

## **XerTrainer engages all at Northampton Academy**

The children at Northampton Academy's eyes light up when they realize their PE lesson will be 'playing' on ZigZag's\* XerTrainer interactive target wall.

The Sports College was one of the first schools in the UK to install the 8ft x 4ft computerized panels, in an effort to be innovative and help the children to enjoy physical activity.

And according to Drew Allison, Director of Sport at the Academy, it has certainly paid off. "I am very excited about the results," he said. "As an Academy we are always strive to be innovative, but this is hard on a day-to-day basis using traditional materials. The pupils are so excited about XerTrainer their eyes light up and even the kids walking past the door stop just to watch."

The students use the panels to improve their skills in a variety of sports including netball – for passing, shooting, running and teamwork, and cricket, for batting, bowling, and increasing attention span and concentration under the pressure of a clock and a scoreboard.

One Year 8 male student said: "We're normally told not to hit or break anything, but we were told we could smash the targets as hard as we liked and that we wouldn't break them. I did try! But I soon found out accuracy gets you more points so I tried to focus on hitting the targets rather than just using power."

The XerTrainer has even encouraged disaffected children to get involved in PE lessons. Drew Allison said: "The most pleasing aspect was that some disaffected pupils, such as small cohorts of Year 10 and 11 boys, said 'if this is PE I would be happy to do it all the time'. These are the kids that would not normally take part in or like a traditional team games based curriculum. Now we have to tear them away! To me this is the most rewarding result to date."

\*ZigZag is the UK distributor for XerTrainer and XerPro. [www.zigzaguk.com](http://www.zigzaguk.com)