

A CASE STUDY OF REPORTMASTER

By Jim Kelso.

ReportMaster dispenses with all the problems associated with writing reports. It gives teachers the flexibility to fine-tune how they wish to complete their reports by (a) creating a bank of statements relevant to their own subject and using these to complete reports; (b) completing multiple reports for similar pupils and then editing the comments afterwards to make them more applicable to individual students; or (c) writing individual reports straight into ReportMaster.

Teachers can set up their own statements or choose generic statements within ReportMaster. A complete report can be entered, or up to four different statements chosen from the bank with the student's name and the relevant pronoun automatically attached when you ask ReportMaster to form the paragraph. If desired, this can then be edited further and then checked to eliminate any spelling or grammatical mistakes before saving the report.

The teacher can also choose to use descriptors for topics such as Progress, Homework and Organisation.

When it is being set-up RM requires relevant class, student and teacher data to be exported from the school administration system straight into ReportMaster. The look of the finished report will depend on the template the school has supplied to Carn Software.

Before we started using ReportMaster staff were plagued with rewriting reports by hand when someone had made a mistake. However, many staff still had reservations about using an ICT based system to do something they had done by hand for decades.

But this is the 21st C so they had to bite the bullet. Some found that they were taking longer to complete reports but this was acceptable as they learnt to use the system. Other staff who were more computer literate, hit the ground running and wondered how they coped with the previous system for so long. Now, after several years of using ReportMaster, the entire staff is adamant that they would never go back to handwriting reports.

As far as Heads of Year, Form Teachers and Senior Management are concerned the new system has enabled them to monitor reports much more closely, making changes as necessary before deciding to print reports. While no system is totally foolproof, we have found that ReportMaster is able to do whatever we require and when we do hit a snag, Carn's staff can be relied upon to hastily respond to our requests.