

# Cultural Leadership in Education

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## Accounts of Practice 2016-17





## Introduction

Welcome to the first collection of accounts of practice, written by participants in the Cultural Leadership in Education Programme 2016-17. This collection was distributed at Newcastle University on 21 June 2017. Contact details for authors are provided as we received them in their accounts of practice. They can be found at the back of the collection.

*“I am delighted by the breadth and depth of the accounts of practice in this first collection. They demonstrate a commitment to the development of culture, the Arts and school leadership. The Cultural Leadership in Education programme is an unusual and exciting opportunity for teachers in our region’s schools. It offers an alternative dimension to curriculum and leadership development, which, I am sure, will prove to be of benefit to our region’s children and young people.”*

**Anna Reid**  
North Leadership Centre

*“It was an absolute pleasure facilitating a group of practitioners who were so focused and committed to embracing and exploring the potential leverage that effective leadership can bring to the provision of arts and culture. The impressive range and scope of the projects is both enlightening and inspiring and testimony to the creative and innovative work carried out by whole teams of committed staff led by strong leaders. I hope that everyone enjoys reading the case studies and that they inspire others to develop their own practice.”*

**Claire King**  
Programme Facilitator

*“The Cultural Leadership in Education programme is an important development in supporting a rich cultural offer across the region. This innovative approach is empowering leaders to think differently about curriculum development and how to inspire colleagues and build partnerships. Our schools play a vital role in making sure that every child and young person has the opportunity to experience arts and culture. The accounts of practice demonstrate an impressive range of approaches and highlight the creativity of teachers to innovate, embed and share good practice.”*

**Jeanne Hale**  
Consultant - Culture Bridge North East



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## Amy Scott – The Promotion of the Arts and Engaging Families

Over the past 2 years I have been subject leader for art at Ryhope Infant School Academy. Throughout this period of my career I have explored and realised that my passion, interest and enthusiasm for the arts can be transferred and used within my teaching to motivate, engage and open the minds of children.

In the Culture White Paper 2016 it states “Culture should be an essential part of education both in and out of school.” This is my personal philosophy. As a parent of young children, I know that the experiences that I offer them outside of their educational settings are supporting them to become individuals in their own right and opening their eyes to the world around them.

Bearing this in mind and alongside the evaluation of the audit of the arts in school, I identified a focus area. This was to celebrate, develop and extend our cultural offer whilst engaging the children, their families and our staff in projects together and exploring aspects of the arts in an inviting, comfortable, supportive and non-judgmental environment. Whilst doing this I wished to extend our networking and links with companies related to the arts and to create and foster partnerships with local partnership schools.

As a school, we celebrate our children’s cultures and the heritage of the local area throughout our teaching. We always use this as the core of our planning for a creative and broad curriculum, encompassing all areas of learning.

In my role as Year 1 class teacher, I have been active in using our curriculum planning as a basis to link the promotion of the arts and culture within our everyday lessons. This has involved encouraging the whole team to engage and participate in activities promoting the arts. I have involved parents and carers in workshops, modelling creative approaches to develop basic skills. I have also set challenges for homework that involved working together to produce an item for display and celebrating these whilst the children performed songs, musical compositions and shared knowledge they had gained.

Within my role as Art subject leader I have identified areas for development within our curriculum, looking at opportunities for developing skills and exploring techniques, whilst building on previous experiences and planning for progression.

In order to engage families in our work I successfully planned and held an art gallery. Each child produced a piece of work which was framed. Parents had the opportunity to purchase these. The overall response was good; children, staff and parents gave positive feedback. Leading up to this event, I arranged for children to visit the local Art Gallery. A new experience for many.

Our Year 2 children have been involved in a community project “Remembering Ryhope Colliery” producing a book. Following the successful book launch, I compiled a ‘Hidden Talents’ questionnaire for parents, staff and governors of the school. This was the perfect time to gain parent’s and carer’s voices and they were willing to share with us the interests, activities and hobbies they participated in away from school. There is a wide variety of hidden talents amongst parents, which I hope to be able to “tap into” on future occasions.

Throughout school I have encouraged staff to focus on developing and extending the children’s range of art skills. Completed pieces of work have been displayed in a style that has made children proud, resulting in their self-esteem being raised. Their self-evaluations of the work displayed in

school showed that the children were proud of their own and others' work and gave them a sense of ownership within the school. Parents and carers have also commented and praised the children's levels of work.

I am now involved in planning a project to celebrate cultural awareness. This event will involve all children, staff, parents, carers, governors and friends of the school. It will raise awareness of diversity and positive relationships. My identified next step is to engage with our families, involving them in the planning, seeking their time and identifying resources and skills that they can support us with.

Networking with organisations has been extremely beneficial. The realisation that we are all working within similar time constraints in a period of austerity is obviously challenging and can become a barrier unless ways of approaching this and overcoming these issues is looked at from every angle. Although these barriers are universal, what can be achieved is welcoming to see and is evident from the networking that I have been a part of. My aim of engaging families is always going to be a two way approach. I am looking at this in a variety of ways to engage as many families as possible, however, the reluctance, time constraints and prior engagements is always a challenge to overcome. The projects we are involved in currently, offer out of school hours activities and enticing "quick win" offers to engage them.

As I reflect on the programme I realise that my personal leadership skills have become more embedded in my role. As part of the succession planning, the opportunity for me to develop my leadership skills has been supported by the coaching and mentoring by the SLT. I realise that engaging everyone in and promoting culture and the arts throughout the school is an opportunity for me to grow and to apply skills that I have acquired during leadership training whilst focusing on the accessibility, development and progression of Arts and Culture throughout the whole school. The immediate impact for me has been the confidence that I have gained in sharing my beliefs with others and raising the awareness of the opportunities for children to experience elements of the arts within our curriculum and on our doorstep.

Sharing my enthusiasm with my colleagues and also with parents and carers in workshops. I hope my enthusiasm, vision and belief in learning through the arts will inspire others. I am always looking for ways to raise the awareness of the extracurricular things that we do and am keen for RISA to be involved in local and national events.

My vision is that children and families from our school are receptive to all forms of the arts and are given the opportunities to develop their interests and talents, whatever they might be.

I have looked upon the development of my role in Cultural Leadership in Education as a journey that is encompassing the whole school and developing our practices within it. My role in the school as a cultural leader is in my view an opportunity to offer experiences and bring together all stakeholders. As it says in the culture white paper 2016: **"Everyone should have the chance to experience culture, participate in it, create it, and see their lives transformed by it"**.

# Becky Wilson - Raising Standards in Writing through the Arts

## Focus

As a school we very much value the arts in the curriculum and understand they are a means to nurture and develop children's use of self-expression, particularly those that have low Literacy and Numeracy skills. Using Art will further support our journey to deliver stimulating, relevant and quality teaching in our aim to raise standards in writing and diminish the difference between pupil premium and non-pupil premium.

## Description of development process

1. Baseline assessment of current Staff and Pupil perceptions. Develop a staff and pupil survey to indicate current perceptions of the arts. This will highlight the strengths and weaknesses we have in school in order to fully and effectively target CPD.  
54% of staff felt their weakest area was music.  
6% of staff felt they are confident at delivering quality music teaching.  
35% of staff stated that CPD in music would impact upon their teaching and children's learning.  
12% of pupils surveyed believe that Music is their strongest subject as opposed to 56% opting for Art and Design.  
66% of pupils suggested that they would like to participate in a range of art activities in school.
2. Baseline Pupil Premium Writing to evidence impact of journey. Initiate a case study to provide evidence of raising standards and closing the attainment gap between PP and non-PP children.
3. Study Arts planning across school and how we link this to writing. Review how teaching of the arts leads to high quality outcomes, e.g., innovative, authentic, inspiring, inclusive, active, and progressive and develop ownership. Time for reflection and feedback are an integral part of our planning.
4. Establish a whole school curriculum planning for the arts. Working with our music hub develop whole school framework for utilising the Ten Pieces to improve the teaching and learning of music, art, performance arts and writing.
5. Whole school planning. Utilising staff skills and contributions to develop authentic opportunities for the children. Contact Culture Bridge to organise relevant artists, musicians.

## Account of benefits/evidence of impact

Following quality CPD and a whole school approach there was a positive impact. Our talk for writing training led to an opportunity to use this as an artistic approach to writing. As SLT wished these strategies to be adapted by all I encouraged staff to use drama, art and music through talk for writing.

According to whole school data since the implementation of this initiative combined prime aspects of GLD (good level of development) Non Pupil premium in writing scored 67.4 and Pupil premium scored 69.2 giving an increase in pupil premium achievement of +1.8.

Recommendations/proposals for practice

Networking and sharing good practise with other schools. Find a link or opportunity where all staff must be on board otherwise as subject lead you are overworked and unsuccessful with regards to impact from the project.



## Discussion of challenges/barriers/issues

Focus of project changed due to school development plan. There is more need to work closely with SLT to have a greater awareness of yearly focus and hence produce a more outwards facing project. Following a sharing good practise day the focus of the project changed. At first I felt this had been wasted time and resources, however on reflection it was a learning tool.

Following our talk for writing CPD, there lacked opportunity to share good practises that had been developed within school. This has led to uncertainty and low self-esteem of staff. A missed opportunity to model using creative and artistic means to raise standards in writing. SLT carried out a learning walk to see staff using new strategies, though what was the benefit for staff?

## Reflections on what has been learnt/achieved

As discussed in Cultural leadership sessions and an “early win” was built in. At a staff meeting I discussed what theme staff would like Arts week to be and explained need to link to writing. After discussions it was led to the use of the BBC Ten Pieces. I then sectioned off some protected whole school planning time during meeting time allocation. This encouraged creativity and enthusiasm within the staff.

# Carly Cormack and Louise Gatti - Contemporary Art and Visual Literacy - giving students a voice

## Statement Focus:

To support pupils to creatively explore the themes and ideas associated with contemporary art and visual literacy, improve engagement with, and understanding of, creative writing and produce outcomes that provide an alternative voice to interpret the show for peers, teachers and general visitors.

The objective was to create a sound collage, carried out in partnership with New Writing North, part of The Max Reinhardt Literacy Awards (MRLA) 2016-17 for creative writing and literacy work with schools, galleries, art museums and visual arts venues in England, in response to BALTIC's Rodney Graham exhibition.



**The development process:** *the project developed through the priorities of the school, BALTIC and The Max Reinhardt Literacy Awards.*

BALTIC believes in the power of contemporary art to provide alternative lenses with which to view the world. For audiences, the need to develop visual literacy skills; the ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning from information presented visually is paramount. The MRLA offered BALTIC the opportunity to further embed the development of visual literacy within its schools programme.

Using this as a means to provide alternative voices for our academy we agreed on the production of a sound collage in order to develop our students visual literacy and understanding of contemporary art. The creative writing was produced with artist Stevie Ronnie in a series of workshops delivered and planned by Stevie and supported by art teacher Louise Gatti.

Workshops occurred during lesson time, not taking time away from other curriculum areas and students developed their writing outside of lessons through homework opportunities and extended project work. The MRLA directly supported the School Improvement Plan and is currently looking into providing a model to further explore the impact of this project by analysing the performance data of students.

## Benefits /evidence of impact:

Students creatively explored the themes and ideas associated with contemporary art and visual literacy. Engagement improved and their understanding of creative writing developed, resulting in the production of an alternative voice to interpret the show for peers, teachers and general visitors.

Students' interpretations of the work of Rodney Graham, featured in a major exhibition which opened at BALTIC on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2017. The Sound Collage produced by the year 7 students will be the first time the gallery has integrated community involvement / student work into the main show and their comments will be heard by visitors as they walk around the exhibition. Over 120,000 people are expected to visit the exhibition which was given a five-star review in [The Guardian](#) and featured on the [BBC](#).

