

Keeping Students Engaged

St. Joseph's Secondary School Changes the Dynamics of the Classroom

St. Joseph's Secondary School is located in the small village of Rochfortbridge in County Westmeath, Ireland. Founded in 1954 by the Sisters of Mercy, the school continues its tradition of creating conditions for learning where everyone is enabled to approach life with confidence.

Preparing students for the challenges of a transformed economy and society has become a priority for entire Irish educational system. In November 2017, the Minister of Education and Skills launched a countrywide STEM Education Policy initiative to make Ireland a leader in the provision of STEM education. The goal of this ambitious initiative is to make Ireland a European leader in STEM education by 2026.

St. Joseph's has been named a Microsoft Associate Showcase School for its innovative use of technology to improve teaching and learning—a significant distinction, considering that there are only ten Microsoft Associate Showcase and Showcase Schools in the entire country.

The Challenge: Teachers Stuck in the Front of the Class

At St. Joseph's, teachers often display multimedia content onto projectors and whiteboards. About half of the teachers in the school's 55 classrooms use laptops or desktop computers to display their content; the rest have Microsoft Surface Pros equipped with Microsoft OneNote and Office 365. But no matter what source device was used, teachers were still restricted by the physical limitations of cables. They remained tethered to their desks—often at the front of the classroom—and were unable to interact with students or provide individual attention without interrupting the lesson.

"I wanted to change the way teaching and learning occurred in our school," explains Teacher Stephen Eustace. In addition to teaching Math, Accounting, and ICT, Stephen manages the school's IT department and introduced OneNote and Office 365 to the school and was instrumental in bringing the Surface Pros into the classrooms. He wanted St. Joseph's



School

St. Joseph's Secondary School

Population

860 students and 71 faculty

Installed

35 ScreenBeam receivers in classrooms and multi-purpose areas around the school

Teacher Devices

Microsoft Surface Pro with OneNote and Office 365

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St. Joseph's Secondary School

teachers to reap the full advantages of the tablets in terms of mobility, so that they would have the freedom to move around the classroom and engage with students.

So the search was on for a wireless technology solution. After trying several products, the school selected Actiontec's ScreenBeam wireless display receiver because ScreenBeam was the only product on the market that was compatible with many of the school's VGA-only projectors.

Setting up ScreenBeam and establishing a wireless connection between the Surface Pro and the projector was easy, according to Stephen.

"I installed ScreenBeam on the projector and plugged in the VGA cable. On my tablet, I just dragged my finger across the screen, connected to the projector, and the contents on my tablet appeared on the projector screen."

With a wireless connection, teachers now have the flexibility to move around the classroom while projecting lessons onto the display. "Teaching with your back to the students is not what it's about," says Stephen. "Engagement happens when you face the students or are side-by-side with them."

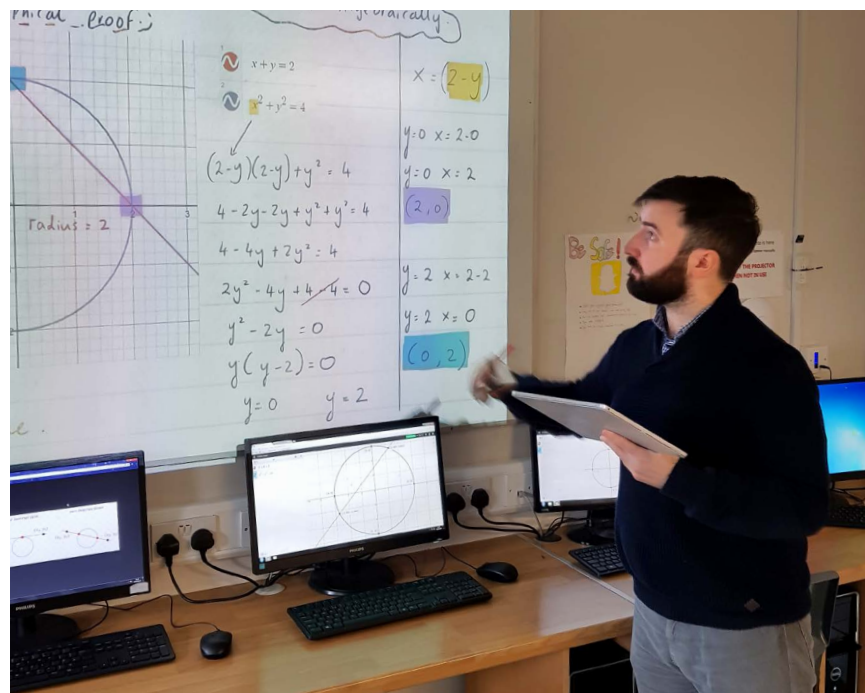
Mobility Makes the Most of Class Time

Having the ability to present from anywhere in the classroom helps teachers make the most out of their 40-minute classroom sessions. Explains Stephen, "When I bring my device over to help an individual student, everyone else is benefiting from that assistance because they all can see it. That's pretty awesome. It's a very effective use of my time. Class time is short and anything that you can do to make it more efficient is fantastic."

ScreenBeam has been incorporated into a wide range of curricula at St. Joseph's, including Math, English, Irish and other languages, and even hands-on subjects, such as metalwork and woodwork. Principal Eileen Alford is pleased with how teachers have been using ScreenBeam to enhance learning. "I am very proud that teachers have embraced change in their classrooms," she says. "Teachers are tailoring the lessons even further and ScreenBeam is allowing our educators to teach untethered. Teacher and student interaction and collaboration has been greatly enhanced and our students are being prepared for the future through high-quality inclusive and interactive teaching."

Learning Becomes Interactive—and Fun

Stephen believes that ScreenBeam has been effective in helping him engage and motivate his students about math, including those who are less enthusiastic about the subject. "Most of our students are interested in technology," he says. "So they love using my tablet. I can actually hand



them my tablet and they get really excited. Even when students don't want to answer a math problem, they will try to answer it on the tablet because they want to use the technology. It gets them engaged with the lesson."

Student-Led Success

With greater agility in the classroom, teachers are better able to promote student-led learning and monitor classroom behavior at the same time. "I don't have to be the person solving that math problem," explains Stephen. "I can pass the device around and let the students show their idea of what the solution might be. ScreenBeam allows you to be a guide on the side, rather than the sage on the stage."

Stephen reports that ScreenBeam helps him get off-task students to refocus by conducting the lesson from the back of the classroom. "Some of my students like to sit at the back of the class and have a little chat," he says. "They need to focus. So I sit in the back of the class with them. You can believe the engagement is ten times better because I'm there. ScreenBeam allows me to get close to the students, to give them direct monitoring and assistance."

Future-Ready

St. Joseph's will be increasing its use of rich multimedia tools with ScreenBeam wireless display in the classrooms. Says Eileen, "We are always looking to the future, with a view to enhancing teaching and learning in our school. We have been looking at the new ScreenBeam Classroom Commander and we feel that it would be a truly transformative tool in the classroom. Students love demonstrating their learning and ScreenBeam Classroom Commander allows them to do this in a very natural and interactive manner."



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. ScreenBeam solutions are used as the validation platform for wireless display functionality by companies like Microsoft, Intel, and leading PC OEM and device companies.

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 that you're deploying the most broadly compatible, feature-rich wireless display platform.



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