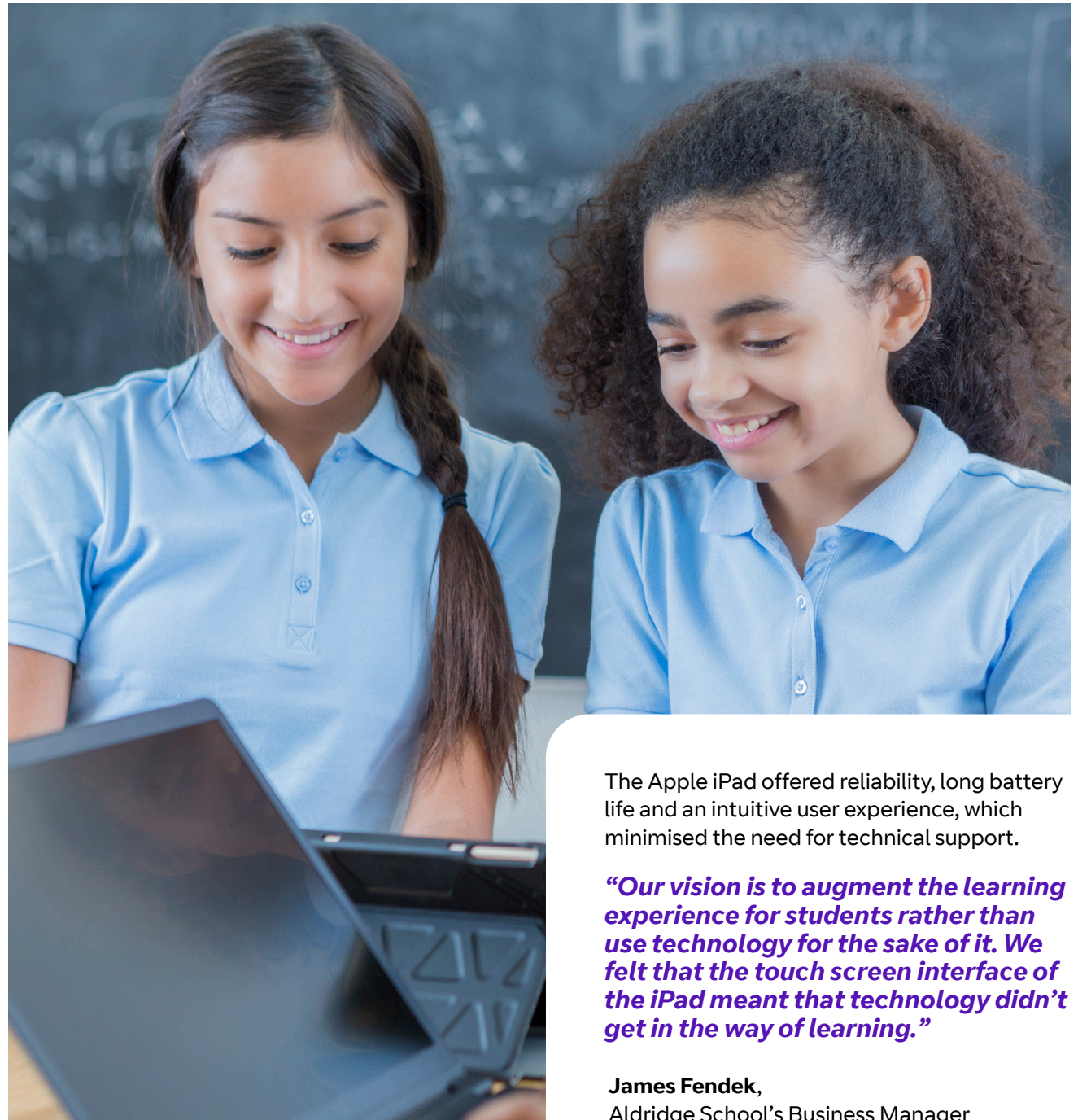
This was to assist their goal of delivering resources digitally and to introduce one-to-one device learning for students.

The implementation of a wireless solution was only one side of the project. During the development of the network, Aldridge School explored many different device solutions for students.

