

Engage case study

St Cyprian's School

Principal Sue Redelinghuys



St Cyprian's is a highly rated independent school for girls aged between 3 and 18, situated on the lower slopes of Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa. Full or weekly boarding is available to high school students. It is a Round Square school and has 940 students on its role, a number that will grow past 1000 in the near future.

Website www.stcyprians.co.za

IT and Innovations Manager

Sarah Mitchell



St Cyprian's School in Cape Town was founded in 1871 but has a completely modern approach to the personal development of the girls that it nurtures, as Sue Redelinghuys, the school's Principal, explains: "Our Anglican school culture and values are paramount. The extraordinary staff that work here buy into that and the girls and their parents choose us for our core values of respect, integrity, compassion and accountability.

"We are a Round Square school; as a member of this global organisation we adhere to a common philosophy that teaching and learning happens as much out of the classroom and independently as it does in formal education. We focus on ownership and real-life learning, problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication and the development of character.

"St Cyprian's has a passionate group of young girls that, influenced by the St Cyprian's philosophy, are social activists devoted to equity and social justice. They have a voice which is not crushed within school but encouraged, within boundaries.

"We also took a very intentional decision several years ago to embrace a 21st Century approach to learning by fully integrating our use of technology to improve learning, rather than just using devices in a standalone way. Our decision to install Engage has made an enormous difference and enabled us to deliver that integrated approach while also improving access to information and enhancing our environmental custodianship by moving towards a more paperless society."

St Cyprian's signed for Engage in June 2016 and conducted a full roll out to all teaching staff

by January of the following year.

"I cannot believe it now, it's almost as if we've had Engage forever," states Sarah Mitchell, the school's IT and Innovations Manager. "To ensure a successful implementation we set ourselves goals to have the Parent Portal and Parent App ready at the end of that first term to publish the first set of reports. We achieved that and much more as well. We soon realised how Engage was improving our efficiency. Having one centralised database and a system which works across everything is just so good."

Engage also delivers the school's requirement to track academic achievement and attributes that are much less measurable, as Sue explains: "We have a very personalised approach to teaching and learning and a very relational culture between our students and the teachers. We work together not only on the academic side, but also on personality, character, values and the other things that make our students very special young ladies by the time they leave St Cyprian's.

"We track the measurables in Engage but also capture things like commendations, to help us understand personal development as well as academic achievement over time, exactly in line with the school's values and objectives.

"I have been absolutely delighted with the functionality of Engage," Sue concludes, "as well as the inherent message that our use of it gives to all our stakeholders, teachers, students, parents and beyond. It especially meets the needs of a younger generation of parents and students who have grown up in this era." 

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