## Further benefits include:

- Impact on department and confidence as department to engage with further projects
- Creation of a successful literacy in Art Scheme of Work
- Deeper understanding of literacy in art – in practice
- CPD - creating sound pieces in art
- Development and engagement of visually impaired (blind) student in Art
- Use of specialist equipment (Pen Friend) to create interactive audio sketchbook
- Improvement in student behaviour and engagement (evident in declined use of school behaviour system)
- 'No Fear', students communicating about art work and sharing personal thoughts
- Confidence of students to embrace new artists and engage with contemporary art

- Raised profile of literacy in Art across the school and with parent/carers
- Improved communication with parents/carers - school newsletter and parents invited to private gallery preview at BALTIC
- Legacy project in development with Baltic and Artist Writer – due to success of the project
- Legacy literacy resource for students including braille resource
- Legacy documentary film and sound collage on school and Baltic archives

**Recommendations / proposals for practice:**

- Identify an area for development in your school/subject area, e.g. literacy
- Consider the class you will work with and who it could potentially impact the most (we chose a high and low set, two year 7 classes)
- Reflect – regularly as a team/department. We looked at and discussed the scheme of work weekly as it changed weekly according to the direction the students took, we also got the students to reflect on the scheme of work



**Discussion of challenges /barriers/ issues:**

Challenges to consider: as the teacher how will you mark the work produced? How do you mark a collaborative piece? And letting go....

*“Letting go as teacher and giving my classroom over to a writer and not stifle creativity by being worried about predetermined outcomes was a challenge!” - Louise Gatti, project lead teacher*

Be prepared to embrace more contemporary practice – be willing to move away from traditional skills and outcomes and remain open minded. Embrace the creativity!

Behaviour initially varied according to the literacy levels of some students and their ability to access some of the content but once the sessions (led by the artist) were pitched correctly with the support of the teacher in planning, behaviour rapidly improved and all students successfully took part and were engaged.

**Reflections on what has been learnt / achieved:**

*Teacher Reflection: As a teacher I have learnt how to apply literacy to art beyond questioning. How to help students create a sound collage as a collaborate piece. I found student’s behaviour improved by investing in them with the artist and taking them outside of the classroom. Students improved their literacy by developing their ability to speak confidently and with specialist vocab about contemporary art. And I learnt and achieved the use of a range of techniques to enable students to feel confident to read specialist art text.*



*Head of Department Reflection: Trust your teachers – when they come to you with an idea, a passion for something that might not ‘fit’ the standard curriculum, trust them and allow them to pursue it. Encourage teachers to take themselves and their students out of their creative comfort zone. Allow them to embrace the arts and allow them to take a lead. Giving teachers the responsibility allows them to take ownership over the project and achieve great art for everyone. Praise when you see things going well and discuss when things aren’t, be prepared to have difficult conversations but supportive ones that are focused on championing the arts and creativity.*

<http://ncea.org.uk/students-views-on-artists-work-feature-in-newbaltic-exhibition/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/mar/17/rodneymgraham-thats-not-me-review-baltic-gateshead>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08hpvc9>

# Cheryl Stanley - Making Sustainable Partnerships to enhance a Cross-Curricular Approach to Teaching

## Statement of Focus

- To help staff teach in a more cross-curricular approach.
- To raise pupil aspirations - pupils will be proud of what they achieve and can talk about the real world relevance of many subjects.
- To work with a new partner and develop a sustainable partnership.

## The Development Process

RIBA Architecture Ambassadors is a charitable project set up to inspire appreciation, enjoyment and understanding of places and spaces by enabling young people the opportunity to learn about architecture by pairing the school with an architect. I had one introduction session where I met our architect partner to discuss possible projects. Hylton Castle is currently undergoing a massive transformation so we decided we would use this as a focus and get the children to design and make their own castle. I also contacted the learning team at Hylton Castle who agreed they would like to be involved in the project. The castles would be designed and made in art and DT lessons but the class teacher would plan literacy, history and geography around this too. The project started with a visit to the castle and a tour and talk from English Heritage's Learning Team and a visit from our architect to talk about her job and link it to their project. Over the next few weeks: children did research; designed their castles and finally with support from our partner had a morning building their castles. To celebrate, we invited the parents to an open morning where all of the castles and related cross-curricular work were on display. English Heritage also sent a representative with the architects' drawings for the Hylton Castle redevelopment.

## Benefits /evidence of impact

Children were engaged and there was improved behaviour from children. A month after the project, I asked children what learning they had enjoyed this year and several mentioned that they loved building the castles.

Since working with Hylton Castle Learning Team, we have been in regular contact about other projects they would like us to be involved with. The next one we will do is a time capsule this summer.

It has helped our families make stronger links with their local community. Not only our children, but the adults got to see what was happening with the new development and most of our families attended a recent open day at the castle.

## Recommendations / proposals for practice

I would recommend making links with local cultural partners, especially charitable organisations such as English Heritage, National Trust etc. The partnerships are mutually beneficial as they can support with teaching by giving children's learning a context whilst encouraging the children and families to use and appreciate their local heritage.

Whilst working with an architect was interesting for the children, as they could ask her questions about her job, they were not teachers and had little understanding of how children learn. In terms of a partnership, I still had to plan the sessions and lessons and the architect just came in and supported me. There was a lot more work involved on my part than theirs for these sessions so I'm not sure I gained anything from the

architect part of this project. This would of course depend on the architect you were paired with.

#### Challenges /barriers/ issues

As art and cultural co-ordinator, I organised this for Year 3. The idea was that I teach the art and DT and the class teacher would build on this in literacy, geography and history. The Year 3 teacher couldn't attend the initial meeting I'd set up so I had to go alone. Unfortunately this meant it was more my vision which I shared when I got back to school. Even though we completed a medium term plan to map out how we could make cross-curricular links, this didn't happen how I thought it would. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the teacher was not able to give full attention to this project so it was more an art and DT project.

I learned that in projects like this, it is essential that the class teacher/teachers involved need to have more involvement in the initial stages so that they can guide the project. I think if they had seen the project as theirs from the outset, they would have felt more responsibility to see it through to the full outcome rather than me having to pick up the responsibility.

#### Reflections on what has been learnt / achieved

- Relevant learning experiences engage and motivate children and can lead to improved behaviour
- Links with local cultural partners can be meaningful and sustainable when you both support each other.
- As a leader, I need to make clear the expectations to staff and pick up these responsibilities myself

## Claire Weller - Putting Culture Back into Focus

### Hoping for change

My role of art and DT leader is something that I'm dedicated to. As a passionate advocate of these subjects, I have endeavored to incorporate cultural awareness as part of my school action plan for the last few years, but I wasn't entirely confident about how to tackle the concept and was concerned about its longevity within the curriculum.

Historically, the school has focused on other cultures (in recent years we have studied Chinese and African culture), rather than studying and celebrating our own local and/or national culture. Personally, I found this disappointing and I had a fervent belief that appreciation of our culture should be embedded in the ethos of the school. I was keen to make changes but wanted to ensure that the Rickleton staff were both supportive and highly involved. We had already established links with schools in other cultures (including an art school in Shanghai) but we had very little local culture links. This was time for change.

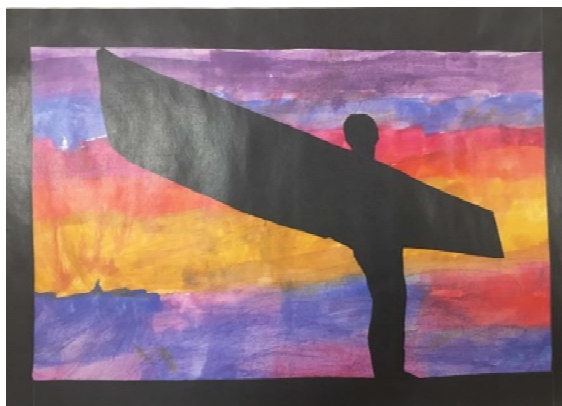


I knew that embedding culture into the curriculum was going to be difficult before the course started. When do you ever get the time to sit and actually consider what culture is or what it means to us? After all, it is such a broad and abstract concept for young children to understand. After attending day A, I found having the time to really think and discuss this with others highly beneficial.

### Time for Change

After leading a culture staff meeting, I quickly found that most staff shared the vision for celebrating our own culture and raising cultural awareness. There seemed to be a buzz of excitement at the prospect, which was very inspiring. We decided that the children should lead a project, to study and celebrate their own culture (student leadership was something we were also looking to embed) with the aim of having a celebration event in the summer term (June exhibition). Some staff were extremely skeptical about the idea of taking a backseat and letting the children lead it, as staff could not plan ahead or control the learning.

From this point, each individual class in the school from nursery to Year 6 began discussing the question, 'What is culture?' As expected, the children found it very difficult to define this, but they did have a basic understanding that they could relate to prior learning. Next, we asked the children to think about what their own culture was like; this led to some very interesting and varied discussions! Surprisingly, many of the children seemed completely unaware of the fact they even had a culture of their own. At first, the



children responded with things like art, music etc. but when they were given more time to reflect, the children had ideas such as local myths, iconic landmarks and individuality. Even some of our youngest children began to think out-of-the-box: sharing ideas about homelessness, manners, and designers. The results of this stage varied greatly from class to class, sometimes even within the same cohort.

After that, each class was asked to decide what it was they wanted to celebrate about their own culture. I was sincerely



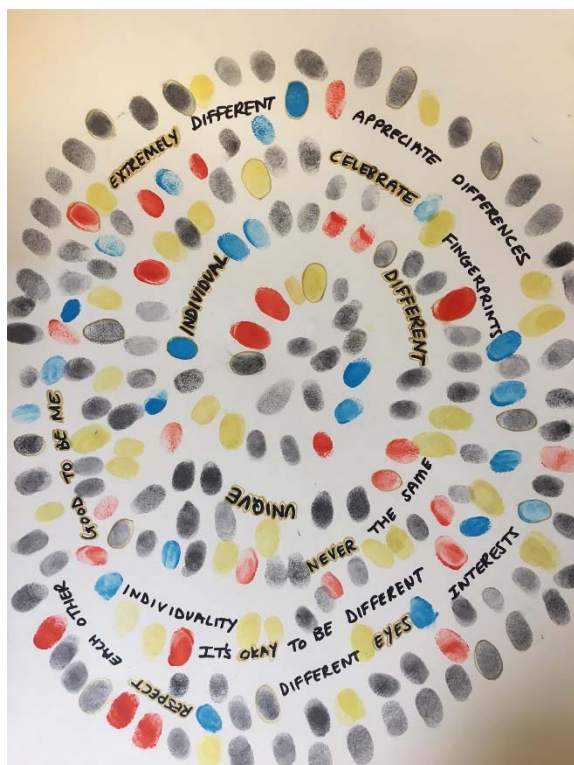
surprised by the range of aspects chosen across the school, from manners on the football pitch, to the Angel of the North, to the importance of being a good friend. Each class then decided on ways to represent this e.g. silhouette paintings of the Angel of the North, clay casting of hand shaking (football manners)... One staff member explained, "The children have seen their ideas taken seriously and given time, which has been quite powerful. For example, the children in my class thought football was an important part of their lives and culture. They were so excited to see how we could base our project around this". The staff are very proud of the way the children took on this project with such passion and determination.

### Celebrations and successes

In general, I feel that all of the staff and children now have a greater awareness of their own culture and there has been an increase in the pupils' appreciation for the importance of cultural learning. Culture has become an important part of who we are and what we do at Rickleton Primary School. In some classes, the project seems to have brought the children closer together as they now see themselves as part of something they share. It has helped the children to gain a better sense of identity as individuals and as a community. A Year 1 teacher said, "I've learnt that there is more to our culture than I initially thought. When you pull apart what makes us as a community there are pieces that we forget about. Personally, I knew a lot about other cultures and never stopped and thought about my own. So when I was asked I couldn't answer. Now, both my class and I can confidently and proudly describe what makes our culture special".



A fantastic and hugely positive aspect of this project is that it will involve the wider community rather than just those involved in school life. The children's work (student led) will be displayed as an exhibition about their own culture in a local Arts Centre for one week. The pupils and their parents are likely to visit, but it is also accessible to the entire local area, creating a greater link between the school and the wider community.



This new link with the local Arts Centre has also led to other successes; we are now using the space again for the current Arts Award group to perform for the local community. I strongly feel that this new link will have longevity.