They eventually settled on the Apple iPad as their device of choice. This was due to their reliability, battery life and intuitive user experience, which required a minimal amount of support from the school's technicians.

ComputAbility at a glance

- Gives students the latest devices, for use at home or in the classroom
- Minimal cost to the school, funded by monthly contributions from parents
- It's affordable. Cost is broken down into small monthly direct debit payments, with no credit checks
- All students have a uniform piece of tech chosen by the school to meet your teaching needs
- Easy to launch with light-touch admin for schools
- BT name builds trust and confidence in the programme

The Apple iPad offered reliability, long battery life and an intuitive user experience, which minimised the need for technical support.

"Our vision is to augment the learning experience for students rather than use technology for the sake of it. We felt that the touch screen interface of the iPad meant that technology didn't get in the way of learning."

James Fendek,
Aldridge School's Business Manager

Creating a 'school-proof' package

Aldridge were keen to foster parental engagement by involving parents in choosing their child's device and by encouraging monthly payments to cover the cost. But they were concerned that organising the purchase of a variety of models, collecting donations and administering insurance claims on lost or damaged devices could prove to be complex and time consuming.

Aldridge needed a programme where everything was taken care of, with no admin headache for the school and no hassle for parents.

"We wanted a device housed in a robust case with insurance and warranty behind it that would stand up to the wear and tear of being used by school students. We wanted to give our parents the peace of mind that if a device was damaged accidently, the insurance would cover the repair." says James.

The Academy found BT's ComputAbility programme. It costs schools very little to implement and has been specifically designed by BT to make it easy to introduce new technology such as tablets and other mobile devices.

"BT said they could manage everything, relieving us of most of the administrative burden and placing less strain on our resources." says James.

Fully managed solution for schools

BT's ComputAbility programme is delivered by finance experts Freedom Tech. To get the ball rolling, they participated in a series of parents' evenings at the Academy to explain the programme and introduce Aldridge School's ComputAbility web portal. The portal allowed parents to choose their child's tablet online and arrange monthly payments to the Academy by direct debit. The company also operates a telephone advice helpline for parents.

"BT's programme handled everything and that was the big selling point for us."

James Fendek, Aldridge School's Business Manager

Each tablet was supplied to the school by BT, bundled with a protective case in a box with the student's name on. Freedom Tech supplied the financing for these iPads, an extended warranty and insurance so if a parent is unable to continue making contributions or an iPad is broken, lost or stolen there's no cost to the school.

"They manage the collection of payments from parents, follow up on late payments and deal with breakages and insurance claims. Basically BT's programme handled everything and that was the big selling point for us." says James.

ComputAbility was easy to roll out

BT's ComputAbility programme gave Aldridge School a really easy way of providing one-to-one iPad learning. When new students arrive each year, they'll also be directed to the online portal, where BT and Freedom Tech will continue to make it easy for parents to organise their child's iPad, without impacting the school's budget or resources.

The Academy has also benefited from BT's free advice on IT hardware. Over 14,000 schools, colleges and universities already use BT hardware and infrastructure technology so it's an area in which the company has established expertise. Aldridge provided classroom staff with iPads prior to the programme's rollout, ensuring familiarity with the technology before it went live - a move which really smoothed the path for a successful implementation.

BT were on hand to provide any additional devices or other IT hardware the school needed, and also offered a training programme designed to quickly upskill new staff in the future on using iPad in the classroom to enhance learning.

"Staff confidence using ICT is much improved. They're rapidly adopting FrogLearn and are increasingly using the network to stream multi-media, such as high quality video, directly to student devices - something we wouldn't have dreamt of attempting before."

James Fendek,
Aldridge School's Business Manager

Results are what counts and BT's ComputAbility programme has made it simple for Aldridge School to pursue its goals.

With a one-to-one device ratio in the classroom, the team at Aldridge School have achieved a virtual learning environment that delivers engaging resources directly to each individual student - and the benefits are huge in lesson time. If a teacher wanted students to take part in self-guided research previously, they'd have had to book a separate computer room.

