

# Surrey

## Enquiry Schools Programme 2010-11

**Creative Partnerships is England's flagship creative learning programme, designed to develop the skills and aspirations of children and young people. In September 2010 a total of nineteen settings were involved in the second round of the year long Enquiry Schools programme in Surrey. Each school was offered the opportunity to work with a creative professional to explore a chosen area of creative learning – defined here as an 'enquiry question' – the range of ideas and themes was impressive and their stories are summarised here.**

### Primary Schools

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#### Ashley C of E Primary School

**How can a whole school food growing project empower our young people to be leaders in sustainability?**



Ashley C of E Primary School

The enquiry was developed to further the school's long term ambition to integrate sustainability principles into the life of the school and to develop Ashley Primary as a model sustainable community.

Sessions with visual artist and sculptor Karen Wydler of Touchwood Trees and organic gardener Darrel Legget gave children throughout the school the opportunity to develop skills in designing and making, in the creation and development of outdoor learning spaces, as well as skills in food growing and exploring the environment. In the words of one pupil, *"it's hands on, it sticks in your mind and the different areas with signs and activities make it fun."*

Sessions also provided teachers with new ideas about using the food growing areas as an outdoor classroom. The project benefited from a kind donation of materials by Action Tree Surgeons. Outcomes include:

- Teachers gained confidence and skills in using the outdoor areas to support learning
- Children have been using the outdoor spaces creatively and in unplanned ways
- A Sharing Success Locally event will open the ongoing project to parents and other potential supporters in the community



Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School

## Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School

**How can we improve our science/technology teaching to make it more child-centred, creative and imaginative, and less teacher directed?**

Engineer and science specialist Brian Egles' work with Year 3 pupils and teachers centred around the book *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*. Brian works with Surrey SATRO - an organisation which promotes maths, science, engineering and technology for 5-19 year olds.

This cross-curricular project had strong links to both literacy and art, using the story for stimulus to explore various scientific experiments. The children made working lighthouses, boats with hidden magnets, safety structures made with springs and water rockets assisted by Stan Stephens,

the National Water Rocket champion! A further highlight was a visit to the school by Ronda and David Armitage, authors of *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*. Outcomes include:

- Collaboration with external practitioners is to be incorporated into the School Development Plan
- Teachers learnt how to make a science based topic more creative, imaginative and less teacher directed
- Children learnt that sometimes they can find a better way to do something by trial and error

## Clarendon Primary School

**How can a creative partnership help children to have a tangible impact on environmental issues in their community?**

Year 5 and 6 children worked with musicians Tommy Ludgate and Sarah Horley of Globe Jam to write songs, make instruments from recyclable litter and junk, and engage the local community and businesses in a themed singing project - 'Sing When You're Binning'.

The project was co-designed with children by encouraging them to think about things they could really change in their local environment. Children took to the streets, protesting about litter in Ashford, singing 'Sing While You Bin That Thing' in the town square and holding a protest march back to the school with banners.



Clarendon Primary School

The project aimed to equip the children with a range of skills and the confidence to learn how they can make a palpable difference. A CD recording will be used to help further work on a local campaign. Outcomes include:

- Children made associations between their education and their immediate surroundings
- Learning was disseminated to all staff through an InSET day
- Globe Jam, for the first time, experienced the scope for using music in an educational context

## **Cleves School**

**How far can peer teaching go in helping pupils to be responsible for raising the quality of their own learning?**

This enquiry challenged the children to take responsibility for the collaborative production of a film. Filmmaker Sasha Hoare worked with 150 Year 6 children over 24 sessions, organising them in small groups and operating to strict timescales. A highly structured approach worked well to unlock creativity. The difficult topic of 'oppression' proved to be no bar to enthusiastic engagement of children and teachers, who have all enriched their understanding of history as well as gaining filmmaking skills.

Filmmaking has proved an ideal creative medium for this work, as it allowed for the allocation of specific roles to particular children, with technical skills being peer-taught by the children to their classmates. Cleves will disseminate their learning to other local primaries in an event developed with Creative Partnerships Surrey and Sussex as part of the Sharing Success Locally programme. Outcomes include:

- Children have identified meta-cognition skills (eg. group working, negotiating) practised in their filmmaking and discussed how they might use these in other areas of the curriculum

- The teacher will continue to use filmmaking and peer training in her practice
- The teacher is now trained as an Arts Award Adviser - a number of children used this work to contribute to their Bronze Arts Award portfolio



The Holy Family Catholic Primary School

## **The Holy Family Catholic Primary School**

**How can we creatively enable our children to express themselves more confidently and so become more engaged independent learners?**

In order to embed speaking and listening into a process that is designed to give children confidence in their own ideas, Holy Family focused on narratives generated by the children which, through a process of development and collaboration, were refined into a new form – whether written, performed or shown.

