

# Smarter Spaces Project - SSAT and Dulux



Cuddington Croft  
Primary School

# Collating the design brief



## Our story...

We are a two-form entry Primary School with a nursery located in Cheam, on the Surrey/Sutton Borders, with approximately 480 pupils on role. Last year we chose to become an Academy, joining 'GLF Schools' MAT.

Children at Cuddington Croft **thrive** in a **caring** and **nurturing** environment where our pupils are **safe**, **happy** and **enjoy** school. We aim to promote **lifelong learning** through an **enriched curriculum**, which also provides many extra - curricular opportunities in sport, drama productions and music. We are proud of our pupils' **exemplary behaviour** and our **SATs results**, where our children achieve well beyond national averages .

Our last Ofsted inspection in 2012 rated us as a 'good' school however we aspire to provide an outstanding, broad and balanced curriculum which fulfils our vision:

**Inspire - Enrich - Succeed**



# Welcome to Cuddington Croft Primary School...





Our site currently comprises one main building which houses the majority of the school facilities, and one stand- alone building for classes of children in years 4 and 5. This is called 'The Adlington Building'.

We have worked very hard over the last year to reconfigure and develop the site so that we could join up parts of the building which had previously been separated and to **maximise the use of learning space** in doing so. We are already seeing the impact of this in that the school is now feeling much more of a cohesive team than previously, and the different key stages are no longer so segregated. Additionally we have developed previously unused 'dead' space to create a bright new library and breakout learning spaces which are **adaptable and flexible; enabling learning to take place in a new range of creative ways**. Furniture, storage and display spaces within these areas have been designed so that they are **accessible to the children** and can be **changed and adapted** by them, to **suit their learning needs**.



## Work we have already done: before...



A small and sometimes dangerous corner of the playground, and 'dead' space which was a walkway between classrooms have become our new library and breakout spaces.

## Work we have already done: after...



The School Council were part of the design team for these areas. These spaces are still 'evolving' and we hope will continue to do so alongside and complimentary to the Smart Spaces Project.



## Next steps and vision for the Smarter Spaces project...

The staff and children are enjoying using the new spaces, however the remaining part of the school is now left in contrast to these areas- particularly the Adlington Building where the year 4 and 5 classrooms are situated.

Our vision for the Smarter Spaces project is to re-design the communal spaces in the interior of this building so that they complement the rest of the work we have done in other parts of the school.

The key priority for this area and is **a bright, stimulating, and innovative space** which moves from being simply a thoroughfare or corridor, into an area where **learning continues** and **creativity is inspired**.



## The space to be re-designed:

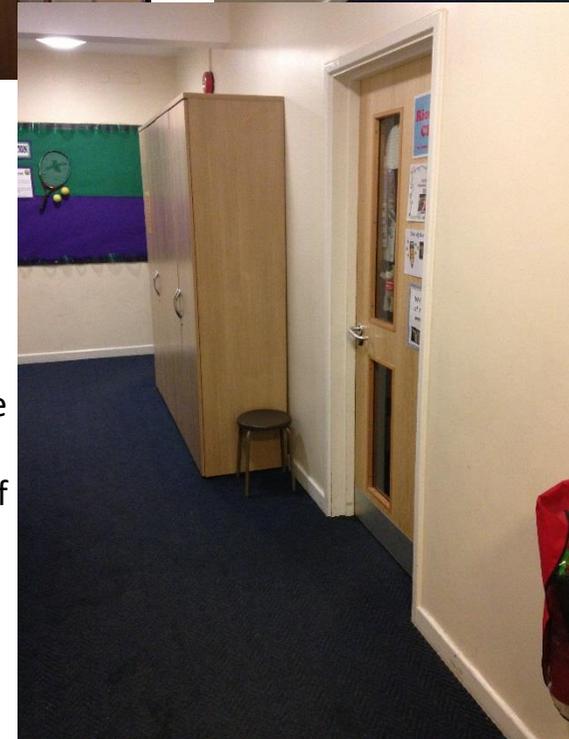


The entrance into the Adlington building which links to the rest of the school.

The internal space is a corridor linking four classrooms and two cloakrooms.



The lighting is harsh and functional, there are no windows and no source of natural light.





The space can become untidy as it is used regularly by over 100 children and their teachers; and is used for storage of lunchboxes and teaching resources.

