

Backup for education: The view from the DfE

What the latest guidance from the Department for Education and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) means for your school and the actions you need to take.

Latest DfE guidance on backing up and protecting data

In August 2020, the Department for Education and National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) shared updated guidance with schools following an increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infecting the education sector. The cyber-attacks appear to be taking advantage of system weaknesses such as unpatched software or poor authentication and “have had a significant impact on the affected education provider’s ability to operate effectively and deliver services.”

What do you need to do?

The latest guidance implicitly states the actions that all education providers should take to ensure they are protected against the effects of a possible cyber-attack or ransomware infection.

It is vital that all education providers urgently review their existing defences and take the necessary steps to protect their networks from cyber-attacks.

Along with your defences, having the ability to restore systems and recover data from backups is vital. You should ask your IT team or provider to confirm that:

- They are backing up the right data
- The backups are held offline
- They have tested that they can restore services and recover data from the backups

Read the latest advice from the NCSC [here](#)

Key definitions

Why hold backups offline

As ransomware attacks have grown to be more sophisticated over the years, onsite backup servers have become targets for cyber-criminals trying to ensure a ransom is paid.

An offline backup protects your data in a location that is separate from the network on which your live data sits. If your backup is on the same network as your live data and a ransomware infection takes hold, all data on the network including your backups is susceptible.

With Redstor your data is securely stored in two geographically separate data centres ensuring an airgap between your live data and your backup. Data is encrypted before it is sent to Redstor's data centres, meaning that even if there is a malicious file amongst your data it cannot compromise the platform.

The ability to restore systems and recover data

If you are infected by a ransomware attack then it is likely that all of your data, not just a single files, will be corrupted, it is therefore imperative that you are able to recover all of your data in a timely manner both from an operational standpoint and a compliance standpoint.

Many solutions tick the box of offline storage but with bandwidth limitations they can be extremely slow to recover or access vital data.

By utilising Redstor's InstantData™ you can easily restore files, folders or full servers and access data on-demand with streamed access, leaving you safe in the knowledge that you can recover and access your data in the event of a disaster.

How does this relate to data protection regulations such as the GDPR?

Article 32 of the GDPR sets out conditions for the security of processing data under the GDPR and gives additional guidance on what "technical and organisational measures" organisations must take.

Under Article 32 it is stated that organisations must have:

"the ability to restore the availability and access to personal data in a timely manner in the event of a physical or technical incident"

While this is in line with that latest guidance from the DfE and the NCSC, a key element under the GDPR is the "timely manner". Implementing a solution that would take days or weeks to recover data is not suitable.

How Redstor helps you meet the latest requirements

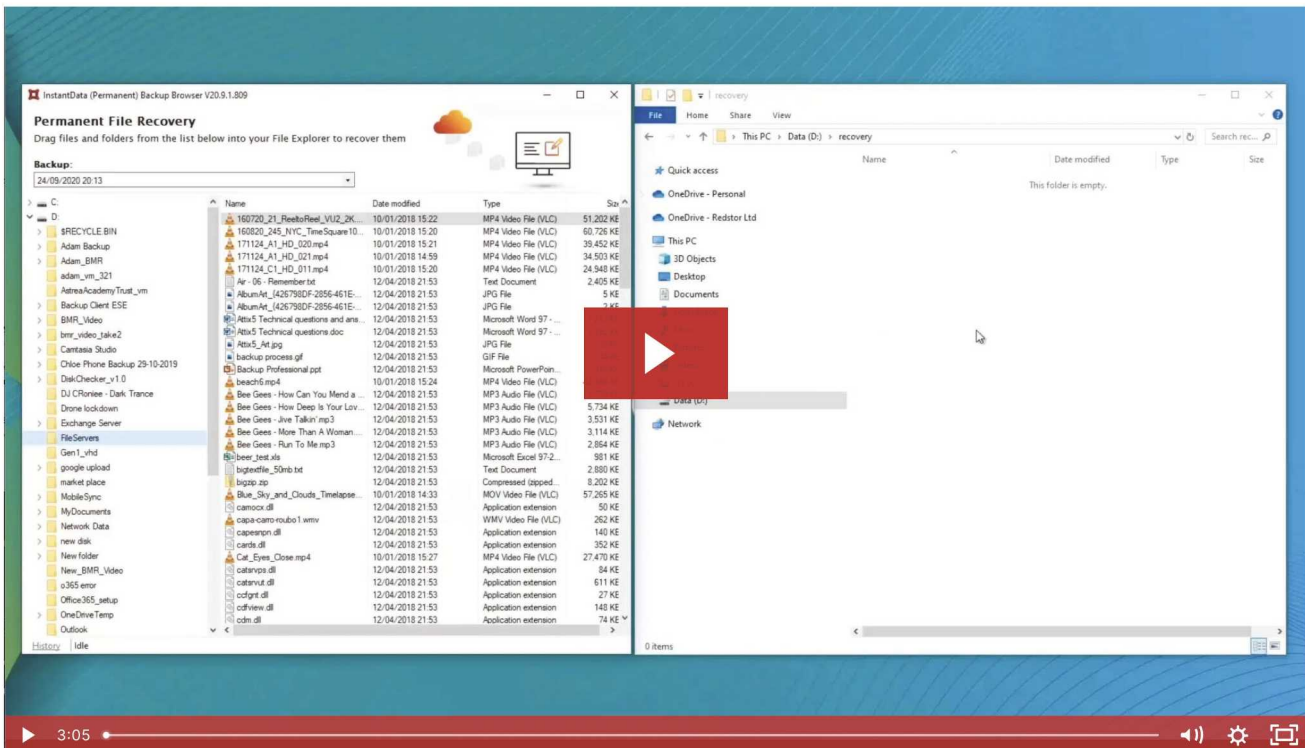
With Redstor you can easily select all data for protection and utilise Insight and industry-leading reporting to ensure all of the correct data is being backed up.

Data is encrypted before it is sent to Redstor's secure UK data centres, meaning that even if there is a malicious file amongst your data it cannot compromise the platform. By utilising InstantData™ users can then rapidly test recoveries and access data on-demand.

Not using Redstor or need help testing a restore? Speak to your service provider to understand how you can implement the solution and utilise InstantData™. Contact one of our specialists to arrange a free two-week trial.

Why Redstor

Watch how InstantData™ enables immediate access to data and allows for full server recovery from ransomware or for testing purposes, all in under 3-minutes:



Since 2005, Redstor (commonly referred to as RBUSS) has been delivered by a network of specialist education partners (including 70 Local Authorities), who trust Redstor to protect the data in over 12,000 educational establishments nationwide.

Redstor is the only Capita approved, fully automated, cloud backup and recovery service allowing schools and colleges to back up their data off-site, securely, over the Internet and/or dedicated IP links to our secure, remote data centres. As a cloud-first solution there's also no reliance on hardware and set-up can be done in as little as 15-minutes.