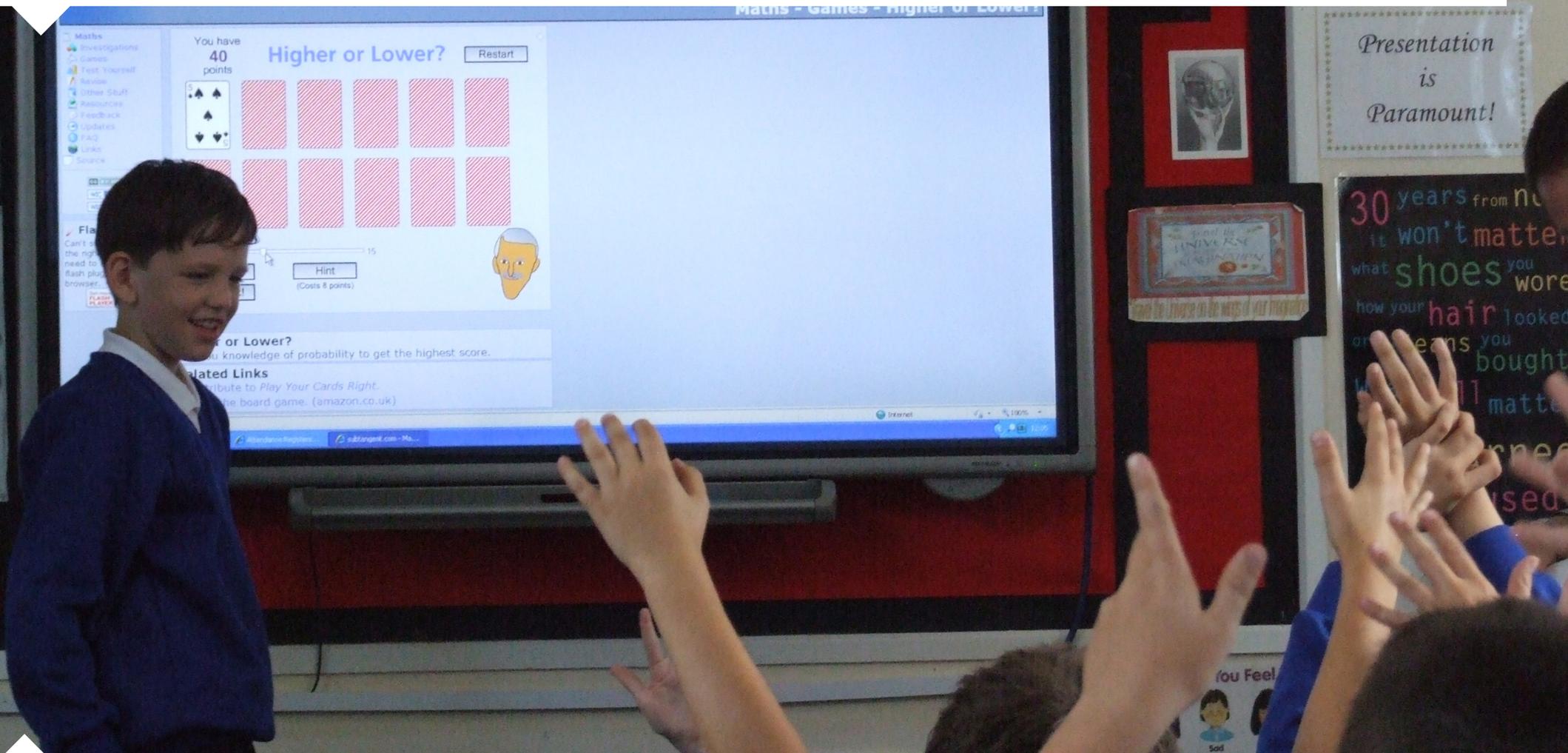


SHARP

CASE STUDY

Turning good lessons into great lessons



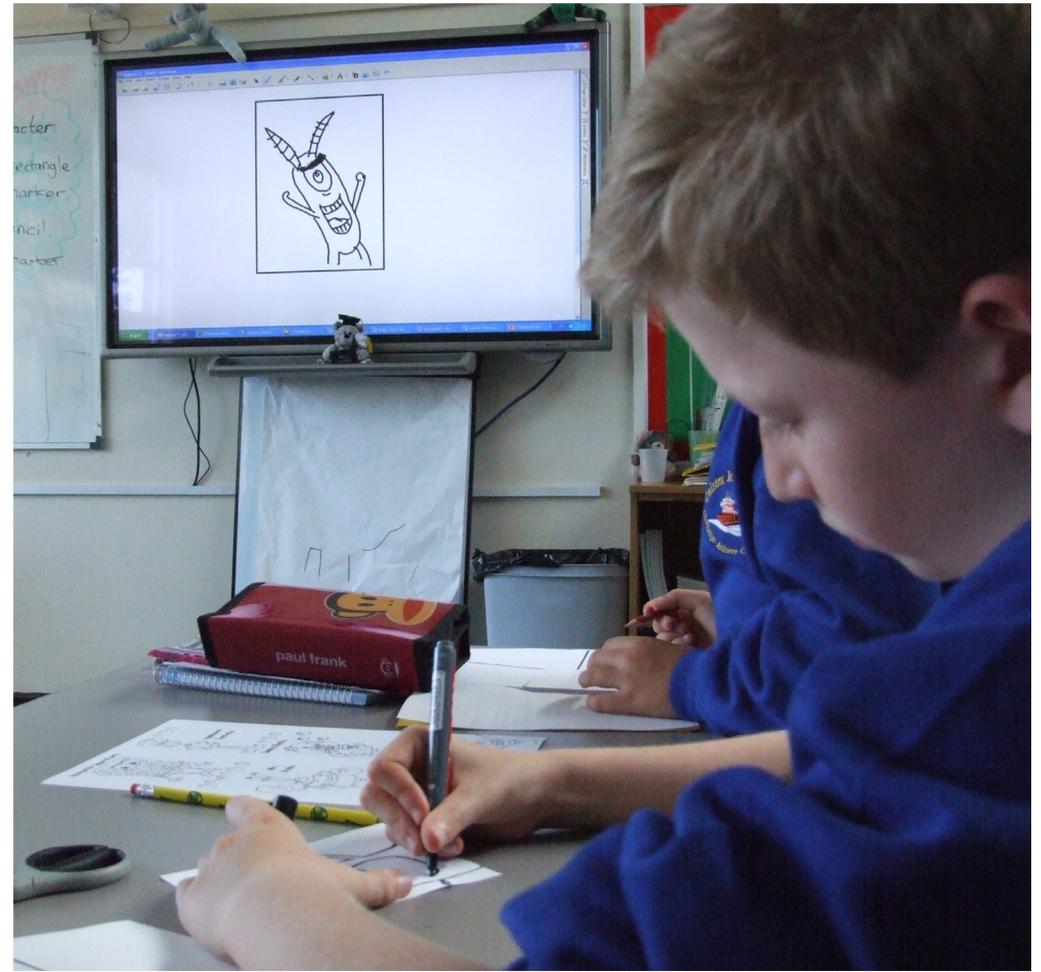
Students are avid users of technology while parents expect educators to provide the latest interactive solutions to improve learning. **/This is Why** Sharp developed its BIG PAD range of interactive touch-screen monitors. With breathtaking image quality, 60-inch screen size and an easy-to-use interface, the screens provide Caister Junior School with a visually stunning, highly interactive and versatile canvas to inspire learning.

Installation Overview

Caister Junior School near Great Yarmouth, on the east coast of England, has 360 pupils from 4 to 11 years old. It aims to provide the best possible education and a happy working environment. With a motto of 'Challenge, achieve and celebrate', it sets the highest possible learning goals for pupils, promoting successes and motivating them to achieve more.

The school adheres to UNICEF's Convention on the Rights of the Child. Pupils are taught to recognise the opportunities open to them and that with rights come responsibility, especially to make the most of their education.

With its projector and interactive whiteboard solution coming to end-of-life, the school looked for a new teaching and presentation system. It reviewed interactive projectors, projector and whiteboard solutions, TVs with an interactive overlay, and dedicated touch-screen monitors. Each was judged against a range of criteria. They had to be clearly viewable throughout the classroom, capable of operating in daylight, provide reliable long-term operation and produce great quality images. With Sharp's BIG PAD interactive touch-screen monitors outperforming in all categories, the school deployed 12 PN-L602 60-inch touch screens.



