

Partnership example: Kingsmead Primary school

Kingsmead Primary School is an average sized primary school in Hackney, East London. It serves an ethnically diverse community and has above average numbers of children known to be eligible for free school meals and those identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Ofsted rated the school as outstanding in 2011.

Partnership aims and objectives

Through its three year Change School programme (2008-11), the school aimed to raise pupils' attainment around oracy, writing and literacy as well as personal, creative and social skills, through innovative delivery of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). The objectives included:

- Develop teachers' creative skills through creative workshops and INSETs with practitioners.
- Enable teachers to use and embed these required skills, techniques and experiences in their future topics and within other cross-curricular work.
- Enhance children's confidence through performing and creativity.
- Develop a creative curriculum across the school.
- Build a community wide approach to oracy and literacy with greater opportunities for community cohesion and inter-school links.

Project types

2008/09: The partnership was between the school, performance poets from The Poetry Society and Artburst. A whole school cross-curricular literacy and oracy project based on performance poetry. Subjects included Art and design, Citizenship, Design technology, Drama, English, Geography, and PHSE. The main artform for the activity was literature, although visual and performing arts were explored.

2009/10: The partnership was between the school, performance poets from The Poetry Society and a video artist. A whole school cross-curricular literacy and video project. Subjects included drama, English, ICT, Music, and PHSE. The main artforms for the activity were literature and performance poetry.

2010/11: The partnership was between the school, performance poets from The Poetry Society and two photographers. A whole school cross-curricular poetry and photography project. Subjects included art and design, citizenship, English, media studies, and PHSE. The main artforms for the activity were literature and visual arts.

Significant project stages for partners

- A project planning 'Creative Team' was formed, supported by the Creative Agent. Planning took place as a team in the Autumn Terms based around the IPC. Both staff and pupils were involved in the development of the project
- Practitioners were selected according to the expertise they could offer the school. The pupils from the School Council were involved in the selection process.
- Creative workshops and INSETs take place in Spring Term led by the creative practitioners.
- Practitioners recorded their progress and session status in a book so that they could each learn how the other's sessions were going and think of how to connect their work.

- A bank of ideas for teachers and children was created, including film documentation of work for future projects and for particular topics that can be expanded on, and CPD guidance for all staff which can be shared with other schools.
- Presentation of pupils' work via exhibition, performances and a spoken word event for Kingsmead students and local schools within the cluster.
- Evaluation and monitoring of the project progress is taken on by a Creative Agent.
- A Creative Agent undertook evaluation and monitoring throughout the project and helped to make links with local practitioners who could benefit the school in the future.

Outcomes from the three year programme

School's outcomes

- **Model of practice** By the end of the 3 year programme the school felt confident that creativity was at the heart of teaching. The projects helped provide the school with a framework to continue to develop sustainable creative learning in the future.
- **Development of a new school ethos** There was a sense that the school was developing an ethos for creative teaching and learning through its work on oracy, poetry and spoken word. The whole school confidence resulting from this work impacted on creative teaching practice in the school. Additionally the IPC ethos was being developed across other parts of the curriculum.
- **Teaching resources** The projects resulted in the creation of a bank of ideas for teachers across the whole school for CPD and ideas for poetry, writing and performing in class.

Teachers' outcomes

- **Knowledge of learning styles** Teachers gained a greater awareness of pupils' different learning styles and how different teaching methods can support learning.
- **Creative teaching** Teachers learned to take a more creative approach towards the curriculum, thinking outside the box and using these acquired skills in other projects/topics. Greater confidence and enthusiasm was felt. Teachers also developed skills in how to use school spaces effectively and produce a number of ideas based around the same theme.
- **Greater relationships** Through planning with practitioners and working on co-construction with the students the teachers built a range of new relationships, resulting in new skills and confidences. As a result more cross-phase teaching is possible, e.g. a year 5 teacher supporting and teaching a year 1 class.

Students' outcomes

- **Learning and attainment** The pupils' understanding of the conventions of poetry increased and they were able to make more connections between subject areas. They made significant progress in literacy, demonstrated by an increase in reading and writing levels.
- **Emotional development** The pupils developed emotional literacy due to the themes they were addressing throughout the project.
- **Skills** The children developed speaking and listening, performance, language and thinking skills. The school recognised that students were thinking more creatively across and within other subjects. In addition, the children developed photography, editing and other media skills. They appear to value these skills and the ways in which media can support and inspire creative writing.
- **Confidence** The project was very successful in developing the confidence for a range of children including those with SEN, to speak in public, co-construct ideas and perform.

- **Motivation** The pupils developed a new enthusiasm for new initiatives around the school and are keen to take part.

Practitioners' outcomes

- **New knowledge and methodologies** The practitioners worked with all age ranges and in new ways which were experimental, allowing them to expand their experience and their professional 'offer' in new ways.

The value of partnerships with the creative sector

- **Expertise** The practitioners were selected due to the specific expertise and inspiration they could offer the school. They had the experience and skills that teachers could learn from; providing teachers and pupils with ideas and techniques that could be used across different subject areas and beyond the curriculum.
- **Role models** As experts in their fields the partners were good role models for the pupils and they enjoyed working alongside the practitioners to create work of a high standard.
- **Other creative opportunities** The practitioners provided opportunities outside of school for children – they were given the chance to participate in a London-wide poetry slam at the Royal Albert Hall.

"[The change school project] ... has helped to embed the school's sense of identity as a creative and collaboration space in which children and teachers have the confidence to work using co-construction and use a range of art forms to provide a vocabulary and a clear working methodology for exploring community identity, challenges, reality and to celebrate who we are." (Kingsmead Primary School 2010-11 Project End Form)

Advice when undertaking new partnerships

Kingsmead Primary School learned that planning sessions between the teachers and creative practitioners were invaluable as they were a chance to mutually agree on the path and develop relationships. Joint planning such as this would prove beneficial to the development of new partnership projects.