

Parklands College grows young minds, builds futures

Parklands College in Cape Town is passionate about making sure students are prepared for the future. By doing this, they are creating entrepreneurs of the future through authentic learning experiences, where students create products and solutions for the real world.

In August 2018, Parklands College was recognised by Apple, once again, as an Apple Distinguished School (ADS) for innovation, leadership and excellence in education. They are reportedly the only one in Africa out of 470 in the world. They have achieved this status by providing an environment that offers Authentic Learning experiences to learners.



PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

Parklands College named Apple Distinguished School

16 Mar 2017



In the early days of their Apple technology integration programme, it was found that cross-curricular project/challenge based learning was the best way to provide authentic learning experiences to students. In learning through projects, learners are prepared with skills that are applicable beyond the school curriculum equipping them with the relevant and necessary skills for the modern workplace.



Work life experience

As part of the project, learners were placed into roles similar to those they may be given in the workplace so that they can experience work life. It was found that learners become highly motivated when they are solving or addressing a real-world challenge and if they are creating a product for an authentic audience, beyond the four walls of the classroom, they develop a deeper sense of purpose or passion for what they are doing. As an example of project-based learning, a team of Life Orientation learners created a movie called “I am

Beautiful” and was used in an anti-cyberbullying campaign.

Allocated time has been set aside during the school day for passion led, experiential learning courses and interests, some of which include Film, Sound Engineering, Animation, Robotics, Mobile Application Development and Hospitality. Not only do these courses give learners opportunities to explore areas they would never have been able to in the standard curriculum, but they also develop what has been dubbed as “horizontal” skills, that act as the glue between subjects.



Software development environment

The Mobile Application Development Incubator (MAD as it is called by students) is a software-based development environment and one of many examples. The vision of the incubator is to create young entrepreneurs of the future by teaching learners how to solve real-world problems through the development of free professional, relevant, commercial and educational applications for the global market.



A big focus here is for them to give back to society. Of course, being an Apple school and using SWIFT as the development platform, students can use the Apple APP store to reach the global market.

These free applications are completely developed by students with educators as facilitators and guides in the process. Students have released five apps on the App store so far. They are “Simple Learning Time”, “Safer Web”, “Simple Learning Afrikaans”, “Safer Britannica” and “A.VOID”, which are available for free on the global Apple App Store. The apps have had over 80,000 downloads globally to date. One of our learners, Stephanus Cilliers, received a scholarship to WWDC three years in a row 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Music and Film experience

Parklands College studios houses both film and sound engineering studios. The vision for the studios is to give young talent the chance to experience the music and film industries from the creation of an original work to its release on a public platform.



For this reason, the studios have become a space for authentic learning to take place. This space is a hive of activity because learners love multimedia and they use the facilities for almost every project and subject. This facility has also given the College's sound engineering learners, musicians and filmmakers the opportunity to express themselves in a professional environment for an actual audience. The sound studio released a digital album called "Origin" on iTunes in 2014 and recently released "Origin Vol. 2". The film studios have released two music videos on the [Parklands College Studios YouTube channel](#).

Robotics offered

Parklands College made Robotics a compulsory offering to its learners from Grade R to Grade 8 in 2014. This was in order to develop its learners interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Design and Mathematics (STEAM) and Coding.

The college has also been successful in the World Robot Olympiad over the past four years where teams have represented South Africa at the International events and have been placed up to 12th in the world. They have also done well in the First LEGO League robotics competition where the Hyperion Bots team placed 5th in Europe in the Open Invitational Central Europe in Hungary in 2018. This team designed a water solution which included an innovative 3D printed water brick that dispenses stored water from alternate sources. This is very useful during times of drought.