Now research can form a fluid part of the learning experience, right there in the classroom. Teachers can ask for devices to be used for 10 minutes in their lesson, which saves time and avoids unnecessary disruption.

Home study is much improved too. Because students take their devices home, they no longer need to compete for time on the family PC with siblings and parents. Class resources can be accessed at any time for homework or revision, and if a work sheet is lost, students can instantly access another copy, which removes any excuses for not completing homework!

About FrogLearn

FrogLearn is an award-winning learning platform that can integrate with a number of devices including the Apple iPad. FrogLearn Education says:

"FrogLearn gives teachers the ability to assign and keep track of student's work, create resources and connect with educators, all through technology."

More information is available at
http://www.frogeducation.com/

Additional benefits for school staff with TechPerks

"They manage the collection of payments from parents, follow up on late payments and deal with breakages and insurance claims. That was the big selling point for us".

TechPerks provides employers with a compelling employee engagement proposition which gives staff the chance to own desirable computing devices and other home electronics products in an affordable way.
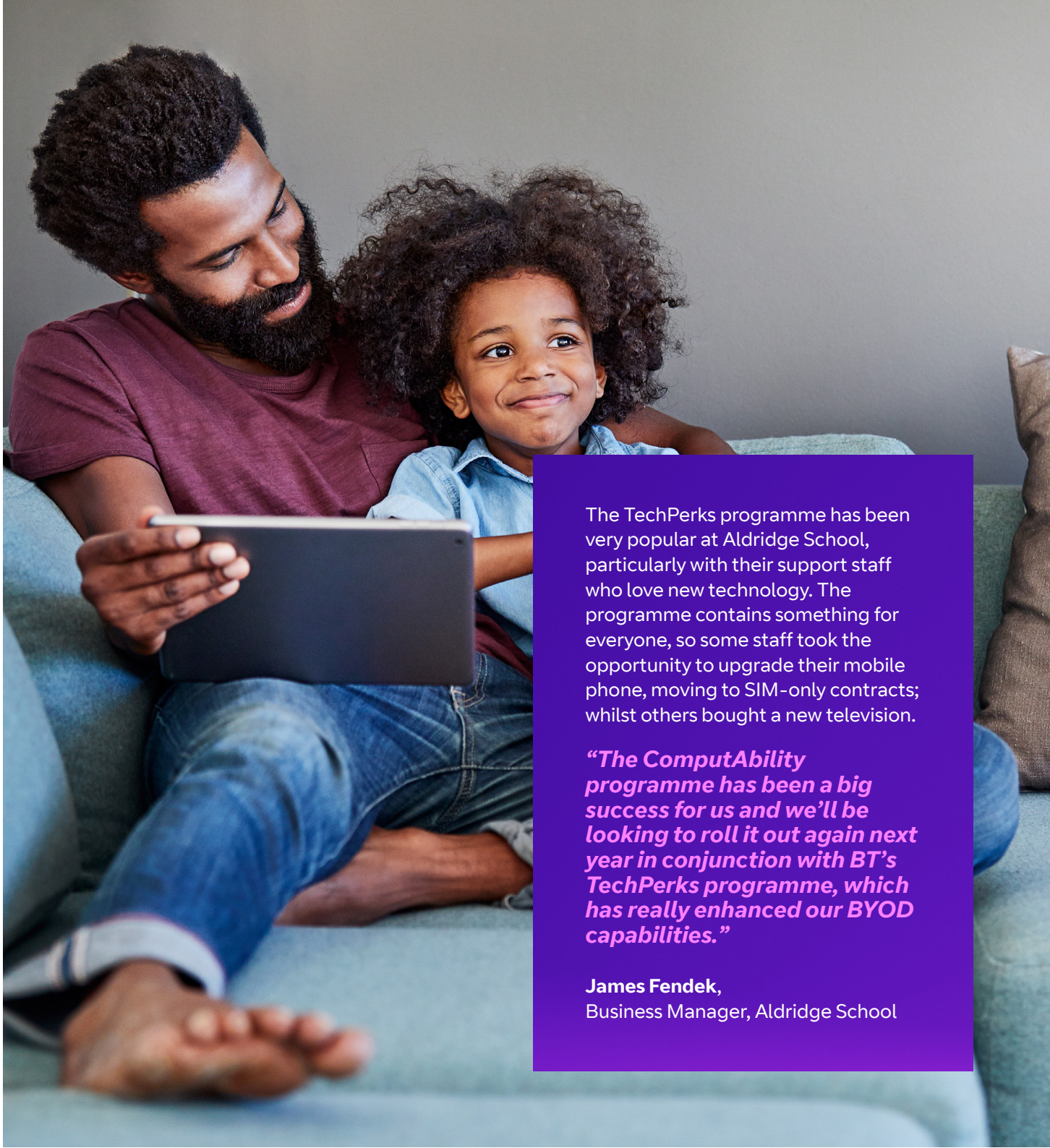
TechPerks has helped Aldridge School's employees to be more successful and productive at work.

