

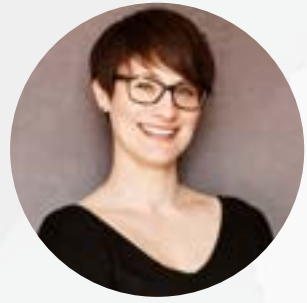


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The New Curriculum:

A Creative Vision for
Primary Learning

A Message from Tilly, Our CEO



Hello, I'm Tilly, the CEO of **now>press>play**. As someone who has spent years immersed in the world of education, I am constantly inspired by the power of creativity to transform the classroom experience. It's this passion that drives everything we do – and it's why I wanted to share this paper with you.

Our vision at **now>press>play** is to make every child's learning matter deeply to them. We believe that education should go beyond facts and figures; it should spark curiosity, foster empathy, and stay with children long after the lesson ends. This paper reflects that belief and explores how creative approaches can reshape learning for the better.

To create this, we collaborated with educators and specialists who share our enthusiasm for what education can become. Their insights have not only informed the direction of **now>press>play** but also highlighted the incredible possibilities ahead when creativity is placed at the heart of learning.

I hope this paper inspires you to dream big about what education can achieve. Together, we can ensure every child has the chance to live their learning – **to go there, to do it, and to feel it.**

Warm regards,
Tilly
CEO, **now>press>play**

In response to the Labour Government's call for a "rich and broad, inclusive and innovative" curriculum, we've gathered insights from senior leaders shaping a future where creativity takes centre stage. Their reflections offer a glimpse into how creative approaches are transforming learning, sparking curiosity, and empowering both pupils and teachers.

This collection highlights practical strategies and bold aspirations for embedding creativity into primary education. From harnessing new technologies to fostering cross-curricular projects, these leaders envision a curriculum that inspires, engages, and equips pupils for the modern world.

Hopes for the New Curriculum

"A curriculum that is truly representative of all voices and experiences ensuring inclusivity and diversity in its content. When children see themselves represented, they feel valued and inspired which encourages greater creativity and investment in their learning. Creativity comes in many forms but the current national curriculum is so rigid it often stifles these opportunities. A more flexible framework could allow for a broader range of creative expression and engagement.

Unlikely but we can dream: A greater equilibrium between creative subjects like drama and art and the core subjects in the national curriculum. Creativity deserves to sit alongside English and math in terms of importance and time allocation. I would also love to see a better balance between traditional physical writing, which remains vital, and teaching touch-typing skills to prepare students for the digital demands of modern life."

- **Kyrome Adams, Senior Director of Primary, The Halifax Academy**



"I envision more open-ended tasks and fewer rigid frameworks. Policies that encourage teachers to adapt and innovate in their lessons would be beneficial. While it may seem like a pipe dream, collaborative training sessions on creativity could make this achievable."

- **Chris Dyson, Deputy CEO, Create Trust**



“The government is talking about injecting creativity (plus oracy, digital skills, life skills) while simultaneously making it abundantly clear that they fully support the current ‘knowledge-rich curriculum’. To expect primary school teachers to deliver creativity as an ‘additional sprinkling’ on top of their enormous workload and expectations is unfeasible. Creativity in the classroom (plus the other skills) will not be realised without a top-to-toe re-imagining. Schools need to leverage creativity in ways which will be useful in the 21st century workplace: for example, abandoning the teaching of subjects in silos (an hour of literacy in the morning), but instead having children collaborating on creative projects which span multiple academic disciplines and life skills. Many primary schools already deliver excellent versions of this (even the ‘old-fashioned’ teaching via topic is a step closer to this), and I hope this best practice will be used.”

- **Oscar Wood, Co-founder, now>press>play**



Investing in Creativity: You're given £100,000 to foster and nurture creativity, what do you spend it on?

“First, I would invest in creating more spaces within alternative provisions to better meet the diverse needs of our students. Schools often struggle to meet these needs and additional support structures are essential.

Second, I would tackle digital poverty by ensuring every child has access to reliable technology and Wi-Fi at home. The digital divide is more than an inconvenience - it's a barrier to learning and participation in modern life. A few years ago, I would have immediately said books which are still essential. However, the gap between those with access to proper technology and those without has a far-reaching impact on education, opportunity and future success. £100,000 is not enough, but it's a start!”

- **Kyrome Adams**



“I’d prioritise hiring creative specialists (like artists and musicians) for workshops, refurbishing spaces for collaborative projects, and acquiring resources like art supplies and technology. Establishing a fund for pupil-led creative initiatives could empower students and give them ownership of their learning.”