Artist Lulu Allison worked alongside teachers and their Year 1 and 2 classes. There were an impressive palette of creative behaviours and thinking skills developed that were complemented by the practical and technical skills learnt. They include visualisation, improvisation/risk-taking, making associations, experimentation, reflection and refinement, idea-generation, collaboration. Outcomes include:

- Teachers have learnt the value in directing children less, adopting a flexible approach and using open ended tasks

- Children produced stories that were published in a book
- At the start of the project, the focus group children answered a direct question only once compared to nine times after

## The Mead Infant School

### How will children's oral language develop through utilising creative media to represent their own experiences?

Artist Becci Kenning worked with Reception teachers and children to develop oracy skills at The Mead. Becci introduced her innovative 'colour action story sequence' model (a chart that connects story elements to colour and action) to give children the framework on which to build narrative structures.

The project culminated with a celebration day where the children showed the rest of the school their storytelling skills in the morning and in the afternoon, a film presentation was made to parents and carers. In the film, children told their audio stories, based on real life events, over pictures they had drawn to illustrate them. Large displays charted the children's journey of discovery through the feeling dolls, shadow puppets, small world play and sock puppets they had created. Outcomes include:

- Children made significant progress in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile points, with average increases of: 23% in Communication, Language and Literacy; 31% in Personal, Social and Emotional Development; 22% in Creative Development
- The 'colour action story sequence' is to be implemented throughout the literacy curriculum
- The lead teacher is using the evidence to highlight her strengths towards application for senior management team



The Mead Infant School

## The Oaktree School

### How can the school grounds be used to inspire and motivate boys to become more creative writers?

Before the project the chosen boys from Year 2 at The Oaktree School were hesitant about writing. Writer Sonya Smith worked in partnership with teachers to engage the boys and their parents in using the school grounds to inspire them to write.

Playing games at the beginning of a session meant that they entered a safe and fun environment in which they could generate story ideas. Working in small groups enabled their voices to be heard and increased their confidence. Linking with existing school events, such as the annual 'Night Adventure' treasure hunt and 'Grandparents Day' worked to maximize the impact of their learning. An informative InSET day, led by Sonya, gave the school staff insight into different ways poetry and writing can be taught. Outcomes include:

- The boys are choosing to write during carousel times
- Year 2 staff now plan games sessions before beginning poetry or creative writing sessions
- The school are planning an outdoor structure for a quiet space away from the classroom to help children gather ideas for writing



## St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

### How do we challenge and develop our children's use of words and punctuation through story-making and music?

At St Thomas of Canterbury, working with musician Darren Clark and writer and performer Alex Kaye, sessions with Year 2 and 3 used a superhero story to focus on 'Punctuation Power and Superhero Vocabulary!' Children co-wrote and sang songs, really letting go and allowing their imaginations to inspire their writing, stories and drama. A teacher commented: *"What has become clear to us is the fact the children would often struggle to work collaboratively as a group prior to the project. They have now learnt to negotiate and work together and that is probably as important as how well they use their full stops!"*

Children are more prepared to take risks in their writing and also in terms of new activities and working with new people. Children were involved in the planning, evaluation and dissemination of the project. The staff benefited from an InSET session led by the practitioners where they explored the use of narrative to teach topics. Outcomes include:

- Children use words more effectively, have a wider vocabulary, and are more consistent and accurate in their use of punctuation
- Teachers are now incorporating creative approaches to narrative in their curriculum development
- Teachers have become more confident working with children as co-constructors of learning

## West Ewell Infant School

### How can we inspire our Reception children, especially the boys, to choose to write whilst they play?

At West Ewell Infant School many boys were reluctant to write as part of their playtime. Artist Becci Kenning devised activities such as: 'Outside Labels' – children using chalks to label things outside, 'Music & Marks' – children responding to different types of music using pens on large pieces of fabric, and 'Pirate Day' – children dressing up, reading maps to find treasure, then creating their own treasure map.

