

Creativity in Action



To develop a Creative Curriculum, focusing on the creative learning of teachers (and support staff), increasing understanding and confidence of teachers and support staff in the methods and positive outcomes of creative, cross-curricular learning opportunities

- Our project, 'Creativity in Action', definitely increased our progress in the development of the creative curriculum at The Dales School. We introduced a meeting called 'The Big Plan' where each half term, all staff teams in school would meet together to talk about the next theme. Over the project each country explored the themes of 'Time', 'Elements', 'Weather', 'Challenge' and 'Flight'. During the meeting we discussed how to hook children in and interest them in the learning – we offered a hook for the adults too! For example, at the meeting to discuss the 'Weather' theme, we gave everyone a ticket to a particular destination, provided an in-flight meal in a bag and simulated a flight! The Headteacher was our captain. When everyone landed, they disembarked to a 'country' where resources were set out to begin exploring the creative possibilities. The fun atmosphere helped to engage the adults in planning. They began to use exciting hooks with their classes, to excite them in the theme and to inspire their own thinking and planning – an enquiry-based approach.
- Collaborative planning also involved opportunities to share the skills and specialisms of our whole staff team. This led to more flexibility in grouping children in different ways to explore new and exciting ways to learn.
- Because all of the Erasmus partners explored the same five themes, we were able to take on board each other's ideas and activities. The project blog was a great forum for sharing successes and questions. The end-of-theme questionnaires helped us to collate everyone's views and to move forwards from our new starting points

To find out about new methods of teaching, validate our current methods and introduce changes where necessary, creating positive and helpful working relationships between schools in Germany, Portugal, Catalonia, Denmark and England

- As above, the project blog was a useful tool in hearing and seeing what our colleagues were doing in-between meetings and using some of these ideas in our own work.
- The 'Big Plan' provided a forum where *everyone* could contribute ideas and the purpose and reasoning behind working creatively could be discussed. We could also discuss what was working and what was not. We were able to share this with our international colleagues and Germany adapted their own staff meeting using this information.
- Regular mobilities, questionnaires and opportunities to feedback on progress and listen to the journeys of our project partners kept creativity as a major focus in school.
- **To document the process**
- As well as regular meetings which included presentations about the process and postings on the project blog, the process is documented by:
 - Children's work and project books
 - Ongoing assessment of achievement across the curriculum
 - Attitudes to and interest in learning opportunities across the curriculum
 - Teacher's long, medium and short term planning
- **To develop an evaluation system**
- Information from the final questionnaire is collated and will be taken forward to inform the next steps in this journey. The onus will now be on retaining these exciting ways of working.

Evaluation -How staff communication has developed.

- “All together we are making the difference by sharing good practice and working together”
- Sharing of information from internal and external professionals.
- Supportive network of Safeguarding, Mental Health, Family Support, Behaviour Support e.t.c
- Teaching School Alliance has enabled communication through a wider network and sharing good practice.
- CPD development.
- Staff have been empowered to ask for support if needed and know where to go for help.

- Creativity requires thinking differently, a process which requires change.
- In order to teach creativity you must teach creatively.

Changes

Throughout the Creative Project the Staff at the Dales used the 'Big Plan' as a starting point and platform to support learning, produce ideas, trialling these before implementing into the curriculum. Following this the school has moved on so that, staff have been upskilled, developed strategies and techniques to support the individual needs and requirements of the child. Continuing to work as Teams and sharing information.

Leadership

- The vision and drive of the new leadership has engaged strongly in monitoring and modelling practice and been involved in regular dialogue with staff focused on practice and progress.
- Disseminating leadership has empowered all staff to shape provision to meet children's needs effectively offering training and skills development.
- IAsend offers a clear system of assessing monitoring and planning tracking the progress of children.

What Worked at the Dales

- Whole school approach offered the opportunity to ;
- Listen to ideas from others without any hierarchy.
- Allowed everyone to share their opinions and ideas about how we could extend our creative offer to further engage and involve our children.
- The willingness to share ideas.
- Allowing those who are more skilled to lead.
- CPD development to support cross-curricular links for all staff, staff were able to ask for training in areas they were interested in and not just subjects they were teaching.
- Our statement of commitment is linked to key priorities in the School development Plan-
- “The creative curriculum will be extended to provide less formalised access to learning and additional opportunities to celebrate achievement. This will include Dance, Movement, Art, Music, both indoors and out.”
- Increased usage and interaction with all aspects of ICT.

- Structures now in place facilitate staff working together, creating dialogue around creative approaches and the sharing of good practice. Informal team meetings take place regularly where notes are taken discussing what has worked and what hasn't gone so well and what the conclusions and outcomes reached.
- Professional autonomy has been empowered so that teachers have flexibility to match the curriculum to the children's needs and interests.

The development of R.E and Music at The Dales

Staff development



Communication/language – Raising the profile of subject areas through talking about the value of the subject and the barriers that there may be within the subjects helped us to enhance our understanding of the area. In turn this developed the way staff spoke about the subject to each other and to the children. We decided to stop introducing R.E to the children using its name and instead use the learning that we wanted to take place. This quickly reduced the barrier and allowed staff to teach the area more effectively and for the children to be engaged in their learning.