- **Chris Dyson**



“Exciting.....Some ideas.....if only

1. **Technology and Digital Tools:** Equip classrooms with the latest technology and digital resources.
2. **Creative Workshops and Programmes:** Organise workshops and programs that focus on various creative disciplines, such as music, drama, art, and design.
3. **Flexible / Agile Learning Spaces:** Redesign classrooms and other learning spaces to be more flexible and conducive to creative activities.
4. **Professional Development for Teachers:** Develop professional development programmes that help teachers learn new creative teaching approaches and strategies.
5. **Creative Resources and Materials:** Purchase a wide range of creative resources and materials, such as art supplies, musical instruments and maker kits.
6. **Enrichment Activities:** Fund enrichment activities that promote creativity, such as school clubs for aspects of art, music, drama, dance and digital technologies.
7. **Community Partnerships:** Establish partnerships with local arts organisations, museums and businesses to provide students with real-world creative experiences and authentic learning opportunities.”

- **Lady Kirsty Grundy, Principal & Primary Director,
Shireland Technology Primary**



“I would spend it on spectacular theatrical performances, based on the project-based learning taking place in each year group. The money would be spent on visiting specialists who’d devise the shows with the children, so that teachers do not have to do this work: a creative director (who also controls the budget), musicians, designers, digital programmers and so on. For example, Year 5 singing and dancing their way through a story about evolution, with a projected backdrop (90s screensaver-style) which morphs according to a code they’ve written, corresponding with the changing of human DNA over time. Reception acting out a self-penned story about helping in the community (except everyone’s a sea creature, as that was their theme), alongside a stop-motion animation of their water-marbled jellyfish they made earlier that term. Children need to take pride over their creativity, link it inextricably to their learning, and then share this with their caregivers, the community and the wider world.”

- Oscar Wood



Insights from Leaders:

“Across all our schools at Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust, we put creativity at the heart of the curriculum helping deliver and underpinning the skills and knowledge aspects. The Trust emphasises hands-on learning, connected thinking and real-world application to ensure that pupils not only meet national standards but exceed them in an engaging and meaningful way. The primary curriculum is driven by the core values of Excite, Explore, and Excel (E3L), which are interwoven into everything they do.

At Shireland Technology Primary, creativity is fostered through an innovative and authentic learning experience that is rich in the use of new technologies. The curriculum provides a range of purposeful and real-world learning episodes, or 'explores', which help bring learning to life. Technology is used to create exceptional learning experiences, allowing children to collaborate, problem-solve, and develop critical thinking skills. The school promotes the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' (Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creative and Critical Thinking) by providing children with rich and meaningful first-hand experiences through inspiring E3L themes. Additionally, the curriculum includes creative workshops working alongside external providers, such as digital music production, science-based music and eco workshops, which further enhance pupils' creative skills and engagement.”

- **Lady Kirsty Grundy**



“In a modern primary school, creativity should be infused into every aspect of learning. It's about fostering imagination, problem-solving, and critical thinking across all subjects.”

- **Martin Bailey, Director, Animate 2 Educate Ltd**



“I’ve worked in primary schools who take creative approaches, which some might imagine is too radical or impossible: every single child doing 75 minutes of music per day; handing over the entire school once every 10 days to drama specialists, who teach that day’s curriculum via theatre (while the teachers collectively do their PPA time from home!). These ideas should not be thought of as radical or unexpected, but rather ways in which children learn the curriculum effectively while building fundamental life skills.”

- Oscar Wood





Shaping a Creative Future

This collection of insights highlights the transformative power of a creativity-driven curriculum. By fostering innovation and inclusivity, we can create learning environments where every child thrives and their learning matters deeply to them.

Thank you to the leaders who shared their vision. Together, let's inspire a future where creativity takes centre stage in every classroom.

Warm regards,
The now>press>play Team



From Vision to Impact: Unlocking Creativity in Education

The ideas in this paper are a call to action. Creativity at the heart of the curriculum empowers every child to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

At **now>press>play**, we bring this vision to life through immersive audio experiences that spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and foster empathy — practical tools to reshape education and make every child’s learning matter deeply to them.



Fosters engagement and inclusion

Why does meaningful engagement matter?

When every child feels included and excited to learn, they believe in their potential and actively engage with their learning.



Deepens empathy and communication

Why should we care about empathy and communication in education?

Immersive storytelling helps children step into others’ shoes, sparking emotional connection and meaningful dialogue.



Supports academic performance

Why encourage academic performance?

By boosting literacy and retention, immersive experiences empower children to communicate confidently and succeed academically.

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