

## St Brigid's Special School Mullingar

### CASE STUDY

**St Brigid's provides a service to students between 4-18 years old, whose primary descriptor is a Mild or Moderate General Learning Disability, in the Midlands for over 30 years.**

**' We aim to provide a learning environment, in which each student is happy, secure, motivated, sensitively challenged, appreciated and fulfilled '**

Creative Associate  
Caroline Conway  
Creative Coordinator  
Judith Jennings



## Why it worked

Whole School buy-in

Keep it Simple – don't make unattainable Goals

Voice and agency of the students



# LISTENING TO VOICES & ACTING ON THEM

## THE LUNDY MODEL





**SPACE**

Everyone's voice is important. There are no wrong answers, and you don't have to join in. There is a safe and comfortable environment.

**VOICE**

We want it to be easy for participants to express their voice by giving information to help form an opinion and with multiple ways of answering. Talking, drawing, pointing etc.

**AUDIENCE**

We will all look at the responses, including teachers, students and CA, and talk about what our ideas are

**INFLUENCE**

What you say **DOES** matters. It will affect what the school decides to do.

# CREATIVE HABITS OF MIND

-  INQUISITIVE
-  COLLABORATIVE
-  PERSISTENT
-  DISCIPLINED
-  IMAGINATIVE

Finding out new stuff

Doing things together!

Keeping going!

Getting better at it!

Thinking of great ideas!

## BROAD STROKES

Fun creative sessions to introduce broad concepts of creativity.

We broke it down into one question per session.



## What was the best creative thing you have ever done?

It is a good question to start a conversation around – it can be a really small thing or something more spectacular. It is important for them to talk about why it was good – was it because they were doing it together, did it make them feel proud, maybe it gave them some private enjoyment, did they like showing other people etc? It can be things they did in school or out of school.





**Introducing the range of what creativity can be**



# What do you like to do? You ✓ your three favourites

## Student surveys



MOSAICS



EXPERIMENTING



GARDENING



DANCING



Activity	Vote
63 Students participated	
Baking	32
Dancing	28
Singing	18
Drawing	18
Building/Gardening	14
Painting	13
Film Making	11
Experimenting	10
Acting	9
Designing/problem solving/Writing	6
Photography	5
Textiles/Mosaic	2



