



How can art be used to embed learning?

What would the curriculum look like if it was designed by children and young people?

OFF THE CURRICULUM
SCHOOL PROGRAMME

OVERVIEW

Off the Curriculum is an approach to learning in KS2 classrooms where children are in charge.

Students work closely with facilitators to devise questions about the world, past, present and future. Experts and artists then work with students to deliver a bespoke, creative process that allows the children to explore the question from many perspectives. Off the Curriculum is about critical thinking, the importance of questions and the power of using art to explore, creatively interrogate and bring to life ideas and opinions.

We don't yet know what skills the world of tomorrow will require from our young people as they grow up and take their place in the world. But we can be sure that in order to achieve their fullest potential, they will need to know who they are, be confident in themselves, not afraid to challenge the status quo, take risks, ask questions, know how to express themselves in different ways and find their own paths in life. Taking part in projects like 'Off the Curriculum' gives children a chance to practise these skills for life.





STAGE 1

- Provide windows and mirrors, allowing students to look at themselves and their peers and identity from new perspectives.
- Encourage critical thinking, and put the curriculum into context, exploring learning in school and out of school.
- Demonstrate power and voice sharing, where questions and ideas are expansive and open-ended. Place value on the process itself as a part of the learning. Give value to the pupils' lived experience. Support the development of speaking and listening skills encouraging children to ask big questions and deepen their understanding of their own topics of interest.
- Find the questions and topics to explore in stage 2.

PROCESS. THE WHY

Warm up, start physical
Create a sense of ownership and pride in the learners' names and heritage. Everyone has a story.

Introduce the curriculum - what is it and who created it?
(Curriculum link to UK decision making processes - government).
What are they learning in school? What makes up the Curriculum?
Who decides what is taught? And what is learnt outside of school?

Celebrate the knowledge that is in the room.
Discuss commonalities, differences and areas of expertise highlighting heritage, hobbies, languages spoken, cultural and religious beliefs, significant relationships and community connections.

Create a visual representation of the diversity and knowledge in the room.

EXERCISES. THE HOW.

Sit in a circle - children share names with an action.
Everyone repeats action and says name. Then give the children the opportunity to share with the group the 'story/ history' behind their name. Where did it come from? Why are names important?

On a large sheet of paper draw the school building. Fill the inside with things we learn inside school (including break time, friends, PSHE), fill the outside with learning that happens outside the classroom through family, hobbies etc.

GAME: Alphabet Attack. Split the class into two teams, race to find a word relating to learning/ education for every letter of the alphabet. Learners line up and take turns to write words on the board beginning with each letter of the alphabet. After the alphabet is complete the fastest team gets a point. The opposite teams can then pick 3 words from the other team to challenge. Students from the other team have to give an explanation for each word chosen with a point awarded for each word they have a strong explanation for. Learners should be able to back up choices and think broadly about the topic.

GAME: 'The sun shines on', one person in the middle states a sentence true to them,, learners move and swap seats if the statement is true for them. (e.g. 'The sun shine down on ... anyone who speaks more than one language, looks after an animal, likes painting')

Map the world using gym mats to create continents. The learners stand somewhere they feel a connection to and take a piece of wool to map their connection out. They then share things they know about that place with the class.

