Facit

Case study:

Witherslack Group

Facit's Identity Cloak significantly reduced video redaction time and manual effort for Witherslack Group, ensuring GDPR compliance.

Overview

Witherslack Group is the UK's leading SEN Education Provider of specialist education and child care for children and young people with special education needs.

Objectives

- Gather and operate video footage with integrity
- Ensuring compliance with GDPR and other data protection laws
- Ensure the safety of staff members and children across facilities
- Monitor footage for safety and behavioural training

> Identity Cloak is part of our GDPR compliance framework. We can respond to video SARs quickly, accurately and safely while keeping our pupils, staff and third parties safe.

Witherslack Group with 36 schools and learning centres across England, the Group is renowned for its holistic and integrated approach to education, care and therapeutic support.

Its commitment to improving outcomes is reflected in sector-leading Ofsted ratings, high levels of placement stability, high attendance rates and strong educational achievements for its young people.

At the heart of Witherslack Group's success is its unique "Team Around the Child" model, which is a seamless integration of education, therapy and care that creates nurturing environments where children can thrive. The Group's focus on developing life skills and independence, through its Futures programme, further strengthens each child's potential to contribute positively to society.

The Challenge:

Managing GDPR Compliance following Growing Video Requests

Across Witherslack Group's 36 schools, CCTV is used extensively to support a safe, secure and well-managed environment. The footage serves multiple purposes, from safeguarding and behavioural monitoring, to health and safety assessments and incident reviews.

Witherslack Group is the destination of choice for many parents, carers and education professionals looking for the best possible environment for children with additional needs. Incidents involving staff, pupils or external individuals occasionally arise.

With the introduction of GDPR, individuals gained more rights to access their personal data, including images captured on video. Parents and guardians can submit Subject Access Requests (SARs) and ask for copies of any data held about their child, including video footage.

Processing SARs involving video brings specific challenges. Under GDPR, when sharing footage, data controllers must ensure any identifiable information about third parties, such as other pupils, staff or bystanders, is redacted. This includes visual identifiers like faces, name tags and vehicle number plates, as well as audio elements where voices could identify individuals.
As data awareness increased, Witherslack Group saw an increase in SARs involving video footage.

The number of SARS created a need for a reliable, scalable and user-friendly video redaction solution to manage requests securely and in compliance with data protection law.

"**Identity Cloak** was the right tool for the job. We could process requests **in-house** and stay **compliant** while keeping the privacy of **all individuals** in our CCTV footage safe."

Kevin Spedding
Data Protection Coordinator

The Solution:

Facit's Identity Cloak, an AI-powered redaction tool

Kevin Spedding, Witherslack Group's Data Protection Coordinator, chose Identity Cloak to redact video across the Group's estate entirely in-house in a central location.

Why Identity Cloak:

- **Cost-effectiveness**
  The software offered robust functionality at a price that matched the Group's budget.

- **Live environment testing**
  The ability to trial the solution in a real-world setting before purchase gave Witherslack confidence in the tool's capabilities.

- **Comprehensive functionality**
  Identity Cloak delivered all the features promised, from automated tracking to simple manual editing.

- **High-quality support**
  Facit provided hands-on support and guidance throughout onboarding and implementation.

- **Regulatory confidence**
  The solution ensured the Group could meet GDPR obligations with confidence, consistency and security.

Identity Cloak in Practice:

High Standards in Data Security and Compliance

By combining automated redaction tools with manual editing options, staff can tackle even the most complex scenes with precision to keep all individuals private while preserving the context and integrity of the footage.

Identity Cloak's rich set of redaction features makes it perfect for the dynamic environments found in Witherslack schools. Some of the features used regularly by the Group include:

Automated face and object detection
Quick redaction of individuals not relevant to a SAR.

Manual override
Allows staff to unblur specific individuals or events where needed; for example, during an incident review where a clear view of specific actions is required.

Video trimming
Allows users to extract and redact only the relevant parts of long CCTV footage, which reduces workload and improves viewer experience.

High Standards in Data Security and Compliance

Incident Evidence and Legal Requests

Witherslack Group puts a premium not only on processing but also on storing and sharing of sensitive data, especially video footage. Identity Cloak integrates seamlessly into the Group's existing secure IT infrastructure. Redacted videos are stored and accessed under strict conditions, with encrypted storage and strict access controls in place.

Footage is only shared externally in exceptional circumstances, such as a statutory legal request. Internally, access to redacted footage is restricted to a small number of senior staff with safeguarding or compliance responsibilities.

This approach ensures that the Group meets its GDPR obligations and exceeds them by following best practice in data handling, which further builds trust with families and stakeholders.