DESIGNING



WRITING



BUILDING



PAINTING



PROBLEM SOLVING



PHOTOGRAPHY



TEXTILES

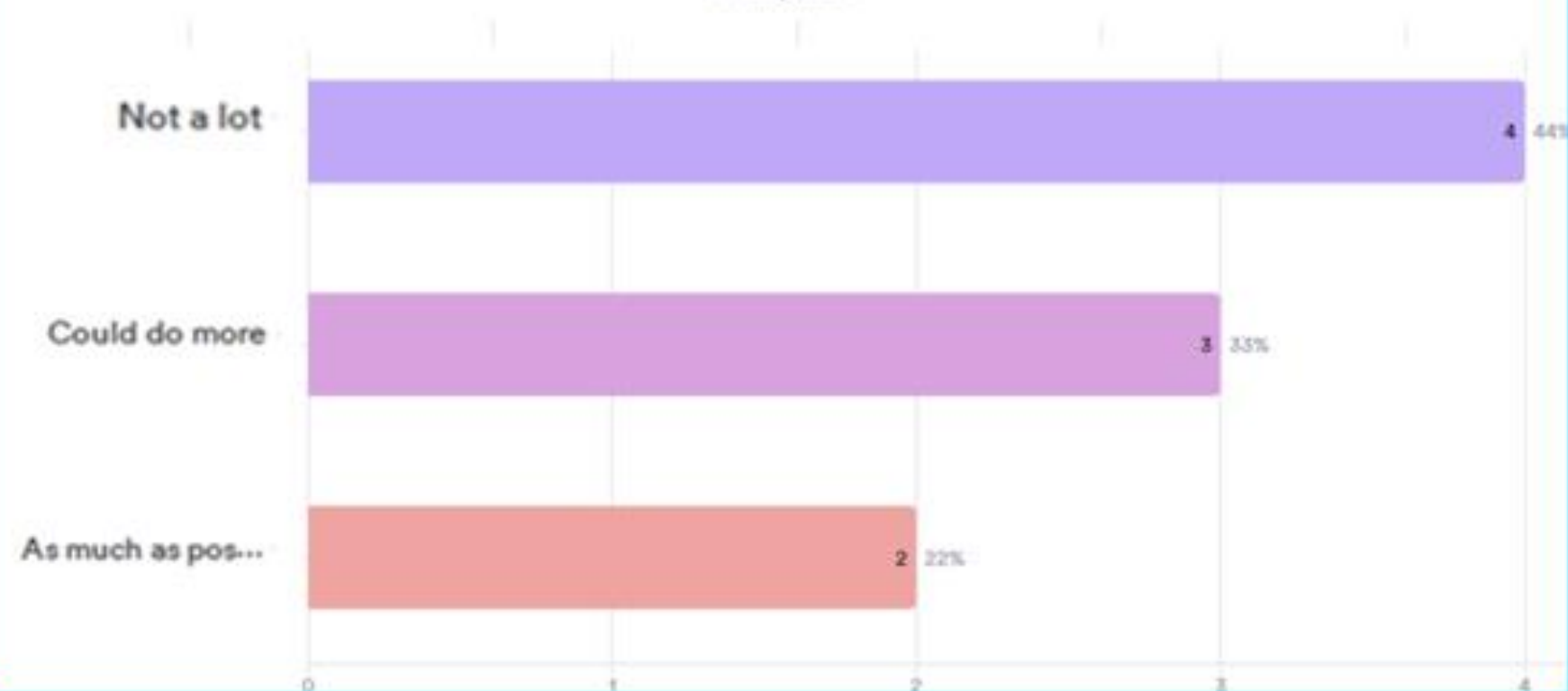


SINGING

## SURVEYS - Staff

How much do you engage with artists, cultural organisations and/or venues to support teaching and learning?

9 Responses



## Refining the results

St Brigid's had a starting idea that Creative Schools would be about the outdoor spaces.

It was now time to see how this could work with the creative priorities identified across the school.



Things they had already done

Your school is looking at the outdoor spaces as part of Creative Schools. We want you to think about what is important in these spaces. How do you use the space? How can this be a creative space? What ideas do you have? What could you do that could be added to every year? Here are some ideas to get you thinking!



# OUTDOOR COOKING



MUSIC – could you have music outside?



COLOUR – How could colour be added to your space?

BOUNDARIES



PATHWAYS

PERFORMANCE



What are your dreams for this outdoor space?



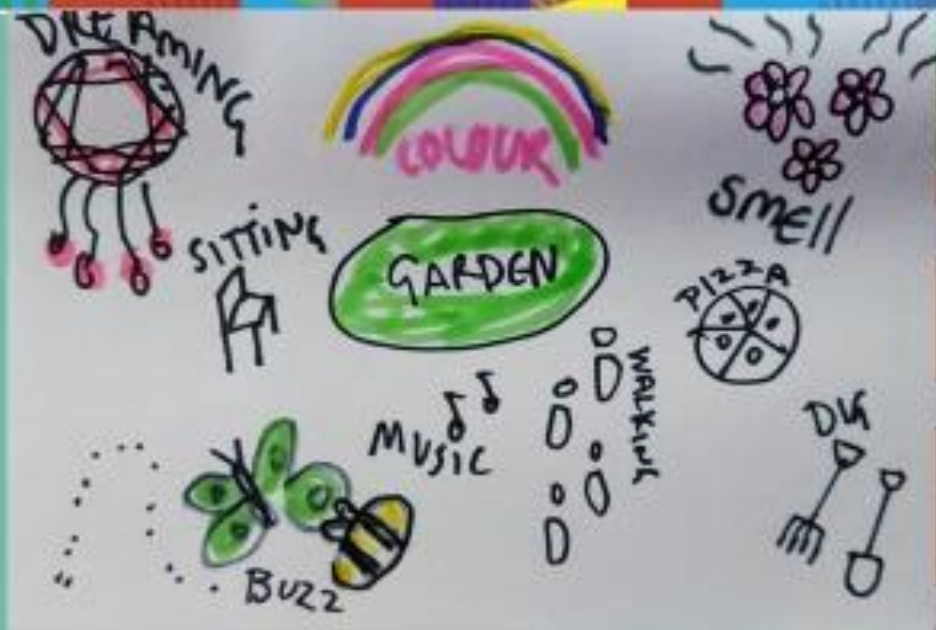
SNA 's mentimeter

What are your dreams for this outdoor space?

