

Immersive Classrooms

Imagine being able to take your class on a coral reef diving expedition. What about a trip up Angel Falls in Venezuela? A journey back in time to a wartime Underground station at the height of the London Blitz anyone?

The Trust is working with colleagues at Production Park and Backstage Academy to develop Interactive Immersive Classrooms that will bring these experiences to our schools. Carol Spruce, Principal at Humberston Cloverfields explains that, "We are matching technologies that are the frontiers of what's possible, with advanced computing skills, the content of YouTube and the pedagogical expertise of the Trust to make this possible for all our pupils. It's more than exciting."

Already Interactive Immersive Classrooms are up and running at Linden Road Academy, Hardwick Green Academy and Humberston Cloverfields Academy. Three more are being installed ahead of the Autumn so that in each hub of the Trust we have two facilities that can be used by all children to augment their learning. The concept of an immersive space has been with us for a while but ours are different. The image is sharper, the sound bigger and the content is more expansive. It's worth thinking how you might use an IIC with your class (and remember, if you can find it on YouTube you can create a learning environment from it in an IIC).

The innovation is not going unnoticed. In the Spring the BBC featured the work at Humberston Cloverfields in a local news bulletin. It's worth checking this link to see what the prototype looks like...

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-humber-47680193/north-east-lincolnshire-school-uses-virtual-reality-in-classroom>

For more information please contact Ronnie Woods.

The Role of Trustees

The Trustees are the highest level of governance in the Trust. Their deliberations and decisions affect every child and every member of staff. They establish the broad strategic direction of the Trust and sit at the pinnacle of the Trust's accountability processes. They monitor the performance of the Trust as a whole and that in individual schools. They ensure that resources are well used and check that the Trust remains compliant with its legal responsibilities.

Our Trustees have a broad range of skills and expertise. Trustee Richard Hildyard appreciates that, "We benefit from the insights of entrepreneurs, lawyers, accountants, financial advisers, educationalists and charity leaders. All have an unequivocal passion for ensuring that every child in the Trust - all 10,000 of them - have an excellent start in life. They appreciate the huge difference that a great school can make to all pupils and particularly those who are disadvantaged."

This is expressed in our Trust goals which include ensuring that all pupils attend a school that is good or better, every child has access to a world class curriculum and every child makes at least good progress.

The Chair of Trustees, Jack Harrison (himself a former head teacher) explains that, "We established the Enquire Learning Trust to build schools that genuinely excel, schools that place a premium on quality and pay attention to the crucial details. And because we believe that all children can be powerful learners, we want our schools to be inclusive and work for everyone."

School funding

Either, "There's never been so much funding in our education service," (Damian Hinds - Secretary of State for Education) or "Schools are beyond breaking point," (John Harris - The Guardian). Our experience is that academy finances represent a significant challenge at this present time. The Trust is proactively managing the pressures we face and working closely with academy leaders and business managers. The emphasis is on creating schools that deliver high quality experiences and outcomes to our pupils and remain financially sustainable.

Chief Finance Officer, Jodie Younger explains, "Because we work across 7 local authority areas our Academies do have a different financial settlement and this means that the impact of rising costs varies from school to school. Sometimes, for good and historical reasons, schools have made choices about internal organisation that are proving less resilient to financial challenges than others. Where this is the the case the Trust is committed to helping schools to make necessary changes in ways that protect the quality of education that pupils receive."

The Trust central services are provided at a much lower cost than those in Local Authority Schools (who routinely offer up 10% of their budget to the council and then have to pay for services as well). Being part of the Trust means that all schools get the high quality support services that they need (as opposed to those they can afford) on a fair basis. Because we are a charity and we don't make a profit, we conservatively estimate that we are able to save our schools around £80K each year. This resource is invested in the provision that benefits our learners.

Learn.

The news sheet of the Enquire Learning Trust



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by Darren Holmes

The evolution of enquiry

The process of enquiring into practice is the bedrock of the Enquire Learning Trust. Each school hosts at least three opportunities every year for colleagues to witness, explore and reflect upon their practice. The process is designed to affirm, challenge and reveal practice and be a vehicle through which ideas are shared. If you've ever wondered how the Enquire Learning Trust academies appear to be growing in alignment despite a firm commitment for schools to develop in their own distinctive way then the answer is enquiry. As colleagues witness great work in another Trust school they seek to emulate, adapt and improve on it in their own context.

And enquiry is continually evolving. It has always been deliberately engineered as a disruptive agent that embeds a strong component of challenge. Jaimie Holbrook suggests that, "Enquiries reveal a growing confidence in our schools that the day to day work is robust and effective. Leaders are requesting a focus at a higher level of sophistication and quality as confidence grows and there's an upward recalibration of expectation." He goes on, "We are also seeing leaders use enquiry effectively within school as a key component of school improvement."