### Recommendations

We have loved the way this project has brought the school together and given us all senses of identity. We would love other local schools to study their own culture and share their findings with us so that we can compare the similarities and differences.

You're all welcome to visit our culture exhibition at the Arts Centre Washington from 22<sup>nd</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> June.

# Claire McStea - Machines Versus Nature: Thinking and Moving Through Brazil

## *Collingwood School and Media Arts College*

### **Rationale**

In view of the current climate in education, and its emphasis on product over process, it is important to re-centre our thinking and practise back to the individual child and re-establish a child-centred learning approach.

Collingwood has always put creativity at the centre of our curriculum. We are a special school for children aged 5-19 with a range of moderate to severe learning difficulties. When our young people leave us at 16, 18 or 20 they need to be prepared for adulthood and the world of work. They need to make informed choices, which require them to have an understanding of their personal strengths and capabilities and have the confidence and language to communicate this. It is our job to find what defines our young people rather than what limits them.

We see an increasing amount of mental health problems and emotional challenges amongst our students. In light of this the SLT decided that the school needs to revisit the role of the arts as one of the school improvement priorities and make a change. The development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities is an essential part of meeting these aims and learning through the Arts is the perfect vehicle in which to develop these skills.

I devised a whole school Arts and Culture audit to identify areas for staff development. Following this, it was decided that the arts project should be carried out with the younger students to allow for progression and with staff who were in most need of CPD

### **The aims of the project were to develop:**

Thinking skills, Encourage cross curricular planning; Collaborative planning; increased engagement in the arts and culture; Working with creative partners

### **The Project**

Two classes are currently involved in the project which will run until the end of the summer term

Class teachers, first created a cross curricular topic web around the theme of Brazil, with a focus on the Arts. We then met together and considered the needs of the class groups and most apparent areas for development. Staff were then asked to make explicit, the activities which would promote thinking skills, with a focus on; Creative Learning, Collaboration, and Communication.

The stimulus chosen was the Amazon Rainforest with the focus being on Machines versus Nature.

Most of the delivery will come from the class teachers, with the music and drama delivered by myself. We wanted dance to play a major role in the project as it allows children to develop all 3 Thinking skills. Dance is all about communication, which allows children in our SEN setting who may not have the confidence, skills or vocabulary, a means in which to express themselves. Also working in small groups instils leadership, cooperation and collaboration, when making creative choices.



Both class teachers felt that dance, was an area for their own development and have teamed up with Dance City who will be delivering 3 dance sessions. 2 in school and one in Dance City

Class teachers intend to use this valuable opportunity as CPD and use the knowledge, skills and techniques learnt from professional dancers in their own teaching

The stimulus for the dance will be animals and plants of the rainforest and issues surrounding deforestation and environmental protection; and Machines verses Nature. The contrasting nature of the theme Machine Verses Nature opens up exciting opportunities for music and dance

The dance sessions will be using a mixture of techniques and styles from the Samba tradition and from Capoeira, a Brazilian martial art that combines elements of dance, acrobatics and music, which will appeal to the boys who make up 80% of the students.

Stories used as starting points are The Great Kapok, Tree and the traditional tale, 'The Wings of a Butterfly.' These stories allow the students to explore the cultural traditions of the Amazonian people and discuss and debate environmental issues through a range of drama conventions. i.e., hot seating, conscience alley and freeze frames.

The story of 'The Wings of a Butterfly' will challenge children to problem solve, generate ideas, explore possibilities and come up with solutions.

The story of 'The Great Kapok Tree' raises issues for debate, around issue of deforestation.

In art and design children will create masks, costumes and jewellery inspired by animals of the rainforests and the cultural traditions of people living in the Amazon. In music, children have been learning to play samba percussion using rhythms generated from words and phrases connected to their learning. The music will form part of the carnival style celebration at the end of the project

Students, on the ASD spectrum, with sensitive hearing will use the sound-beam and music soft wear to create a rainforest soundscape... The soundscape will be used for an interactive sound display available for the whole school to use.

Pupils who do not wish to be part of the live performance can be filmed against a rainforest background using the green screen facility in our Media suite.

The plan is to work towards a performance in front of an invited audience, which will include neighbouring schools. However the emphasis will be on the creative process.

### **Outcome and Evaluation**

Staff will be measuring the impact of the project on; Thinking Skills, Enjoyment and Engagement and Literacy. Methods of recording include sound bites from the pupils, video diaries, teacher observations, questionnaires and assessment for learning tools using allowing for meta-cognition.

The only barriers and obstacles have been around allocated time for time for planning and monitoring, when working across curriculum areas. It has also become apparent that staff new to the teaching profession need training and guidance in cross curricular planning and thinking skills.

The results and reflections on this project will be shared with staff and used as part of our CPD program which will be offered to other schools in the region.

## Elisabeth Stanley – Arts and Culture Provision within Linhope Main Site, 17/11/16 – 17/5/17

**Statement of Focus** - After undertaking an audit of all teaching and learning staff in November 2016 using a tool provided on day one of Cultural Leadership course, it was very evident that staff at Linhope PRU felt that they lacked confidence in a number of areas including:

**Vision** – there was a perceived lack of cohesive vision relating to the arts and culture and that there was some ambiguity regarding direction and who drives this area within the team.

**Facing outwards** – consensus was that there was a lack of close links with cultural organisations and creative professionals from the creative sector.

**Recognition and celebration of success** – it was thought that we do not take the opportunity to celebrate high performance. We were missing the opportunity to benefit from a culture of celebration inspiring and motivating our learners and staff.

It was decided that we would use 'Facing outwards' as the immediate focus for improvement. To this end staff consulted during a training day on 10 March 2017 about the sort of cultural organisations we might benefit from forging links with. As a team, we spent some time looking at how visits and community cohesion through arts and culture might improve behaviour.

From this event, the lead for Arts Award established some links with local primary schools to see what link they have established and to gain information and recommendations about providers. She visited Hotspur Primary and was provided with numerous strategies employed by their school which she intends sharing with the staff at Linhope.

A partnership was established with Open Clasp Theatre Company where staff would work collaboratively on the development and verification of Arts Award portfolios

A link has been forged with TLG, one of the learning providers that we employ, to work collaboratively on Arts Award portfolios. There is an intention to internally verify each other's work and to share the cost of centre registration and external verification fees. This should result in better quality output, better learner support and should save money for both parties.

Contact was made with a range of providers through a Teachmeet hosted at Dance City on 4 April where links were established with:

- Seven Stories
- Northern Stage
- New Writing North
- Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art
- National Glass Centre
- Dance City

At this event, connections were made with a number of schools and colleges in order to gain support by collaborative learning on Arts Award. This proved to bring great value to Linhope where work on art and culture had previously happened in isolation.

Back at school, the information from the Teachmeet was shared with the other staff at a twilight staff training session. Staff in English and Arts Award intend to schedule trips out to visit Seven Stories and the

National Glass Centre. It seems that developments were realised simply from raising awareness and having opportunities to discuss benefits of arts and cultural partnerships.

An immediate impact is that the English department has been using the Part C Arts Award hero scripts for year 10 and 11 learners speaking and listening assessments. Talking about art and culture in school has allowed more cohesion between subjects and has been beneficial to both English and Art.

The PE department have linked with a dance teacher and now hosts a fortnightly dance class which is open to all learners.

Staff have been upskilled not only from the Cultural Leadership training which has had some elements of cascade back at school, but awareness has been raised regarding learning outside of the classroom and the benefits of embedding more art and culture into the curriculum.

The audit provided a framework on which we could self-evaluate and it provided a focus for improvement.

I would recommend taking opportunities to network with others and of finding out more regarding established providers in your local area. An audit of staff might prove beneficial and the opportunity to put arts and culture on your whole school meeting as a regular agenda item will raise awareness of what is going on in your school and might provide opportunities to develop links between departments who might be working in silos regarding art and culture.

The cost implication of inviting partners into schools or undertaking external cultural visits is a barrier. We intend to look for the opportunity to apply for arts related funding to minimise this barrier.

The pressure on teachers and learners to focus on curriculum specific to exam outcomes can limit teachers' choices regarding access to cultural areas that might be of interest to staff or learners. We intend to look for ways that we can do some collaborative, cross-curricular work so that we can pursue a richer curriculum for all.

There is an increased administrative and time burden when working with partners and staff feel that they are already time-deprived. The Arts lead intends to look at ways of reducing the burden by having risk assessment and partner packs completed in advance of planned trips to make accessing arts and cultural experiences easier on staff.

An audit of all teaching and learning staff might identify some opportunities for development within the team.

It is evident that information about previous good practice within Linhope was not being shared and celebrated with other staff. This will be rectified.

## **Feye Carter - Embedding culture and diversity into the primary arts curriculum**

At Clavering Primary School, we hope to raise the profile of the arts in school and are working towards the Artsmark Award. Within this, we want the children not only to experience a variety of art and culture this year, but want to embed these into our curriculum for future learning. Art is a valued subject in our school, as we believe it has a positive impact on the whole child. Our curriculum currently meets all statutory requirements, but the aim of this project is to familiarise the children with culture and the arts through a continuous learning path by building relationships with external organisations.

The art coordinator, the Arts and Sports lead and I (the music coordinator), want to ensure that the children have access to a range of authentic opportunities in school and also the local communities, by developing partnerships with local cultural organisations. As a team we planned an 'Arts Week' for the children to work with local artists and to create an exhibition of work to share with friends and parents. We decided to base our week around the topic of 'British Values' knowing that this would be supported by the head teacher. After meeting with the head teacher and gaining her support, we were given our budget so we could delegate roles to contact different theatres, dance companies, galleries, museums and musicians. We planned different outcomes and activities for each year group.

During a staff meeting, we introduced our 'Arts Week' project. We explained the shared outcomes and the different opportunities the children should have. In previous years, there had been an overlap of work between year groups so the head teacher stressed that it was important that this didn't happen and that the work produced was of a high standard. At first, we gave each year group time to plan some initial ideas for their year group during the meeting. Some staff were reluctant to participate due to other commitments in the curriculum, so in a subsequent arts team meeting, we adapted the plans and used staff strengths and interests to support one another. Two of our teaching assistants planned and created a British Values flag which all children contributed to.

Next, we contacted our local Bridge Culture Organisation 'The Forge' to arrange workshops for different year groups with a variety of artists and art organisations. This included work with local glass and painting artists. Then we contacted Tees Valley Arts to arrange fabric and digital media artists. Finally, we spoke to Tees Valley Music Service, who already conducts in-school music lessons, to create a bespoke British Values music workshops including song writing.

After 'Arts week', it was agreed that the main aim of this project was a success. All children took part in workshops run by local artists and art organisations. The children were engaged throughout the week and created a high standard of work. The work was shared in a whole school assembly and the children's achievements were shared on Twitter. Small exhibitions of work were displayed around school so that parents and families could share this achievement. These exhibitions were led by members of the 'Arts Committee' which was set up so that children interested in the arts, could share their views and support our arts curriculum.

As part of this project, we have built positive relationships with wider cultural communities which will be utilised next year as well. Following working with the Hartlepool Tees Valley Music Service representative, positive relationships have been developed further and we now have secured more music teachers coming into school. We have other opportunities such as the music workshops at the 'Sound Pod' and we have been approached to work with TVMS and local arts organisations as part of the Wintertide Festival in November. We have also planned our music provision with TVMS for the next academic year. The staff in school also expressed their positive views of the art week and gained from sharing good practice.

Due to the success of 'Arts Week' we want to hold a similar week next academic year, using the new relationships developed with local organisations. In addition, we have discussed how to embed opportunities to work with these organisations part of our Arts and Design curriculum next year. We would also like to embed arts-based trips into our curriculum to give children the opportunity to visit local galleries and museums.

