

Enquiry Schools

Case Study Slides

Project Name: Make Your Own Space

School(s): Burford Primary School, Oxfordshire

Local Authority: Oxfordshire County Council

Creative Partner(s): Andrew Hudson, Riach Architects

Creative Agent: Jacqui Ibbotson

Year Group(s) / Young People involved: 9 - 11

Start Date: 04 June 2008

End Date: January 2009



Enquiry Question	Context	The Story	Impact on young people learning	Impact on teacher learning	Impact on creative partner learning	Impact on school	Learning from the work	Revisiting the Enquiry Question	Next steps
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Could a creative design project, led by Yr 5 & 6 children, raise their standards of achievement and attitude to learning?

Through this enquiry question, the school wanted to find out how cross-curricular, hands-on, creative learning methods could effectively engage children, raising their standards of achievement, expanding their world-vision, and developing a wider range of skills (other than purely academic ones).

The project - to design an outdoor learning space for the school - enabled children to explore (both individually and in groups) 'creative learning hats' which the school was adopting as part of the school development plan.

The enquiry question was very important to the school; the Year 5 and 6 group increased their level of skills across many subject areas and together pupils, teaching staff and the local community have taken ownership of the design project enhancing the profile of the school in the Burford community. The enquiry perfectly suited the main area of the School Development Plan - to build more creativity into the school's curriculum.

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“The enquiry question is very important to me and to the school; the Year 5 and 6 group will considerably increase their level of skills across many subject areas and together pupils, teaching staff and the local community will take a pride and ownership of the design project enhancing the profile of the school in the Burford community. The enquiry fits in with the School Development Plan to build more creativity into the school’s curriculum”.

(Ellie Stacey, Headteacher, Burford Primary School)

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The Head Teacher, creative agent and children worked on a brief to send out to potential creative partners (architects and visual artists). Year 5 and 6 children were involved in the interviewing of six firms of Architects.

Riach Architects were chosen because of their organised approach to the planning and because of their easy and approachable manner with young children.

The creative partners selected were then invited to a 'Preparing for Partnerships' session led by Jacqui Ibbotson involving all the staff of the school and the two Architects from Riach. In this team-building meeting, we brainstormed a clearer brief for the design project and identified many ways in which the whole school, parents and local community could get involved in the project.

This project involved the year 5 and 6 class of children of Burford Primary School 30 children, aged 9-11. The creative partner led by Andrew Hudson of Riach Architects, consulted with the class teacher Kate Burgoyne before and after each session.

Design Sessions

- The subjects covered in each session were as follows:
- Introduction to the project
 - (Timetable, Process, Exercises, Objectives)
- Site Survey and Analysis
 - (recording levels, orientation, views, trees and doing scale drawings)
- Brief Formation and Design Tools
 - (Materials, Colour, Climate, Mass, Form, Light, Acoustics)
- Design Workshop 1
 - (Drawing designs and making models)
- Design Workshop 2
 - (Evaluate and review design and prepare for final presentation to parents and local community)

The first step was to take a good look at the Paddock where the outdoor learning space would be situated and measure it



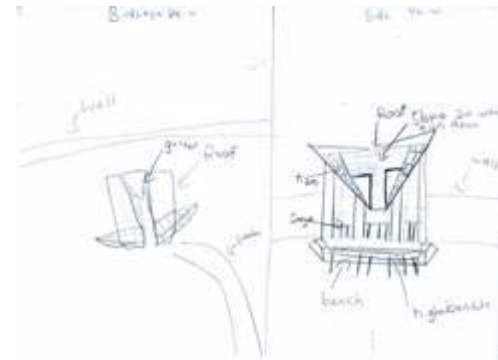
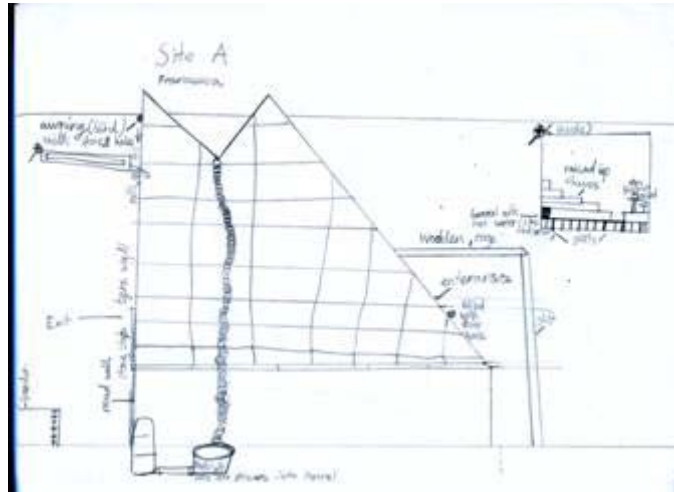
What is the history of the site? What was there before?



