

# Creative Classrooms

Ownership



## OWNERSHIP – Creative Intention

- A key element in enabling children to develop creative skills is to help them to take greater responsibility for planning and managing their own learning. Indeed, throughout the Project the school has invested a lot of **time and energy** into ensuring that students are consulted at all stages in the planning – they are placed centre stage in the learning process.
- There is a **culture and expectation** that children will be involved in making decisions and a **deep-rooted sense of respect and trust** – where children trust adults and adults trust children.
- Staff who have worked at the school for a number of years recognise that there has been a shift in relationships between staff and students as they have become more confident in running the project. There is however, a recognition that the students need a balance of learning approaches and, that while there are times when a more didactic approach is needed, this should not preclude the development of creativity skills.
- The school has **maximised engagement** by allowing students to express their views in different ways and has **managed expectations** by carefully **scaffolding opportunities** so that the students' ideas can be realised within manageable parameters.

## Ownership – Pupil perspectives



“Drama is supporting students to be imaginative, self-aware and collaborative. “It’s really great to see your friends improve and develop. You see this when they step into their roles, develop new skills like learning lines, responding to stage cues, or when they are interpreting how a character might move based on the style of their costume costume.”



Drama is increasing students’ confidence and self-belief: “Acting makes me happy and makes me feel proud of myself”

Drama is expanding students horizons: “It’s so exciting to be able to perform on a ‘real’ full size stage.”



A focus on creativity is “helping students to be confident in the validity of their own viewpoints: “Every child should have an opportunity to perform.”

Music is contributing to students’ mindfulness and wellbeing: “Making music is soothing and calming... it makes me feel happy”



## Ownership – CREATIVE IDEAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Students were able to choose the setting for their play during a literacy lesson (ice, desert, wasteland, forest, desert and jungle)

Harnessing their imaginations: Exploring, synthesising and refining multiple options

Students supported to amend the script provided by Shakespeare Schools Project E.g. adding new lines and stage directions and making suggestions for character adaptations or relationships between characters.

Students encouraged to take account of the influence of process, product and audience

A selection of children within the Production team were given responsibility for creating pieces of music to accompany the play. The music specialist adopted a pupil centre approach allowing students freedom to make decisions about how they wanted to explore particular themes in the play with sound. They experimented with simple sound making outside using readily available objects and used various percussive and synth sounds using Garage Band. They also explored song writing using thought showers to generate ideas.

Providing genuine freedom to experiment without any pre-determined success criteria. Being flexible and adaptable and functioning well with uncertainty. Modelling the idea that everyone can develop, practise and improve creativity skills, whatever their starting point. While some students may have had a stronger innate inclination towards music creativity, everyone was able to develop their creative capacity to an extent across Year 6.

Idea

Link to creative classrooms

Research carried out for the Children's Commissioner identified some key elements for effective student voice.

### *Laying the foundations*



**Take a look at what school is for.** Think about what your school is actually trying to do. Distinguish between the aims (eg creating able learners) from the external measures (eg exam results). Ensure the school's ethos and practice flow towards these aims.



**Put student voice at the heart of learning and school life.** Schools see better learning when student voice is included. Giving students control over aspects of their learning leads to much more engagement.



**Make sure that your ethos is applied consistently.** Whatever the ethos of your school, both staff and students must be treated with respect. That means senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, lunchtime staff, students and parents all giving each other a voice and being given respect.



**Start small.** Some schools found it useful to start with small projects with younger students that gradually 'grow up through the school'. Students then can demonstrate concrete results and improvements which they then use to convince reluctant staff.



**Do it for real, rather than as a simulation.** Students learn from being exposed to real life issues and challenges. They should learn that they don't always get what they want, but that their voice is heard in real decision making about things that matter to them.