

providing increased opportunities for online collaboration and creativity. The group has found that communication via the internet is often the most efficient and immediate form of dialogue and one that appears to suit many young people. In **November** we attended the launch event at the Tate of the Manifesto for a Creative Britain. Inspired by this idea, we have also prepared a collaborative **Manifesto for a Creative Tallis**, which attempts to summarise our thinking so far about creative learning. We hope to consult a range of stakeholders about the statements in the Manifesto so that it can be adopted as an important feature of the School Development Plan and become a vehicle for change. Further information about the work of the group is contained below.



Also in November, JN and PD visited two new schools in Denmark where creativity, in different ways, has been embedded into the school culture. A report was written for the Leadership Team outlining the key findings and making recommendations for change. These included:

Re-state the values and educational philosophy of the school.

Do all students understand them? Do all parents?

Do staff members understand and agree with them?

If not, how do we tackle this?

Discuss how we can put our newly re-stated values and philosophy into practice? How do we encourage reflective practice?

How do we promote more collaborative learning (both between members of staff and between staff and students)? How can the curriculum, the organisation of learning spaces and school day be better co-ordinated to facilitate creative learning?

Re-think the learning and teaching strategy for our new school. Set up a timeline with certain markers so that all staff and students are ready for our refreshed approach.

Create a New Technologies strategy to enable the realisation of our vision for learning and teaching. Is ICT a subject? How should the ICT curriculum be delivered in the future?

Develop a coherent plan for supporting the local community so that Tallis becomes an active learning hub, responsive to local needs.

Organise a series of benchmarking visits to schools engaged in next practice research through the DCSF Innovations Unit.

In **December**, The SSC group responsible for change management with regard to creative learning organised a whole staff meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to inform colleagues about consultation to date and encourage them to identify ways in which previous recommendations for promoting creative learning could be turned into actions. The Creative Tallis ARG assisted in presenting information to the staff. The resulting 12 statements were then collated by the SSC team and fashioned into 4 actions. These are:

STRUCTURES

Present a range of models of alternative timetable and curriculum structures (including class sizes) to the staff for further consultation at some point this year

RESOURCES

Conduct a survey of all staff “What would you like to do with all kinds of ICT that you are currently not able to do?” in order to create a strategy for the more effective distribution of ICT resources

PEDAGOGY

Gather information on KS3 audit from DG to analyse responses to the new national curriculum with a view to facilitating further training opportunities for staff

Co-ordinate a programme of InSeT on contemporary pedagogies for the whole staff

The first of these actions was attempted by the Leadership Team but a change to the school day proposed for September 2009 failed to get the necessary support required. The second action requires the collaboration of the line managers for ICT. A proposal to test the new email system might be an effective way to conduct this survey. The third set of actions is ongoing and is partly co-ordinated by the Future Foundations Action Research Group.

Later in December, a whole day conference took place entitled “Creative Communities” with our arts college partner schools, reflecting our commitment to sharing the benefits of our School of Creativity status. The event was documented by Eelyn Lee Productions. A **blog** was established to help facilitate sharing of best practice within the network. programme of projects is emerging with each of the schools this year based on discussions at the conference. The first of these has taken place at Horn Park School. A further project is planned with hard to



reach young people based on The Ferrier in the early part of the summer holidays. Created again with Eelyn Lee Productions, and collaborating with Greenwich Youth for Christ which has a drop-in facility in Telemann Square, the project aims to provide a media toolkit for participants as they map the existing estate and think about its future.

In **January** we hosted a visit by 20 Danish educators interested in our use of new technologies for learning, with a particular focus on creativity. Speakers at this event included JN, HW, DL, Tom Dennison White, Sam Murray and artist Nick Cattermole. Topics covered included the front end of the school website, Tallis TV and Tom Tom, multimedia learning in the DSC and sound technology.

In **February** we received a visit from Mike Peters, our national SoC adviser. A report was produced (see attached) outlining his observations and recommendations for development. He suggests the following points as a focus for the next visit in June:

Student engagement in SoC – leadership, implementation, monitoring and review of creative learning

Assessment and evaluation of creative learning across the school

Progress on outward leadership event

Coaching as a model for promoting creativity

Impact of creative learning strategies, particularly at KS4

Mapping use of external practitioners

Project outcomes for 2008-9. Plans for following year.