Measurable benefits:

Since implementing Identity Cloak, Witherslack Group has seen:

- **Faster response times to video SARs.**
- **Cost-effective in-house processing.**
- **Greater confidence in data protection across the organisation.**
- **Improved awareness of GDPR compliance as the tool reinforces best practice.**

Identity Cloak has also led to greater transparency with families and stakeholders. Parents and guardians making requests receive clearer, more professionally redacted video evidence which builds trust in the Group's data handling processes.

> "Each video has its own context and challenges. One might be a playground altercation; another footage of classroom damage. Identity Cloak gives us the flexibility to tailor our redaction approach to the scenario"

Conclusion

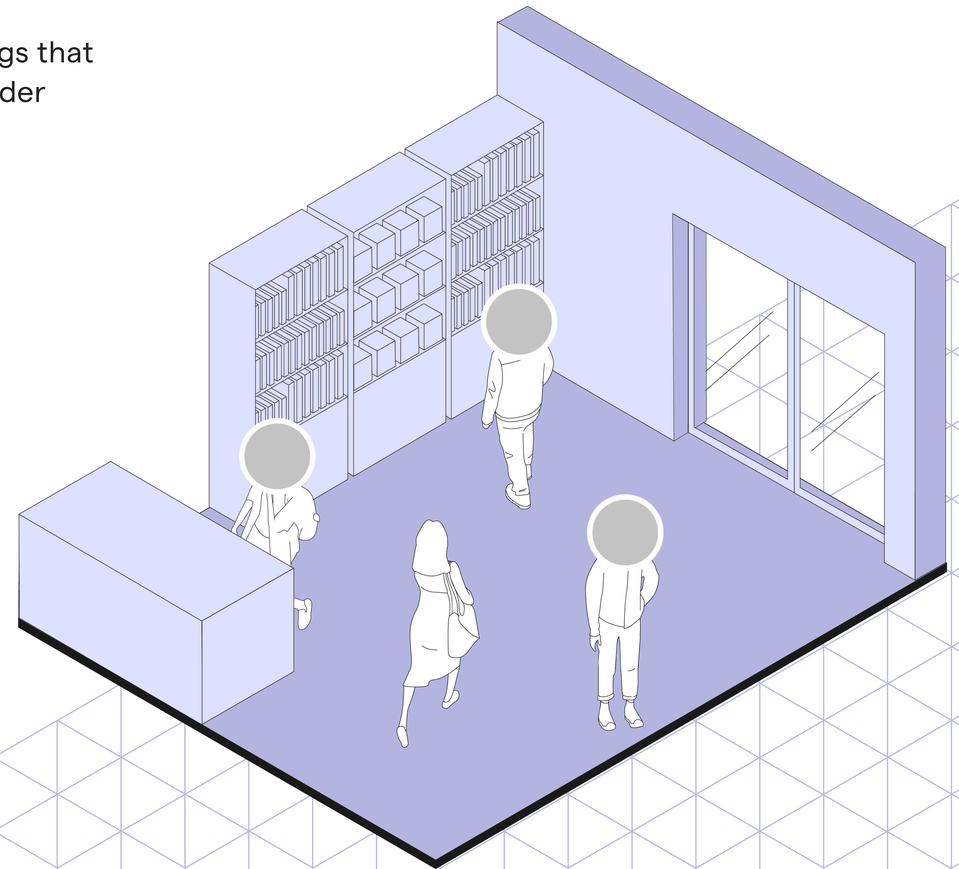
A Model for GDPR Video Compliance in Education

Witherslack Group's approach to data privacy and GDPR compliance is a benchmark for education providers across the UK. By using Facit's Identity Cloak, the Group has turned a growing operational challenge into an opportunity to improve its data governance.

In an industry in which safeguarding, trust and compliance are key, Witherslack Group's investment in best-in-class video redaction demonstrates its commitment to doing things that are right for its students, its staff and the wider community.

Stay on top of compliance with Identity Cloak

Facit's Identity Cloak video redaction software is quick and easy to use. Redact footage within minutes to ensure privacy for all.



About Facit

Cutting-edge compliance and video analytics software

Solve problems, create opportunities and enhance business operations

23	80+	2
Countries where Facit solutions are developed	Current customers	Technology patents granted

Commitment to quality. Simplicity. Excellence. Innovation

Commitment to quality
We offer consistently high-performing products thanks to years of in-depth team experience and innovative testing.

Simplicity
We offer simple solutions to complex problems, saving you time and resources.

Excellence
We help our clients future-proof their organisations with compliant document and video redaction solutions.

Innovation
We work with the brightest minds from around the world to deliver innovative solutions for our compliance and video analytics clients.

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