

Curiosity, Communication and Creativity in a Digital World



**But what does this mean in
our setting?**



By Little Apples Afterschool club

In January 2018 we were invited to take part in a new project run by Leicestershire County Council- titled Curiosity, Communication and Creativity in a Digital World.

My first thought as the owner of the club was 'no, not interested, our club's ethos is about the outdoors, tree climbing, making dens, running around with each other not sitting with laptops, ipads or phones'. This wasn't me being ignorant to them, but I didn't want them in the setting as felt they were accessible in school and at home.

However, I thought I should go along to the meeting to find out more. So the meeting was an 'Interactive' day learning about children's communication, language, imagination and creativity and how this links with digital media. We then spent time in a room full of resources that was set up like you would for children...at this point I warmed up to the idea! There was microscopes with various resources and also a small world area set up, there was a den area using a laptop and projector to make a scenery as a backdrop and much more. I could now see how the two could work together in our setting and still keeping our ethos.

The Team

The next task was to cascade this to the team including the children. We already had lots of torches, magnifying glasses but not enough so we enjoyed a shopping trip to look for more unique lights and torches a favourite was the police car lights and the disco ball lights.



We left the children to decide where and how they wanted to play with these, some took them into the dens they had made others used them on the stage with the music. It was good to see them being used with the other resources not instead of!

We were also lucky enough to have an old projector available for us to use, again this was left simply in an area set up for them, some children (and adults) enjoyed making shadow puppets and creating stories. Others collected open ended resources and placed them on to the

glass top in ways to make patterns or shapes that shone up onto the material curtain (and even the ceiling!!).



**Communication & teamwork
(yr 2)**



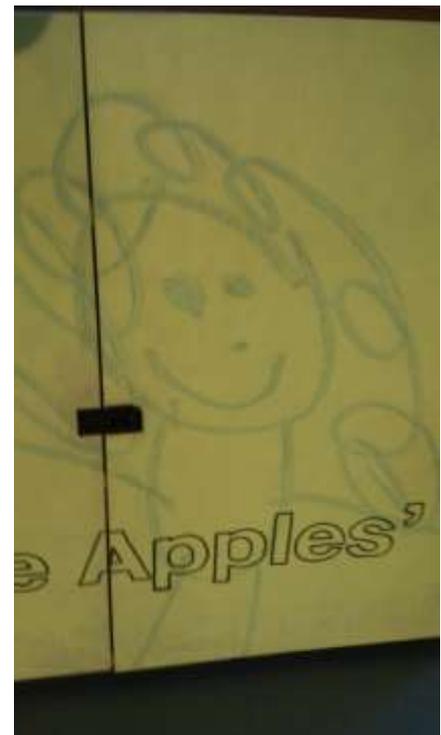
**Creating patterns with open ended resources that were out in the room and recognising these can be seen on the ceiling!
(yr reception)**



(yr 3 & 2 reception children)



This child (reception) doesn't usually spend time doing any drawing or mark making, however he drew a person on the acetate which he found out the paper box and then took it to the projector and realised he could see his drawing, working with another child (yr 3) he found by moving part of the projector the person went on to the ceiling, wall and the cupboards!!



Making patterns (yr 2 children)



At the start of the time of using the projector we had another project running which was to make a collage of a building from the village after looking at photos of places the group decided on the church when we looked on the internet for information we found a historic case of murder! This was a big interest to the older children (yr 5-6) and one wrote a letter to his teacher asking if they could look into this more in class. The photo was placed on the projector and children helped to draw around the outline of the building after this it was worked on over time as an art project which when finished we will be getting framed and donating to the church.

Our voices!!

“I make that” child shows me a shadow puppet on the wall - (reception child)

“I liked it when I had my wig on and the ginormous scissors were going to cut it” - (year 2)

“I like using the lights for the shows” - (yr 2)

“I like all the using lights and putting things on to look at” – (yr 1)

“I loved the church drawing and talking about the murder” – (yr5)

“I was sceptical about the project but seeing the way it can be added to resources and activities we already do I can see it works well”- (owner/leader)

“at first it did cross my mind that it would be us sitting around on iPads, not that I think this to be a bad thing....I’ve seen apps like the green screen one and animation ones that can unleash so much creativity however my experience of them in our school is playing games, finding out information or coding.....I should have known better where after school club is concerned. I especially liked the introduction of the torches. Who would have thought they would be as much fun. The children were making their dens as dark as possible just to use the torch and the role play they inspired. Also the games created, ie. stepping/dancing on the light trying to catch it, spotlights on the girls dancing shows, torches behind sheets for shadow puppets and guessing the child by their shadow. Then there was the overhead projector, which I was just using to enlarge photos to copy for our artwork projects but the children had different ideas, wanting to put all manner of things on top to enlarge onto the walls ie. pens buttons and beads etc which on from that, you showed me, putting fake snow onto the light box to create snow patterns (which reminded me of my own childhood, using my fingers to pretend to ice skate)....and I also used this idea in my own classroom. The mini camera which everyone wanted attached to their head and selfie stick was another great success and can see that being used more and more as it gives the children a new dimension to their play and an insight for us to see what they are up to lol.....hopefully when you figure out how to upload the magnifying thing....that will be amazing too. Can’t wait till September! (afterschool club practitioner)

Funding

Funding was to be given to put towards the purchase of digital resources, this was something we had thought about after seeing some of the items on the training day. So we purchased a digital microscope and a camera which could be used outdoors but would hinder the activities we did.



with this camera the children enjoyed wearing it on their heads whilst playing football and climbing trees. It also has various which they enjoy working with.



the digital microscope takes a bit of getting used to but the children are enjoying learning whilst using it, especially looking in each other's ears, eyes and at their hair follicles!!

Digital Media Audit

Part of the project meant we had to do an audit and look at our current resources and think about something that would be beneficial to use. The questions were-

- What resources do you currently have in your setting? For example; Digital camera/iPad/torches/walkie talkies?
- Following the Digital Media training you have attended are there any resources you would like to use in your setting?
- Following consultation with the children in your setting, what ideas for resources did they have?
- For those settings taking part in the Digital Media Project – please identify your top 3 items

What next? –

Since the project and the sharing event we have continued to use the resources within our everyday practice, the children will ask for specific items if they cannot see them out, we especially like camera at the minute as see the photos and films is very funny!

We are pleased we were able to be involved and glad we opened up our thinking to include Digital Media.

Many Thanks to Leicestershire County Council- Early Years Team

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