JN and DL attended a “Hot Group” event at 11 Million to be consulted about this year’s Shine Week plans. It is likely that there will be considerable media interest in Tallis this year. Shine Week plans are underway, an initial meeting with key players has already taken place with more to follow. The annual staff conference featured several workshops related to creative learning. These included: John Riches’ session on young people’s access to learning via the internet and the impact of new technologies on cognitive ability; Elli Narewska and Roopa Vyas’ session on creative writing for a real audience; various physical activities including sword fighting and acro-balance with Lisa Sproat; Zek Hoeben (Fortsimere School) on new



technologies, Web 2.0 and virtual learning environments; and Kerry Gibson’s 3D evaluation activity.

March saw the innovative **Living Cinema** event in the Drama Studio in partnership with Eelyn Lee Productions, Netribution and the Technologies Strategy Board. This event included a mixture of video projections, live music, a three course meal and discussion on the themes of community, change and creativity. An audience of teachers, students, parents/carers, local community members and media

industry professionals were invited and the evening provided us with an opportunity to rehearse some of the features of our planned “Food for Thought” SoC event in the summer term. Feedback from the evening was very positive and a report has been published by Nic Wistreich, the director.

JN and HW attended a conference entitled “Creativity and the Creative School” at Corsham School in Wiltshire on Tuesday 10th March. Several other visits have taken place to a range of institutions including PFI schools in Ealing and the new RSA Academy in Tipton.

The Creative Tallis ARG visited Rivington Place on 30 March in order to see an exhibition of interactive digital art and to plan a SoC event for the summer term. A decision was made at the meeting to begin the process of registering the students for the Silver Arts Award based on their responsibility for curating the planned event. Their first task was to write a review of the exhibition. They have since begun the process of discussing the nature of the event via the blog and meeting practitioners with whom they will collaborate. We are in discussions with Kat Joyce and the Tangled Feet Theatre Company about a possible week long residency in late **June** featuring an interactive, site specific performance of an improvised play entitled “Home”:



Whether home is a mansion, a shack, or a tent, we all strive to protect the place of safety that we've created. Is home a place, a language, a network of people, or a four-walled structure? How fragile is the membrane between home and the rest of the world?

The annual Fashion Show is now firmly embedded in the school's calendar and provides an opportunity for some intensive cross-curricular learning for students across the years. Last year, the event was co-ordinated by a committee of students and was even more ambitious in scope and the integration of media technologies. Some criticism of the event was received from teachers who felt that issues surrounding the ethics and sexual politics of the fashion industry had not been addressed directly. It was also clear that many people had failed to understand the nature of the learning that had taken place behind the scenes. As a result, a group of post 16 Art & Design students visited the London College of Fashion in March to meet Professor Helen Storey and some MA students on the ethical fashion course. As a consequence, this year's show will attempt to deal with environmental issues more directly through the use of recycled and hand made clothes. reference will also be made to “Wonderland”, both in the sense of the world of the imagination and the Helen Storey project of the same name which explored the concept of biodegradable dresses. We are also intending to document aspects of the show's creation so that this element of the learning process for students can be communicated more effectively to the audience.

The first Year 7 cross-curricular learning day took place in **April**, co-ordinated by DG and featuring a huge variety of activities exploring the dual themes of healthy lifestyles and connections. Students could elect to take part in a variety of sessions both on and off site. Some lasted an hour; others a whole day. Participants recorded the acquisition of new skills and aptitudes and responses to the day have been largely positive.

