

Mobility Leads to Teaching Innovations

at the Sacred Heart School



Founded in 1839 by the Sisters of Mercy, the Sacred Heart School is an all-girls Catholic secondary school in Tullamore, Ireland. Renowned for its academic prowess, the school offers a broad curriculum complemented by a variety of extracurricular activities. In keeping with the Mercy tradition, the school is also recognized for its charitable work as well as its commitment to the belief that school days should be among the happiest of a person's life.

To foster new teaching innovations, the school has always made it a priority to integrate technology into the classrooms. A few years ago, teachers began to supplement their core curriculum by displaying multimedia content using PCs connected to whiteboards and projectors. In 2013, Sacred Heart gave teachers Microsoft Surface Pro tablets. But while the tablets were mobile, the teachers were not—yet.

At that time, the tablets weren't connected to the projectors, so the teachers remained tethered to their desks. As teacher Gloria Enrique explains, "They gave us time to get comfortable working with the tablets before we started searching for a wireless solution to give us full mobility. Our school management encourages teachers and students to explore and innovate."

The Challenge: Untethering Teachers to Fully Embrace Technology

The school selected Actiontec's ScreenBeam wireless display receiver to provide a dedicated point-to-point connection between the teachers' tablets and classroom displays or projectors. Now, instead of being stuck behind a projector or at their desks, teachers are free to move around the classroom while projecting content.

"The classroom environment changes a lot when you're moving around," Enrique says. "You see the students' faces. You can look at their work to see if they actually understand the lesson. You can come back to a point without singling out a student."

School

Sacred Heart School, Tullamore

Population

750 students and 50 faculty

Installed

ScreenBeam receivers
across classrooms

Teacher Devices

Microsoft Surface Pro 3 with OneNote

"You can see that they are learning. And they are actually enjoying themselves. For a teacher, it's very rewarding to see that your students are enjoying the class."

—Gloria Enrique, Teacher
Sacred Heart School

Learning Becomes More Interactive

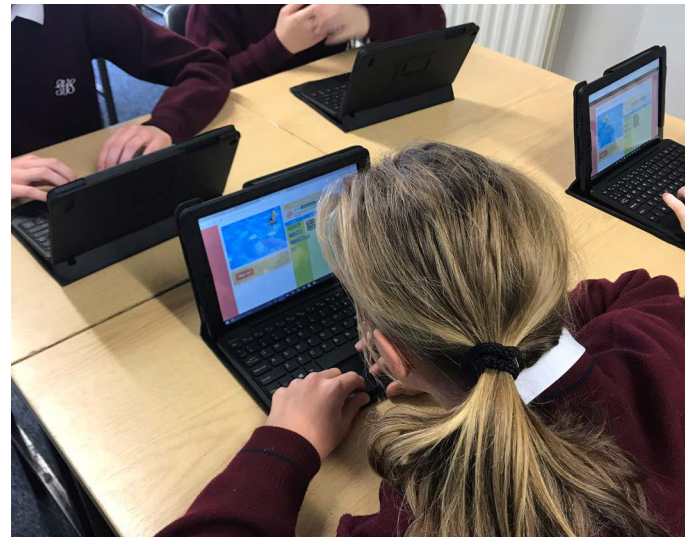
Encouraged by the early success of mobile teaching, Sacred Heart took interactivity to the next level in 2016, giving first- and second-year students Lynx 10 tablets with Windows 10. Enrique, who teaches religion, geography, and civics to first- and six-year students, reports that having a wireless connection has increased student engagement and participation. “It’s transforming how teaching and learning outcomes occur in the classroom,” she explains. “It brings subjects to life. Learning is becoming more interactive.”

Teachers have the flexibility to provide individualized attention, making the instruction more meaningful and accessible. “We can display the work the students are doing on their tablets,” says Enrique. “Or allow the students to use their tablets and interact with different content. We can rearrange our classrooms to have students work in groups. Teachers have proximity control and can see what they are doing. Students can ask questions at any point because we are close by.”

According to Principal Pauline McKenna, having a wireless connection with ScreenBeam has particularly enhanced learning for more complex subjects.

“The use of ScreenBeam has allowed us to approach teaching and learning from a visual perspective, which in a girls’ school is particularly welcome. Our approach to complex concepts, such as those presented in math, chemistry, and history, can now be condensed in images, thus embedding the concepts at a much deeper level.”

It is also easier for teachers to incorporate student-led teaching into the classroom. “We can give them more freedom to do their own discovering,” says Enrique. “It allows students to express themselves in different ways, while still being responsible for their own study. Teachers help and direct, but the students are the ones discovering, searching, and creating.”



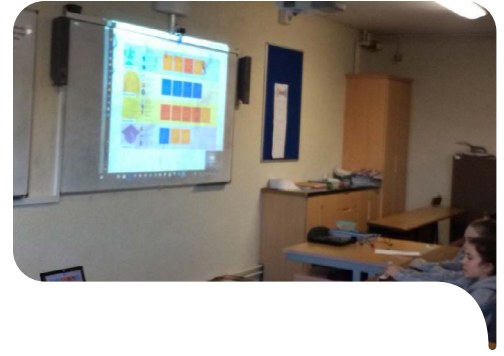
Keeping Students Engaged— 15 Minutes Longer

In 2016, the school began a several-year campaign to equip each student with a mobile device, starting with the first-year students. In the following school year, Sacred Heart extended the class period from forty-five minutes to an hour. That normally would present a challenge, but with the ability to devise new digital learning strategies, first-year teachers were able to fill the additional 15 minutes of class time with engaging new lessons that kept students focused and motivated.

Enrique created activities using Kahoot!, a game-based platform for learning, and Quizlet, a mobile and web-based study application. Students play on their tablets with answers projected on the screen. “You can see that they are learning. And they are actually enjoying themselves. For a teacher, it’s very rewarding to see that your students are enjoying the class,” says Enrique.

Exploring New, Innovative Ways to Teach

Recently, Enrique's first-year civics class collaborated on a global education project with Grupo Sorolla, a school in Valencia, Spain. Part of the project included a Skype-a-Thon, where each class shared songs and facts about their schools and countries. Enrique used the camera on her tablet and wireless connection via ScreenBeam to Skype with the class in Spain. The Spanish class was projected onto the screen in real-time.



The Future: Managing Student Devices with ScreenBeam Classroom Commander

Enrique notes that motivating and engaging learners in an interactive learning environment requires new skills and tools. "We're still discovering the best ways to give our students a better learning experience. Creating digital resources that engage learners in a one-to-one environment can be challenging and time-consuming."

To increase the level of student interaction and help teachers make the most of instructional time, Sacred Heart is considering combining wireless display with ScreenBeam Classroom Commander, a wireless orchestration system that adds real-time student device monitoring and control.

"We are looking forward to the possibilities that Classroom Commander offers in providing real-time feedback and personalized learning," says Enrique. "Classroom Commander allows you to observe the students' working process and provide really beneficial feedback during the process—when it really matters. I think it could prove really beneficial to help us support the students during the learning process and as they become lifelong learners."

With Classroom Commander, students can present their work right from their desks onto the classroom display. Teachers will have the ability to preview the student screens beforehand. "We are already giving the students the opportunity to become the experts and teach their peers," she says. "But Classroom Commander will make that seamless, while saving much-needed time during the lesson. I'm really excited about allowing the students to present from their devices onto the whiteboard with just a click of a button."

"Teaching and learning has changed," she adds. "Students aren't just writing and copying; they are creating. And they are preparing for the future by enhancing their digital literacy."

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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