



# Ground breaking paging system installed in Primary School

## Improving Student Engagement at Richmond Road Primary

For Principal Jonathan Ramsay and his staff at Richmond Primary School the main motivation for deploying a paging system was student engagement. “We needed an intercom system that would let us talk to the whole school internally and externally, parts of the school or just individual spaces to remind them of events.”

Jonathan had had access to paging systems at his previous schools and sorely missed the ability to remind children about activities. He also believes in empowering the students and wanted them to have the opportunity to manage the paging system themselves. His former paging systems had been traditional systems where announcements were broadcast over audio cables but he was aware that this was now obsolete technology and he was keen to ensure that Richmond Road Primary School were investing in a futureproofed solution.

“We wanted to remind children about events, such as the ukulele group running at lunchtime. Thirty children signed up but only five would turn up because the majority would forget or be distracted.”

The system also had to be easy to relocate as he explains, “We unfortunately had an arson attack in 2014 and some of our students are currently in prefabs. We needed to be absolutely sure that whatever we spent our money on was portable and could be moved into our new buildings at a later date.”

One other issue that they wished to resolve was for the benefit of the neighbouring community. The school’s current automated school bell was linked to the emergency alarm system and could not be turned off during the school holidays and weekends. He had also visited another school that was using bird song in place of a bell and was keen to experiment with Richmond Road’s notification sounds too.



## Granting the Wishlist

Edwards Sound are gold sponsors of the Auckland Primary Principals' Association and were known to Jonathan. The school also had an existing relationship with the Audio-Visual company since they had previously designed and installed the school hall sound system. Jonathan sat down with the Edwards' team and explained their priorities:

- A futureproofed solution that would be a good investment
- With every component easily relocatable
- That enabled announcements to be zoned
- With a school bell that could be personalised and "that wouldn't ring in the holidays!"



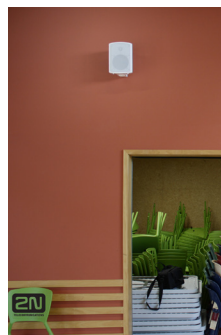
Jonathan Ramsay,  
Principal

## Audio over IP Public Address Systems

An audio over IP public address system was the answer. Audio over IP systems run over local area networks (LANs) rather than using audio cabling, taking advantage of a building's Wi-Fi or network cabling. This meant that any speakers installed in the prefabs could easily be relocated to new buildings in the future. Zoning is done via some easy to use software. The system can also be linked to VOIP telephone systems so anyone can make an announcement using their phone in place of a microphone, making the intercom system particularly accessible. And the 2N system came with bird songs included and these could be turned off at weekends and holidays.

"Edwards have been really responsive. Even when I was away from school, I flicked them a quick email and they sent someone immediately to sort out any problem."

Edwards went away and designed a system that would meet all the school's needs and the proposal was submitted for Ministry approval. Once Richmond Road had the green light, the staff and students waited with anticipation. Due to the ease of install there was no disruption to classes during set up and the teething problems that come with any deployment of this size were speedily resolved.



2N Speakers installed in a prefab, in the staff room and an outdoor area

## Life with A Public Address System

“I have no idea how we survived without a paging system,” says Jonathan. “It is hard to believe but we largely avoided sending messages to classrooms and when we did we used a student runner, which meant finding a student and then writing the message out.” Jonathan’s office staff have found it extremely easy to use. “You click on an icon on the desktop, push a button to speak and a button to stop. There is a panel down the side to select the classroom, block or whole school,” explains Jonathan. The school is very excited about the potential the system offers for student empowerment next year. Senior leaders who organise activities at morning break and lunch time will be trained and take responsibility for making their own announcements.

A student-initiated survey is already underway across the school to identify what the student population want for a “bell” sound, with Jonathan and his staff supporting the sense of ownership and self-management demonstrated by the students.

Jonathan is excited to once again have a school wide paging system, this time with far more options. For the staff, having a modern IP based system really is a whole new world. And Richmond Road isn’t finished there. “We intend to use it to its full capacity and are still exploring the possibilities such as running a radio station across the school, using the telephones for paging and connecting it to our alarm system to play automated messages in the event of a lockdown. And we are definitely excited about experimenting with our bell system!”

The Richmond Road School Jingle may not be far away...backed by ukulele of course.

“Staff are really excited about the ability to customise the system and zones, for us to be able to contact them and for student leaders to do the announcements. They didn’t know what they were missing.”





## Want to Empower your Students?



Student Leaders,  
Richmond Road

Audio over IP technology means that paging systems can be easily installed into schools without necessitating the expensive installation of audio cabling.

Instead the audio signal is transmitted over the LAN / WAN.

Schools can send audio to the whole school or designated zones at the click of a button including:

- Scheduled messages or alerts (using a sound of your choosing)
- Live announcements
- Pre-recorded emergency procedures via a “panic button” on any networked device
- A school radio station

**Contact Edwards for more information or visit our website**

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