PROCESS. THE WHY	EXERCISES. THE HOW.
<p>What are the issues we face today? How could the curriculum equip us to face these challenges? Look at the UK's relationship with the world from different perspectives.</p> <p>Share some big ideas to provoke thoughts and questions from the children.</p>	<p>Exploring different maps together as a class e.g. global temperatures, CO2 emissions, wealth distribution, the British Empire, contrast between Miller and Peter projections map shows the countries in relative size more accurately. Show how maps have changed over time; early maps exaggerated the size of the UK in comparison to other countries.</p> <p>Group discussion about what challenges are important to the class, personally, locally and globally.</p> <p>Extension: Create superheroes that accentuate your skills and how they can be useful in society e.g. great at cooking...</p>
<p>Generate topics / questions that the children want to know more about that are not taught at school.</p> <p>Use a democratic voting process to decide on topics to focus on in smaller groups.</p>	<p>Create 4 stations / areas in the room. At each station with large sheets of paper in each place, write the headings: What if...? // Why did...? // How does ... work?</p> <p>OR</p> <p>People // Places // Things.</p> <p>Ask learners to circulate the stations in groups and add topics or questions in response to the prompts</p> <p>Narrow down topics by a democratic process of voting for the most popular ones. (suggestion to split a class of 30 into groups of three for second stage)</p>
<p>Create detailed questions around each chosen topic.</p>	<p>Work in smaller groups to explore with learners what they want to find out and why? What type of people/ professionals would have some answers?</p>

N.B At different points in the day play fun games to break up the tasks and learning

- initially to break the ice, create bonds, provide brain breaks and bring fun and joy to the learning.



STAGE 2

- Pair an expert and an artist to creatively explore each question/topic
- Focus on process not product.
- Introduce learners to professionals.
- Use high quality creative materials and techniques.
- Share learning with the whole class, encouraging clear articulation and creative expression.

The children work in 3 groups of 10 on their chosen topic with an expert, and an artist. A safe environment for learning and making mistakes is created. The day is focused on the learning process more than product, with the opportunity to share using the artform and cascade learning at the end of the day.



PROCESS	ACTIVITY
Experts and artists plan together before the session.	
The experts share their knowledge on the children's chosen topic.	Expert leads first hour of day (using props, videos, real-life examples, Q&A lead by learners)
Introduction to the art form	Spend time in the creative process being supported and scaffolded by artist (and possibly expert too)
Presentation to peers and teachers sharing learning process.	

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EXPERT?

We are all experts in something. In this case, the expert is someone with lived experience of a topic or from the country of interest, a student or a professional with expertise.

EXAMPLES OF ARTFORMS

- Rap
- Collage
- Sculpture/ clay
- Projection/ live animation
- Spoken word
- Illustration and ipad drawing
- Drama
- Lino printing

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS / TOPICS

- How coloured pens are made?
- How are video games made?
- Why do we have to go to school?
- How can I be a Youtuber?
- Why did homework become mandatory and not a punishment?
- Why did Racism start?
- What is the Amazon Rainforest like?
- How do names of countries get decided?
- What if religion didn't exist?
- How do phones, microchips and motherboards work?
- How do we improve mental health?
- How can I be a good friend?
- What would happen if money didn't exist / everything was free?

REFLECTIONS

CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES ON THE PROJECT:

10/10. I actually get to learn about stuff about actual real life. I learnt about games today!
(Y4 child)

My favourite part of today was performing in front of everyone **(Y3 child)**

I love the fact that we learnt from a real rapper **(Y4 child)**

It's made me think about all the cool jobs that there are **(Y4 child)**

It didn't feel like school today! We did what we decided **(Y5 child)**

TEACHERS/ TEACHING ASSISTANT:

*It's been a great boost for their human values and their experiences.
I see children who are normally very quiet speaking up and sharing their ideas!*

*It's been good to have extended time to focus and to be with the children.
We normally have to get through things so quickly.*

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

*She came out of school laughing and smiling! She's had an excellent time!
And really enjoyed the experience. I wish she could do it again!*





LINKS TO THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

6.2 SPOKEN LANGUAGE (Y1-6)

- Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- Use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play /improvisations and debates
- Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication

In Years 3 and 4, pupils should become more familiar with and confident in using language in a greater variety of situations, for a variety of audiences and purposes, including through drama, formal presentations and debate.

In Years 5 and 6, pupils' confidence, enjoyment and mastery of language should be extended through public speaking, performance and debate.

The National Curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences.
- Become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques.
- Evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design.





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