

## Engage case study

# Pridwin Preparatory School

### About the school

Pridwin Preparatory in Melrose, Johannesburg, is a day school for boys, described by *The Economist* as a world Ivy League school, alongside Michaelhouse in KwaZulu-Natal.

From its origins with six pupils in 1923 the school these days is almost up to capacity with 463. To cope with this growth, it has followed a plan of continuous development, for its pupil development as well as its infrastructure.

### Website

[www.pridwin.co.za](http://www.pridwin.co.za)

### Deputy Head and Head of Operations

Eswée Prinsloo



Named after King Arthur's ship *Prydwyn*, the legend is woven into school life, with the school's four houses named after Knights of the Round Table – Bedevere, Galahad, Lancelot and Tristram.

Apart from academics, all boys are expected to play a musical instrument, read and write music, join in the athletics programme whilst choosing one or more sports.

With its Integrated School Day Approach, Pridwin boys leave school soon after 4.30pm, having completed their classes and sports fixtures for the day, as well as their homework. Home time is therefore home time.

### Change

By 2014, it had become obvious that the existing limited school management software was restraining the school's vision.

"The curve of our growth plans and forward thinking innovation could not be met with our existing software," said Eswée Prinsloo, Deputy Head and Head of Operations. "We created a list of requirements and evaluated nine systems. From this, we arranged three-hour long presentations from five companies, looking at usability, functionality, and their ability to grow with us. Engage stood out in every area. There was no doubt regarding the choice to be made.

"As soon as the Executive Team realised Engage's benefits, momentum shifted and buy-in was quickly established throughout the school. We implemented the change by creating a Steercom, which I chair to ensure everyone stays on track. This way we can meet our objectives and ensure the team is fully trained at all times."

### Communications

"Before Engage, WhatsApp groups were in use and had become a nightmare," Eswée recalls. "We would all have hundreds of notifications each week, most of which were valueless and time wasting.

"Engage now runs our comms strategy which works really well, using the Engage Portal, its App, SMS and Email. All comms are targeted, including timetables, fixtures, notifications and newsletters.

"Engage comms is streamlined. If a parent receives a communication, they know it's relevant to them and respond. The use of WhatsApp Groups by staff has been stopped."

Summarising the benefit that Engage has brought to Pridwin, Eswée states: "There's no confusion with Engage – it helps us to achieve our growth curve."

