The Computing Practial Project

School Timetabler

Analysis

Background to and Identification of Problem

My client for my timetable is Mrs Lansdown, Head of Sixth Form at Hitchin Boys’ School and constructs timetables for the whole school.. Hitchin Boys’ School is a secondary educational establishment with a sixth form which is part of the Hitchin Sixth Form consortium with Hitchin Girls’ School and The Priory School. The school provides a secondary level education with the aim to carry out GCSEs, followed by further education towards AS and A2 exams. This is given by well trained staff with the use of projectors, interactive whiteboards and textbooks. Currently, I am studying form A2 at Hitchin Boys’ School sixth form and Mrs Lansdown is the head of the sixth form.

Description of the Current System

Currently, Mrs Lansdown uses Nova T6 to construct timetables for the whole school and, in conjunction with the other heads of sixth in the consortium, the sixth form. Nova T6 works in conjunction with the school management system SIMS, which has an SQL server containing staff and student information which Nova T6 has access to. Sadly, Nova T6’s automatic timetable construction functionality causes staff and students to travel unnecessary distances between lessons, even though classrooms are available within a small area. Currently, the timetable is initially constructed by Nova T6, then Mrs Lansdown manually adjusts the timetable to minimise distance travelled and other problems with the automatic system. In order to improve the automatic timetabling construction functionality, the new system would have to take in to account the distance between classrooms to reduce the distance travelled by staff over a day.

Identification of the Prospective User

Mrs Lansdown will be the immediate user of the system, but the system will be designed to allow for fast tutoring in the usage of the system, to allow all following heads of sixth form to continue to use the system.