

Art and Design



Compelling learning

Video 3: Art and design

Churchdown School

SP, Headteacher: We want to give students who come to this school the opportunity to work with a range of professionals in a range of environments and have extended periods of time to unwrap their learning. We feel that there are significant added advantages through adopting a more flexible approach.

Teacher A (in class): When you're making these and you're using all these different kind of textures, and scrunchy sort of materials, why did you choose...

SP: As a school we're looking at ways that we can change the existing historical structures of delivering a timetable, to provide more extended periods of time for students to work on various subject matter. The classic example is where students have enhanced their science learning through work in art and vice versa.

Teacher A (in class): Why are we making the colours stand out more, why is that important?

Pupil A: Because cells normally have vivid bright reds and blues in them so it would look more cell-like.

Teacher A: Exactly...

SB, Subject Leader: We started with a project with Year 7 and incidentally we also made links through our community with Tim Chance who's from the Cheltenham path lab and so we decided to send some teachers along to it and they came back really really interested and bubbling about what they'd seen and that's what stimulated the project really.



TC, Pathologist: These are pictures of micro-organisms, of fungi, bacterias and so on that we've isolated in the lab, and as well as being very useful as documents of what we see, they're also very good sources of inspiration for artwork.

SB: One of the big things about the project was to actually work alongside the science, when they were actually teaching cells they would actually work on cells in the art department, but in different media.

Teacher B: So one person in your group of three can be in charge of cutting the first shape. You'll all get a piece of clay that size and you can decide what shape it's going to be.

Pupil B: Somebody from the hospital that grows fungi on Petri dishes came in and talked to us about cells and where they live.

Pupil C: It's helping us learn about cells and do art at the same time.

SB: We've got fantastic ceramics facilities, we do a lot of work in textiles and fine art, and so what we wanted to do was give the students the chance to work in those three areas. I was really excited by the work the students produced. They'd used a whole load of different materials, the sort of things that I think, you know, that Year 7 might not have come across before.

Pupil D: I've definitely learned a couple of new stitches such as the whipping stitch and cross-stitch.

SB: One of the things I think's really exciting is that a lot of the boys have actually been doing textiles work which is something which I think is fantastic to get them at that age.

Pupil E: That's the nucleus, it controls the whole of the cell.

SP: There have been a number of comments from pupils about the science curriculum being brought to life, working in a medium, in art and design, that they feel much more confident with, and it's also brought the art and design department and the science department much closer together.

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SB: I think one of the things about the secondary curriculum which is important is this notion of developing creativity through experimentation, risk taking, that sort of thing, and I'd like to see that, you know, coming out of this project.

Teacher A: I think, just sort of reading the key concepts of the new curriculum, exploring and experimenting like you were saying, just kind of investigating...

SB: One of the things about the project which has been fantastic is the work that's been done out of the classroom, because there's been workshops, there's been extended study after school, and the students have really engaged with that and I think the new secondary curriculum offers a lot of opportunity for that, and bring it on as far as I'm concerned, because I think that will be great for us and the department and the students.

SP: One of the main concerns was about our ability to engage the local community. It's not always been easy as a school, and we were concerned that we'd be able to get people in the school, get them interested in projects related to the art and design curriculum, and that's not been the case. It's been the most positive experience that the art and design department have had, the school's had and I've had.

Pupil F: I've enjoyed... because in science I have trouble in science but because I've done this it helps me to remember and stuff.

Pupil G: Great, I wish it was science and art together all the time, really.

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