

Treorchy Comprehensive School Enables Student-Centered Learning

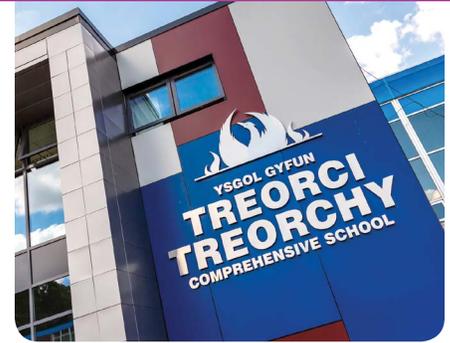
ScreenBeam boosts teacher well-being

Located in Wales' Rhondda Valley, Treorchy Comprehensive School is a mixed comprehensive with approximately 1,700 students on roll between the ages of 11-18. Forty percent of the students come from 20% of the most deprived areas in Wales. Treorchy has over 100 teachers who work hard to create a 'community school committed to excellence' in order to prepare students for successful futures. For example, Computer Science is an important area of the curriculum because it is expected to become a growing industry across Wales.

Treorchy's modernization plans are rooted in embracing technology to establish an educational environment that fosters overall student academic success and supports teacher well-being. In 2015, Treorchy was designated a Microsoft Showcase School and within two years, every teacher was equipped with a Microsoft Surface Pro, while classrooms and meeting spaces were updated with ScreenBeam wireless display. Together, these tools provide an engaging learning environment that gives teachers the mobility to quickly and easily address student concerns and minimise distracting behaviors, while positively supporting teacher well-being with the aim of reducing workload. According to a 2017 National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teacher survey of 800 teachers in Wales, 76% of respondents cite demanding workloads as their number one job concern, 57% say they are not provided with the resources to allow them to teach, and 85% report that their job negatively impacts their well-being.

Challenge: How to Make Education More Engaging while Supporting Teacher Well-Being

Students from seven feeder primary schools, and a number of extended feeder schools, choose to attend Treorchy due to its focus on high academic standards and it is well known for its adoption of digital technology. The school is also a Sixth Form center of excellence in Rhondda Cynon Taf for students aged 16-18. Growing enrollment means space is at a premium. So, many teachers don't have their own classrooms and must move from class to class during the day. Until recently, this situation presented issues to working efficiently because teachers needed to take time to log into systems whenever they changed classrooms.



School

Treorchy Comprehensive School

Population

Approximately 1700 students and 100+ teaching staff

Installed

ScreenBeam 960 wireless display receivers

Teacher Devices

Microsoft Surface Pros with Windows 10

"With ScreenBeam offering wireless orchestration and ease of connection, the goal for better teaching agility became a reality."

—Rhys Angell Jones
Treorchy Headteacher

Traditionally, classrooms had computers in the front connected to the wall to link to projectors, so all teachers were typically limited to standing in the front to teach and present content to students. This didn't bode well for personalising learning. And in terms of teacher well-being, the scenario also made it more difficult at times to identify disengaged students or students needing more attention and guidance.

According to Treorchy's Headteacher Rhys Angell Jones, school leaders determined that putting devices in the hands of staff would give them more agility in the classroom to better support student academic advancement and improve teacher well-being. After deciding that Microsoft Surface Pros would be the optimal portable computer option, he and the Deputy Headteacher met with a ScreenBeam expert and learned that ScreenBeam wireless display receivers include native connectivity to Windows 10-based systems. "With ScreenBeam offering wireless orchestration and ease of connection, the goal for better teaching agility became a reality," he says.



"ScreenBeam works regardless of Internet connection, so even if our Internet goes down, teaching doesn't stop."

— Matthew Davies
Treorchy Deputy Headteacher

The Payoffs of Teacher Mobility to Make Learning More Positive and Productive

Now with the systems in place schoolwide, teachers agreed that one of the truest benefits is how quick it is to connect to ScreenBeam. Even if they have to move from one classroom to another, they can simply walk into a room, use their Surface Pro and press Windows-K to automatically connect via the ScreenBeam wireless display receiver to the classroom screen, and quickly begin teaching.

Teachers also very much appreciate that ScreenBeam doesn't require Internet bandwidth because overall Internet bandwidth in Wales can be variable.

Beyond the technical practicalities, the Surface Pro/ScreenBeam combination supports engaging and flexible teaching methods that directly benefit students. In the past, even with interactive whiteboards, teachers largely had their backs to students to write on the boards, and students had to come to the front of the room to do interactive whiteboard activities. Now, with Microsoft Surface Pros and ScreenBeam, teachers face students and can teach from anywhere in the room. Engaging even reluctant students is easier because teachers can go to them in their space and interact with them rather than forcing them to stand up in front of peers.

Davies reports that one staff member told him that something as simple as taking the register is more interactive because they can take the register and actually see pupils who say, “yma (present in Welsh)” and relate to them rather than having their back to students.

In terms of teacher well-being, the ability to teach anywhere in the classroom has supported engagement of pupils, teachers can readily stand next to a pupil who is possibly misbehaving and also support them as needed immediately—making the learning environment more positive and productive.

Outside of the classroom, ScreenBeam is making meetings far more efficient. It is used for senior leadership team meetings, leadership forums, and fortnightly staff meetings, all of which are now paperless.

A Bright Digital Future

Looking ahead, Mr Angell Jones sees Treorchy continuing to move into the digital realm. Now, the school is working to establish a culture where pupils are less dependent on the teacher and are devising pupil-centered plans that put students at the center and taking responsibility for their learning. Such efforts would be impossible to facilitate without devices such as Surface Pros and ScreenBeam.

“I genuinely believe that technology can improve pupil outcomes and support staff well-being,” says Mr Angell Jones. “We’ve invested heavily in technology. A lot of people see it as a cost, but we think of it as a smart financial investment.”

Treorchy Comprehensive School



Industry Leader

ScreenBeam wireless display is the only solution that truly enables commercial deployment of secured and IT manageable wireless display. ScreenBeam wireless display is the industry standard for benchmarking and device interoperability, making it the most broadly compatible solution available.

Actiontec is Microsoft's co-engineering partner for wireless display technologies in Windows. Because of Actiontec's status as the industry leader, and our ongoing investment in supporting industry device manufacturers, you can be assured you're deploying the most broadly compatible, feature-rich wireless display platform.

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