

# 'Purposeful creativity': Year 9 BESD secondary boys in a special school develop 2D work into 3D sculptural designs making a number of cross-curricular links

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Case study: **#05**

**School Profile: Lakeside Special School is a school for boys aged 11–16 who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Pupils are drawn from the whole of Hampshire and a residential facility is available for up to eighteen children.**

## What was the school trying to achieve?

BESD pupils are often characterised by lack of self-esteem and confidence, displaying a resistance to working outside safe personal paradigms.

However, if they manage to fully embrace new ideas their focus and energy can be unrelenting. In Year nine many pupils lack confidence in their drawing ability and developing ideas. Most have limited experience in working with resistant materials in an artistic context. Design involving resistant materials is a crucial element of their GCSE coursework.

Therefore there were several aims to this project. The school wanted to enable pupils to gain greater confidence in developing ideas from two dimensions to three. It was planned to reinforce the notion that drawing can be personalised and expressive as well as being topographical. Students would explore, investigate and gain competence in working with varied ranges of techniques and materials. The project was also aimed at underpinning the value of analysis, evaluation and decision-making in developing ideas and techniques.

## How was learning organised to achieve these aims?

Year nine pupils receive two forty minute art lessons weekly. The project was to run for twelve weeks and was ongoing at the time of writing. The project was to design a sculpture based on natural and animal forms, reflecting the influence of Celtic Art. It was envisaged that pupils would also produce maquettes.

In order to motivate, inspire and demonstrate high standards it was decided to take all pupils on two separate visits to local sculpture exhibitions. The first was to the Cass Sculpture Foundation at Goodwood, Sussex and 'Art in the Garden' at Hillier's Arboretum at Ampfield, Hampshire.

The sculptor who organised the latter show was also brought in to show examples of her own work and projects executed in collaboration with other schools. She is scheduled for two half day workshops for assisting in the fabrication of maquettes in 2008. (Fig 1)

During a residential visit to Wales Pupils went to the National Gallery and Museum of Wales to draw Celtic artefacts first hand (Fig 2).

A local falconer was brought in as part of a literacy initiative and Year nine's were given opportunities to sketch birds of prey. Emphasis was placed on expressive drawing of natural objects from the studio resources, first hand. Encouragement was given to explore and investigate as wide a range of materials, media and techniques as possible.

The following cross curricular links were also established:

- Maths: Geometry of natural forms (spirals, concentric shapes, analysis of Celtic Knot work)
- History: Background to the Celts were and what their Art looked like
- IT: Research into the Celts and natural forms, word processing of evaluations and Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- Science: The nature of materials, the make-up of skeletal forms
- DT: Craft and metal working techniques such as planishing, cutting, drilling, stamping, annealing and braising

Tools, materials and vices were also borrowed from CDT and workshop/hearth space booked for later in the project when the sculptor revisits (Fig 3). LSA's were reallocated in the later stages so the pupils could have appropriate CDT technician support. A plenary was held once a week to review and evaluate progress and direction (Fig 4).

## How well did the school achieve its aims?

The project is currently only half completed but improvements are already evident. Confidence levels have risen considerably in designing in 3D. Studying Celtic influences resulted in freer, expressive and personalised drawing styles.

There is a significant rise in the level of competence in working with a wide range of materials as can be seen from some of the examples, particularly resistant materials and elements of risk-taking. (Fig 5) More attention needs to be devoted to pupil's formal evaluation of their work, but this can be aided by pro-forma check-lists.

**The final outcomes will be shown on the NSEAD new Secondary Curriculum website.**



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5