During this project, I found that the main challenge was getting the initial support from the senior leadership team. They were hesitant due to some of the quality of work produced during the previous arts weeks. We therefore decided to use British Values as an anchor knowing that this was on the school development plan. Due to this, we received a generous budget and managed to secure artists and other external organisations to provide workshops. Another challenge was getting all of the staff enthused with the project as this guarantees high quality planning and activities. To overcome this, I worked with individual teachers to come up with some ideas that would benefit their classes and thus ensured the teachers felt confident. I also think that the support of the SLT was an important factor because it meant that we worked together to ensure the success as a team.

On reflection, I think I would encourage staff to work in small groups and focus on the quality of work and not the quantity. I would also make the staff aware that there will be a scrutiny of the overall art work as this would guarantee dedication and make everyone accountable with the work that is produced. Next time, I would want the Arts committee to be more involved and feed back to staff and how they found their week.

Overall, I would repeat this project as it has been beneficial for children and the overall impact has created relationships with local businesses and artists. We are using this experience to make sure we embed local artists into our curriculum. Also, it has provided a great opportunity for children to have positive experiences within the Arts and share these with their parents and families.

## Jack Gardner - No. 132 Malcolm Street

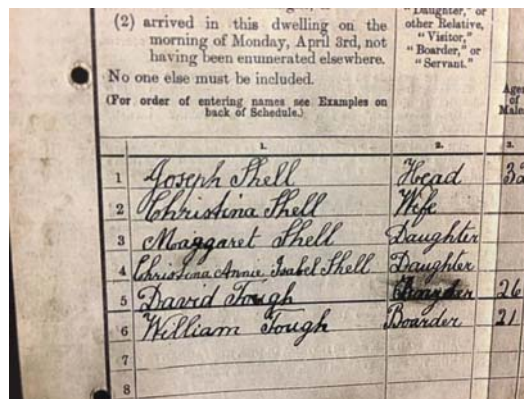
A week-long cross-school cross-curriculum project in collaboration with Historic England and Heaton History Group.

### Aim:

- For children to explore a sense of identity and local environment through local history.
- To engage with cross-generational local people
- To create a memorable experience.

### Monday

All children within the school watched a short film in the class at the start of the day. The film told the story of Joseph and Christina Shell of 132 Malcolm Street, Heaton as they wandered out of the Ouseburn Victoria Tunnel only to find that they have travelled one hundred years into the future. The film was a collaboration between myself and TURPS films and showed the couple comically struggling with the differences between Heaton in 1917 and in 2017. They eventually find Malcolm Street only to find their house no longer exists and Hotspur Primary is in its place.



		"Daughter, or other Relative, "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant."		Ages of Males.
		1.	2.	
1	Joseph Shell	Head		32
2	Christina Shell	Wife		
3	Margaret Shell	Daughter		
4	Christina Annie Isabel Shell	Daughter		26
5	David Tough	Boarder		21
6	William Tough			
7				
8				

I then went into each individual class and presented a box of objects (courtesy of Beamish Museum) and explained that the school caretaker had just discovered them within the school grounds. The children then became archaeologists and the teachers took a Mantel of the Expert approach in exploring the objects; guiding the children to conclude that the objects belonged to Joseph and Christina.

Teachers then allowed children to ascertain that perhaps the Shell's lived where Hotspur currently is. Using historical maps, aerial photographs and census forms the classes then discovered exactly where 132 Malcolm Street stood and who lived there. At this point Joseph Shell arrived into each classroom and explained that the only way for him and Christina to return to their time period was to find out what had happened in Newcastle between 1917 and 1984, when Hotspur School was built. Each group was then assigned a different decade to explore from Reception looking at 1970s to Year 6 looking at the 1910s.

### Tuesday - Thursday

Each Year group explored their designated decades. I had arranged numerous visitors from local residents who remembered Heaton at various decades throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century to local historians. There were also visits and tours of Heaton, trips to Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle Library and each year group visited the Discovery Museum.

Children were encouraged to bring in old family photographs and artefacts from the past and took delight in showing and telling their family stories with their classes. They all fed into a temporary Hotspur School Museum which was built especially for the project. The children's creative responses to their learning included art, newspaper writing and short stories, all of which were included within the Museum.

### Friday

I led a special whole school-assembly for parents and carers in which I presented the museum before Joseph and Christina Shell re-emerged. The children sang two of the school's songs and Joseph and Christina taught them old Geordie songs in return. After this I showed a Power Point presentation of the children's learning which was presented in the form of a time machine to allow Joseph and Christina to return to 1917. The actors left before a final concluding film of them returning to the Ouseburn Tunnel; remarking on how reassured they are that such great learning and creativity is taking place where their homes used to exist.





## The process

The development process started as I was assigned the task of creating a week-long Mantel of the Expert project. I wanted to explore the local history and was inspired by the artist Jeremy Deller's work in exploring heritage through art. I worked with Chris Jackson of the Heaton History Group to research into the project. We looked at the census forms of the streets which stood where the school is built and chose to focus on Christina and Joseph Shell; a real couple who moved from Holy Island to Heaton to work on the railway.



I had a budget from Historic England which allowed me to partly pay TURPS films to document the week and make the opening and closing film. In coordinating the project, I had to carefully timetable all educational visits and visitors around class timetables. I was provided time in staff training sessions to explain to teachers my plan and take any questions. I was conscious not to overwhelm my colleagues with information so drip fed information over the weeks. Consequently, my colleagues remained enthusiastic and supportive throughout and were all hugely helpful in putting together the school museum.

## Challenges

One of our visitors fell ill the morning he was due to come in, fortunately we were able to negotiate another visitor through a parent. It was important to remain well organised with the structure of the week but to also allow some flexibility within that. The sourcing of objects, resources and costumes was time consuming and consequently it was a challenge to juggle the project with my other school work.

I was deliberately inexplicit with teachers when discussing the creative response to their decade as I wanted the response to be child lead, not prescriptive and I didn't want to add pressure within the time restraints. Consequently, there was great range in the quality of the creative responses and uncertainty as to what was expected. With hindsight, I could have been clearer about my expectations regarding this.

## Evidence of impact

In response to the project Victoria Angel (Local Heritage Education Manager, Historic England) made Hotspur the first in Newcastle to receive Historic School status. In a special 1917 themed weekly school bulletin the head-teacher Miles Wallis-Clarke wrote of the project:

"This is real learning, exciting, stimulating, thought-provoking, relevant, localised, cross-curricular and immersive. It is the kind of learning that children and staff will remember... it is organic, unpredictable and sometimes accidental."

The opening film stimulus was a great success with parents and it has currently been over 3,000 views on social media. TURPS films are currently in post-production with a film documenting the week and plan to enter it into film festivals and competitions.



3k Views

Like Comment Share

Lynn Grady, Karl Mc Grath and 71 others

Chronological

27 shares

<https://vimeo.com/218397684>

On the Friday a child in reception, anticipating that Joseph and Christina would return, came to school wearing the same clothed cap and grey blazer as Joseph Shell. A fantastic example of what a memorable experience the project had been. Although the results were a reflection of Heaton I feel the project could be repeated anywhere. If you scratch the surface of any locality you will find a real wealth of information, coincidences and stories to work with, many of which the children provide. It allows children to take pride in where they are from, their community and heritage and provides an alternative history to that of Kings, Queens and conquests.

# Joanne Thompson - Speaking about Art

St Joseph's RC VA Primary School Gateshead

## The Aims

- Access to the Arts for children, staff and families
- Whole school participation in a range of Arts
- To develop and improve speaking and listening across the school
- A catalyst to start this whole cycle: an Artist in residence

## The Development Process

Our school is located in a culturally rich environment with a range of Art and cultural venues within walking distance or a short metro journey away.

We wanted to reach out to those children who don't have the opportunity to visit these places with their families. We also wanted to engage in events that allowed families to take part including those in very close proximity to our school: Saltwell Park Sculpture day held every September, Enchanted Parks held in Saltwell Park every November, Juice Festival held locally every October half term.

Involvement of the staff. As a school we wanted to see if adding more Art and cultural opportunities to the curriculum we provide would enhance our children's learning. We wanted to introduce more opportunities for speaking and listening through introducing the children to a wide range of new experiences.

Budget: the money from the project came from Pupil Premium money across two financial years to give the project a chance to work

My role: I became the coordinator of Artist in residence, main contact for any artists in school, attending CPD and developing a long term role with different Art organisations.

How did it all start?

We contacted our local Art Officer who helped us to advertise for an artist to work in school over a four term contract. We took part in an Art commissioning process. The artists were asked to write to our Year 6 children to showcase their talents. We then asked the children to help us decide who we interviewed. We chose some of Year 6 children to think of questions to personally ask the Artists during their formal interview. When choosing our Artist in residence we took on board the children's views which were very similar to those of the staff involved in the interviews.

At this point we had no idea of the journey which we were about to embark on nor the speed at which our involvement in Art and Cultural project would escalate. Within the first term of project beginning we had six different artists in school, five classes had been involved in a least one project and there were four educational visits to a local Art location.

## The Evidence of Impact

- To become makers of Art
- To become critical users of Art

As a school we wanted to bring a range of Art opportunities into school: drama, Art, dance, music, and cultural experiences. We wanted to make links with local art and cultural venues and open our doors to new and exciting opportunities.

But at the same time we wanted our children to talk about Art, to be critical about a range of Arts. We wanted our children to get beyond the 'it was good' 'I liked it' 'it's nice'. We wanted our children to express their negative and positive feelings about Art.



Through our work with John Quinn this element grew as he encouraged our children to develop a creative response to the activities they carried out. This enabled our children to respond through song, poems, rap, and poster making and talking.

#### Recommendations for good practice

- A catalyst for the project: by employing John Quinn, as our artist in residence, this gave myself, the co-ordinator of the project the chance to make much needed links with local art organisations, to develop a new way of thinking of Art and Culture across our whole school community.
- A supportive SLT and governors: the original idea for the project came from the Head teacher who has been extremely supportive in allowing our doors to be open to a wide range of projects and new experiences for the children. We also needed the support of our governors to allow us to use a big chunk of our budget for this project.
- A budget – although many of the events we took part in were free we had a budget put aside to make sure that our school became involved in lots of new projects.

#### The challenges

- Part of the project was to engage the whole school community. For our children to talk about local art, artists and venues and for our families to want to know more about local art and to take their children to some of these events.
- The next step for the whole staff. Encouraging staff to use the Creative response as a teaching method after taking part in an activity. Giving our children the opportunity to respond in a way that suits their personality and creative abilities.

#### Reflections on the project

- Our children can now talk about Art. As part of this project I ‘talked’ to two children from each class once a term. It was just a general five minute conversation about the new things they had been doing in class. At first it was mainly myself talking, trying to get information out of the children. By the fourth term the children came in bursting to tell me what they thought about a local sculpture or the work they have carried on using animation projects. Their ability to have a conversation and the development of their language has been something wonderful to witness.
- TeachMeet: my school was asked to share the work of their project through a TeachMeet event. This gave me the opportunity to sit down and mentally process the journey we have been on; to list the events we have taken place, the Artists and organisations we have worked with, the connections and relationships that have begun. As a part time member of staff it is has been a project that has been a pleasure to have such a major role in. I have developed into a leader within our school and I know that this will continue into the future thanks to the links that have been made and the progress that the children have made in their ability to ‘Speak about Art’.

## Julie Forster and Mark Pearson – Implementing a Cultural Carousel

As there is a high level of children receiving free school meals, many of them do get the opportunity to visit museums, theatres or other cultural experiences. Also, the area in which our children live is quite mono-cultural and almost our pupils are of White British Heritage, therefore as a school we are committed to bringing these experiences to the children. The carousel would involve the teaching of all subject areas outside of the core critical subjects with a measurable cultural impact. Curriculum coverage within school was at times sporadic we wanted to implement an engaging solution that inspired children, providing them an enhanced cultural experience. Teachers were assigned subject areas according to their skills to ensure specialised and high quality teaching where possible. We also wanted to ensure we could assess the progress of the children effectively and the impact of the learning.

