

darts



Teacher Case Study

Inspiring Leaders, Creative Learners

Inspiring Leaders, Creative Learners – A Teacher's Journey

Jozie Duckitt – Lakeside Primary

Programme Background

Inspiring Leaders, Creative Learners is darts' partnership with the Rose Learning Trust and nine primary schools, funded for its first two years by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Teacher Development Fund. The programme supported teacher development and pupil learning through co-delivered creative lessons and dedicated CPDL at The Point.

Across 1,198 creative sessions, teachers experienced major increases in confidence, creative practice and willingness to take risks. All participating teachers now use more creative techniques and have seen improvements in pupils' confidence, collaboration and information retention. The programme also influenced whole-school culture, with Headteachers adapting assessment approaches, embedding creative topics and establishing a Creative Champions model.

It created a strong cross-school network through whole-cohort CPDL days, sustained artist-teacher collaboration and regular Trust-wide leadership meetings, with this community continuing through the new Creative Champions who meet each half term.

Inspiring Leaders, Creative Learners strengthened professional relationships, built pride and confidence among teachers and demonstrated how creativity can meaningfully transform teaching and learning when embedded through long-term, collaborative CPDL.

Jozie's Story

Jozie has been a Year 1, 2 and EY teacher for 10 years at Lakeside Primary School and remembers how she felt at the very beginning of Inspiring Leaders, Creative Learners. She describes herself as terrified and completely out of her comfort zone. Everything she taught was scripted and tightly structured and the idea of working creatively felt impossible.

"I did not know how to react. I was scared,"

She could not have imagined how different her teaching would feel now.

Her turning point came at parents' evening. Parents kept telling her that their children knew so much and were remembering more than ever before. It was the first moment she realised how much creative learning had changed things.

“It was proof! They had retained so much more.”

From there, her confidence grew quickly. Her classroom shifted into a place where, in her words, every child is engaged and switched on. The introduction of a floor book has opened up lessons, making space for imaginative thinking without the pressure of writing everything down.

Jozie has noticed a real move towards passive learning since the pandemic and feels this programme has helped reverse that. She teaches a class with four pupils with SEND and eighteen pupils who speak English as an additional language. Creative lessons bring them all in straight away.

“Even the quiet ones who never put their hand up are now excited to answer”

She talks warmly about working with darts artist Emma Liversidge and how the whole class lights up when she arrives.

“The difference in their attention is amazing.”

One of the most valuable things Emma taught her was how to link her learning through the whole school so that creativity did not stay confined to one class. Strategies from Inspiring Leaders, Creative Learners are now embedded across Key Stage 2 at Lakeside Primary. The school's Education Lead has fully embraced the approach after seeing that it works. For Jozie, this wider impact has been powerful.

“It is not just my classroom that has changed. The whole school sees the difference.”

The second year of the programme was especially important to Jozie. She says that Emma helped her see herself in a new way.

“She made me realise I am a good teacher. She would say: ‘your future self is going to do this’.”

That belief stayed with her. Jozie now leads training in school using what she has learned, and all adults across the trust are involved. She has gone from saying no to every challenge to team teaching at Rotherham's Grimm and Co in front of one hundred people.

“I would still be the person saying no if it was not for Inspiring Leaders, Creative Learners.”

She tells other teachers that if they feel unsure, they should take part anyway.

“If a darts artist asks you to do something, believe in them. They will bring something out of you that you never knew you had.”

From fear to confidence, from scripts to creative freedom, Jozie's experience captures the heart of this programme. She describes it simply as amazing and says it has changed everything about the way she teaches and the way her pupils learn.

To ensure that darts can maintain this powerful impact, [donate here](#).

