Project summary

Funky Friday was an initiative that was devised as a response to developing AFL and ensuring a smooth transition from EYFS to KS1 through a creative curriculum. This enabled the school to utilise expertise on the staff to teach in small groups focussing on skills progression, clear learning objectives and success criteria in the creative arts (art, music, dance/drama and ICT). The impact has been engaged learners, motivated teachers and teaching assistants and an opportunity to plan collaboratively with colleagues. The curriculum was personalised to groups and individuals enabling children to develop their skills within the different areas. All staff have became familiar with age appropriate expectations within the different subjects and have a more in-depth understanding of the next steps for the children's learning.

Specific aspect of practice to be accredited?
An innovative approach to the transition of EYFS to KS1 (Funky Friday)

Aspect of Every Child Matters addressed:
- Be healthy
- Make a positive contribution
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Achieve economic well-being

What were you hoping to achieve?
- To develop a high quality and appropriate learning culture that impacts on the progress of children
- To develop a skills-based creative curriculum
- To develop a team approach to the planning of teaching and learning in EYFS and KS1
- To aid a smooth transition from EYFS to KS1 to ensure the continuous learning journey impacts on the progress of children
- To ensure assessment for learning strategies are being utilised effectively, impacting on learning
- To support teachers in developing and modifying existing practice in response to individual and school needs.
How did you identify the need for this practice?

- Progress in Y1 had a tendency to plateau
- Need to support and scaffold the children in the transition phase transferring from a different learning environment
- Foundation Stage Profile suggested that standards in the creative subjects were slightly below the other areas
- There was a need to develop a more structured approach to the teaching of the arts across the whole school
- Skills progression from EYFS to KS1 needed embedding to ensure it was being effective
- Need to utilise all expertise of staff more effectively, particularly TA's who had not had the opportunity to work in EYFS and KS1 before
- Wanted to actively encourage collaborative planning to promote high quality teaching and learning.

What did you do?

**Summer 2008**

- EYFS and Y1 teacher attended training on transition and AFL
- Worked with colleagues to devise an innovative approach to transition, embedding the principles of AFL through a creative curriculum that impacts positively on the progress of children
- Initial planning meeting with teachers and teaching assistants to identify strengths and interests of staff involved.
- Teachers planned collaboratively focussing on skills progression ensuring clear learning objectives and success criteria were applied.

**Autumn 2008 (1st Half)**

- Piloted 'Funky Friday' a fun creative afternoon of activities incorporating music, art, dance/drama and ICT based on a multi-cultural text.
- Provided the opportunity to utilise different areas of the school accessing resources.
- Introduced manageable assessments to be recorded by staff to input into next planning cycle.
- First cycle completed
- Celebrated success with children, staff and parents through display
- All staff evaluated the approach
- Adapted practice in the following half term in response to the evaluation.

**Autumn 2008 (2nd Half)**

- Initial planning meeting to introduce new Christmas linked theme
- Planning sheets with Learning Objectives and success criteria were given to staff
- Staff took ownership of planning relevant activities within their curriculum area
- Success celebrated through the Christmas production
Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?

- Acting Head, Acting Deputy and Reception teacher led the project
- All teachers & TA's involved, planned and implemented the project
- Teachers/TA's provided expertise and skills in particular curriculum areas
- Received input from the early years team.

How has the practice been modified or improved during development?

- Timetable has been modified to allow longer more productive teaching sessions
- Flexible time-table in foundation/KS1
- Opportunities sought to make links between subjects involved.

What has been the impact of the project on pupils’ learning, achievement or enjoyment and how has this been measured?

- Enhanced learning experiences due to expert practitioner planning and delivery
- Assessment impacted more profoundly on teaching and learning due to working with small groups of children
- Pupils expressed enthusiasm and enjoyment for 'Funky Friday', therefore increased motivation was evident
- Majority of children of all abilities developed and enjoyed success in the different areas
- Working as a team was beneficial to both staff and pupils
- All children experienced a progressive skills-based creative curriculum
- Impacted positively on wider community relations with the celebration of success event
- Opportunities to teach small groups were provided, this enabled a high quality, appropriate learning culture to develop further.

What are the next stages in the development process?

- To continue to modify and develop this approach each Autumn Term to aid transition from EYFS to KS1
- To trial at other stages of transition - e.g. KS1 to KS2
- To incorporate the outside environment wherever possible.

What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?

This practice has been developed to address an issue that is prevalent in lots of primary schools. 'Funky Friday' is an innovative, creative way to ensure smooth transition. The approach could transfer easily to other schools - alternatively the principles behind the practice could be applied to other establishments with modifications.

Any other comments:
Transition was aided as it was presented in a non-threatening way to the children. It provided opportunities for staff to plan an in-depth piece of work for a small group of children, focussing on very specific issues. It motivated children and impacted positively on their learning.