quiet area  
music wall water feature  
recyclable materials used  
theatre area love this id  
yoga meditation area  
gardening  
outdoor instruments  
murals

Teacher's  
mentimeter

solar fountains  
bio bio-sculpture outdoor  
maze relaxing area with water  
healthy eating videography and photograp  
weaving relaxing space  
wall art garden bas relief  
mosaics sculpture garden tree stump seats  
sensory musical garden  
playing instruments paint  
design





# Creative Schools

Kay Synott – Heritage in Schools



Gairdín  
na Scoile



 **HERITAGE  
IN SCHOOLS**

An **Education** Initiative  
The Heritage Council



By Kay Synott Heritage in  
Schools Expert

Working with a professional to put structure on the plan

## The Sensory Garden



Wellbeing through  
physical digging

**SOUND** – Stage, drums,  
music, wind chimes, music  
wall, grasses

**TASTE** – Herbs, vegetables,  
pizza oven

**SMELL** – lavender, herbs,  
scented plants, scented oils,  
cooking

**TOUCH** – reflexology path,  
hand prints, lambs ears

**SIGHT** – murals, everything!



Creative Schools



ARTIST INTRODUCTION

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CLEANNE MCLAUGHLIN



## Creativity and Wellbeing going hand in hand in Secondary Purple

This last term Secondary Purple are focussing on creative tasks that are both cross curricular and draw on prior learning. These activities are also encouraging students to work more independently and mindfully



## The Sensory Garden



**“ I can't believe I did this .... I am so proud of myself ”**



**Outdoor performance stage, music installations**

- ❖ Used maths to work out the area and perimeter – seeing the practical application
- ❖ Laid slabs for outdoor pizza oven
  
- ❖ Percussionist to help make a music wall





**CBS TY joint project – reflexology path through willow walkway**



**'We will be leaving a part of ourselves in the school'**





**“ You are not different even though everyone is different but that’s how you are. Everyone is treated the same, like you are normal.”**

**“ Staff will not give out they will try to solve the problem and sort it out ”**



## Creative Schools

Our Creative Schools Project is about creating a sensory garden to enhance the Wellbeing and creativity of the whole school community. As an end of year celebration we asked classes to create a piece of art, in any medium they liked, to represent the Five Senses.



## Creative Schools

The teacher understands our age group  
and listens to our voice  
Everyone is included together!  
Understands that each person has a  
different way of expressing themselves



Given self belief to students – one student  
is doing safe pass course after physical  
garden work – realised he could do it  
Creative schools has altered the way I talk  
to the students – there voice is important  
in everything





## **Judith Jennings**

The role of School Coordinator for Creative Schools has led to many benefits across the school community.

On a most basic level, it has transformed the space we are working in and has everyone thinking of how to represent the five senses in unique and safe ways,

However, more importantly, it has given students a greater voice as their creative ideas have been put to the fore.

Every student has participated in some activity and their work is seen all around the school.

I found my own students have developed greater confidence in problem solving as they realised it is part of the creative process.

It is wonderful to hear them talking in groups, figuring out what will and will not work.

Personally, I have found the process enlightening. I am looking at my teaching in a far more dynamic way, looking for creative solutions and looking for ways to elevate the student voice. There is a freedom that comes with creative activity that enables you to explore different possibilities, that ultimately transforms teaching and learning and leads to a harmonious classroom where all are reaching their potential

**'We are behaving differently now'**

**Student Council 100% student led  
picked Musical Theatre for activity**

**Confidence to put Creativity at the  
heart of School Planning**

