

# Microsoft recognises the innovative use of technology by Elkanah House teachers

BY KAREN STADLER

In November 2014, four Elkanah House School teachers were selected as Microsoft Innovative Educator (MIE) Experts for 2015.<sup>1</sup> This ISASA member school is in Cape Town in the Western Cape.

The four teachers were recognised by Microsoft for excellence in their innovative use of technology to help students learn and achieve more. To qualify for the MIE Expert programme, teachers from around the world had to submit at least one learning activity to Microsoft to show how they were using technology effectively in the classroom. More than 800 educators from over 100 countries worldwide were chosen for 2015, of whom only 16 were from South Africa and Lesotho. Of these sixteen, four are from Elkanah House.

## A project about potential

The teachers submitted the following activities:

Linda Foulkes, information and communication technology (ICT) and Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) trainer at Elkanah House High School, designed a learning programme entitled 'The Potential of OneNote and Office Integrated Apps in the Classroom'.

This learning activity focuses on the potential of OneNote and Office Integrated Apps in the classroom with regard to student collaboration and in staff training. The macro activity spans a number of micro sessions covering a range of Office tools that are beneficial for online collaboration and sharing, as well as for offline connectivity. Today, one relies heavily on the 'connected' apps and tools and we tend to forget about Office tools, which have been around for many years.

OneNote, OneDrive and the OneNote Web App are powerful tools to use in any environment to collaborate on documents and share resources, create digital notebooks, school subject tutorials, marking of homework, recording video and audio, hyperlinking, inking and annotating, attaching



The close-up

documents and integrating subject resources. You can view Foulkes' activity here: <http://goo.gl/VDp6ba>.

## Animation aces

Jacky Louw, design technology teacher at Elkanah House Senior Primary School, and Simone Crous, art teacher at Elkanah House Senior Primary School, entered a joint project: 'Lights, Animation, Action!'

The aim of the project was for the learners to design and create their very own unique 3D superhero or villain. They also needed to create a set (an environment to use for filming). These two elements were combined into a 30-second promo (a piece of publicity or advertising, especially in the form of a short film or video) in which their character displayed or explained his/her/its character, super power and reason for existence. Along the way, the learners used the following tools and apps: Microsoft Excel, I Can Animate, Padlet, Thinglink, Safari, iStop-Motion, Google Forms, Google Docs, the Camera App and Wordpress, our platform for the project. The learners storyboarded their ideas, created the set, created the hero or villain, filmed, created the voiceover, used sound effects, created a time capsule for the following year's learners and reflected on their own and peers' end products. You can see Louw and Crous's activity here: <http://goo.gl/jbNKvu> and <http://goo.gl/oLOd1X>.

## Technology meets ecology

Karen Stadler, head of digital learning at Elkanah House Senior Primary School, entered a project called 'The Travelling Rhinos Project – Save our Rhinos'.

This is an ongoing global project to raise awareness about the dire rhino-poaching situation in South Africa. Five uniquely African stuffed toy rhinos travel around the world to visit classrooms and schools to raise awareness of this problem in an effort to save our rhinos, one classroom at a time. Each rhino travels with a journal, and each class contributes to a page in the wiki created for the project, which serves as an online record of each school's participation: <http://saveourrhinos.wikispaces.com>. The rhinos have visited over 80 classes since December 2012. This was supposed to be a year-long



Linda Foulkes



Simone Crous



Karen Stadler



Jacky Louw

project, but due to demand it has been extended indefinitely. To see this activity, go to: <http://goo.gl/nokMPx>.

As MIE Experts, over the course of 2015, these Elkanah teachers can expect:

- free Microsoft tools and technology, including Office 365 Pro Plus
- exclusive professional development opportunities
- opportunities to develop their personal 'brand' and career as thought leaders by participating in case studies, speaking engagements and content development
- eligibility to earn an all-expenses-paid trip to the Microsoft in Education Global Forums in Redmond, Washington in the United States in April 2015, or Dubai in February 2015. Those who are not selected to travel overseas will be given the opportunity to attend the SchoolNet South Africa ICT in the Classroom Conference in Durban in July 2015, at Microsoft's expense. They will be expected to share their learning with their peers and also participate in a series of webinars over the course of the next year. Each teacher has also received a certificate of recognition for this achievement. ✿



Quiet on set!

For a full list of the South African and Lesotho teachers who were selected as new Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts, visit: <http://goo.gl/5KFUiF>.

**Reference:**

1. See: <https://www.educatornetwork.com/Sites/Educators/Expert/HowToApply>.

# No 'hit or myth' here: Unicorn Preparatory School targets technology

BY IAN HOUSTON

Unicorn Preparatory School is a Christian, English-medium day school catering for 346 boys and girls from Grade R to Grade 7. In 2015, Unicorn Preparatory celebrates 21 years as an independent school and its 43<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

Since Unicorn Preparatory first opened its doors, it has become a vital part of community life in Tzaneen in Limpopo. The unicorn is a fitting symbol for a fine school. The mythical one-horned horse appears in

folklore around the world<sup>1</sup> – in South Africa, tales of the unicorn are even found in ancient Khoi and Khoisan culture.<sup>2</sup> All the legendary tales of the unicorn portray it as a creature devoid of evil, a mythical protector of the meek and innocent.

**IT a key component**

While our name may refer to a mythical creature, our reputation as a leading institution in technology use in the classroom is very real.

Our location in the tranquil valley of Tzaneen, far from any major city, has not prevented us from making information technology (IT) a key component of our educational programme. Over the past five years, we have actively developed and grown IT throughout all aspects of our school. This could not have been achieved unless all staff were on board technologically.

Integrated Curriculum Using Technology

Upskilling

KN-10up

Androids

KN-3to5

iPads

KN-6to9

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