

Enquiry Schools

Case Study Slides

Project Name: Raising Achievement Through Music

School(s): Bayards Hill Primary School

Partner(s) Oxfordshire County Music Service -
Debbie Rose yr 4, Alex Hehir yr 6;
Oxford Science Trust, Kate Griffiths;
Oxford Botanic Gardens;
James Carter – Poet;

Local Authority: Oxfordshire

Start Date: March 2008

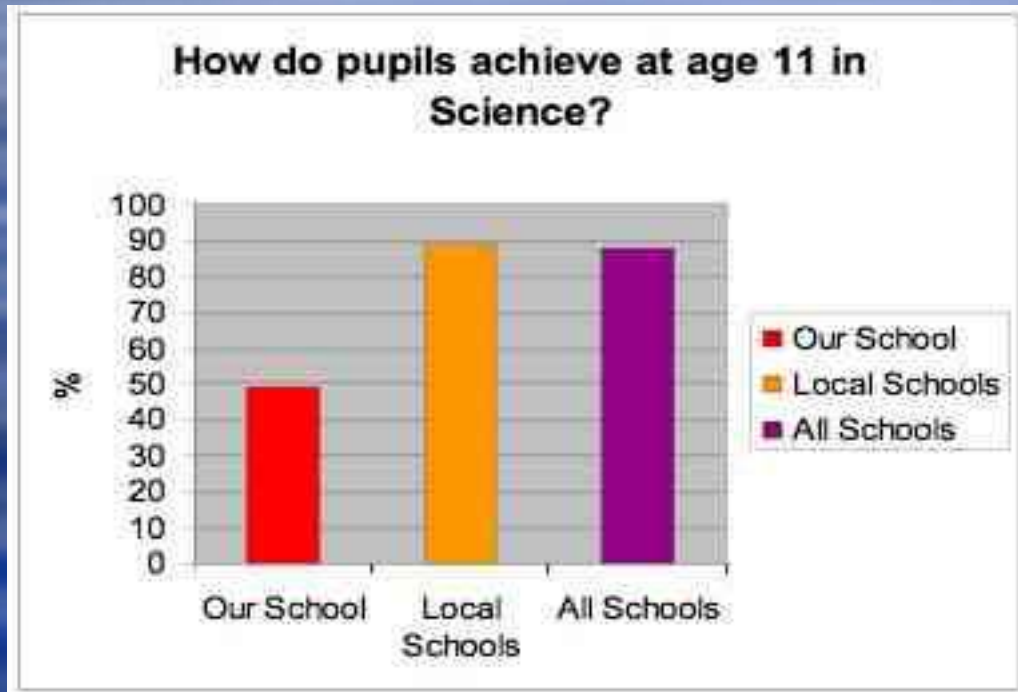
End Date: July 2008

Enquiry Question

How can Bayards Hill School work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Music Service, on a project which places music at the centre and delivers the curriculum in a more creative way in order to raise achievement in science?

Context

Improvements in science standards are a major focus in the school development plan due to our science results being below the expected national average.



The Story

The target classes - The project began with an introductory session led by the principal creative partner, Debbie Rose (Music Service). Debbie introduced the children to the main theme of the project (water). In the first session Debbie talked to the children and collected their initial ideas about the project, involving them in writing and producing their own musical work. During the project, Debbie worked with the children for 8 sessions to develop the music. Children visited Oxford Science Trust and Oxford Botanical Gardens, to explore ideas about the nature of water, the importance of water for life forms, and sound. During the project, further creative partners were introduced - for example a local scientist and poet. Also during the project children were encouraged to research and prepare their own writing connected to the theme - eg in connection with Water.

Other Key Stage two classes: At a whole staff meeting, other staff put forward ideas for a smaller contribution to the project. Eg. Year 6 staff were keen to investigate photography of water using digital cameras. Y6 were also already working with a music practitioner from Oxfordshire County Music Service, on Music/ICT with the aim to produce a composition connected to the project. This element was funded by the school. Most of the key stage two children were involved in music related to the theme. We tried to include all Key Stage 2 classes in at least one session with a creative artist as part of the project, and to include all classes in the final performance.



Young Peoples Creativity

**Children working
with the
County Music Service**



“We were learning about the subject (Science) but we were doing it through singing and rapping and that is a different way to learn about a subject”

Oxford University Botanic Gardens



“At the Botanic gardens we went to the desert, the swamp and the rain forest.”

7/21/2009

Bayards Hill Enquiry Project

Young Peoples Creativity

“We went to *Hands On* at Science Oxford and they came in to school; we made bridges, rockets out of *Connects* and we made rockets out of fizzy bottles. We designed the rockets and it went blast up in to the air.



Tap water

- We are lucky for tap water because people
- In some places don't have clean water
- Or even no water at all.
- I feel sorry for those people how die
- With out water.

“Did you know that this lady has to get up really early in the morning to go up the hill and go to the cloudy water place to get water?”

Other Impacts on young people

Throughout the project the children have had great enthusiasm and energy for the topic. I strongly believe that this is due to creative teaching and the great opportunity we have had to make cross-curricular links. The creative teaching has also suited the differing learning styles of the two classes. Not only that but the children have a really focused outcome at the end of the project therefore they know what they are aiming for and what is expected of them. Since the project has started I have noticed a marked increase in the children's confidence and enjoyment in their learning, across all ability groups, which has been reflected in all other areas of the curriculum.