Although Aldridge offered staff basic laptops, some chose to use the TechPerks programme to purchase a new device that was better suited to their specific needs - typically with a higher specification than the Academy's IT budget would allow.

As well as using these new devices at home, staff were also able to leverage their benefits at work thanks to Aldridge School's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme. Aldridge has seen a number of staff move over to Apple laptops for work, meaning the Academy can redeploy resources from their limited central budget elsewhere.

"TechPerks means I can have a reliable laptop at home that's available for me to use when I need it, without having to share with my children."

Helen Newey,
Data Manager at Aldridge School

The TechPerks programme has been very popular at Aldridge School, particularly with their support staff who love new technology. The programme contains something for everyone, so some staff took the opportunity to upgrade their mobile phone, moving to SIM-only contracts; whilst others bought a new television.

"The ComputAbility programme has been a big success for us and we'll be looking to roll it out again next year in conjunction with BT's TechPerks programme, which has really enhanced our BYOD capabilities."

James Fendek,
Business Manager, Aldridge School

Why ComputAbility from BT?

- It's cash flow neutral to the school
- The ComputAbility portal and advice line is fully managed on your behalf
- Adoption will have a positive impact on embracing ICT throughout your school, which can in turn improve your Ofsted rating for technology
- We manage the collection, follow up on late payments and deal with breakages and insurance claims, it's part of the service

To learn more or request a free call back from one of our 1:1 specialists visit bt.com/one-to-one

Things you need to know:

*Parents/Guardians are only allowed one device per student and all orders are subject to school sign off prior to delivery.**Savings depend on the actual make and model of products selected and the comparative typical alterative high street price at the time of your programme's launch. Full illustration will be provided. ***To be eligible to take part in the TechPerks programme, employees must be UK based, aged 18 years or over and earning above the national minimum wage (after monthly salary sacrifice deduction). The TechPerks and ComputAbility programmes are delivered by Freedom Tech Limited, a technology finance company that works with organisations to provide them with innovative solutions to engage and empower their employees. Freedom Tech Limited is not a BT Group company nor affiliated to BT Group in anyway. Please note you will be required to enter into an agreement with Freedom Tech Limited for the operation of the programme. Goods ordered under the programme will be provided and delivered by BT and subject to BT Business Direct Limited standard terms of sale found at www.businessdirect.bt.com/help/policies/bt-business-direct-conditions-of-sale. Before rolling out a TechPerks or ComputAbility programme, you agree that you have relied on your own assessment in determining the suitability of the TechPerks or ComputAbility programme for your organisation. TechPerks and ComputAbility programmes are subject to the employer passing Freedom Tech Limited's credit criteria. All quotations are subject to credit and insurance approval via Freedom Tech Limited. TechPerks prices and savings are for illustrative purposes only and were correct as of the dates stated. All catalogue items and prices are subject to change. A full copy of our conditions of sale are available on request or can be downloaded from www.bt.com/businessdirect/conditions. Calls may be monitored to ensure levels of service and for training purposes. Calls cost 8p per minute from a BT landline. Charges from other networks and mobiles may vary. Errors and omissions accepted. Nothing in this publication forms part of any contract. BT Business Direct Ltd, Alpha & Beta House, Enterprise Park, Horwich, Bolton BL6 6PE