For example: at Eastfield, subject leaders create an enquiry question that sits at the heart of their cycle of activity and at Laceby Acres a continuous state of enquiry takes the place of formalised pupil progress meetings.

During Spring 2019, all schools within the Trust took a common enquiry focus - their progress towards curriculum change and innovation - and the outcomes are simply stunning. The enquiries were led by senior leaders and, together, capture the essence of our collective endeavour and set out some useful next steps for each school. The next issue of Learn will report on what we've learned from these.

ICT leadership

In May, IT leaders across the Trust, met to discuss and share good practice. Brett Webster, Director for Information Technology, shared with leaders the plan for equipping all schools with up to date equipment through the Trust IT programme.

Leaders shared curriculum documents and resources through our newly set up online team room with the idea that we support each other and develop 'a high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world'. Rebecca Clayton said, "We have so much expertise within the Trust in terms of IT teaching, that we can support all schools wherever they are on their journey to plan the IT curriculum. There is no need for anyone to struggle."

Trust wide professional development for ICT leaders has been expertly delivered this term by Adam Charlton and Sharon Gurney from Elliston Academy and Stakesby Academy respectively. Adam shared examples of a range of free resources - Google Expeditions, Scratch, Kodu, and Lightbot - and demonstrated how these might be used to support teaching and learning. Sharon presented a skills progression table and exemplified the subject specific vocabulary necessary for each year group. This group will continue to meet to share ideas and develop practice and provision across the Trust. Please check the Key Dates document in your school or the online calendar on the Trust Website for the full schedule of meetings.

Inspection

Ofsted inspections are important to all of us and in a very real sense when one of our academies is being inspected all of us are. When colleagues negotiate the challenge of scrutiny successfully and receive positive endorsement from inspectors this is a great outcome for everyone.

As the Trust secures a reputation for improvement this builds confidence in what we stand for, what we do and how we go about things. Since we began in 2013 we've created a strong track record that is reflected in inspection outcomes. Overwhelmingly, our academies are good and improving. Many have travelled the journey to outstanding - with many more following in their wake - often in the face of significant challenges. Overall around 92% of our pupils attend a school that is at least good and this means that from the point of conversion to academy almost 3000 children have access to improved provision. 11% of children attend schools accorded the highest inspection grade and we can be proud that this is almost twice as high as the national average.

There's a broad blueprint for this achievement. Rebecca Clayton - Enquire Learning Trust Director and herself an Ofsted lead inspector says, "Overwhelmingly across the Trust academies all pupils benefit from an excellent - and improving - curriculum, learning opportunities are built upon what pupils know and can do, data is used well, teaching is precise and focused and often incorporates a signature pedagogy such as a peer critique or AfL." She adds that, "Behaviours are well managed and classrooms are orderly environments that communicate high expectations. Hard work and scholarship are recognised and celebrated and pupils create beautiful work on a daily basis." In all our schools we see Leaders at all levels working hard to create a positive environment and set a powerful example. They are skilled at developing others and ensure that everyone has high expectations and takes responsibility. This means," argues Rebecca, that, "Colleagues enter the inspection well prepared and confident in their work."

Importantly we do these things - and a whole lot more besides - not for inspectors, but for children and the communities we serve and as the focus of inspection changes with the introduction of a new Framework from September 2019, we will continue to support one another so that positive outcomes remain the norm.

Focus on Oakfield

Oakfield Academy in Hyde prides itself on its inclusivity. Principal, Heather Farrell is proud of the provision that pupils with special educational needs access and she knows that children benefit from staff who have great expertise in securing their progress. Heather is clear, "My colleagues are simply inspirational. They are hugely skilled, hugely dedicated and wonderfully generous. They share their expertise around so that everyone benefits. I have a school full of creative, adaptable, dedicated, problems solvers. You really can't buy it."

And everyone benefitting is important. Heather is unwavering in her understanding that, "Our pupils with SEND bring a huge amount to our school. They reflect our deeply held and authentic belief that everyone is special and that all pupils can make a unique and valued contribution to the school community." She suggests that, "Schools are microcosms of wider society and it's part of our role to help pupils embrace diversity and understand that every person is unique and important."

When Ofsted visited the school early in 2019 inspectors recognised the quality of the work with SEND at Oakfield. The report outlines how the resource provision - which is a real strength of the school," and is "an exemplary of good practice."

This resource base - which hosts pupils from across the Borough of Tameside - is expertly led by Paula Anderson. She loves the work she does and sees the impact of her efforts every day. Paula is adamant that, "It really works at Oakfield because everyone takes responsibility for all the learners. We have high expectations and make sure that learning is enjoyable."

Heather concurs. "The whole team plays a part. We try to give every child the chance to shine and make sure that all pupils with SEND have a personalised programme that helps them to learn alongside their peers.



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the **enquire**
learning trust