## About us and how we learn...

The space we would like to redesign is used by two classes of year 4 children and two classes of year 5 pupils (approx. 33 pupils in each class), plus their teachers and teaching assistants.

Attainment and progress at Cuddington Croft Primary School is significantly above that of local and national averages. **Teaching is good** (with an increasing amount **outstanding**), however this now needs to be underpinned by **outstanding learning**. We aspire to achieve this through an **inspirational, innovative and creative curriculum** working in partnership with a **creative learning environment** which challenges that of the norm and provides enriching opportunities for all to excel. We aspire to equip our children with the skills to understand how they learn best, and to **lead their own learning in a creative way, making use of the environment around them.**



As a staff, we have identified that in order for our children to become outstanding learners they need to develop greater skills in **resilience**, **risk taking** and **creativity**; being willing to **embrace challenges** which are not presented in a conventional 'academic' form but which **stretches** their **thinking** in a range of new ways.

A 'typical' Cuddington Croft child is hard working, articulate and academic however a significant characteristic of many of our children is that they can be risk averse and have a dislike for things being 'incorrect' or an answer which cannot be sought in a procedural fashion which they are accustomed to. Life, however, will not always present problems which can be solved in a way which you have used before and this drives our passion to equip our pupils with a greater range of **skills** which will support their **lifelong learning**.

In response to this problem, the staff and pupils have all used 'Packtypes' ([www.packtypes.com](http://www.packtypes.com)) to help the children to develop a better understanding of their personal strengths and weaknesses and to identify how they learn best. This is a key priority on our current SDP. The design brief for the Smarter Space is that it, itself, becomes a vehicle to help children overcome these learning challenges and develop personal skills for learning and for life.



## Measuring and assessing the impact of the project...

As the lead practitioner, I will use 'Packtypes' to identify how different children approach and self assess their learning prior to and following the design project.

Personality and learning traits can be measured in a numerical format using this method, so it should be an effective way in which to show impact in a quantitative as well as a qualitative form.

## Pupil participation in the design and evaluation process...

The previous design project which was carried out in school was led by two members of staff in conjunction with the school council; however I will use 'Packtypes' to ensure that a new group of pupils is selected to form a design team which represent a cross section of personal and learning attributes across a range of pupils and ages.

## The Packtypes® Grid

The design group will be selected from a mixture of Packtypes as each will bring a different balance to the group through their individual strengths.

Each type will also have a preference for a different learning style, and therefore different design elements will appeal to them.

Each classroom in school has a displaying showing the makeup of Packtypes within that class.

New Ideas  
Risk Taking



HOUND



MASTIFF



TERRIER



POINTER

Facts  
Certainty

People  
Care



COACHDOG



RETRIEVER



GUARD DOG

Results  
Action



SHEEPDOG

A key component to the design group will be the children who fall into these areas (those most averse to risk) as they are likely to be most challenged by new and innovative concepts, and who highlight most strongly the skills we wish to develop across all our pupils.

## The design brief...

Our vision is for **learning to be everywhere** and all around the school environment; not to be confined to a classroom but to spill out into all areas of the school.

The 'corridor' areas of the building we are hoping to develop are currently purely functional and lacking in purpose, but our dream would be for them to be more than just passages in and out of rooms and for them to be **a learning environment** in their own right.

Our aspiration is to actively promote the concept that **learning takes places all the time and is all around us**; and opportunities for this are exploited through areas which may be unexpected- for example within corridors. Children are **inspired by** and **absorbed in learning** throughout their day in school, not just when they are in the classroom.



The 'smarter space' should **enable** children to be **active participants** in developing and **constantly evolving** an **inspirational, innovative and creative** learning environment. It should both **inspire** and **promote learning** and enable and encourage the children passing through this space to both showcase and **lead their own learning** using their surroundings.





The space to be developed is a functional corridor which links four classrooms and provides access to toilets and cloakrooms for over 100 children and 10 staff, so it is heavily used regularly throughout the day.

The interior of this building suffers from having **very little natural light** and therefore can feel **dark and uninspiring**. This is further highlighted by the contrast to other areas of the main building which have been part of the refurbishment project and are light, bright and attractive.

We would like to use some of the design ideas from the new areas to make the two buildings appear more **cohesive** and 'joined up' and because they have received positive feedback from the children, staff and parents on the positive look and feel of these new spaces.



