

The Complete Guide to Print Management in Education (2025)

Introduction

In an era where schools and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) face increasing pressure to reduce costs while maintaining high standards, printing remains one of the most overlooked sources of inefficiency. From lesson plans, to compliance documents, the volume and sensitivity of printed materials require a strategic approach to management. This guide is designed to help educational leaders, school business managers, and IT professionals understand modern print management and how to implement a more efficient, secure, and scalable solution that supports both learning and administration.

Why Print Management Matters in Education

Hidden Costs: Printing can account for 1-3% of a school's annual budget. Without monitoring, schools often overspend due to unnecessary colour printing, single-sided printing, and unclaimed jobs sitting on trays.

Time & Efficiency: Admin staff frequently get pulled into troubleshooting printer issues, ordering toner, or managing outdated equipment. Time lost here impacts both productivity and service to staff and students.

Compliance & Data Protection: Printed documents can include personal information, medical records, and safeguarding notes. Poor print practices can lead to GDPR violations and data breaches, putting student and staff privacy at risk.

Common Print Challenges in Schools and MATs

Decentralised Devices: Multiple standalone printers across sites with no central control or monitoring.

Untracked Usage: Without usage reports, it's impossible to identify high-volume users or areas of waste.

Downtime and Interruptions: A lack of service agreements or outdated hardware leads to frequent breakdowns, affecting lesson prep and office continuity.

Excessive Waste: Documents are printed unnecessarily or forgotten at the printer, leading to paper and ink waste.

No Print Policy: Staff and students may print freely without accountability, resulting in high volumes and rising costs.

Benefits of Modern Print Management

Cost Control: By tracking who prints what and when, schools and trusts can set limits, introduce print quotas, and route print jobs to the most cost-effective devices.

Secure Printing: Pull-print or PIN release ensures that documents are only printed when the user is physically present at the device, safeguarding sensitive material.

Cloud Printing: Staff can submit jobs from any location-whether at home or between schools-and collect their prints securely at any enabled printer. This supports hybrid working and increases flexibility.

Automated Supplies: With managed print services, toner levels are monitored and replenished automatically, ensuring no downtime and eliminating emergency orders.

Sustainability: Eco features like duplex (double-sided) printing, black-and-white defaults, and carbon footprint tracking help institutions align with green goals.

What to Look For in a Print Management System

System Compatibility: Must work with your existing networks, devices, and cloud environments like Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace.

Security Compliance: Look for GDPR-compliant software with audit trails, encrypted transmissions, and secure access.

Central Visibility: Dashboards that give trust-wide insight into usage, costs, and savings potential.

Scalability: The system should support everything from single academies to large multi-site trusts.

Creating a Print Policy That Works

A clear policy helps manage expectations and encourages responsible printing.

Permissions and Roles: Set clear rules for who can print in colour, who can access high-volume jobs, and what should be printed at all.

Default Settings: Use black-and-white and duplex settings as the default to save on resources.

Confidentiality Rules: Secure printing for documents that include personal or sensitive information.

Monitoring and Feedback: Share usage stats with staff to encourage reduction. Introduce rewards or recognition for departments that meet targets.

Annual Reviews: Update policies regularly to reflect changes in tech or user behaviour.

Getting Buy-In Across the Trust

Data-Driven Business Case: Present projected savings, environmental benefits, and security improvements to trust leadership.

Pilot Programs: Trial the solution in a few schools first to demonstrate success and refine implementation.

Staff Involvement: Provide training and support so users feel confident in the new system.

Change Champions: Appoint key staff to promote adoption and assist colleagues during the transition.

How to Get Started

- 1. Request a Free Audit:** Identify waste, inefficiencies, and opportunities for savings.
 - 2. Evaluate Vendors:** Choose a provider with experience in the education sector and familiarity with compliance needs.
 - 3. Build a Rollout Plan:** Start small, document lessons learned, and expand to other schools in phases.
 - 4. Communicate the Benefits:** Make sure all stakeholders understand how the new system will help them.
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Ready to Take Control?

Book your free audit today.

Your smarter, simpler, and more secure print setup starts now.

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