

Lancashire Education Awards



Case Study

Establishment name:	Gillibrand Primary School
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Lead contact name	Mrs Ashley Clayton
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Project title	Gillibrand Creative Curriculum
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Award gained

Award category	X
Innovate <i>A project that demonstrates practice that is new or ground breaking, which successfully engaged and enthused learners.</i>	X
Achieve <i>A project had measurable impact on raising outcomes for pupils.</i>	
Invest <i>A project that has had a positive impact upon an aspect of the wider school community.</i>	
Collaborate <i>A project that involved work across more than one school or work with other agencies.</i>	
Include <i>A project in provision for pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities</i>	
Inspire <i>A project that demonstrates embedded exceptional provision of an aspect of the curriculum. Practice will have been developed and refined over time.</i>	

Project summary (maximum 200 words)

In 2014 our curriculum began to grow, improve and develop. Skills were matched to the needs and aspirations of our children, and we hoped to create an even better curriculum which was innovative, creative and meaningful, whilst further raising standards. Specifically, after our 2016 OFSTED, we wanted to ensure RE, Computing and DT were given equivalent focus as other curriculum subject areas. We also focused widely on the use of our amazing outdoor space to take all this learning outdoors too.

To guarantee greatest impact, it was decided that all the various priorities needed to be linked together through cross curricular teaching and learning. Subject leaders analysed the National Curriculum and, in consultation with teachers, planned how the age-related skills for maths, reading, writing, science, computing, history, geography, design technology, art and MFL could be taught ensuring clear progression across year groups.

EYFS had recently achieved the 'Step Outside' award for effective use of their outdoor environment and we wished to build on this 'best practice' and support the children during transition into KS1.

The project also wished to increase engagement with parents and the community through identifying and utilising skills and carefully planning community events.

How did you identify the need for this project? What were you hoping to achieve?

The introduction of the new national curriculum brought about further opportunity for our school to create a unique, innovative curriculum, which placed our children and their needs at the very centre. Whilst already a strength (The curriculum is a significant strength. Pupils experience a wide range of memorable learning opportunities over their time here. - OfSted 2016) there were still areas of our curriculum which our school and Ofsted had identified for development and further strengthening.

Our 2016 Ofsted inspection highlighted that we could 'improve pupil outcomes even further by ensuring curriculum planning in religious education (RE) and technology matches that of the best in the school, so that pupils further develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in these subjects'.

Our aim was to develop a curriculum that provided as many creative and innovative opportunities and experiences as possible, which inspired teaching and learning throughout the school. Through carefully planning and rigorous monitoring this was achieved and has since gone from strength to strength, deepening and broadening the learning experiences of all our children.

Who led the project?

This was a whole school initiative, which, whilst initially identified by the SLT, following the recommendations of the 2016 Ofsted inspection, was led by subject leaders and staff. The resulting innovative curriculum owes its success to the shared responsibility and accountability of all staff at all levels. Whilst SLT made the creative curriculum a whole school priority, subject leader's monitored teaching and learning, maintaining momentum and giving their curriculum subjects a high profile. Through the skilled guidance of subject leaders, teaching staff supported

each other in designing the curriculum to fit the needs of our children and purposefully address gaps in learning.

What steps/actions did you take?

We used the 2014 National Curriculum to formulate year group specific skills. These are constantly reviewed each year and adjusted if needed to suit the requirements of our children and to ensure progression through and across year groups. Staff expertise is used to effectively support teaching and learning and provide children with appropriate challenge. Teaching is planned around a skill-based curriculum with topics threaded through to ensure an effective, cross-curricular approach. Our creative curriculum also remained a focus appearing regularly on staff meeting and phase team meeting agendas. Subject leaders have regular, planned time to monitor the impact of their subject in all year groups.

What was the impact of the project and how was this measured/assessed?

The impact of our curriculum has been far reaching. Assessment and tracking show standards of teaching and learning in all curriculum subjects have increased and a larger number of children are meeting age related expectations. Parental and community involvement is developing with regular parent/carer events and visits to school from community members. Specific 'Outdoor Learning' weeks and the continued high profile of the outdoor environment means it is used much more effectively to support all curriculum areas. Class Blogs and pink curriculum books show a greater amount of teaching and learning time is spent outdoors and this, in turn, has led to further investment in the outdoor environment (successful bids for story telling domes and an outdoor classroom as well as a current bid for story telling chairs). The children can talk about what they have learned in DT and new skills they have learned in the same way they talk about their successes in reading. Pupil questionnaires and parent questionnaires show that we place a strong emphasis in school on the wider curriculum. Below are a few quotes from parents and children talking about our innovative curriculum:
"even learned new facts about the Maya. I wish we did this when we were at school!" (KS2 parent).
"The children have worked so hard and learned about how to make money in 'real life'." (KS2 parent at Enterprise Week).
"This has been the best day - I want to create algorithms when I am older." (KS1 child).
SEE PHOTOS emailed across too.

What are the next steps? How will you follow up this work?

The project has been one which has gathered momentum, been changed, amended and evolved over time to meet with changes from on high and also changes at the school and to accommodate the children's needs. To continue, we will maintain the high profile given to all subjects, the professional development of staff and the evolution of the planning and monitoring cycle. We are now developing our teaching and learning to ensure we constantly provide challenge and questioning to extend and deepen the understanding of all our children in all areas of the curriculum.

Do you have any other advice for establishments that might be considering a similar project?

Whole school initiative - shared responsibility and accountability

Complete an audit of the current curriculum

Move away from prescriptive schemes of work

Consider whole key stage topic to lead the curriculum (e.g. KS2 have just completed a topic on The Maya)

Identify the skills from the National Curriculum

Use these skills to plan, teach and assess in all areas of the curriculum

Invest in resources (including physical resources, CPD, trips, visitors, parents)

Maintain the high profile of the project and involve all stakeholders

Constantly monitor progress and impact and make improvements