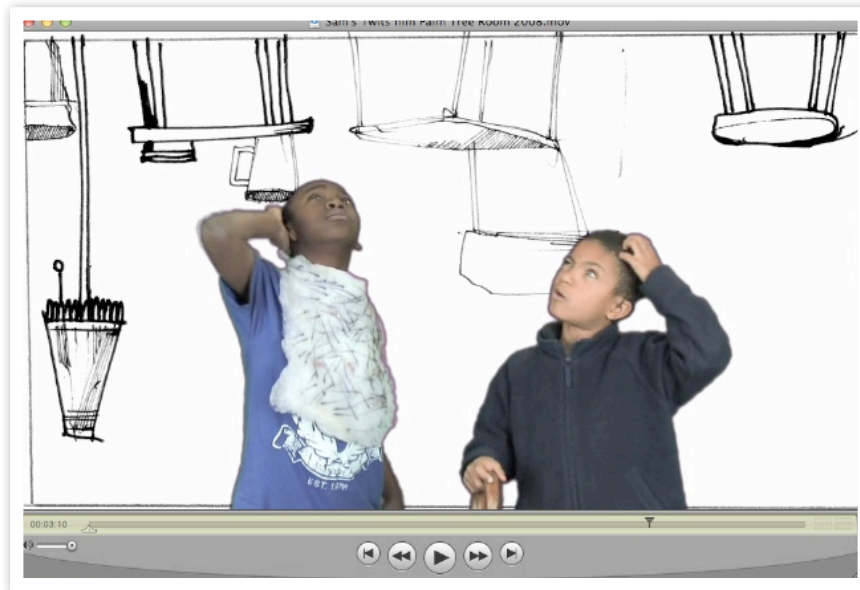
JN, DL, HW and others are in the process of writing a Media and Digital Literacy strategy document outlining a vision for future development at Tallis. We expect the document to be available for consultation in the second half of the summer term.

HW has been successful in obtaining significant external funding to support a collaborative project entitled “Deaf Create”. The rationale for the project includes the following:

To create a pathway from early years to post 16 education to enable students and staff to develop their use of new media to support learning

To use new media to develop resources and teaching to make the curriculum more accessible for deaf students

To share and develop expertise in new media between different support bases in the Deaf Advisory Service



To allow access to technologies that develop student independence, communication skills and enhance student self-esteem

To record and share learning and resources more effectively among students, parents, teachers and community groups

Michael Shaw, artist in residence, has been working with various groups of sixth form students during their enrichment time on Wednesday afternoons. They are exploring strategies for the creation of temporary conceptual art works that respond to the school building. These works will appear, unannounced, throughout the summer term and will help to animate a range of public spaces. So far, works have included: concrete sound pieces installed in bins and false ceilings, chalk shadow tracings in the concourse and car park and a 3D thread drawing. Mike has proposed to install one of his interactive motion sound sculptures in school during Shine Week.

Beginning on 6th **July**, Shine Week will provide a fantastic opportunity to co-ordinate a variety of innovative events designed to draw attention to the relationship between talent and creativity. Ideas so far include:

A production of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” at a local farm

Year 12 Theatre in Education performances for local primary schools

A Fashion Show entitled “Wonderland” featuring surreal, couture inspired clothes in partnership with Professor Helen Storey and LCF

A KS5 film showcase

An Olympics Enterprise Day

Challenges

We face several challenges in further developing our role as a School of Creativity. These can be summarised as follows:

- How do we provide opportunities for more young people to lead on developments in creative learning?
- How do we establish a shared sense of the value of being a School of Creativity amongst staff and students?
- How do we encourage all learners (students and teachers) to take advantage of new technologies for learning?
- How do we measure the impact of creative learning strategies?
- How do we better engage parents and the local community in contributing to our development as a School of Creativity?
- How can we contribute to the national debate about creative learning?

Recommendations

The Creative Tallis Action Research Group would like to make the following recommendations to the Leadership Team:

- We believe that students should be engaged in the process of assessing their own and others’ creative learning. This can be achieved using a variety of strategies including: lesson observations (for which appropriate training could be given and a suitable scheme of assessment devised); self-assessment across the curriculum integrated into a PLTS framework; self-assessment during cross-curricular learning days. We would also like to see the evaluation of creative learning strategies become part of the existing lesson observation process so that we are able to gather useful information about good practice and disseminate this both in and outside school.
- We would like to see the inclusion of student representatives on all future employment interview panels.
- Students should be given responsibility for assisting the school in devising new learning activities and providing feedback about the existing curriculum. For example, faculties, departments and year teams could invite groups of students to provide feedback at specially arranged meetings, via questionnaires or online using either Tallis Talk or a web forum. The Leadership Team may decide that a Student Learning Council could assist in providing specific feedback about new learning initiatives.
- We would like an audit of current access to and awareness of new technologies for learning. We believe that this is an important step towards improving the situation in the new school and providing all learners with appropriate 21st century tools. In addition, we would like regular opportunities for students and members of staff to share skills and knowledge.
- We would like to submit a draft “Manifesto for a Creative Tallis” to the Leadership Team for consultation. We feel that this document could be useful in sharing an understanding of the value of creative learning in the context of whole school development.