"We selected Sharp's BIG PAD 60-inch touch-screen monitors for our new interactive teaching solution for a number of reasons. They're designed for classroom use, operate clearly in bright light and are exceptionally reliable. They also present content in stunning quality, so everyone can see the content wherever they are sitting. The screens were by far the best solution and, with costs of LCDs coming down, we're sure more schools will deploy them."

Anthony Hall, Year Six Teacher and ICT Coordinator, Caister Junior School, Great Yarmouth

The installation

Caister Junior School used projectors with interactive touch screens to assist with teaching. The products were coming to end-of-life: images were grainy, maintenance costs were high and classroom lights had to be dimmed when using them. Anthony Hall, ICT Coordinator, says: 'We looked for a new highly intuitive teaching aid that displays content with a high degree of clarity so pupils don't need to strain to see the information. It also needed to be easily used by pupils and work without dimming the lights, as this can make both pupils and teachers sleepy.'

Cost was a factor too: 'While the up-front cost was important, we looked for a system to provide us with solid, reliable operation for at least ten years – a long-term return on investment is vital for all schools as budgets are tight,' observes Anthony.

A number of technologies were reviewed, including projectors with interactive whiteboards, short-throw projectors that do not need a whiteboard, and TVs with interactive overlays and dedicated touch-screens.

Says Anthony: 'The touch-screen overlay worked ok but it looked a little clunky and is really a TV customised to be a touch screen. The projector systems with interactive whiteboard were expensive and we had concerns about reliability and cost in terms of bulb replacement. With newer short-throw projectors, we felt that teachers still get light in the eye and, over a long day, this can become uncomfortable. The best solution by far was Sharp's BIG PAD touch-screen technology.'



A no-compromise solution

The image quality of the PN-L602 60-inch interactive touch-screen monitors was immediately apparent to Anthony. He says: 'The contrast is very high, the image quality exceptional and the monitors can be used even in sunny conditions. The screens are also easy to use, so there would be little or no learning curve for colleagues.'

The school also valued the bundled software that provided rich functionality with the option to write on the screen, use fingers to zoom in and out, change writing colour, open applications, and much more. 'The software is good and the writing responsive whether using the finger or supplied pens,' observes Anthony. 'Also, the screens are designed for education and presentation markets. They are neat – hanging flush to the wall with no loose cables – and are very sturdy. If there's a problem with a monitor, it's replaced next day too, which is really important as they are in constant use.'

To pause video and split the monitor screen (e.g. to show video on one side and to write on the other), the school purchased a £70 graphics card for Anthony's PC. Also, to help teachers 'queue-up' content (such as video to follow on from a separate image file), computer monitors capable of showing 16:9 widescreen video were purchased. Anthony remarks: 'If you want to accurately match content between your computer and the touch screen, you need to buy 16:9 monitors for your computers. The costs are small though and we're delighted with the new Sharp touch screens.'

From good lessons to great lessons

The monitors show a variety of content including video, internet pages such as BBC Clips and images. Interactive learning tools including art and Matrix maths packages are also very popular and pupils are encouraged to contribute in class by drawing on the monitors. 'The monitors provide an accurate and consistent writing experience and are very flexible. We use them as a "normal" whiteboard, to display internet content, play video and really draw the children into lessons,' comments Anthony. 'We also connect in-class visualisers to the screens. The visualisers can magnify photos and objects by up to 200 times and when, for example, you put a leaf on there, the image quality is breathtaking. The monitors turn good lessons into great lessons.'

The pupils enjoy seeing content being prepared from the teachers' computer screens and blown up on the monitor. Moreover, they have quickly taken to drawing and writing on the screens to take a full part in lessons.

Concludes Anthony: 'My colleagues are delighted with the screens. They're easy to use and the content looks vibrant, bright and crisp. Our last ICT coordinator left a decade-long legacy with our old interactive projectors and the Sharp screens are so flexible and reliable that they create a new legacy with a great learning tool for years to come.'

COUNTRY: UK
CUSTOMER: Caister Junior School, Great Yarmouth
MONITORS: 12 x PN-L602 60-inch interactive touch-screen monitors

This is Why

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