

# Reporting school attendance during the COVID-19 crisis

## Devon County Council

When the COVID-19 crisis struck, and schools closed to all except vulnerable children and those of key workers, the existing reporting needed to be enhanced to make sure that children were kept safe. One of the key challenges that surfaced was how council workers accessed school attendance data – specifically for vulnerable children.



In the existing system – it was very time consuming for council workers to access data for vulnerable children, to check whether they were attending school or not. The COVID-19 crisis was a developing situation and schools were being closed, which increased the necessity of this solution.

There was an existing system in place to distribute the data on a daily basis to the council employees that needed access to it. However, the overall process of accessing this data took approximately 2 hours per day.

As Devon County Council are committed to delivering the best service to its constituents – creating easier and secure access to this data whilst saving time was imperative. By solving this challenge, council workers would be able to dedicate more time to supporting vulnerable children, in a situation where time is a vital resource.

What they needed

What we did

How it went

# What we did

We worked in partnership with Devon County Council to create an **automated** end-to-end data extraction and reporting solution, to give council workers access to the data they need.

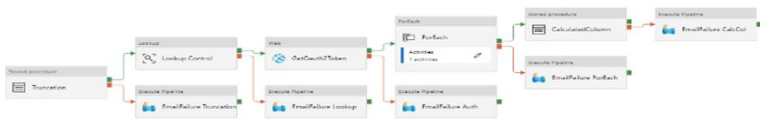
We enhanced existing systems using a variety of Microsoft data analytics tools including **Azure Data Factory, and Power BI** to connect to source systems such as CareFirst.

We designed and built a solution in collaboration with key users, to make it easy for authorised users to **access** the data they needed through Power BI dashboards, granting a central point to this data system, replacing the splintered legacy system.

Further to this, we added **security** parameters, so only authorised council employees could access this sensitive data.



Azure Data Factory



Power BI

# How it went

The result of this **cross-organisational** collaborative effort, was an end-to-end data extraction and reporting solution that has removed a **manual task** – saving **2 hours of work, per day, per employee** for DCC's Education Business Unit.

The key requirement of refreshing data on a daily basis without occupying a lot of council worker time was met. This was achieved by an **automated** process that ensured vulnerable child school attendance data was refreshed not once, but **seven times per day**. This means that the data can rapidly be accessed **securely** by **authorised** council workers, without them needing to perform time-consuming administrative tasks.

As data could both be accessed more quickly, and could be relied upon more confidently, this work **empowered users** to access data with greater confidence.

The **internal technology capability** of Devon's Educational team was increased, through training and guides provided to them by us. We collaborated with users and stakeholders to **design a system** that was user friendly, leading to wide **adoption** across the department.



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