Child	Science Level at start of project	Science level at end of project
1	2b	2a
2	2b	2a
3	2b	3c
4	2c	2a
5	2a	3b
6	2b	3c
7	2a	3b
8	2b	3c
9	2a	3b
10	2b	3c
11	2b	-
12	2b	2a
13	2b	3c
14	2a	3b
15	2a	3b
16	2a	3b
17	2a	3c
18	2a	3b

"I liked the Botanic Gardens, we learnt about different plants" Yr4

"I learnt that water evaporates into the sky" Yr4

"I learnt that you can use water and air pressure to shoot a rocket up into the sky" Yr4

"I learnt that you have to plan things before you make it to test it out" Yr4

Adult Learning

The project has provided us with the opportunity to build on our own professional development and to gather new ideas and experiences that could be incorporated in the classroom in a creative teaching style.

I also feel that it has provided some members of staff and myself with added confidence to try out and experiment with new creative ideas. For example, my background is science and am therefore very confident teaching this subject, however, my knowledge in music is very limited and therefore less confident in teaching this subject. Through taking part in this project it has provided me with many creative ideas that I can use in the classroom based on or around music. This has increased my confidence in this particular subject area and am looking forward to trying these new ideas out.

The feedback from other staff has been extremely positive and many have got involved and taken part in the project where possible. Many teachers have commented that they have really enjoyed having the freedom to teach creatively and innovate some new ideas in their own classrooms.

Science Water Questionnaire

1) Did you enjoy the 'Water' project this term? (Circle answer)

Yes: (A) (B) (C) (D) (E) (F) (G) (H) (I) (J) (K) (L) (M) (N) (O) (P) (Q) (R) (S) (T) (U) (V) (W) (X) (Y) (Z)

2) What part of the 'Water' project did you enjoy the most? (Circle 2 answers)

Comment	Frequency
The Magic Show	18
Rockets	27
Bridges	12
Music	9
Water cycle	3
Literacy Lessons on water	1
Relaxed Gondola	15
Other	1

3) Why did you enjoy these parts of the project? (Eg did you learn something new, interesting)

Comment	Frequency
Fun	20
Learned something new	16
Like the rockets flying through the air	1
It was interesting	9
Funny	8
Making things	8
It was easy	2
Significant	1
Coating	2
I liked looking at all the different	1

Student Questionnaire

Whole School Change

In the light of the findings it would suggest that providing a creative curriculum can help to raise attainment.

Within the school, there is already a change in approach to planning the curriculum. The project has contributed to a shift in culture and a recognition that a more creative approach to teaching and learning has the potential to raise achievement more quickly than previous practice and that it brings new energy and joy the teaching and learning experience.

“The other thing we learnt about water is that people that live in other places, they have cloudy water and we have clean water. So we have been putting up posters around the school about water, saying please help other people.”

Learning from the work

Oxford Science Trust, The Botanical Gardens in Oxford and the poet, James Carter, all gave very valuable input.

The project overall was successful and the concert at the end was greatly enjoyed by the pupils and parents. The pupils reached a good standard of performance and gained in confidence through the experience.

After the school had been accepted for the project OFSTED placed the school in the category “notice to improve”, which placed some constraints on the time for staff CPD and meetings. The initial meeting with staff was very successful and generated a lot of interest. Most of the ideas were followed through in some part of the school. The final celebration centred on the work of year 4 who were the target group and these children were very excited about the work. We did not fully realise the potential to involve the whole school in the project or final celebration and would want to develop this aspect further in another project.

If we were planning the project again, it would be helpful to include CPD with the creative partner for all staff early in the project, to empower more of them to take a more active role in the creative process. Also, it would be helpful to arrange more time for initial planning with staff and children and to build in some time for review as the project progresses. This would have meant that the project and final presentation could have included a wider representation of the work across the school and would have given greater ownership for all staff and pupils.

Revisiting the enquiry question

One of the most successful outcomes of the project was the website that the children created. They really felt that they had ownership of the work and it was a very valuable way of involving their parents. This in turn led to positive feedback for the children. If we were to do a similar project we would want to set up the website earlier so that it could be of even greater benefit.

The project had a far larger impact on children's speaking, listening and writing skills than originally envisaged. The website encouraged them to take responsibility for their own research and to take a pride in the presentation of their work.

The "Mini Opera" that the children presented at the end of the project showed how much confidence the children had gained over the time of the project. At first they were quite reticent about singing but by the end, they not only sang but performed. Some children sang solos, which was completely new to them. Other strands of music were included in the final concert, and although they were not part of the project, they also illustrate the benefits of opportunities to discover their own talents. One 7 year old child who had previously presented very negative behaviour in class discovered a talent for playing the cello and played a solo. His class teacher said that the confidence he had gained had made a significant difference to his attitude and achievement in other curriculum areas.

There is now a plan to start an after school choir in the school and the children's interest is in part due to this project, as well as other initiatives in the school.

The project has generated two further questions:

- How can a creative curriculum (with music at the centre) encourage greater involvement of parents in their children' education?
- How can a creative curriculum (with music at the centre) help to identify individual talent and how can this be nurtured and developed in order to raise overall achievement

Next steps

School

Within the school, there is already a change in approach to planning the curriculum. The project has contributed to a shift in culture and a recognition that a more creative approach to teaching and learning has the potential to raise achievement more quickly than previous practice and that it brings new energy and joy to the teaching and learning experience.

Oxfordshire County Music Service

Following the success of the project, Oxfordshire County Music Service and Bayards Hill School are keen to pursue an Enquiry Project with the local partnership schools. We would be particularly keen to explore further the question of how a creative approach to the curriculum can influence the positive involvement of parents in their children's education. We would want to explore the impact of a creative project on parents' involvement in school, on the support that they give to their children at home and the potential for encouraging families to engage in more cultural experiences with their children.