The children interview 'the client', Mrs Stacey to find out what she wants.



The next step is to start to draw some designs of the structure in two possible sites



Making Models



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Children at Burford Primary School have been very positive and have expressed various interesting creative ideas throughout the project. The Head Teacher noted that the children's relationship with the architect has been very enjoyable.

The greatest challenge has been that, instead of having time-tabled sessions within their suggested curriculum, the children have longer half or full days with the creative partner. However, they seem to have enjoyed this despite the fact that it demands concentration and attention during their longer sessions.

"I enjoyed the lessons very much because we were allowed to choose what we planned."

"It was fun but more challenging with calculations which I like."

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The architect has worked with both teachers and trainees and teaching staff have learn a huge amount about the processes involved in being a professional architect. They have learnt how to structure the design process and picked up many aspects of the professional language of architecture.

The challenge for the class Teacher and Head teacher was in giving over five whole days of teaching time to this creative learning project. They did this in order to explore creative cross-curricular work.

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The two Architects involved in the project had never worked in a Primary School before and so it was a steep learning curve for both of them at the start.

The biggest challenge was understanding how to meet the individual needs of children with a wide range of ages and abilities. However they picked up techniques from the class teacher on how to keep the attention of the children and grew in confidence and skill throughout the process.

The creative partner also had to learn to manage the dual responsibility of having to produce a good end product for the school whilst at the same time providing a good experience for the students and really allowing them to lead the process.

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- The project has helped the school develop sustainable and embedded creative learning by encouraging and promoting the ‘hat’ skills that are featured across the school’s creative curriculum.
- The project idea has turned out to be highly relevant to the objectives in the School Development Plan, as it gave a good level of challenge to the children involved.
- The creative practitioner was a gem and his skill with children really developed in the course of the project.
- The relationship building and communication between all project partners and participants grew and collaboration was very strong.
- For the most part there was a high level of involvement from the children as co-project managers

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One surprising aspect of the project was that the children learned to look at the outdoor space at the school in a different way. Detailed study and recording of the history, geography, trees and plant life of the paddock has made the children appreciate the beauty and various uses of the space which is very pleasing.

The children were able to identify the different skills that they had developed from this project. They commented on the following:-

- Going outside to do our work
- Designing on the computer and on paper
- Made models of our work
- Sessions have been more active
- Looking at houses and buildings
- By thinking what could happen like nature, and sunlight
- More planning and designing the learning space
- We have been able to study the paddock and its history properly

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And specifically mentioned the following learning and skills:-

- Using new equipment
- Using scale
- Co-ordinates
- measuring
- team work

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- The enquiry question was answered.
- The project has helped the school develop sustainable and embedded creative learning by encouraging and promoting the skills featured as part of the creative curriculum.
- It has made specific contributions to the Every Child Matters outcomes.
- The school would like to incorporate lots more involvement with creative partners, with a view to becoming a Change school.
- The next stage of this project is to raise money so that the vision can become a reality and the outdoor learning space will be built.

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- The children and the architect prepared design drawings, verbal presentations and displays to present to parents, the local community and potential donators to demonstrate what they have been doing and to launch the fund-raising campaign to build the space.
- The next stage of this creative project is to raise money so that the vision can become a reality and the outdoor learning space will be built.
- When the money has been raised as the children will oversee the building process and participate where possible.
- The school would like to incorporate lots more involvement with creative partners, with a view to becoming a Change school.