

# Belt and braces approach to cyber security

Trafford College Group (TCG) has three large and long-established campuses including Stretford and Stockport, providing a range of STEM courses and adult education courses in maths, English and English to speakers of other languages (ESOL), and Altrincham, offering a dedicated sixth form centre and numerous vocational programmes from hospitality to law. The group is a partner with the World Skills UK Centre of Excellence, launched in late 2020 to boost excellence in skills development and encourage young learners to choose technical education, including apprenticeships. It also delivers community learning courses across a number of community venues in and around Trafford. In early 2021, it merged with Cheadle College and Marple Sixth Form College, adding two new campuses to its estate.

## Added value services

Trafford College Group’s strong emphasis on cyber security ramped up when the COVID-19 lockdowns forced all its sites to close in 2020.



*“We’ve always been vigilant about the risk of ransomware threats and because of the extra uncertainty caused by lockdowns we joined some of the Jisc cyber security seminars.”*

Dave Fitton, TCG’s director of IT and digital services

*“They were scary, but they highlighted the most likely risks and talked about practical ways to protect ourselves.”*

The group was already in the middle of a programme to upgrade its web filtering and firewall systems using Sophos products and their Jisc account manager recommended adding the **Janet Network resolver service (JNRS)** ([jisc.ac.uk/janet-network-resolver](https://jisc.ac.uk/janet-network-resolver)). It provides an extra layer of advanced protection and is available to every organisation connected to the Janet Network ([jisc.ac.uk/janet](https://jisc.ac.uk/janet)).



*"We see it as an added-value 'belt and braces' service," comments Dave. "It gives us extra reassurance and it's something we can take advantage of as part of our Jisc subscription."*

JNRS includes response policy zone (RPZ) technologies to help in making sure users' domain name system (DNS) requests made over the Janet Network don't reach domains that may be compromising. As an additional layer it offers another opportunity to catch anything suspicious that gets past an institution's perimeter firewall. JNRS creates continuously updated RPZ feeds, adapting to new and emerging threats to protect users from exposure to risk and the organisation from harm.

*"JNRS helps to protect our devices and any other devices that connect to our systems including students' own devices and anyone using the guest wifi," says Dave. "That has regularly been up to 9,000 devices per day and this number has increased following our recent merger."*

### **Quick and easy to set up**

Getting started with JNRS was simple. Dave explains that *"it's just a couple of settings on the firewall. You just put in the IP addresses, which takes about two minutes for each site, and that's it."*

*"It doesn't affect the speed of traffic and we don't get lots of extra calls to the helpdesk as a result. Occasionally teaching staff working in some subject areas find they want to access something that gets flagged for query but it isn't common and it is easy to resolve."*

*"The recent upgrade for our firewall and web filtering systems and our adoption of Microsoft Threat Protection (MTP) are part of our ongoing commitment to keeping our students and staff safe and protecting our business operations."*

*"JNRS, as well as DDoS mitigation ([jisc.ac.uk/ddos-mitigation](https://www.jisc.ac.uk/ddos-mitigation)), are integral to our security arrangements and we value them as part of our subscription with Jisc."*



To find out how Jisc can support your organisation, please:



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or visit  
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