



## Waterkloof House Preparatory School Pretoria, South Africa

South African school uses SMART Board interactive whiteboards for participative learning

Waterkloof House Preparatory School (WHPS) is a private school in Pretoria, South Africa. There are about 350 boys, aged between six and 12, enrolled in Grades 0 to 7. Each class has about 20 pupils.

The school, which opened its doors in 1923, has a tradition of a relaxed teacher-pupil relationship, coupled with firm but fair discipline, integrity and sense of purpose.

In 2004, the acting principal of WHPS, Dorian Herringer, and information technology teacher, Gary Viljoen, with some scepticism attended a SMART Board interactive whiteboard presentation at a neighbouring school. Twenty minutes into the demonstration they were convinced that the SMART Board interactive whiteboard was far more than simply "a whiteboard with lights", and had signed an order for WHPS' first SMART Board.

By mid-2007, WHPS had installed 16 SMART Board interactive whiteboards, enabling it to stake its claim as the first school in southern Africa to have one SMART Board in every classroom.

The computer laboratory is equipped with 24 networked workstations, using SMART's SynchronEyes instruction software, which enables the teacher to monitor all the computers in the lab from his desk and give personal, immediate attention where it is needed.

# Case Study

### Challenge

Create a culture of excitement and sharing among teachers and a collaborative environment in the classroom.

### SMART solution

SMART Board interactive whiteboard

### Case result

Teachers benefit from each other's enthusiasm and lessons are more original so pupils absorb information more quickly.

This rapid implementation of SMART technology throughout the school ran ahead of schedule. The information technology steering committee had been formed in 2004 to develop a five-year phased plan for an IT infrastructure that could grow with the school's changing needs. But once the Parents' Association sat through a demonstration of the SMART Board, the programme was fast tracked.

Initially the SMART Board was put through its paces by a few teachers in a shared classroom at WPHS. They learned to use it, interrogated its software and extended their expectations of the technology. Once the technology-savvy teachers were comfortable with the SMART Boards, the next step was to encourage the more traditional teachers to use the technology.

Two teachers attended the SMART Masters Training Course, which equipped them with the knowledge and skills to train all the schools' teachers to use the interactive whiteboards. During the school year, ad hoc training is conducted to up-date and revitalise skills. "Having two teachers driving the programme has been invaluable," says Gary Viljoen. "A supportive atmosphere has been created which enables teachers to benefit from each other's enthusiasm and extend their use of the SMART BOARD interactive whiteboards."

The school is now moving into a lesson-development phase. "An interactive whiteboard, because it encourages the pupils – rather than the teacher – to interact with it, requires a huge change in the way a lesson is presented," says Viljoen.

He is now helping to research, create and present lessons for each grade and subject in the school using the SMART Board.

"This lesson development, which focuses on leveraging interactivity, includes the worksheets and tests for each lesson. By showing teachers what is possible and how to get the best out of the interactive whiteboards, we believe a culture of excitement and sharing will continue to grow among the staff."

Mathematics and economics management science teacher Brigette Theunissen, says that use of the interactive whiteboard has made her lessons more successful and "the boys have benefited considerably".

She says that, in the economics class, the World Wide Web is often accessed for current information and the boys devise their own notes from internet resources. "This is far more effective as a teaching method because they have researched the information together." It is in the mathematics class that the interactive software is most effective, particularly for teaching geometry.

Afrikaans teacher, Sanet Gioia, says using the SMART Board interactive whiteboard has encouraged her "to think about preparation in a more original way and be more careful in regard to planning". She has found that being able to work together on the screen to correct mistakes in sentences, vocabulary and word order without having to re-write whole sentences is an easy way for the boys to learn.

Dee Norris, English and science teacher, has found that sound and interactive quizzes are effective tools, engaging the boys in what they are learning. "Most pupils are visual learners and this method helps them absorb information."

The last word goes to Catherine Blackhall who teaches the Grade 0 class, the youngest boys in the school. "Using the SMART Board interactive whiteboards encourages a lot of discussion, which is valuable in getting the boys to think for themselves and express their views. This practical learning is always better for young pupils."



**Grade 0 teacher Catherine Blackhall finds the SMART Board encourages discussion and practical learning.**

"A supportive atmosphere has been created which enables teachers to benefit from each other's enthusiasm and extend their use of the SMART Board interactive whiteboards."

**Gary Viljoen, information technology teacher, Waterkloof House Preparatory School (WPHS)**

## About SMART

SMART Technologies Inc. is both the industry pioneer and global education market segment leader in easy-to-use interactive whiteboards and other group collaboration tools. The award-winning SMART Board interactive whiteboard is the most widely installed interactive whiteboard in the world. Many school jurisdictions have standardized on the product, which is used to provide interactive learning opportunities and enhance student achievement in more than 600,000 classrooms spanning every U.S. state, every Canadian province, every Local Authority in the UK and in more than 100 countries worldwide. SMART products also include interactive pen displays, interactive digital signage, wireless slates and software. Using SMART products, groups can access and share the information they need to meet, teach, train and present. SMART's education customers include New York City Board of Education (U.S.), Oxford University (UK), Kobe City Board of Education (Japan), Barrier Public School (Australia), University of Ottawa (Canada), United World College (Singapore), Stephen-Hawking-Schule Neckargemuend (Germany), Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (U.S.) and Harvard University (U.S.).

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