



RAS Data Sheet | Parallels Remote Application Server

## Parallels RAS empowers students and teachers at Enterprise South Liverpool Academy

Enterprise South Liverpool Academy (ESLA) chose the award-winning virtualization solution Parallels® Remote Application Server (RAS) for two reasons. The first reason was because it was an inexpensive method for delivering education applications to students on tablets or small laptops. The other reason they implemented Parallels RAS was because it could deliver virtual desktops to teachers in order to allow them to work from home with ease. Chris Little, trust head of IT at the English academy, describes Parallels RAS as one of his “favorite products.”

“I am pleased that we chose the [Parallels RAS] solution,” said Little. “It saved a lot of disruptions at our school.”

### Organization

ESLA is a Catholic academy that teaches children from ages 11 to 18. The academy is located in Garston, Liverpool. There are over 1,000 students currently enrolled at the institution. The educators at ESLA work hard to provide the best learning experience possible for their students.

### The challenge: Delivering applications and desktops to students and staff at home

The academy needed a solution to deliver learning applications to students on their personal devices, in addition to virtual desktops to teachers at home. Students needed access to different Windows® applications like Microsoft® Office or Adobe® Suite (e.g., Photoshop®). Moreover, one factor the school had to consider was that not all students could count on access to a desktop computer because they come from low-resource backgrounds. As a result, ESLA needed a mobile-optimized virtual application delivery solution that allowed students to access Windows applications no matter what device was available, including smartphones and tablets.

“The students needed access to applications like Adobe Suite and Microsoft Office, things that they wouldn’t have access to at home because, obviously, it’s expensive software and most of our students come from quite poor backgrounds where they may not have access to a full computer.”

*-Chris Little, Trust Head of ICT, Enterprise South Liverpool Academy (ESLA)*

While ESLA looked into competing virtualization software packages, such as VMware®, they were disappointed in their pricing structure, which would have taken an unreasonable hit on their modest IT budget. Furthermore, they had heard negative reviews about VMware’s product.

In this development project, an environment was built wherein various software packages could be safely accessed remotely from medical institutions using multiple OSes, including old models such as Windows 7. Mobile health checkup buses, for example, need to be equipped with a mechanism for safely accessing patients’ personal information, including medical records.

## **Solution: Students and staff have access to applications on any device, anywhere**

ESLA's IT supplier, Capita, suggested that Little look into Parallels RAS. After seeing an online demo, Little said the IT team was impressed by how smoothly it ran, how straightforward the interface was, and how affordable its pricing plan was.

With plenty of helpful documentation, the installation process for Parallels RAS was "very simple." Both the server-side and client-side installations were straightforward and quick to perform. Within three hours, the institution had tested everything, and one week later, they were able to roll it out to devices.

Parallels RAS allowed students to access Windows desktop applications at home that they otherwise wouldn't have been able to afford, such as Adobe Photoshop. For teachers, they could now carry on working from home as if they were at school, with access to student data, records, files, folders for their planning, etc. With Parallels RAS, students and staff at ESLA can access their applications from home regardless of which device they're using.

## **Adoption result: Affordable virtual solution with powerful features is a "lifeline"**

For ESLA, the key benefits of Parallels RAS are:

- Affordability
- Runs smoothly
- Streamlined interface from user and admin side
- Straightforward installation
- Works well, even on a poor connection
- Ability to remotely fix problems

Little says that Parallels RAS has been a "lifeline" for the educational institution and the IT department. Remote access to fix issues has allowed him to perform his job with more flexibility and efficiency.

## **Summarizing conditions**

ESLA has 150 staff and 1,100 students enrolled at their institution in Garston, Liverpool. The students range in age from 11 to 18. Many come from underprivileged backgrounds with scarce resources in their homes. ESLA has been using RAS since February 2013, when it was 2X before being bought by Parallels. The institution currently uses Parallels RAS v15 with 1,000 users total and a capacity for 250 concurrent users.

## **Summarizing solutions**

The academy needed a comprehensive VDI solution to deliver applications, desktops, and data to students and educators over a mobile-enabled network. After finding that other solutions didn't fit their budget, ESLA opted for Parallels RAS for its powerful, streamlined features and low cost.

## **Summarizing advantages**

Parallels RAS provides ESLA with a powerful, comprehensive VDI solution at an affordable price. Students and staff enjoy more flexible virtual learning environments. Even in low-connectivity environments, Parallels RAS provides a stable platform that the school can rely on to empower its mission to provide the best learning experience possible for students and staff.