Having spoken to our head teacher following the Cultural Leadership course, she allocated time during staff meetings and a twilight to begin the process of implementing the carousel to minimise the impact on teachers' time. As a cohort of staff we agreed a policy to ensure the carousel would happen. The conditions were;

- Weekly for a full afternoon
- Units of work would last 6 weeks per rotation
- Each unit would meet the outcomes for that year group
- High quality teaching
- Demonstrated progression
- Culturally relevant
- Must include a SOLE (self-orientated learning environment) session.
- Rigorous assessment
- Audited to ensure coverage
- A creative element
- Evidence to be displayed and celebrated
- A portfolio of evidence

These stipulations would ensure that the team working on culture would implement a programme that is worthwhile. A trial run date was further agreed for May 2017.

The idea of a carousel solved many problems the school needed to address. Foundation curriculum subjects were often side lined for the core subjects. The carousel would ensure that our foundation teaching would happen and it would provide the children with a culturally richer curriculum with more specialised teaching. As subject leaders were responsible for the delivery of their area, it would ensure high quality teaching with thorough planning. Additionally, children's progression could be monitored in the curriculum subjects. The carousel allows cultural exposure to be weaved into the timetable, allowing the children to experience it on an on-going basis rather than a one-off type event.

After running a staff meeting discussing the idea of a carousel, there was some resistance to the implementation. There were a number of factors such as planning time, timetabling, limited flexibility and accountability. We discussed the benefits of taking ownership of their curriculum area and how it eliminated the need to chase staff for evidence of their subject being taught and this is when we developed the idea for a policy. Swimming slots were changed and trips would no longer be permitted on Friday afternoons with the exception of externally organised events. Furthermore, staff were allocated time within the timetable to arrange their subject and what they will teach during the carousel, eliminating the prospect of an increased workload; a primary source of resistance. We also stressed that time would be saved by not needing to plan and teach other non-core subjects. Through careful consideration of staff time and providing opportunities to improve the consistency of the teaching of subject areas, staff responded more positively to the concept.

Financing also proved to be a primary source of resistance. Teachers of creative or D+T based subjects were worried about resourcing their subject. Some staff also prioritised the budgets of their subject area over others so an equal budget was allocated to each subject. We decided that remaining funds would be pooled and accessible to subjects that required more funding such as art.

To begin our trial run, we had a Culture week which would be followed up on consecutive Friday afternoons for the rest of the half term. Each week, each class rotated to a new teacher and completed a culturally relevant lesson based on a different subject area, taught by the subject leader. The initial culture week contained several cultural workshops such as the Lions of Zululand, Bollywood dancing, African drumming, Rainforest creatures and Samurai meditation. The school felt lively and more vibrant and the children embraced it enthusiastically. We have since decided that each change of unit during the carousel would be launched with a new culture week to hook the children.

The curriculum is clearly more cross curricular across school and staff now run collaborative curriculum meetings and discuss progress, impact and plan all subjects based on a single topic which runs throughout school. The teachers are supportive of the carousel and have commented on the improvement to the structure of their Friday afternoons and an improvement in behaviour. Additionally, the work produced has created a display for each class, further relieving extra workload. Teachers have also commented how the carousel has relieved the pressure of teaching foundation subjects during the week and freed up additional slots on their timetables. Reluctance to teach subjects that the teachers are unfamiliar with is less of an issue.

Importantly, the children have enjoyed the variety of subjects and doing something new and different each Friday afternoon. Moreover, the children are expressing a love for cultural learning and it has been reflected in the work they are producing. They have a much wider access to subjects they would not usually access that exposes them to local and global culture. In future we want to ensure we have community links within our carousel to ensure the concept of a local culture is more relevant to the children.

# **Katherine Askham – Dance in Excelsior Academy 2016/17**

## **Introduction**

Excelsior Academy is a school situated within the West End of Newcastle. The school has a primary school, 3 secondary schools and a 6<sup>th</sup> form college. Within the Academy the performing arts subjects of drama and music are very strongly represented. Dance has been part of PE and works alongside these areas, but is not as strong as an individual area. The aim for this project was to look at the profile of dance as a creative subject area, build and develop this, to begin, to put into place links with outside agencies and companies within the dance area.

## **The Process**

The process began in July 2016; the pupils performed various dance performances within the Academy Fashion show alongside Drama, Music and Art. The pupils performed a variety of styles and a lot of their own creativity went into these performances. Off the back of this performance and celebration of what the pupils were capable of, began the idea of raising the profile of dance within the Academy.

After the performance, I continued to work with the senior leaders to discuss how dance could look within the Academy for the upcoming academic year and beyond. During this first term the focus was on introducing workshops to the pupils to broaden their dance awareness and continue to work with pupils to perform during events, the Awards evening at the centre for life, the Sports Awards breakfast, the Christmas Show. Using these opportunities to showcase the talents of the pupils but also the differing styles of dance, to build the interest of the other pupils to then take part in the workshops and create a need for dance on the curriculum at both KS3 and 4.

In order to develop this further I had started to create links with other companies. In our school we are very lucky to have Newcastle on our doorstep and within Newcastle are a number of cultural and creative companies. I started by contacting Dance City, they operate from Newcastle City Centre. They have standard dance classes for babies through to professional dancers, but also offer courses including BTEC level 3 and degree courses, pupils from their classes and workshops have gone to Laban London and London stage shows. They have a variety of ways to work with schools and the community. I also had meetings with the Procurement and Funding Manager within the Academy to look at funding opportunities and other companies that offer initiatives' to work with schools, Leeds Ballet and the Royal Ballet.

Unfortunately at this point I was quite poorly and unexpectedly absent from school from early December through to February. After completing my phased return I started to pick up my additional roles throughout the Spring 2 term. This obviously had an impact on the momentum of the project and lost what I wanted to do, which was to build on the success of the summer fashion show. It also meant that the Christmas show performance and Sports performances did not happen.

From this point spring 2 into summer 1, I have re – engaged with Dance City and the Education Group regarding workshops and bringing dance into schools. With Dance City, I have discussed how they can assist with the staffing of KS3 curriculum to eliminate the need to appoint a full time member of staff, while we build the subject area. Also the workshops and training available for staff and how they can support us. They also offer summer and term time classes for pupils who want to develop their skills further, pupils who have taken part in this, starting from their schools after school clubs, have gone on to win Young Dancer of the Year. We discussed how to get pupils from our catchment area to view performances and how this can be linked to visits backstage. These links are currently in the initial stages, but looks a promising area to build

further on in the coming months and year.

June 2017, I have organised workshops with another company, The Education Group. They will be working with KS1, 2, and 4. This is to celebrate International Dance day. It will raise awareness again of the subject area across the school and I will be evaluating via pupil and staff feedback the engagement in the workshops, and also to see if there is a need from the pupils to take part in further dance workshops and classes.

### **Recommendations**

- Build on links with Dance City – workshops, tours backstage and take pupils to performances.
- Use their freelance dance teachers to create a dance subject area within both KS3 and 4.
- Take up their CPL for teaching both KS3 4 /5 within schools.
- Working with Dance City to take part in PULSE, performing with other schools across the region with the possibility of performing across the UK.
- Work with the Education Group to celebrate international dance day with a day of dance workshops.
- Obtain feedback from the pupils and staff about this day. See what the interest in continuing this within the day to day curriculum would be.
- Review the quality of the workshop offering to see if we would work with again.
- Liaise with SLT re the status of dance within Ks3 looking towards Ks4.
- Use after school clubs to create a core group of dancers that can be used within the performances in the Academy.

### **Conclusion**

There are a large number of recommendations, due to the unexpected gap within the project process. These recommendations can be easily met within the end of this summer term and the starting of the next Academic year. The process as expected at the end of last year was to be ongoing, which would be built on each academic year, allowing the subject area to grow and expand. I think the key to the success of the subject area as a strong creative area is to forge the links with Dance City. This will allow us to utilise strong subject specialists and also key up to date with changes and initiatives within the dance arena.

# Kim Leck and Tania Dodd - Embracing Equality and Diversity

## Background

Sedgefield Primary School is predominately a white British school, with the children having little experience of people from different ethnic or religious backgrounds. This became the driving force for our project as we wanted our children to have the opportunity to experience a diverse range of cultures. In addition this would support our work towards the renewal of our Equality and Diversity Award. We therefore decided to hold an Equality and Diversity week within school which would enable our children to immerse themselves into the music, art, dance, drama, food and culture of three main religions; Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam.

## Family Groups

All of our children are organised into one of eight family groups, each one comprising of children from Reception to Year 6. The family groups meet regularly on a Friday afternoon and within these sessions they were given a number of focussed activities which would pave the way for our Equality and Diversity week. These also resulted in some thought provoking, collaborative artwork.

## The Big Launch

We launched our Equality and Diversity Week with a whole school viewing of Zootopia complete with popcorn! The film encapsulated the essence of our week, depicting how we can all live in harmony even though we are all different. Work from this film was then carried through to Literacy lessons where children were encouraged to explore the central themes.



## Equality and Diversity Week

We decided that it was important for different year groups to work together on their given religion, thus Reception and Key stage 1 focussed upon Buddhism, Years 3 and 4, Hinduism and Year 5 and 6, on Islam. In order for children to fully experience the culture and beliefs of each religion we felt it was necessary to organise visitors to engage with the children and also arrange trips to religious centres. We made contact with The Islamic Diversity Centre in Newcastle who were really helpful and enthusiastic. They came into school and held a workshop with our Year 5 and 6 children, as well as organising a visit to a Mosque in Middlesbrough. The children were able to explore many aspects of Islam throughout the week, producing their own Mosque models, made Mango smoothies as well as making a dance and drama of The Islamic Creation story.

A parent put us in contact with two practising Hindus, who came into school to work with our Year 3 and 4 children. The children had the opportunity to experience the everyday life and culture of a Hindu, including dressing up, music, dance and art. They embarked on a very colourful enactment of a Holi Celebration as well as enjoying a visit to a Hindu Mandir in Middlesbrough where they shared a typical meal.



Logistically we felt it was better to use for outreach service of The Oriental Museum for Reception and Key Stage One. They completely took over our Infants and provided an action-packed introduction to both Buddhism and China. The children engaged in all aspects of music, art, drama and even dragon dancing. The children had the opportunity to experience of activities from meditation to making sculptures of Buddha.

Staff also went on a number of free courses to further develop their skills and knowledge which supported and extend the work produced during the week. Courses included a workshop on Ganesh at the Bowes

Museum and a Mutual Respect and Tolerance Conference with representative from all of the main religions.

### **Evidence of impact**

Throughout the week the buzz around school was amazing but the greatest impact was from the celebration held on the final Friday afternoon. Parents were invited to join the children in their family groups, from where they would embark on a tour of the school and the children would showcase their work. Photographs were placed on a slideshow in each classroom along with work produced throughout the week. Videos of the various dances created were played in the hall for parents to watch as well. Upon exit parents and children were asked to complete an exit ticket in order to evidence the impact of our project. The responses were extremely positive and included comments such as;

*'Enjoyed having an insight into the children's experiences'*

*'How much the children have put into this special week, and shown real pride in their work'*

### **Recommendations**

It is extremely important to establish good contacts and establish clear expectations from an early stage. Utilise the talents of those around you as well, whether it is those of staff, parents, or local organisations. Organisation is key too, we set very clear goals and aims from the start and held regular meetings to inform staff of our progress and to disseminate information.

### **Challenges**

The biggest challenge we encountered was the lack of funding, and the inability to source and secure an arts partner. Our school demographic means that we have very low numbers of pupil premium children and very little access to additional finance. However, we do have extremely supportive parents who contributed to the number of trips we had arranged. We were also able to utilise the connections of some of our staff and parents, who were able to organise both visitors into school as well as helping to arrange trips.

Communication was another issue, as no matter how much detail or planning we gave other members of staff, there are always one or two who put a spanner in the works. Luckily we were able to overcome most of the hurdles presented to us and the children had a really action packed week.

### **Reflections**

Embarking on such a project was difficult, particularly with such financial constraints. However the excitement on the children's faces as they led their parents around on our celebration was just priceless. However in future we would look to become part of a project with an Arts Partner, which would help with both funding and hopefully take our focus in a different direction. We would also seek to involve more staff at the planning stages and harness their hidden talents too!



