

## Girton Grammar School



### Overview

#### Industry

- Education

#### Challenge

- Need to maintain continuity of education in the face of global crisis
- Perimeter protections insufficient to protect dynamic workforce
- Lean security team charged with defending distributed infrastructure
- High level of public and parent concern for protection of data

#### Results

- Cyber AI allows school to maintain operations in remote conditions
- Full visibility achieved across complex cyber ecosystem
- Self-learning technology prioritizes threats, saving time and resources
- AI Autonomous Response immediately contains cyber-threats as they emerge

### Business Background

Girton Grammar School is an independent co-educational school located in Central Victoria, Australia. Founded in 1884, it is one of Australia's oldest schools and consistently aims to achieve excellence in all facets of education. Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, all schools in Australia were closed, but classes needed to continue online; amplifying Girton Grammar School's digital presence. Taking a proactive and adaptive approach to cyber security accordingly became a crucial step for Girton Grammar School – ensuring that its leading educational services remain resilient in the face of global challenges, both presently and in the future.

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Darktrace gives us the assurance that we are fully advanced in cyber, which is in line with our greater mission to achieve excellence in all endeavors at our school.

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**Carl Sillery, ITC Manager, Girton Grammar School**

### Challenge

Each year, the school provides 350 junior school students with laptops and desktop computers that can be used in school, and also allows 750 senior school students to bring their own device under its BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy. With an expansive digital estate that spans a diverse range of users, Girton Grammar School wanted to find a solution that would simplify its cyber security strategy and grant more visibility into its dynamic workforce.

Moreover, the school has a lean IT team of only four people that oversees all users, devices, and systems across the entire institution. In addition to keeping the school's network safe, the IT team is also tasked with administrative work, such as writing reports and resolving technical issues for staff and students alike. With limited time and resources dedicated to cyber security, the school needed a tool that could allow its IT team to secure its entire cyber ecosystem as efficiently as possible.

Lastly, there was a significant amount of concern from parents and the public regarding the privacy and protection of students' data. Perimeter security was deployed as part of the initial cyber security strategy, but proved insufficient when it came to the school's need to promptly identify and respond to threats across the entire organization. This ultimately led Girton Grammar School to look beyond traditional security tools and seek a proactive approach for its cyber security strategy.

## Solution

After a successful 30-day Proof-of-Value (POV), Girton Grammar School decided to deploy Darktrace's Immune System technology across its entire digital business in order to unify its security strategy, as well as grant its team much-needed time and crucial insights.

"We knew that our networks are reasonably safe," notes Carl Sillery, ITC Manager at Girton Grammar School. "However, before we started with Darktrace, we did not know what we did not know." Indeed, Darktrace's unique user interface, known as the Threat Visualizer, allowed its IT team to achieve complete visibility into its digital estate. Moreover, with Darktrace's AI immune system continuously monitoring raw network traffic to detect potential threats, the team knew that it could be aware of what was happening across its networks at all times.

He emphasizes that, while the team used to have to typically "spend four hours digging from scratch" in order to "sniff out" possible threats, identifying suspicious traffic is now made easy with Darktrace's Cyber AI Analyst which automatically triages, interprets, and reports on the full scope of security incidents that occur. This allows its IT team to buy back time to focus on strategic work. "Darktrace made everything so much easier," Mr. Sillery affirms—"it radically simplified something that was incredibly complex."

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It is so much easier to implement AI than to constantly search from scratch. Darktrace brought a game-changing amount of visibility and convenience to our team at a challenging and unprecedented time.

**Carl Sillery, ITC Manager,  
Girton Grammar School**

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## Benefits

From COVID-19 to potential future crises that require the school to maintain continuity of education virtually, the school must continue to defend students and teacher data no matter where they sit – and the team anticipates seeing an increasing number of VPN connections.

Despite being tasked with remote working, Girton Grammar School's IT team uses Darktrace every day and remains connected with its IT infrastructure at all times with the Darktrace Mobile app. "Even if the team is not physically present, the school can still function" Sillery comments. Darktrace's Mobile App enables access to the Threat Visualizer and allows the team to benefit from the unparalleled threat detection, investigation, and response that Darktrace's Enterprise Immune System offers. With push notifications that alerts to in-progress attacks and one-click confirmations of Antigena suggested responses, the team is now able to view and contain threats within seconds.

"Darktrace's AI helps give the visibility for these connections," Sillery underscores, "flagging data breaches or anything else that is strange and unusual. Sillery concludes "We feel sure that nothing bad will happen, even when we are away. This peace of mind is crucial, as it allows us to fully move forward with our educational mission as a school."

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