Confidence – Music ambassadors on the school staff have driven music as a subject area this last year, providing children with new experiences and opportunities to develop their skills and confidence. This in turn has developed staff confidence. Staff have worked closely with experts in the field such as recording artists and musicians, have shared good practice and celebrated success with the children and the staff team. Eight year six children were awarded Arts Award Bronze for their work in Music over the last year and staff have been trained to deliver the Arts Award.

Approach – We received some funding from Barnabas and this allowed us to provide opportunities for the children to explore RE through a different approach. This approach used stories and the Three R's (respect, resilience and responsibility) to teach elements of RE and incorporate others areas of learning such as music, speaking and listening and confidence building. While working alongside staff this approach can be taken back into the classroom and used in a creative way in order for the children to develop skills and deepen their learning.





Evaluation of Elements Theme

ERASMUS 

Creative Curriculum Project 2017-19

Feedback and Evaluation Form – End of Theme - Elements

<p>Q1 – How many teachers/non-teaching staff were involved in the project? How many pupils were affected by the project? Were other people (e.g. parents, external organisations etc.) involved in the project?</p> <p>All teaching staff (15), non-teaching staff and around 90 pupils were involved. Parents/carers took part in exhibitions and were able to see displays and work produced by the children. Classes had the opportunity to visit places of interest and local venues that supported the theme. Some classes were able to invite external organisations into school to work with the children and present workshops.</p>
<p>Q2 – How did you plan the project theme? How did you work collaboratively?</p> <p>The theme was planned utilising the schools 'big plan' concept. Staff were mixed and purposefully put into groups with a good ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff including the head teacher and admin staff. Each group were given resources and a challenge within a particular element, sharing their findings at the end. Everyone had the opportunity to explore all other group tasks, therefore extending the knowledge, skills and sharing of ideas.</p>
<p>Q3 – How do you feel about the project now? Did you get more energy and motivation? Was it a heavier workload? (If yes, why? Are there any changes possible for the next theme?)</p> <p>The project gave a feeling of exploration and excitement, staff and children were motivated, however there seemed to be less time given to share ideas and meet up as people felt they either knew what they were doing or this was the last topic in the project. Staff were extremely supportive of the project however it was the same staff that went on mobility's and these were the staff that had a direct link to creativity within school.</p>
<p>Q4 – What did you do well during this project theme? What will you do differently next time?</p> <p>All staff coming together as one big group and no one within that having a hierarchal advantage, everyone took part, everyone's views and ideas were equally valued. Having pursued the project through the 'Big Plan' it brought to light hidden talents whether it be ICT, Music or a flair in Art. The next time the 'Big plan' will no longer be used although staff enjoyed the process, it is time to move on and present topics/themes in a new and different way which keeps staff attentive and prepared, kASEND allows staff to generate a target and the how left open to imagination and creativity.</p>
<p>Q5 – Any other comments?</p> <p>Usually when sending staff on mobility it is staff that may have some link to the subject matter, in future it would be good to send one staff member with knowledge of above and others that need or want to pursue their professional development and widen their horizons a further way to share skills and knowledge.</p>

Feedback and Evaluation Form – End of Whole Project

<p>Q1 – How many teachers/non-teaching staff were involved in the project? How many pupils were affected by the project? Were other people (e.g. parents, external organisations etc.) involved in the project? (Summary and analysis from previous end of theme questionnaires).</p> <p>All staff in school from the two sites of the Dales took part in the 'Big Plan', from that around six staff were chosen to take part in the mobility's. Teachers then transferred their knowledge and shared ideas with the children. All parents/carers were involved in exhibitions, sharing of work, art workshops. Museums/galleries and local places were visited to support the theme.</p>
<p>Q2 – How do you feel about the project now? Did you get more energy and motivation? Was it a heavier workload? (If yes, why? Are there any changes possible for the next theme?) (Summary and analysis from previous end of theme questionnaires).</p> <p>The project developed a consistent approach across the school staff, they thought about how to engage children developing an enquiry approach and to focus on the process of learning. It was an exciting way to work, sharing ideas and expertise. Staff said working more collaboratively gave them more confidence, inspired and motivated them to engage in other activities to support the theme. Initially there was a heavier workload for some staff setting up the 'Big plan' workshop but this was quickly disseminated amongst staff. Working this way pulled ideas together and became more purposeful. It challenged all to think outside the box and developed not only linguistic and technical skills. It was a less hierarchical way of sharing expertise and knowledge and gave non-teaching staff a voice.</p>
<p>Q3 – Does this way of working fit with your National Curriculum? Why, or why not?</p> <p>Working creatively allows all learners to learn in their own style and this in turn teaches others how to learn in a different way. For each theme learning across the curriculum is mapped out and consideration is given to coverage throughout the year. Staff found it easy to link themes to the learning objectives of the National Curriculum.</p>
<p>Q4 – Which key points will you take away with you and integrate into your curriculum and practice? Which points do you feel were not as relevant?</p> <p>Shared planning to utilise curriculum strengths. A hook into learning to engage and develop an enquiry approach. Focus on the process of learning rather than the outcome. Collaborative working helped support those who were less creative and skilled. Working together raised staff morale and motivated to plan together and ask for support. Inclusion and listening to the ideas of others.</p>
<p>Q5 – Any other comments?</p> <p>Staff said they would like to do a whole school 'big plan' for other areas within school. Staff thoroughly enjoyed the creative project it created a 'buzz' in school and promoted teamwork and the sharing of skills. It is good to learn from one another based in school and from other countries. It was great fun, it pushed and challenged all.</p>