## Lauren Jorgenson - Embedding an Arts and Culture offer and authentic experiences into the curriculum

The purpose of this project was to add to our whole school aim of raising the profile of the arts and culture in school. Our formal curriculum for the arts ensures that all statutory requirements are met, but the purpose of this project was to contribute to the aim of ensuring that all children have access to a range of authentic opportunities within the arts and culture. In previous years, although the children had access to an arts curriculum, they have lacked experience of working with local arts based professionals and arts organisations. Consequently, I and the 'Arts team' in school decided to that our main focus of this project was to develop relationships with local artists and arts organisations to ensure that opportunities for children to receive real life, authentic arts-based experiences were offered as part of our curriculum this academic year and that relationships could be built upon to provide these opportunities in following academic years.

As a basis for building relationships with local artists and arts organisations, we decided to plan an 'Arts Week' in which the children would work with local artists and produce a small exhibition to show their work to families. The first step in this process was to meet as an 'Arts team' and clarify the aims of the week, before negotiating finer details with the SLT. The Art and Design coordinator, Music coordinator and I (The Arts and Sport lead) therefore met to identify a potential theme for the week and the focuses for each class. To give the project some leverage, we decided to focus our Arts Week on promoting British Values, as we knew that this was part of our school development plan and could therefore use the Arts as a tool to do this. Following this meeting, we met with the Head teacher to finalise plans, agree objectives for the week and negotiate a budget.

The next step was to introduce the project to staff and ask them to plan year group appropriate activities for the children, whilst ensuring there was no repetition across year groups. In previous years, this had been a problem when organising arts-based activities and so the Head teacher had stressed that this was not to be repeated and the work would have to be of a good standard. Initially, some members of staff seemed a little reluctant to plan an Arts week in an already packed curriculum; however, they were given staff meeting time to come up with initial ideas and the Arts team used and adapted these to ensure that the work produced would be progressive and of a good standard. Out of this meeting, it was also identified that some members of staff had certain strengths in the arts, so this was utilised to plan a whole school project to accompany individual class work. Two of our teaching assistants planned and created a British Values flag, which all children contributed to.

Following the initial staff meeting, the Arts team organised workshops with artists and arts organisations, based on the ideas of members of staff. We contacted The Forge, a local arts organisation, to organise work with glass and painting artists and organised workshops with local fabric and digital media artists, who work with Tess Valley Arts. We felt it was important to offer children a range of arts based experiences across school and therefore decided to organise workshops using a range of media. We also contacted Tees Valley Music Service to organise bespoke music workshops and create a whole school 'British Values' themed song. This was built upon work that a member of staff from TVMS had been doing with a song writing lunch time club.

The main aims of this project were achieved as a result of the 'Arts Week' as all children across school participated in workshops ran by arts-based organisations or local artists. All children were engaged and enthused throughout the week and produced work of an excellent standard, which was shared during a whole school assembly. At the end of the week, exhibitions of the children's work were also put up around school and families were invited in to look at their work. These exhibitions were led by members of the 'Arts Committee' which was set up as part of this project so that children, who were interested in the arts, could express their views on what to include in the week and how to embed the arts further into our curriculum. Staff also expressed a positive attitude towards the Arts week as they enjoyed working with artists and were able to share good practice.



As part of this project, relationships were established and developed with many local artists, which will be utilised next year as well. Relationships with Tees Valley Music Service have been developed further as, prior to this project, we had music teachers coming in to school, but there were little opportunities to develop their musical abilities further aside from that. Following working with the Hartlepool coordinator of TVMS, we have been offered opportunities to participate in further music workshops at 'The Sound Pod' and been provided whole class music tuition and taster sessions in stringed instruments. Additionally, we have been approached to work with TVMS and local arts organisations as part of the 'Wintertide' festival in November. We have also secured music provision with TVMS for next academic year. Due to the Arts week being a success, the SLT have also agreed to hold a similar week next academic year, using the local artists that have been in school again.

For the future of the Arts in our school, we have discussed with the SLT how we could embed opportunities to work with local artists into our Art and Design curriculum further. We would like to invite artists into school at various points throughout the year to work with children as part of our Arts and Design curriculum and assist teachers when planning units of work. Additionally, we would like to embed arts-based trips into our curriculum to give children the opportunity to visit local galleries and museums as part of Art and Design.

One of the main challenges of this project was ensuring that it was fully backed by our SLT. Due to the quality of work produced during 'Arts days' in previous years, our Head teacher was a little hesitant to agree to an 'Arts week' at first. We therefore decided to use 'British Values' as an anchor as we knew that promoting British Values was on the school development plan. Without this, the SLT may not have been as generous with our budget and we may not have been able to secure as many artists to work in school as we did. A further challenge that we faced was reluctance from teachers when planning the Arts week. Some teachers did not share the passion and drive to raise the profile of the Arts as I and the arts team did and therefore put very little effort in when planning activities. To overcome this, I worked with some of the teachers to come up with initial ideas before the arts team put plans in place. In this situation, I think the backing of the SLT helped as it was clear that they valued the project and so we all had to try our best for it to succeed.

Overall, the project has gone well as the aims have been achieved; however, if I was to repeat this experience again I would do it slightly differently. On reflection, I should have given staff more responsibility for their own planning and organisation of activities. Staff planned initial ideas for their year groups, but the Arts team then adapted and added to these to ensure that there was progression between year groups and that there was no repetition. The Arts team also organised workshops with artists, based on the initial ideas in the planning phase. However, I feel that I should have made staff more accountable for the activities planned in the week and given them the responsibility to organise the workshops for their classes. To ensure that they planned effectively, I could have built in an 'early win' into the project and asked staff to share good ideas and links that they had made with artists with other members of staff. In addition, I feel that I should have involved our 'Arts Committee' more in the planning phases so that the children had more ownership over the types of activities planned in the week. Feedback from the children about arts provision in school could also have been shared with staff, which may have given them more of a sense of shared responsibility over the project.

This project has been a success as all of the children enjoyed participating in the Arts week and they were able to share their work and experiences with their families. Teachers were also able to observe and share good practice with local artists, potentially using techniques in their own planning. Ultimately, the main aim of building relationships with local arts organisations was achieved as other cultural offers have arisen as a result of these relationships and plans are being made to embed authentic opportunities into our everyday curriculum.

# Lisa Duffy - Sustainable Creative and Cultural Learning

## Statement of focus

Our primary teachers face a constant struggle to address the balance of covering a wide range of National Curriculum objectives while striving to win a never ending battle of raising standards. Changes implemented by The DfE to the National Curriculum in September 2014 were designed to add rigour in key primary subjects. They stated that:

“By raising standards in basics such as reading, grammar, fractions and basic scientific concepts, children will be equipped to do more advanced work once they start secondary school.” (The Rt Hon Michael Gove, June 2012)

While the curriculum coverage that was published gave us objectives for the foundation subjects (which include the arts, culture and diversity) these objectives are woolly and guidance on delivery is poor. This coupled with the pressure to deliver ever higher results in core subjects has meant that we are in grave danger of stifling creative practice. Thus denying our children adequate opportunities to engage in experiences which celebrate the arts and cultural diversity. Many argue that developing and broadening these skills share equal importance to those across the core subjects. The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education argued:

“Creative and cultural education are dynamically related and that there are practical implications for the curriculum and for the classroom .... Raising standards should not mean standardisation, or the objectives of creative and cultural education will be frustrated. (All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education May 1999 PG 10 and 11)

The government’s response to such frustrations was addressed more recently in the first White Paper to be published on Culture in fifty years:

“We will put in place measures to increase participation in culture, especially among those who are currently excluded from the opportunities that culture has to offer. In particular, we will ensure that children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are inspired by and have new meaningful relationships with culture.” (The Culture White Paper – Department for Culture, Media and Sport March 2016)

In reality these grand promises are a lot more difficult to deliver. The pressure to raising standards in core subjects, depleting budgets, funding and staffing cuts mean the primary teacher needs to draw on every tool available to maintain and embed creative and cultural learning across the curriculum. My challenge has been to do so in my own setting, Percy Main Primary School, while embedding a mechanism to ensure that this practice is successful and sustainable.

## The development process

Having been creative curriculum lead for a number of years I have led the staff through change in how we research, plan, document and deliver our foundation subjects through a topic approach. The less prescriptive objectives of the new National Curriculum provided challenges in how to ensure that broad, progressive learning is taking place across the school. I have reviewed how we document learning in the foundation subjects and how we show evidence of learning in year groups and progression across the school. I have worked with subject leaders to conduct these reviews but still faced the challenge of embedding a more robust process which ensured that our creative and

cultural learning was sustainable and progressive. My proposal was to work in partnership with our staff in order to integrate and deliver the Arts Award Discover, Explore and Bronze Awards across the school. I introduced this idea to our School Improvement Team to agree with the principles and costs, wrote it into the school development plan, met with teachers in years 2, 4 and 6 in order to outline requirements and how to integrate the award into their topic work and am currently working on delivery of the same during this term

### **Benefits / evidence of impact**

- Activities for arts, culture and creative learning are documented with meaningful links for the children;
- The awards are linked to national curriculum objectives with progression across year groups visible;
- Through participation in the award the children gain confidence, develop leaderships and collaborative working skills;
- Tangible results / outcomes of the children's work / achievements / portfolios are celebrated;
- Opportunities to learn outside of the classroom are provided;
- Opportunities to build on and create new working partnerships are formed.

### **Recommendations / proposals for practice**

- Plan well in advance and ensure that you have the support of all teaching and senior staff;
- Include certificate / moderation costs well in advance to senior staff;
- Work collaboratively with teaching staff, helping them to make links to their topic work in order to avoid creative additional / un-necessary workloads;
- Build partnerships with local organisations in advance. Look for local cultural offers and consider how they can support / work with your staff to support their outcomes;

### **Challenges / barriers / issues**

- Cost of certificates / moderation – budget in advance and look for cultural partners / organisations to apply to for support;
- Negative responses from teaching staff – ensure that links / support / benefits to the children have been researched prior to introducing the concept so that the benefits sold will outweigh any concerns;
- Time – creative projects over spilling lead to concerns of not reaching completion. In response draw on the community aspect of learning, invite parents / community members in to support the children.

### **Reflective commentary**

Embarking on this project was a worry due to the pressure on the everyday classroom as documented earlier. As well as being able to ensure that our creative and cultural offers have been embedded within our curriculum it has also brought to light ideas that will support core subjects in a more creative and interactive manner. The development of writing skills is a key priority in our school. The creative and cultural experiences provided by participation in the Arts Award broaden life experience and vocabulary which can then be fed back into the children's writing. This forms the basis of my next focus in further developing how the Arts Award can help us ensure that we deliver a sustainable, purposeful creative and cultural learning offer at Percy Main Primary School.

# Mica Hannah Wright - Improving singing in an infant school setting, taking into account the school ethos

## Background:

Diamond Hall Infant Academy is a 3 form entry school with a Nursery unit and unit for 2 year olds. We are situated in the 10-20% most deprived areas of the UK, 44% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. With a diverse population of 25% of children EAL with 20 languages represented. We are situated in an urban area near the city centre. Recently, I have embarked on the role of 'cultural lead' in school in addition to my music coordinator and Y2 class teacher title.

## Planning for the project:

This project was prompted by the evidence which was gathered in school through informal discussions, questionnaires, interviews observations and comments from staff, pupils and parents. The whole school voice and school ethos was taken into consideration, which ensured the project was valuable and meaningful for Diamond Hall Infant Academy and the current culture of the school was reflected upon throughout, along with the direction we would like to move in. The overall purpose of the project is to improve the quality of singing in school along with promoting the love for singing and music, while building on confidence and influencing aspects of the whole school culture as the project grows.

