aurion

Heathdale Christian College

Industry: Education
Employees: ~280 full-time + ~30 casuals
Solution: Software as a Service (SaaS)
Customer since: 2019

In early 2019 Heathdale College in south west Melbourne decided to make a strategic switch from a manual, paper-based payroll and HR system to a centralised, automated solution with Aurion. After 10 months of preparation and planning, Heathdale has rolled out several Aurion modules and brought hundreds of staff onto a modern payroll system complete with online employee self-service.

"Our criteria for the new HR information system were that it was adaptable to change and could be built up in stages to where we wanted to go, and I think that was a real strength of Aurion."

Rebecca Cassar
People, Engagement & Development Manager
Heathdale Christian College

Finding the right solution

Heathdale College wanted to implement an end-to-end payroll and HR system that could manage up to 310 staff across two campuses on a host of different awards for teaching, kindergarten, support, and maintenance, but more importantly, as a growing community, they required a system that could also support the growth of their staffing requirements.

When Rebecca started at Heathdale in 2018, there was only a very basic paper-based system. She couldn't access the information she needed to run reports or easily see who was in which position. "We went on a journey of finding the right solution for our needs, and Aurion was a strong provider from the beginning of our project review," she said.

Planning implementation

The first project in Heathdale's Aurion implementation was to ensure the database was set up correctly.

"It was a large project task," said Rebecca. "If you asked our Finance Manager, she'd say 'I'll never do it again!', because the data that she was taking from the old payroll system wasn't necessarily correct, which meant we were required to confirm the data prior to upload to the Aurion database."

The team at Heathdale realised early on that they'd need to schedule enough time to do their day-to-day tasks alongside the Aurion implementation project. With help from their Aurion project manager, they created room in the project plan for the implementation, which began in November 2019 and was ready by July 2020, giving them time to perform and test trial pay runs.

Although all the Aurion enhancements streamlined Heathdale's HR and payroll processes, it was a lot of change for their staff. However, Heathdale staff were supported through the rollout, with training, drop-in sessions, and extensive notes and videos.

The first upload test in January 2020 suffered from a lack of quality data. But the team put in much effort for the next data load, which was successful, and learned a lot from the process.

Heathdale College now has a central Aurion database containing all staff information, with five team members from HR, finance and payroll accessing one source of truth for their personnel, which they know is correct based on the full-time-equivalent hours in the system.

Ready for change

Rebecca says they didn't initially realise the extent of the effort required for Heathdale's Aurion implementation or Aurion's full range of capabilities. But as Rebecca made clear, "We're not in IT, we're in the positions of HR and Finance!"

"You get comfortable with your own process, and we were in a prime position for change,"
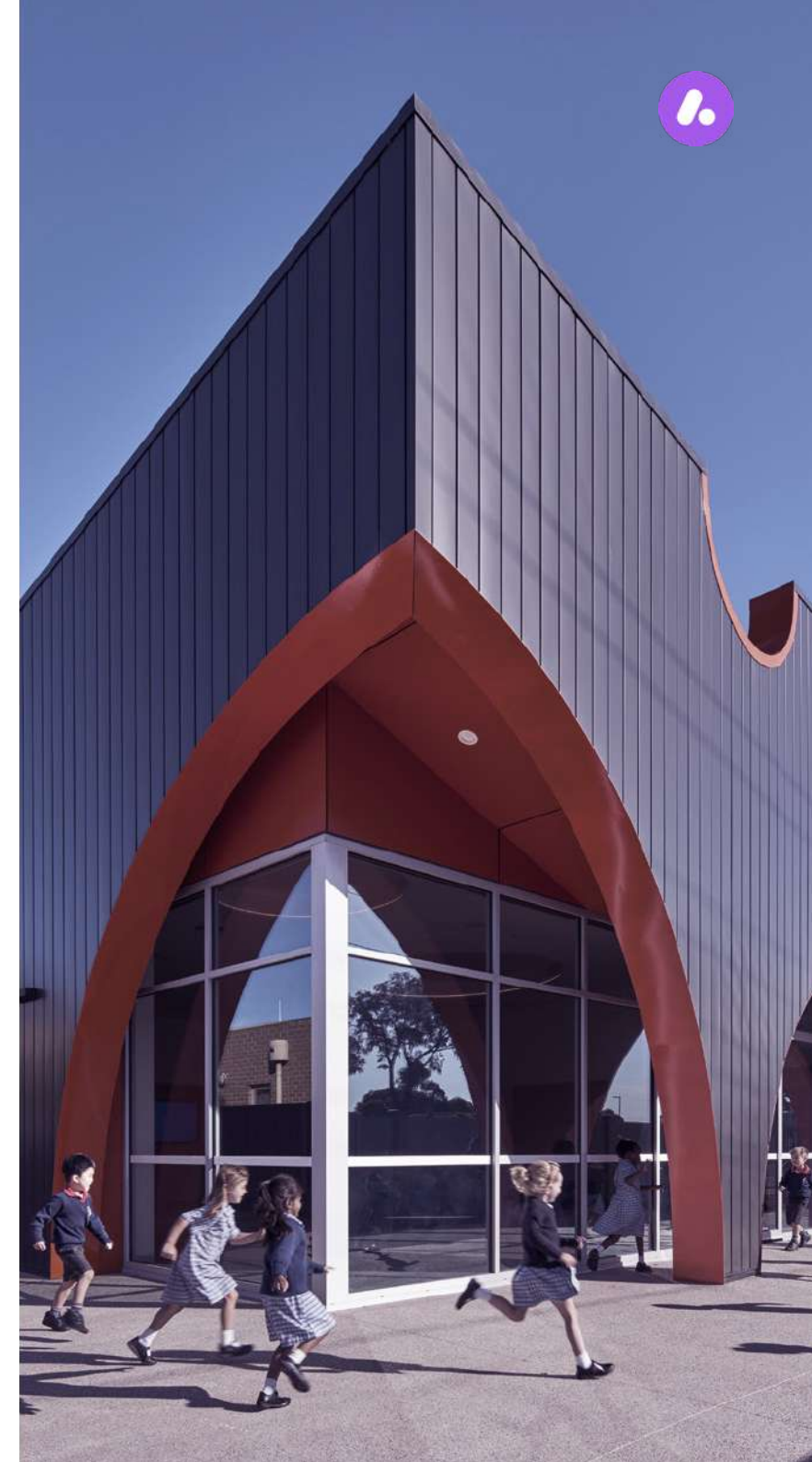
she explained. "Aurion is a great system, but there are restrictions with any system, you just have to know what those restrictions are and work it out."

