

Chromebooks help pupils at CSG De Waard learn skills for the 21st century



At a Glance

What they wanted to do

- Place more of an emphasis on teaching 21st-century skills, and tailor education to individual learners.

What they did

- Bought 500 Chromebooks, and trained teachers to use Google Drive and Google Apps for Education.

What they achieved

- Created a personalised learning platform for pupils.
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Background

CSG De Waard is a Christian educational organisation that operates 15 primary schools and two special needs schools. In 2014, it celebrated the 150th anniversary of the first Christian school on Hoeksche Waard, an island to the south of Rotterdam. Today, it has just over 3,000 pupils and 400 teachers.

Before the organisation began using Chromebooks, each school had a single server and network, and each classroom had two PCs. These were managed by a third party, which was expensive, and CSG De Waard wanted more pupils to have access to more computers and more flexible IT. It therefore began reviewing the available options.

The solution

Upper-School Education Director Tejo Vink was familiar with Google Apps, and kept a close eye on developments in the IT world via Internet forums. He and a number of his colleagues attended meetings on digital education and spoke to experts on the subject.

Eventually they chose a new system, which they now refer to as “Internet school”. They bought just over 500 Chromebooks for the 17 educational establishments, and all the staff have since made Google Apps an essential part of their teaching. “They weren’t familiar with things like document sharing and the idea of being able to log in from home,” Vink says. “But we held two training days, which were a huge help. We use Google Drive as a central platform, and we’ve also started using Hangouts for chat and video conferencing.”

“Using Chromebooks, we’ve created a school system that paves the way for the future.”

—Tejo Vink, Director of Upper-School Education, CSG De Waard

The benefits

The advantages were immediately apparent. The Chromebooks can be accessed any time and from any location, so while they are kept at school, staff and children can log in to work from home. The hardware is fast, user-friendly and extremely flexible, with high-quality screens that can be operated using a separate keyboard. Chromebooks are also better for teaching material that requires pupils to input answers, since tablet keyboards take up a large part of the screen.

“Digital education is the future,” Vink says. “Society is changing, and schools must change with it. They’re teaching 21st-century skills and devoting less time to one-on-one knowledge transfer. Chromebooks and Google Apps for Education are an important way of developing these skills.”

About Google Apps for Education

Over 30 million students, faculty, and staff use Google Apps for Education worldwide. Google Apps is a free suite of hosted email and collaboration applications exclusively for schools and universities. You can learn more and sign up to try it out by visiting our website:

www.google.com/edu

About Google Chromebooks

Chromebooks are fast, portable computers that give students access to the web's rich educational tools & resources. Educators can manage Chromebooks easily from their web-based Admin Console. And starting at just £199 per device including Google Apps for Education for free, these computers make technology affordable for schools. You can learn more here:

www.google.com/edu/products/devices/



The pupils use web-based software, allowing them to work at their own pace and develop their creativity and problem-solving skills, while leaving them feeling much more engaged and motivated.

There are also many benefits for the teachers and ICT specialists. They share documents, spend less time in physical meetings, and have to do less work before and after lessons, freeing up time for other tasks. The ICT staff spend much less time on maintenance and management, and can now focus on integrating ICT into education.

“The infrastructure is very important,” Vink explains. “The Google management console is a huge help, and the Chromebook desktop can be adapted to each pupil. They can’t install programs, but they can use the Internet freely, and we teach them how to use it. Instead of putting a fence round the swimming pool, we teach them to swim. They’re bound to see things they shouldn’t sometimes, but we teach them how to deal with these.”