Feedback:

- **Not enough opportunities for children to develop their vocal ability**
- **Not many enrichment programme of ensembles, groups, choirs and activities**
- **Not a range of CPD opportunities and programmes in music**

***'I'm not always sure what the lyrics are to the songs' – Staff member***

***'We had a school choir and the children loved it, it would be nice to have this in school again' – Staff member***

***'I want to sing songs that I hear on the radio like little mix songs' – Pupil***

***'I want to sing on stage with my friends' – Pupil***

3 main long term aims of the project:

1. To improve the quality of singing
2. To give the children more opportunities to sing in different environments
3. To build confidence in singing

Short term objectives:

1. To form a school choir
2. To implement Charanga (online music programme) into classroom teaching with non-specialist teachers
3. To gather a bank of school songs which staff are confident with

When initiating this project I felt it was important as cultural lead that I identified the strengths of our schools music and build on these:

- Staff knew who the subject lead was and who to approach in regards to music/singing
- The school is well connected with the local music hub
- Music lessons mainly contain singing opportunities

## Benefits and evidence of impact

The immediate impact of this project was early recognised through the implementing of a school choir. Children who attend the choir are interested in singing and put themselves forward showing commitment and enthusiasm. Observations suggest that the flexible, confident and dedicated approach of the choir lead has resulted in dedication from the students along with confidence in their own ability. In leading this project, it was important to find a choir lead that was best suitable for the role, I have worked closely with the choir lead to ensure a positive, respectful relationship has been formed resulting in motivation and mutual respect which I have found extremely important especially for my first project as cultural lead.

***'I like choir because I get to sing songs I like with my friends' – Pupil***

***'The children in choir are able to sing in the community. Recently, we sang to a group of ladies who worked at Diamond Hall 40 years ago, educating the children on their local history and bringing the community together. I felt a sense of achievement' – choir lead***

Our children are now provided with regular performance opportunities in the local area, in school and projects with Sunderland music hub. After positive feedback from Sunderland music hub we also plan on attending many future events and are now looking at starting our own school singing project linked with transition. In addition to this we have created a bank of school songs which the children are now familiar with, as a school we decided on appropriate songs and now implementing throughout the school so all children and staff are confident in singing these songs.

## Barriers

Each step towards achieving the goals of this project has required a range of knowledge and skills which at times has come as a challenge; I observed singing in a partner school which was supportive and informative, although this was not easy to arrange due to both schools various commitments. The attitudes of staff members has also challenged my leadership skills, at times some members of staff stating that they cannot sing and others with a negative attitude due to the curriculum demands. (See reflection)

## Reflection

Discussing ideas about singing and music in school soon made me realise not everyone's attitude is positive towards music, especially when it comes to the teaching of music. ***'I can't sing but I like too when I'm in the car'- Staff*** I also overheard comments about the pressures of the curriculum and not feeling able to 'fit' music in. This was and still is a challenge for me, as a class teacher myself I understand and appreciate the challenge of the curriculum demands, although in my role as cultural lead I aim to bring the 'arts' together and ensure we see this as a positive way to enhance learning and create the most positive, enriched learning environment suited to our children. I introduced 'Charanga' to each year group in school to ensure non music specialist have the confidence to teach music and singing, this is an ongoing development which I plan on revisiting and also building on. I am currently working with 'Charanga' and Sunderland music hub to become a trainer for this programme, I feel like this will build my own confidence in music and help me support others. This is an ongoing project and as cultural lead I plan to keep building on the success of the initial stages, I hope that in the future the use of music will bring the school closer to their community while also developing the children's confidence along with reflecting the school's ethos **we will provide a welcoming, caring, stimulating, challenging, creative and inclusive learning environment.** In the final stages of reflecting on this project I have realised that in the future I would also consider the worries or challenges others would come up against just through informal or some formal conversations /questionnaires to build up a bigger picture.

## Neil Richmond - Movements and Myths Project at Stobhillgate

November Club evaluation notes:

- Despite being a very large group, dividing the children into smaller art form groups (i.e. percussion/music and art) worked very well, and the class teachers taking responsibility for the groups were enthusiastic, creative and hugely supportive, for which many thanks as they helped to bring the whole project together.
- The Head Teacher is a wonderful advocate for the arts in school and took a personal interest in the work, attending key sessions and overseeing the evaluation and strategic direction of the work. As artists, we felt incredibly supported by him and his staff, thus allowing us to get on with what we are good at.
- This was an ambitious project, with overarching aims to get the children moving, thinking and more confident in themselves and what they could do. They achieved all of this and more. To embrace telling a story through music, text and movement was a huge challenge and they embraced it enthusiastically. It was particularly satisfying to achieve the full engagement of some of the more disengaged boys in the group. They struggled at the beginning to focus and could be disruptive. However, when invited to add their own 'moves' (i.e. more athletic gymnastics) into the mix and given a responsibility and praise for their efforts they found their own way into the project.
- The telling of the story (i.e. Persephone and the Pomegranate Seed) provided a framework for the sessions and this was definitely a turning point.
- It was so very helpful that the children were so immersed in the world of the ancient Greeks before we began the project and that they were so knowledgeable about the Gods and their stories from the outset. Centring the work within the story worked well and by updating the young people at the beginning of a session about what we were going to do worked well – this was introduced half way through the work.
- The weaving together of improvised percussive music, art, spoken word and movement to tell the story of Persephone and the underworld offered the children a range of ways to be involved in the project. Each group was respectful of the others, and they worked well as a team. At the beginning, they found it hard to see the endgame and using the framework of a story they knew and loved was the key to motivating and engaging them and they responded better when the sessions had a framework which we could be flexible within.
- The opportunity for each group to see how the others were working half way through and evaluate gave them all more ownership of the project and an interest in it.
- The timescale, although short, worked well. It did however at times feel a bit frenetic and rushed. It would have been better had the timescale worked over a longer period of time.

Or would this have resulted in a reduction in interest in the creative work?

- By the end of the project many of the children had visibly improved their performance and movement skills. The exercises at the beginning of each session, in particular the ball exercises, developed co-ordination, balance and a sense of shape. Starting with the foot positions and the rhythms gave quick results, which the young people could be proud of and introduced them onto more complex frieze patterns. In the early sessions, they really enjoyed listening to different timescales and responding to the different rhythms – if there had been more time it would have been great to develop this further and to stretch their imaginations more by playing with the ‘nature rhythms’ and to have developed the Planet dance. It would have also been nice to explore the myths they had written in movement.
- Overall, it was right to work towards a performance and focus the project in this way – however, the penalty we had to pay working to the timescale (and resources) available we had to take shortcuts – some of the children would have benefited much more by spending more time learning the basics and developing some of the skills mentioned above. It would be so interesting to have tracked their progress over a longer period.

## Paula Wilson - Narrowing the Gap

I believe that the arts play a critical role throughout the curriculum and cannot be valued highly enough. These values have been shaped through years of teaching at Shiremoor Primary School-an ex-mining locality where pupils are largely of white British heritage, have limited experience of other cultures and often little, or no experience of the arts at home.

As a school, we have a vision for all our pupils: to be confident learners reaching their potential and becoming fully equipped for their journey ahead. We strive to deliver exciting choices during lessons and in the range of out-of-school clubs we offer. Indeed many children, whose attainment on entering school is often significantly lower than average, go on to achieve better than predicted results at the end of Key Stage 2.

However, we are constantly exploring ways to increase attainment and having identified, through data analysis, a small gap in the attainment of pupil premium and non-pupil premium in reading and writing, a question arose: how can we enhance the school experience and learning opportunities of these pupils, with the ultimate aim of raising attainment and narrowing the gap?

Our staff met in autumn term to share experience and project aims. I was able to give examples from research studies and personal experience, which proved that children who are happy and confident in school, perform better in academic tests. Staff were interested to learn that a Newcastle University research project found that children attending after school clubs also performed better in Key Stage 2 SATs (April 2016). Of course our ultimate goal is not only to ensure that the pupils achieve academically, but to equip them with a love of learning and skills for life which will carry them on their journey ahead.

With shared values, we went on to plan our project: a musical theatre theme, allowing children to take part in dance, musical drama, reading, story writing, and costume and set design. Our action plan included short, medium and long term goals for all classes.

Across the school we:

- Analysed current provision
- Issued staff audits to assess CPD needs
- Analysed the attainment of individuals and groups using Target Tracker, our online assessment system
- Looked at extra-curricular club attendance so we could send invitations to children not already attending
- Planned arts based interventions and activities for individuals and groups including:

Creative writing booster classes for groups of Year 3, 5 and 6; reading interventions with individuals and groups; art workshops with a visiting artist ( aimed at under achieving pupils with a particular interest or talent in art) a range of after school clubs ( including film, art, crafts, choir and drama) ; gallery visits (years 2, and 3); participation in dance and writing competitions; art workshops in school with visitors from the Laing Gallery for Year 4; dance workshops for Year 1 with a final production to be held in the local community centre; end of year production for Year 6; participation by the choir and artwork displayed at the local community event: The Shiremoor Children's Treat.

- Whole school activities were also planned: library visits for all; year group Christmas productions with a wider community audience; year group presentations/galleries/ videos of completed work

We wanted an event to kick start this 'Year of the Arts' so we could introduce the children to our goals. During a discussion with our Pupil Council, the older pupils were keen to introduce a day of arts based activities. And so through discussion, 'Creativity Day,' an arts focus day when the regular timetable would be relaxed was planned.



Creativity Day was held in the first week of term, January 2017. It involved pupils from Years 1 -6 selecting 2 activities from a wide list: one for the morning and one for the afternoon. The classes were therefore comprised of mixed age children working alongside each other and supporting one another, particularly the older children who had the responsibility of looking after the youngest children.

The range of activities included: fabric painting, origami, Chinese dragon making, guitar, clay model making, animation, drama, woodwork, dance, pop art, knitting, puppet making and seasonal crafts and singing.

The day was enjoyed by all and work was shared in an end of day assembly.

The children wrote evaluations: over 90% of pupils selected the five stars (strongly agree) in all five categories:

1. I enjoyed my day.
2. I learnt something new.
3. I worked well with others.
4. I would like to take part in another Creativity Day.
5. I feel more confident to try new things.

There was a space for comments:

"I liked the helping the year 1 children." Elise, Year 6.

"I was amazed at how good my clay pot was- Miss Ward said it was one of the best." Colin Year 6

"I know how to mix colours now. It was good fun." Freya, Year 1.

Feedback was also taken from teachers. This was also overwhelmingly positive. Our Year 5 teacher expressed initial reluctance to the day as she felt, because of curriculum time constraints, she would have preferred to stick to timetable. However, after the day she said how beneficial it had been for the children to work together and how much they had enjoyed the experience. A Year 6 teacher, working on a woodwork project, said she was surprised at the imaginative ideas the children brought to the task and she wished more time could have been given to the children to finish their tasks. Staff and children have agreed that 'Creativity Day' should be a yearly event.

Our children are happy and gaining in confidence; although we have not had time to evaluate our project in terms of academic progress and Creativity Day was only the initial step –our hopes are high and we are motivated to continue by the positivity of the response.

# Rachel Dembry - Cultural Links Across the School

• a statement of focus

In my secondary school based project I called upon Heads of Subject and Directors for greater cultural links to be included in the education of pupils at Whitburn C of E Academy.

• a description of the development process

I needed to know more about Culture as I felt ill equipped to persuade others to see the importance of Cultural links when it was still 'fuzzy' to me. I read all the required papers set out for the Cultural Leadership in Education course. I bought 'Creative Schools' and 'The Element' by the international bestselling author Ken Robinson. He is one of the world's most influential voices in education. In his inspiring books, he sets out a new vision for how education can be transformed to enable all young people to flourish. I also watched every YouTube video he produced including 'The Cohan Lecture – Why Dance is as important as Maths' and 'The Big Bang' talk and felt enlightened. I was also introduced to the Ted Talks. All the time, I made notes on my iPad and reflected on the current education system in England.

At a 'Subject Board' meeting on 31/1/17 and 'Art Departmental' meeting 16/1/17 I delivered a colourful and informative PowerPoint presentation to Art staff, Heads of Subject, Directors of Education (Heads of Faculties) and the Senior Leadership Team. Questions I raised and addressed included: **What is Culture?**

**Why is Culture Important in Schools?**

Ken Robinson is not alone in thinking we need more cultural links within schools. The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (members from different professions and backgrounds: including science, the arts, education and business. *All Our Futures: way back in 2000 called for more creative and cultural education.*

**The Arts Provision in our school** Traditional 'creative' subjects cannot provide the beneficial Cultural diet our pupils need. I asked Subject Heads and Directors to include even more cultural links in lessons.

