HeadteacherChat's Review of <u>School Spider</u>
**Read the full review below...**

How does School Spider describe their product?

Are you a school that has to login to one system to manage your website, another to send communications to parents, a different one to setup a parents' evening, yet another to manage payments & bookings from parents and, finally, another for sending surveys or permission slips to parents? If so, how many pieces of software does your staff have to learn to use? How many apps do your parents have to download in order to do all of these things? But most importantly, how much is all this costing your school?

School Spider combines all of these items together, resulting in only one piece of software for business managers to master and use, saving valuable time. Parent/carer engagement is increased and, most importantly, it involves just one app for them to manage to interact effectively with all parts of school life.

Used and trusted by over 1,000 primary schools in the UK, *School Spider* is an all-in-one solution that is proven to save schools **up to £3,000 per year**, every year, due to the number of functions within just one piece of software. We combine everything from building your website, parent communication, bookings for parents' evenings, completion of forms & questionnaires, wrap-around care, payments + more, into one simple platform.

School Spider is the only software solution that allows schools and parents to have just one login for absolutely everything.
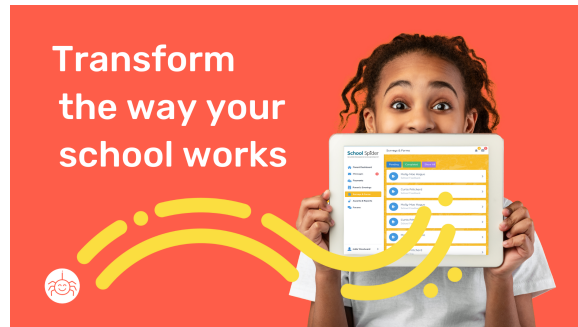
What does it enable you to do?

The key benefit of using School Spider is that it uses one piece of software for a multitude of vital school tasks. The software integrates with all major MIS systems (synchronising *every 15 minutes* to ensure data is always accurate) and all the School Spider components are linked. This means that a school no longer has to buy and familiarise themselves with multiple platforms, saving time and money. Each one of the *School Spider* platforms looks similar and operates intuitively, with clear, obvious menus. The three main products are Parent Communications, Website Design and Bookings & Payments, with the complete package available for £1290. Included in these are a Staff calendar and 'chat' function, and a section for pupils (discussions, blogs, and homework folders) that require a Pupil Verification Code and can be accessed either via the app or a web browser.

Parent Communications

The beauty of *School Spider* for parents is the immediacy of the communication from and to school. Messages can be sent to parents quickly and easily as emails, SMS or text messages. These are included in the package, removing the need for an additional texting service. Parents only require one set of login details for all their children. Templates can be used for frequently used messages e.g. to inform parents of a minor injury, saving school staff time, and every message can be individually set to allow or prevent replies, as required.

Parent/carer surveys can be sent and completed using the app, anonymously if required and with timescales for completion set. Very quickly, staff can send a gentle reminder to all those parents/carers who have not yet completed the survey. *School Spider* can then produce useful graphs and diagrams (pdf/Excel) for sharing with stakeholders showing results of questionnaires, changes in parental engagement etc.

Website design

School Spider staff create a bespoke design, rather than using a standard template that is adapted, and integrate it into the school's MIS. Content from current websites can be copied and transferred, if required. Once built, it is very user-friendly and individual user rights can be allocated to staff and roles within the school. The pages can easily be edited due to the intuitive layout. An 'Ofsted compliance' checker is included, again saving money as this is often an 'extra' that schools buy but, more importantly, this provides relevant reminders to staff ensuring key actions are completed in a timely manner.

Bookings and Payments

School Spider describes the enormous amount of time that this element saves Office staff in processing, recording and managing forms, money and refunds. The system has many uses, including regular purchases such as lunches, one off payments linked to trips (which can, usefully, be paid in instalments) and occasional purchases like items of uniform. Using the *School Spider* app, parents simply click on the items they wish to buy, which are added to their basket – just like many online stores. With one click they can pay using the bank card stored on the app.

Refunds can be issued very easily. In literally seconds, reminder invoices for late payments can be generated and sent to all parents owing money, with guardian/pupil names and individual amounts owed inserted automatically to personalise the invoice.

One feature particularly welcomed by parents is the app's ability to manage Child Care Vouchers. Parents/carers can easily add these, as well as the value of each voucher.

Benefits of using School Spider?

- Saves school money by not having to buy multiple systems
- Saves time spent on everyday simple tasks

- Makes it easy for staff to manage parental engagement
- Makes it easy for parents to engage and interact with your school
- Maximises parental engagement!

Links to videos
School Spider in 30 seconds
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRZMUpOpjik
5 minute introduction to School Spider
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUyXftkIQtg

In summary, HeadteacherChat recommends School Spider because:
'We love the simplicity of the concept. The idea of having a great website that can be made Ofsted compliant, which then enables you to communicate information to parents and carers, and for parents and carers to easily send payments, book events and communicate back to staff. We think that having one system that does all of that is such a good idea, and can see how it will benefit staff in terms of time saved and ease of use.
The team at School Spider are also great to work with, are really helpful, and support you when you need it.' LucyCoy, CEO, HeadteacherChat, November 22