The project culminated in a 'Celebration Sharing Day' to the rest of the school in the morning and parents/guardians and governors in the afternoon. Targeted communications throughout the project contributed to the enormous turnout of parents at this event, which was a breakthrough for the project and for the school. Outcomes include:

- Writing scores have improved and children are able to incorporate writing in their play more readily
- The teacher discovered new ways of encouraging children to write, appreciating the importance of stimulating children's imagination in order to engage them, and appreciating the importance of speaking as a precursor to writing
- The practitioner learnt that creating a sense of class identity and being part of a team is key to the success of a session



West Ewell Infant School

## A3 Hindhead Cluster

A joint enquiry involving a cluster of four primary schools:

- Beacon Hill Primary School
- Liphook C of E Junior School
- Camelsdale First School
- Grayshott CE Primary School



A3 Cluster: Beacon Hill Primary School

### How can a creative project bring opportunity for involvement and collaboration?

In an innovative approach Creative Partnerships Sussex and Surrey worked with Creative Partnerships in Portsmouth to support a cluster of four schools from three counties: West Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire. The schools aimed to capitalise on a landmark event in local road-building, the building of a new tunnel for the A3, and to involve children with their community and local environment. The building of the tunnel created the opportunity to work with engineering company Balfour Beatty on a design for a public sculpture at the roadside entrance to the tunnel. All schools shared an enquiry question and engaged the same practitioner, sculptor Diarmuid O'Connor.

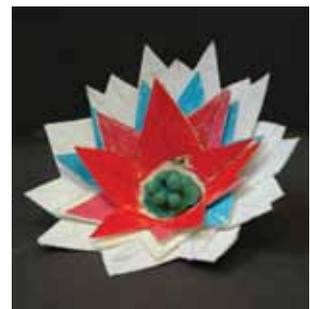
In this first phase of the project, Diarmuid worked with children and teachers in each school to develop designs for an initial set of sculptures to be made and installed on the school sites. A further phase will end with a public artwork created by children from the

cluster and installed at the new A3 tunnel. During the project further questions raised by the schools included:

**How can a creative project build an understanding of local environment, its history and its community?**

**To what extent can a creative arts project bring opportunity for involvement and collaboration in creative learning from cross county border schools and help the schools to define the characteristics of being a creative learner?**

Every child followed a rigorous design process that involved consideration of the site for the sculpture within the school grounds, generating, developing and refining an idea, and modelling a maquette for their final design.



Children kept sketchbooks throughout which became a record of the process. Evidence from journals and conversations suggest that the practitioner pushed children above their 'usual level' of knowledge and communication. Teachers say the project gave a real context to the children's skills and attributes which flourished through a longer more focussed creative project. The project has given unexpected 'depths' - it has been very powerful and surprising to hear exactly what it is that children value about their school. The high motivation levels have been surprising too and commented on by parents. Outcomes include:

- Peer learning with older children supporting the younger years in the design process
- Children demonstrating and passing on their skills to their classes
- Children having a strong sense of making a contribution to their school
- An exciting cross-county collaboration between neighbouring schools

## Secondary Schools

### The Beacon School

**How can a more creative approach to the curriculum develop our students' transferable literacy skills?**

The Beacon School identified that students saw literacy as directly linked to English, and the aim of the enquiry was to demonstrate to them how essential literacy skills are to all subject areas and in developing life skills.

Writer and filmmaker Grant Watson and filmmaker Mark Levermore made films with Year 8 and 9 students. The students decided on their preferred genre and style of film and developed stories, characters and scripts. Once completed, the film was presented to an audience and interspersed with live performance linking scenes. A large number of parents were in attendance.

The school aims to create a similar project with students from this project working as mentors for younger students. This will also offer another opportunity to confirm what the students from this project have learnt. Outcomes include:

- A significant number of students involved have switched their options to include media and drama
- Teachers are more confident in handing responsibility over to the students *"I think I've seen that where they have ownership of work they demonstrate a more positive approach"*
- This was the first time the teacher had worked with external practitioners on a project and it is something she would definitely do again

### Esher C of E High School

**How can we use media and performance to motivate Year 8 students who are underachieving in maths?**

Focusing on a group of Year 8 students, the school engaged performance and media

practitioner Kate Valentine to work with them to enquire how media and performance can be creatively employed to motivate young people in maths. The question linked with the school development plan and so was designed to support whole school improvement.