Despite the challenges, Heathdale had a great result. "We were really happy with the result of the implementation," Rebecca commented, "it was a big project, 10 months in the making, plus additional modules were added to the Aurion core after the 10-month timeframe."

New HR capabilities

Heathdale Christian College has taken full advantage of the breadth of Aurion solutions. At launch in July 2020, their Aurion solution featured Payroll and then progressed to on-boarding new starters and employee self-service. They've now launched the Aurion Learning & Development module as well as Recruitment and are working on launching Career Manager in 2022.

"The last module to implement will be the Career Manager, as I knew that the College leadership would be requiring a system to support staff professional development," said Rebecca. "It was important that Aurion had the depth of modules to grow with our requirements."

"Our Aurion solutions consultant had very positive feedback on how we set up Career Manager," Rebecca explained. "We're calling it our professional growth plan, which includes a simple, easy-to-use teaching plan."

Rebecca and the Heathdale team regularly update the different forms associated with their Aurion modules, for instance, they recently added an exit survey to the separation form for departing staff, which streamlined this process for their admin staff and payroll function.

One Aurion module Rebecca singled out for praise is the Award Interpreter in Timekeeper, which saves the team time. Timekeeper has all the capability to interpret the different obligations and rules from the award in place for leave applications, as well as the boundaries and restrictions from Heathdale's leave policy.

Sharing HR experiences

Rebecca first used Aurion 15 years ago, when she was just starting her HR career, and she has used other HR information systems (HRIS) in different workplaces.

She thinks that schools have been a little too relaxed in taking up the latest technology and now realise they need to make life work better for their staff as well as their HR and payroll teams, so more schools are looking into modern HRIS and what solutions are available.

"I get lots of groups asking, 'what do you use?', and I say that Aurion has been a good system that provided what we need," says Rebecca, "and so I've promoted it in my HR networks."

In preparation for their own transition to Aurion, a group from another Christian college on

the other side of Melbourne visited Heathdale to experience their learnings from the Aurion implementation.

Building up to best practice

"We've learned a lot from our Aurion account manager, who's fantastic," says Rebecca. "Sometimes we go to her with a few issues and the expert knowledge she brings is impressive, as she always brings solutions for any concerns or issues that we have."

"As you can imagine, being a school, we were looking for a solution to track and manage COVID-19 requirements. I logged a request with Aurion on how to best manage this, and now staff can access and add any required information about vaccinations into Aurion via the self-service portal."

Key factors for success:

- Comprehensive online and in-person support
- Expert advice from Customer Advocate and Aurion Consultant
- Aurion Cloud Platform stability and performance

Let's Chat

Email hello@aurion.com
or call 1300 287 466