

Enquiry Schools

Case Study Slides

Project Name: Creative Futures

School(s): Thatcham Park C of E Primary School

Local Authority: West Berkshire

Creative Partner(s) Fowler + Sumner

Creative Agent: Janine Charles

Year Group(s) / Young People involved: Year 6

Start Date: 3rd Nov 2008

End Date: 29th Jan 2009

The logo for 'hmm' consists of the lowercase letters 'hmm' in a blue, rounded, sans-serif font.

Creative Partnerships





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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Text: Can we improve attitudes to school and learning through working creatively together?

We wanted to know if we could excite children about learning, in particular using new technology across the curriculum, so that they would be inspired to take that Further themselves.

And we wanted to know if this could impact positively on the local community so that there would be an enthusiasm for school and learning, that might result in better attendance and more support for learning at home.

We hoped that teachers would be more confident and more aware of their creativity, and feel excited about the potential for working creatively with new technology.



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Text: Developing the creative curriculum is a key tool in our whole school development programme. Our school has a very mixed catchment area with significant areas of social and economic deprivation. Attitudes to learning and the value of education in its broadest sense have not always been very high in some parts of our school community. Standards of achievement in the past have been low; parental involvement in school life has been low. In order to stimulate an enthusiasm for learning, we have been increasingly building in more opportunities to learn through cross-curricular activities using the arts as a vehicle rather than taking a more academic approach.

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Text: The project worked with Year 6 students, some of whom were also on the interview panel. The artists were selected because the children were excited about the technology they could introduce and also liked that they weren't patronising. Afterwards they felt they'd chosen the right people and techniques to get the best outcome for the school and to be able to take their learning 'with them'. Through the P4P we were able to get a really good sense of how the project might proceed and the artists wrote a proposal for three phases of work starting with 'Who I am' using digital photography; then an audio/podcast project connected to this 'One School Memory' and a final video project.



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Text:

The children evaluated each section of the activity by undertaking a Comic Life evaluation for which they took their own pictures (with a bit of help from the artists) and wrote their own commentary. It was really easy to learn (only a few minutes) and helped them to reflect on their learning and capture it as they went along.

PODCASTING



THATCHAM PARK Church of England Primary School

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

WE MET MARTIN AND ARRON



EPHEMERA IS SOMETHING THAT REPRESENTS YOU.

WORKING OUT MARTIN AND ARRON'S EPHEMERA



HERE WE WERE LOOKING AT WHAT WE SHOULD TAKE PICS OF



CHOOSING OBJECTS THAT REPRESENT THINGS

A PORTRAIT OF WHAT MAKES YEAR 6



WRITING DOWN IDEAS



NET BREAK





Young people's creativity



- The children loved taking part and felt they'd learnt a lot
- The artists and teachers were amazed at the quality of creative work the children produced
- They learnt new vocabulary such as ephemera, editing, animation, audacity and did some very good writing
- They took part in philosophical discussions called 'thunks' designed to get their brains warmed up - they enjoyed this a lot and wrote some of their own which became part of the project



Young people's Creativity



- The children and teachers valued taking part in 'critiques', a form of peer review where everyone made shared decisions about what images/sound etc to take forwards.
- The children and staff noticed that quieter children who might not usually 'shine' became much more confident during the project.
- Any tension within the mixed ability groups quickly disappeared.
- Teachers have noticed children are taking more responsibility now



Young people's creativity



- Children who finished activities quickly, helped out the others in their group
- When all the groups worked hard and finished early, a new activity was included - animation.
- Children quickly became confident using the editing software, digital imaging and sound.
- New software was introduced for the school to use: Monkey Jam and Audacity.



Other impacts on young people:

- When the Head Teacher stopped children in the corridor they said they were too busy to chat!
- Improved attendance data?
- Children really enjoyed taking their learning home and had taught their siblings and parents lots of new skills
- Children learnt that their teachers are 'human beings too just like us'!
- The artists were impressed with the high quality of work the children produced.





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Text:

The artists were particularly impressed by how helpful the teachers were, leaving plenty of space for them to be creative without imposing restrictions and in the classroom offered excellent ‘fluid’ support. For the teachers ‘it was a lovely experience’ and they found out what the children could be capable of: ‘we were absolutely amazed at what the children produced. They enjoyed observing their students working with other people guiding them, and realised some had hidden depths. Especially valuable was seeing the less dominant or successful students shine in this new context, growing in confidence and being supported by their peers.