May 2009

Food for Thought – A Brief



Introduction

Thomas Tallis School was designated one of thirty national Schools of Creativity in 2008. The school has appointed a Creative Agent, John Riches, to help develop its role and is committed to promoting creative learning both in school and with its partners in the local community. A team of staff and students, the Creative Tallis Action Research Group, has been partly responsible for the development of the school's status. The group has used a blog (<http://creativetallis.blogspot.com>) as a vehicle for communication and collaboration and to investigate a range of web based resources for learning. Students members of the group are currently working towards an Arts Mark Award based on their contribution to the development of an innovative project or series of projects to take place this summer. One of our concerns is how to better engage parents in the process of developing Tallis as a School of Creativity.

In March 2009, the school hosted an event entitled "Living Theatre" in collaboration with Eelyn Lee Productions, Ntribution and the Technology Strategies Board. Parents, teachers, students, members of the local community and professionals from the creative industries were invited to an evening of live video projections, a three course meal, a performance by the Bollywood Brass Band and discussion about the themes of creativity and change. Members of the Creative Tallis group assisted the musicians and helped behind the scenes to make the evening a success. The event proved to us that there is considerable scope for further surprising interventions in school life as a way of provoking debate and questioning some of our assumptions about what a school is and can achieve.

Food for Thought

We are now in a position to offer a week long residency to **Tangled Feet** later this summer to develop a series of site specific interventions at Thomas Tallis School, in collaboration with various members of the school community, in order to further experiment with notions of time, place and belonging. We are keen to explore our collective understanding of words like "learning" and "school". We would like to utilise as much of the site as possible, engaging audiences in a variety of ways and employing the element of surprise. We are excited by the ways in which stories can be told in non-linear ways and would like the experience of engaging with a variety of performances and installations to be like a computer game in which you discover the rules by playing it. We would like to explore a range of artistic strategies including drama and movement, photography, sound and video, installation and performance and engage with a range of disciplines. These might include notions of mapping and psychogeography, philosophy, psychology, language and mathematics, for example. The interdisciplinary and cross-curricular nature of creativity is central to our mission. Food is also an important element of community and culture and so we would like to end the week with some kind of feast which draws in a range of stakeholders both as audience and participants. We are alert to the potential of developing an even more ambitious project for next year which fully celebrates the history of creativity at Thomas Tallis School prior to our move to a new school building in January 2011.

Dates

Our preferred dates are: 29 June to 3 July.

Budget

The total budget for the residency is £6000 (excl. VAT). In addition, we are able to provide considerable in-kind support including technical support (sound, video, ICT) and student volunteers.

MANIFESTO FOR A CREATIVE TALLIS



Thomas Tallis School is a national School of Creativity. It has a proud history of supporting creativity and innovation. This manifesto is a clear statement of intent about the future priorities of the school. It will form the basis for ongoing development of creative learning and will become part of the set of entitlements for all learners.

1. We believe that challenging, open-ended learning activities promote creative thinking. We recognise that creative learning embraces risk and that the process is often more relevant than the product.
2. We believe that students and teachers should have regular opportunities to exchange skills and knowledge.
3. We believe that students should have opportunities to re-present their learning in a variety of ways that best suit their skills and interests and we are committed to providing access to new technologies for learning.
4. We encourage all learners to be inquisitive and take responsibility for their own learning.
5. We support students as co-creators of learning and provide them with regular opportunities to assess the quality of their learning experiences in school.
6. We encourage our students to develop transferable skills through a structured approach to personalised learning.
7. We engage parents, our learning partners and members of the local community in a dialogue about creative learning.
8. We believe that all learners are entitled to become effective communicators and collaborators.
9. We engage all learners through our understanding of multiple intelligences.
10. We are committed to creative and cultural entitlement for all learners.
11. We monitor the effectiveness of creative learning strategies and share our observations and ideas in order to improve provision.
12. We actively celebrate the creativity of all learners.