Esher C of E High School

The students involved in this project took mathematical concepts and explored them in a way that was meaningful to them through performance and real life experience – often outside the classroom. The students used podcasts and film in the platform 'Radiowaves' to reflect and share their learning. Outcomes include:

- Many students 'confessed' to having gone home and told their parents they had 'enjoyed' maths - a totally new concept for them!
- Teachers learnt new ways to engage students in maths
- Students keen to create their own Radiowaves stations to include other curriculum areas

### Farnham Heath End School

**How can technology engage students with their local community in new and creative ways and how can this support their learning?**

Farnham Heath End has a new hi-tech learning environment – Room 21C – that features cutting edge projector technology. This enquiry was designed to explore creative ways to make best use of this facility. Film practitioner Grant Watson used story as the basis for a far reaching exploration of creating multi-media work with Year 8 and 9 students. Interestingly for a project with hi-tech focus, young people worked closely



with a local history group and made a visit to the Imperial War Museum to support their enquiry. Outcomes include:

- Screening of the students' film at Farnham Spring Festival - raising the school profile and opening further connections with the community
- Students' confidence grew as they learnt to work independently – *“we had our own ideas taken seriously and developed into something really fun and exciting and hopefully worthwhile”*
- Teachers learnt new techniques for creative writing

## Special Schools

### Meath School

**Can adult and child learners work together to lift literature off the page to help learners to be better communicators in the world?**

Meath School is a primary special school for children with speech, language and communication needs and Asperger's Syndrome. The teacher and her team of classroom professionals, including a speech therapist, worked with Tina Muir of Patchwork Theatre with the broad aim to have children enjoy and appreciate stories.

The partnership explored how language can be physically embodied to increase vocabulary and understanding. This involved many games and drama exercises run in close conjunction

with writing and story activities that have led to changes in teaching practice at the school. Given children's cognitive problem in grasping a story that is told, this enquiry tackled a fundamental barrier to deeper enjoyment and facility with language.

An InSET session ensured that the creative approach was shared with all staff, and a celebration event took the form of an open workshop, allowing parents the opportunity to witness their children engaged in the creative processes at play. Outcomes include:

- Many 'magic moments' of group triumph and individual pupil breakthroughs in communication
- Staff have learnt how much stepping out of their own comfort zone in role play supports the children to take creative risks in the learning process
- A strong link with nearby St Pauls CofE Primary School developed, with six pupils and a teaching assistant joining sessions



Meath School

## The Park School

### How can we develop communication and appropriate social interaction in our Year 10 and 11 students through a variety of art experiences?

As a SEN school, 30% of the students at The Park School have language difficulties, and all have learning difficulties which impact on their ability to function confidently in the wider community. The students have to develop social skills to help them at future college places or possible employment.

Students were buddied with 'peer educators' - young actors from Peer Productions, led by practitioner Nina Lemon who focused on a creative approach to language. A finale performance showcased role play scenarios acted out by the students in collaboration with their peer educators. These scenarios explored social interaction such as the world's worst date, the worst interview, how to be a good leader, right and wrong ways to bring up a sensitive subject and when to say no. The outstanding success of the project has resulted in a legacy for on-going peer learning at The Park School that was not anticipated before the start. Outcomes include:

- Ongoing collaboration and funding bids for The Park School and Peer Productions to use a creative perspective to meet the needs of the students
- 98% of students showed an increase in confidence, with improved eye contact with people, good listening, increased confidence in asking questions outside of school and leadership skills
- Arts Award is now established in The Park School



The Park School



## Pond Meadow School

### Is it possible to give our KS2 pupils a genuine understanding of the differences and similarities we share with people in another country through that country's music?

Pond Meadow School has students aged between 2 to 19 years old who have severe and or complex learning, physical, health and emotional needs including autistic spectrum disorders.

Musicians Lucky Moyo and Anna Tabbush explored celebrations and cultures from Europe and Africa through the use of music and story. Students enquired how birthdays are celebrated in Britain in comparison to Zimbabwe. This included learning the 'Happy Birthday' song in both languages, looking at pictures of the different customs, and talking about what birthdays mean for different people around the world. Teachers gained skills and confidence to lead music based sessions and to 'have a go' at singing as part of their teaching. Two weekend workshops brought new levels of parental involvement and a film was made of this successful innovation. The school will deepen the legacy and disseminate their learning to other special schools through a Sharing Success Locally event. Outcomes include:

- More live music making is now embedded into the curriculum
- Engagement of families through weekend workshops
- Plans in place for summer 2012 to inaugurate 'MeadowFest' – the school's own music and arts festival

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