Teachers learning

- Teachers enjoyed seeing the children work co-operatively without their guidance
- Teachers feel more confident about their own creativity (one has bought her first digital camera)
- The Headteacher said 'its all about opening new horizons up' and is keen to embed these approaches across the school curriculum



Inset

- Teachers want to learn more about the technical applications in class
- The Partners gave an initial inset day to teachers which they found really inspiring
- A further day will be provided to build on this and ensure that the legacy is sustainable
- KS1 teachers already want to use podcasting to build listening and speaking skills



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We had not worked in our partnership practice with this age group on such an ambitious level, and we are delighted by the outcome. We found that we were extended during the project to come up with additional work, as the children ‘ate up’ the creative challenges we set them.

This was the first time we have used the *Thunk* process - debating philosophical questions - as a creative-thinking warm-up exercise. It was so successful we have embedded it into all our practice.

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The children demonstrated a noticeable increase in their levels of enthusiasm and commitment. They were always eager to begin the activities and worked consistently to achieve great results. We have also been able to make use of their new skills for different purposes (e.g. photographing our new sculptures and the snowy weather).

Staff from across the school have expressed an interest in the different projects and the school's leadership team is currently working to share and embed the skills and technologies used in the project to support the development of a truly creative curriculum.

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Text:

We learnt that we wish we could have had enough money to take part in the Change School Programme so that we could continue with this work. It's a much more exciting way of learning and it clearly does empower the quieter children.

We want to use these technologies across the curriculum to prepare our children better for the future, and the creative approaches we've seen are possible will help us do this in a way that is exciting and accessible.

We need to build more training for teachers in this area so that we are learning ahead of the children and seeing the opportunities for connecting to the curriculum.

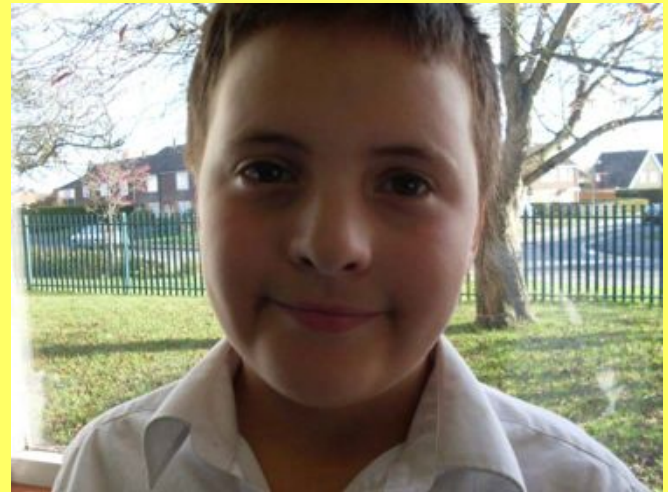


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Text: **The main question generated for the adults involved: what would happen if we worked in this way as a Change School? This project was exciting and stimulating – but too short a timescale! We also asked ourselves what opportunities do we miss by following a more restricted, less creative curriculum within the restraints of current programmes of study. How do we now adapt existing practice to integrate a more creative- and hence more inclusive- approach to learning? How do we now extend this approach to our families in a way that draws them into their children’s learning- and extends their own technology skills?**

Unexpected outcomes

- For the teachers it was really surprising to see their children from a different perspective and to gain insights into their potential from that
- For the Head Teacher learning that some of the quieter and shyer children could be really engaged by these creative strategies
- For the artists it was that every single child engaged with the project and had a 'passion' for it,



The Christmas card

- The children made a card for the artists and surprised them with it - they were so thrilled to get it.
- Everyone was very impressed with the quality of thinking and design that went into it
- Teachers really noticed that the composition symbolised Christmas without stating it (eg photographing the Christmas tree) and that this was a really valuable development.



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Text: The artists are returning to provide an inset day for teachers which will be based on ensuring that all staff are confident to use and apply the software and hardware available now in the school. Podcasting, digital photography, video editing and uploading to the website will be key skills to explore.

The school will discuss the potential for shared CPD with other primaries locally ? And with West Berkshire LEA. Working with creative practitioners clearly provides a more creative approach to using these technologies and the school will explore future partnership working of this kind when resources allow.