**What Difference do Cultural Links Make?**

If we think of culture as the diet we feed to pupils...3 main benefits for our pupils.

I ended the presentation by included funding organisations I had researched and followed this up later with targeted emails to teachers across the school to tempt them.

At another 'subject board' meeting on 30/3/17 I delivered feedback on the questionnaire, gave an update on the cultural links. I 'built in an early win' of sorts by highlighting at the meeting that two teachers intended to include cultural links into their lessons. One staff member is known for his negative attitude so I cherry picked him deliberately and highlighted his interest. I reminded staff that bids for Cultural Spring ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. I also offered an art teacher's time to support any lesson/team teach during the Summer Term when GCSE and A Level pupils had left.

**What is Culture?**

**Culture as a way of life often centres around a belief system** e.g.

- Christianity – traditional religious
- Scientology – non traditional religious
- Mahatma Gandhi - the passive resistance philosophy
- Marxism – ideological
- Vegetarianism - Philosophical

**Culture as an artistic or intellectual activity** e.g. The Arts

- Painting
- Music
- Gallery Visit
- Theatre show
- Artefacts

**Culture as Identity** e.g. Local or World

- North East
- Goth teenagers
- Science Fiction
- Chinese New Year Celebrations

**Why are Cultural links important in Schools?**

Education should enable students to understand and appreciate their own cultures and to respect the diversity of others.

“There are 3 cultural priorities for schools:

1. to help students understand their own cultures
2. to understand other cultures
3. to promote a sense of cultural tolerance and coexistence.

**To achieve these objectives, schools need a broad-based, rich curriculum”**

**The Arts in School 2017**

Year Group	Hours per fortnight			
	Art	Music	Technology Textiles, Systems & Control, Food, Graphics	English Inc. literacy
7	2	2	4	8
8	2	2	4	7
9	3	3		
GCSE	5			
A Level	10			

**20% decline in take up of Arts GCSEs since 2010**  
 28 June 2016 - New figures from the Office of Qualifications and Examinations (Ofqual) indicate that the uptake of arts GCSEs in schools will fall even more sharply than we had feared.

**What difference do Culture links make?**



- **an account of the benefits /evidence of impact**

\*My colleague/Art teacher made links and organised her first event with the Customs House in South Shields entitled 'Pizza and Pencils' for Y9 pupils who have opted for GCSE Art and Y10 GCSE artists. Two follow up sessions in school then took place. Pupils grown in confidence and are set to gain 'Discover Arts Award'.

\*Our NQT and LSA's from my department (Art) and Technology asked to be involved with the Pizza and Pencils event. They wished to become more involved with the school's cultural offer and are keen to be included with future activities. The NQT will take this experience to her new school in September 2017.

\*The Head of RE plans to a bid to 'Cultural Spring' asking for an artist to come into her lesson and teach the pupils how to make a mandala out of coloured sand. She is very excited to develop her lessons in this practical way. She has also grown in confidence and will I think continue to organise her own cultural events for her subject area.

\*The Head of Psychology is also interested in submitting an application for theatre tickets to see a political play with her A Level students. Primarily working in the 6<sup>th</sup> form building this could provide another alliance and source of inspiration for teachers she encounters.

\*I plan to submit a bid requesting money to pay for a DSLR camera and much needed photography CPD, not only for my department, but also for Media and the Design and Technology staff. This would benefit the growing number of pupils who through pupil voice, have expressed an interest in studying Photography at GCSE and A Level.

\*I am currently trying to organise an art teacher to go into History lessons and team teach/support with making clay gargoyles in the Summer Term.

- **recommendations / proposals for practice**

If I'd done the project again I would have narrowed the success criteria as I was naïve to think I could change the mind-set and lessons of so many Head of Subjects and get more Cultural Links into lessons immediately. I should have thought more long term and duly adapted my action plan to focus on one teacher/subject area to organise an event and then evaluated the impact and celebrated the achievements. My project was too large.

- **discussion of challenges /barriers/ issues**

The biggest barriers were time and workload. Staff are incredibly busy especially with all the changes this year e.g. 1-9 grades replacing KS3 levels and GCSE A\*- G grades, teaching Y13 for the first time etc. The timing of introducing my project was not ideal but unavoidable. Being so enthusiastic I also found it difficult to understand the opinions of other staff and this is something I need to work on.

- **reflections on what has been learnt / achieved**

From a personal point of view, doing this project has focused me greatly on the importance of creativity and culture in the curriculum. It has made me more politically aware. I feel I have more 'ammunition' to defend the arts and feel more confident to 'fight' my corner because of what I have learnt. My vision for developing our art department is radically different to what it was. My staff and students (Y7-Y13 approximately 700 pupils in total) now have a stronger champion who is newly inspired to include even more culture and artistic opportunities for them. I am more resilient.

I will continue to support staff in their future endeavours via praise and support, frequent emails about cultural and funding opportunities and by leading by example.

# Tracey Hutchinson - Looking for ways to actively engage families in shared cultural experiences



## Focus

At The Dales School we see a creative approach as being essential to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed. Our pupils are primary age children with a range of individual educational challenges. These include ASC, ADHD, Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues (SEMH), complex communication difficulties and other congenital and medical needs. We are concerned with the development of the whole child. We believe that the skills, processes, knowledge, values and attitudes offered by cultural learning opportunities can enable children to represent their experiences and respond to the world in a variety of ways. We are committed to responding positively to different needs and ideas to help each child to be the best that they can.

*'The greatest disincentives to achievements are low self-esteem and lack of motivation. Creative and cultural programmes are powerful ways of revitalising the sense of community in a school and engaging the whole school with the wider community'.* Ken Robinson, in 'Making the Case: All our Futures. (National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, 1999).

Families, parents and carers are important providers of cultural learning, as stated in 'ImagineNation: The Case for Cultural Learning' (Cultural Learning Alliance, 2011). Our project – ongoing, not finished – is to look for authentic ways to involve families as partners in the process and celebration of cultural opportunities in school. We hope this will in turn lead to more children having access to cultural organisations and activities out of school. Having a designated Cultural Leader in school has given weight to this aim.

## Aim

### ***Purpose and Direction (bold italics = Fullan and Boyle's 'Framework for Action', 2013)***

Currently, there are opportunities for parents and carers to attend celebration days and event, exhibitions of work and special assemblies. Family learning initiatives include working alongside children in a range of ways including cooking, gardening, massage and relaxation, sensory activities and seasonal workshops.

### ***Developing others and Core business: teaching and learning***

As Cultural Leader, I aim to provide more and different offers for families to become authentically involved in cultural activities alongside their children, school staff, cultural organisations and practitioners. This would include experiencing first-hand the sense of achievement, excitement, creative shared thinking and teamwork which are part of the process of working in this way. It is intended that this will lead to increased feelings of wellbeing and confidence and help to articulate the important outcomes of cultural learning.

## Reflection on the development process

### ***Improving the organisation***

As Cultural Leader in school, I planned and led a whole school 'Carnival!' project. This provided the perfect opportunity to explore different ways of involving families in the *plan – do – review* process to provide a sense of ownership for all involved.

Two groups were targeted:

- 'Friends of the Dales' which includes parents, carers and staff. An open letter to meet, share ideas and get involved was sent out. The resulting group consisted of 3 existing parents, 1 new grandma and one new mother
- A 'Family Learning' session was offered to 6 adults and their children; 2 new parents, a grandma and mother, 2 existing parents
- Alongside this, all families were invited to join us on 'Carnival Celebration Day'. This included a parade in the local community, a family picnic, stalls, games, circus and aerial skills.
- In the middle of all this activity a surprise happened – Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art contacted us to say that another school had dropped out of their 'Baltic Stars' programme and would we like to take their place. This is a free, artist-led opportunity for children and their parent/carers to work on a project ending with an exhibition of the process and any resulting work. (See Project Folder). Of course we said yes!

Working with the two target groups was both challenging and very rewarding. In the 'Friends of The Dales' meeting, ensuring everyone's voice was heard and keeping to the point were the major challenges! However, there was great enthusiasm and lots of ideas were generated. Safeguarding issues were raised and acted upon which resulted in the local community police getting involved and joining our parade. One new parent had local business contacts and used them to source raffle prizes. Carnival stalls were

decided on and offers were made to resource and run them. The grandma and mother, who were new to the school, said they felt very welcome and involved already.

The Family Learning sessions started with an adult-only planning workshop. This gave the group time to talk and share ideas before introducing the children. Three 'making' sessions followed where costume and mask designs were made and effectively used to create Carnival dress for the adults, helped by their children. There was a purposeful 'buzz', lots of laughter and new friendships begun. All participants were sorry when the sessions ended and said they would love to be involved in similar opportunities in the future.

### ***Facing Outward***

Carnival Day was extremely well attended. Feedback (See Project Folder) indicates that our families thought it was very successful and would welcome being a part of future events and opportunities. Children's feedback echoes this. Staff completed our SMSC/Creativity monitoring sheet which links Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Learning opportunities to Arts Council's Quality Principles. This showed the increasing understanding of our school team about the positive outcomes for children in offering cultural engagement for learning.

The Baltic Stars project centred on the sights, sounds and movements of a carnival and engaged 7 pupils and 4 family members in the exploration of their creativity together. The timescale was tight but a small team of teachers and support staff worked hard to ensure that this fantastic opportunity could be facilitated. The group was taken, along with our Head Teacher, Deputy and Assistant Head Teachers, some teaching and support staff, to view the opening of their resulting exhibition 'RAAAAWOOWOOWOOGAGASSSHHH!' This was a huge success and all participants expressed enjoyment and pride in their work.

### ***Professional learning***

This whole process really made me think and opened my mind to different possibilities. I am currently working on an EQiPP (Exploring Quality Principles in Professional Practice) pilot project pairing cultural organisations with schools to explore Arts Council's Quality Principles in practice. As Cultural Leader in school, I am working with Lizzie Nixon, Participation Manager of New Writing North. We plan to further explore parental engagement through a creative writing project with the working title 'A Good Day Out'.

### **Recommendations/proposals for practice**

- It is vitally important that schools recognise the need for, and value of, Cultural Leadership to enable strategic planning and implementation of policy and projects to impact across school. In this way it becomes valued and sustainable.
- Arts Council England's Quality Principles provide a clear framework "to inspire planning for high quality arts learning experiences".
- For cultural leaders, linking plans to current research and theory, not only helps to give weight to the argument for change but also helps to empower by reinforcing your convictions:
- *Effective leaders learn from their work and from other leaders – and sometimes learning is from seeing what doesn't work as much as what does.* – Michael Fullan and Alan Boyle (2013) in 'Reflections on the change leadership landscape'.
- Networking with like-minded colleagues from both the educational and cultural sector makes our voice stronger and we learn from each other's practice and experiences.
- Have a team of people to work with and delegate! Don't try to do everything yourself. Involving others spreads the enthusiasm; provides opportunity for professional development and, enables collective thinking – sometimes people have skills they're hiding . . .
- A sense of ownership is very important. Even though you have a plan and long term aims, be prepared to explore other paths opened up by participants – children, families, colleagues, other schools, and the wider community!
- CPD can raise awareness and create a buzz and enthusiasm.
- On Day 2 of the Cultural Leadership course the idea of building in an 'early win' was discussed. I found this a really useful idea for re-enthusing participants and making the longer term aims seem achievable.
- Working alongside cultural organisations and practitioners opens up new ways of working and often has fantastic qualitative outcomes. For example, Circus skills were not only thoroughly enjoyed by all of our children, but also illustrated the results that can be achieved through perseverance and a 'can do' attitude. 'If I can do this, what else can I achieve?'
- Programmes and activities should be an integral part of activities in school and not a stand-alone on bolt-on provision. The understanding of the value of this needs to be a shared philosophy which, over time, becomes part of *the culture* and ethos of the school and all those involved in its daily life.

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