## Initial design concepts...

A key priority for this space would be that it would be **bright** and **engaging** but would also be **adaptable** and **constantly evolving** in a way which would be **led by the children** themselves.

Learning space is at a premium in our school so we are constantly looking for innovative ways in which we can develop any spaces we already have. Following a visit to West Thornton Academy, we were inspired to **re-think our approach to the conventional concept of a learning environment** and have used some of these ideas within the areas we have already re-designed in the school.



## Building on existing features...

We would be keen to integrate some of the features we have used successfully in the other areas of the school such as **writeable walls** (using an enlarged chalkboard or whiteboard surface), **changeable display areas** where children could **promote their learning** and **share inspirational 'found' objects or ideas**, possibly also integrating **a 3D display space**, **inspirational quotes** or artwork.



## New concept ideas...



Storage moves beyond cupboards 'for teacher access only'; coloured lighting highlights resources which children self-select to support their learning and offer ideas to peers.



Lighting highlights a learning 'experience' or journey as you move through the space.

Light tunnels provide natural light in a dark space.

Recessed display, seating or storage areas make use of space through 'nooks' in the wall.



## Additional ideas...

- Instead of being afraid or embarrassed about mistakes or errors, pupils 'publish' these in a large scale collaborative way on a giant whiteboard wall or a graffiti-style 'editing' wall, celebrating and inviting others to contribute to help them find a solution to a challenge
- The corridor becomes a walkway or tunnel, leading you through a learning 'experience'; this could be achieved through an archway or shaped forms in the ceiling, feature lighting, choice of colours and textures
- The name 'corridor' is removed- replaced with something chosen by pupils e.g. 'learning zone'; barrier between classroom and this space is removed so that learning does not have an apparent beginning or end when entering or exiting a classroom
- An area for a mini library or 'inspiration zone' where pupils select and display objects or resources to inspire others
- Interchangeable colours or textures to suit mood, season or topic
- Enabling learning environment as used in EYFS practice is employed (display/ storage become one and the same)
- Incorporation of concepts and philosophy taken from the *Atelier* approach of Reggio Emilia: celebrate the aesthetic, embrace natural materials and light sources (inspiration previously which has already been used in new spaces within school).

Focused discussion questions for pupil design group...

## What inspires you?

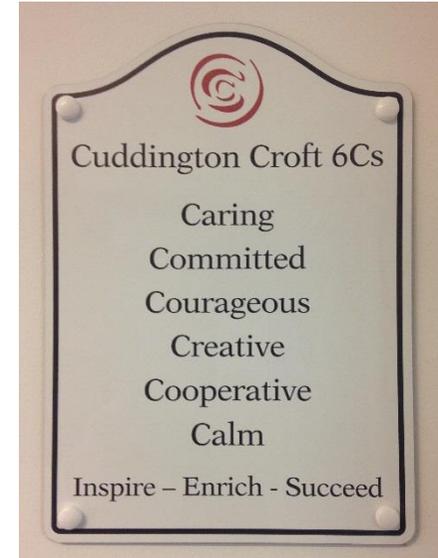
- Light?
- Texture?
- Lines?
- Shapes?
- Geometric/ curved?
- Bold/ soft?
- Matt/gloss?
- Reflectivity, glitter, shine?
- Colour?

**Children could be shown a range of colours, images, textures and forms (both natural and man- made), with discussion about the aesthetic qualities of each and what appeals most to them/ why**

## Functional considerations...

The following information should be considered as part of the design brief:

- Space for storage of lunchboxes
- Access for all children to move through the space at peak times e.g. break and lunch, lesson changes, disabled access (into and out of classrooms and cloakrooms)
- School values and ethos
- Practical access to light switches, electrical sockets and fire extinguishers
- Currently no sources of natural light



## References...

- [www.cuddingtoncroft.org](http://www.cuddingtoncroft.org)
- [www.glfschools.org](http://www.glfschools.org)
- [www.packtypes.com](http://www.packtypes.com)
- *In the Spirit of the Studio, Learning from the Atelier of Reggio Emilia*  
Gandini et al.



# Whole Class session structure (2-3 lessons)

- 1.The Brief**
- 2.And the survey says?**
- 3.Digging deep**
- 4.Putting it all together**



# Small group session structure

- 1.The Brief**
- 2.And the survey says?**
- 3.Digging deep to build**
- 4.Putting it all together**