



Hove Park School ED-A100 Projector Case Study

The constant drive to improve learning and teaching insists that teachers now seek critical feedback from their students.

"It's a well brilliant projector, sir!" was 13 yr old Lucie's reaction when she first worked with the new ED-A100 Hitachi ultra short throw projector in her languages lesson.

Lucie was acting out the role of a TV weather presenter describing in French how Northern France was going to be hit by wind, rain and snow.

Standing right in front of the 77" Hitachi FX-Duo interactive whiteboard, she was moving on-screen weather symbols and talking directly to the class. What she was doing on the whiteboard was not obscured by shadowing and she was not being affected by the potentially dangerous dazzle from a traditional ceiling mounted projector.



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Hove Park School, an 11-18 Languages Specialist School, caters for 1750 students on two large sites. It has a demand for over 100 video projectors in order to deliver an increasingly digitized curriculum with ICT at the heart of a motivating interactive methodology.

In March 2007 OfSTED school inspectors at Hove Park School noted in some lessons that:

“Resources, such as interactive whiteboards are well used to display information but not to encourage interactive learning.”

(Ofsted, 2007)

As school managers addressed this issue, they found many projectors had been installed at just above head height, over 1.5 meters away from the interactive whiteboard. When pupils and teachers interacted with the projected content, they not only cast obscuring shadows over the whiteboard but also risked eye injury from the strength of the bulb which beamed just above their line of vision.

Our immediate experience of the Hitachi ED-A100 was that this short throw model totally resolved the serious Health and Safety concerns around traditional ‘long throw’ projectors. BECTA warns:

“If using data projectors or interactive whiteboards, ensure that pupils never look directly into the beam of the projector. If presenting to the class and entering the beam, pupils should not look towards the audience for more than a few seconds, and ideally should keep their backs to the beam at all times.”

The Hitachi ED-A100 can fill a 60" screen at a distance of only 9.6cm from the front of the projector to the whiteboard. The space-age design drops down a mirror and the bulb's light is reflected back onto the screen. So there is absolutely no problem of dazzle.

Students and staff can now face the class as they interact with the whiteboard without risk of damaging their eyes. This really does unleash the teaching and learning potential of this interactive technology. For students can interact not just with the software projected on the screen, but more importantly with the rest of the class who can be fully engaged along with those in front of the screen. Such a dynamic leads to lively and outstanding lessons.

More and more students are being asked to respond creatively using ICT multimedia tools. We are increasingly asking them to present their learning to wider audiences, acquiring enterprise education and essential workplace communication skills as they do so. Facing the class is essential.

In terms of classroom management, the ultra short-throw beam means that the days of the classroom joker trying to make silly hand silhouette shapes in front of the projector lens are gone forever. By using the Hitachi ED-A100 with interactive or standard whiteboards, users can maintain eye-contact with their audience and not have to turn their backs on the class. Any teacher will tell you the importance of that golden rule.

At Hove Park School our initial assessment is that the Hitachi ED-A-100 projects a crisper image than projectors with the same lumens capacity installed correctly nearer the ceiling. We think this is because it does not have to rely on Keystone Technology to compensate for the angle of the throw and there is no image degradation as a result of this adjustment.

For this reason we are thinking of upgrading to the Hitachi ED-A-100 in our two IP videoconference venues since traditional projectors produce screen glare that reduces clarity of the ‘remote’ conference room (as students look into the screen to see their videoconference partners). Also the exceedingly low fan noise of the Hitachi ED-A100 at 29dB will reduce sound interference with the ceiling microphones. At the moment, these have to be situated just behind the current projector position towards the middle of the classroom.

For our vulnerable teaching spaces such as outward facing ground-floor rooms with unbarred windows and prefab mobiles, we will look to purchase the garish orange security model Hitachi ED-A-110. In general, we are very impressed with the model's security features which include a pin lock, a MyScreen security pin code, a Kensington lock fixing, stainless steel security bar and tamper proof labeling. If the projector is attached to the network it will transmit an email alert if disconnected.

If we could recommend another small refinement to help teachers, we would ask Hitachi to bundle up an easy on-off switch which can be installed next to the whiteboard so that the elusive infra-red remote control can be locked away in the school safe and be forgotten.

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