3 Inquisitive
An enquiry approach

Establishing
The road ahead is becoming clearer and we're bringing everyone with us.

Enquiring
Learning through doing and reflection; understanding what works in our context.

Expanding
Feeling confident; although there's more to do to reach both breadth and depth.

Engaging
Signed up and looking forward to getting started, with some apprehension.

Exploring
Comfortable about being uncomfortable. This is new and challenging territory.

Embedding
Weaving it through everything until it becomes the way we do things around here.

Evolving
Each small step invites new thinking and new stakeholders in (including children).

Always invite explanations, thoughts, reasoning

invite to notice things
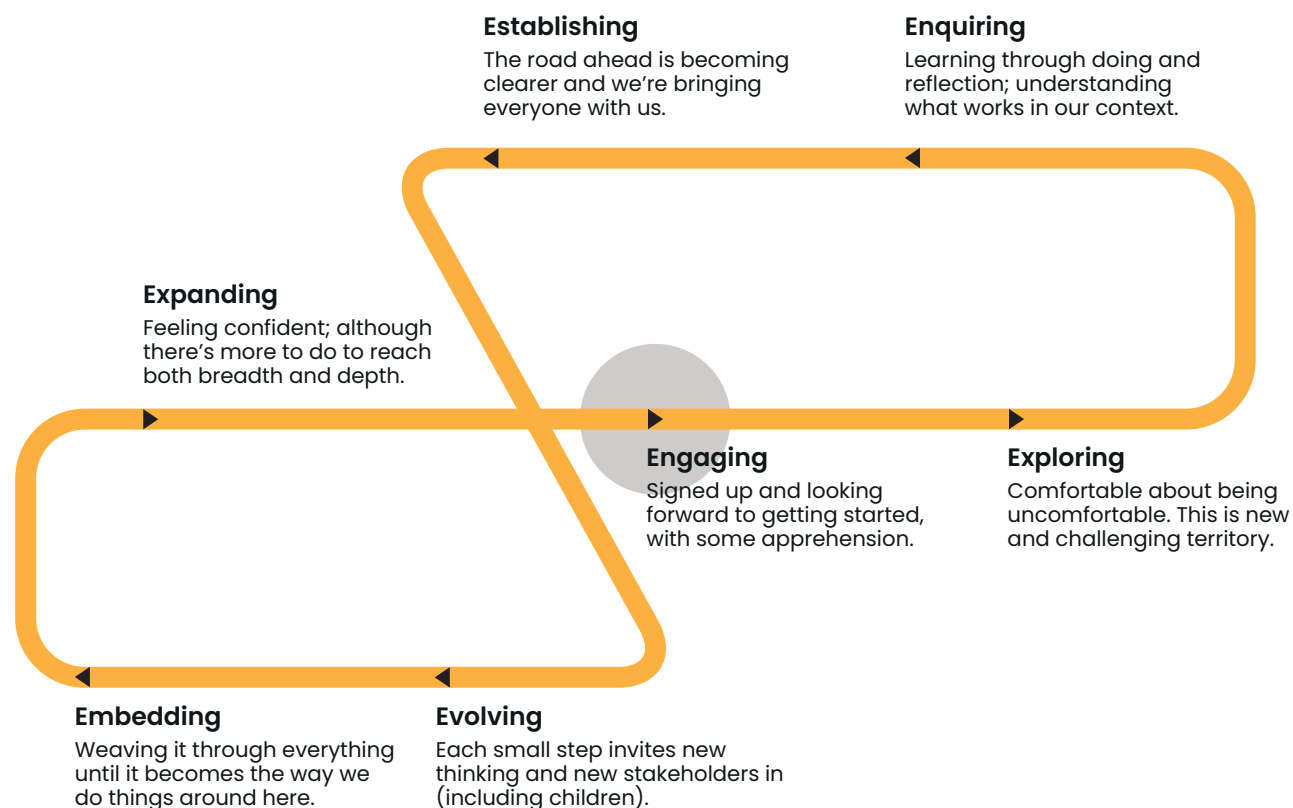
Each school moved through various stages of learning and levels of confidence (and back) during their time in the North East Creativity Collaborative. A definitive 'metro map' for how to teach for creativity in different contexts didn't exist for members, therefore we needed to embrace an experiential, dialogic and dynamic professional learning process.

Being inquisitive was a hallmark for each of the stages but the enquiry stage in particular, was a time for asking the difficult questions and experimenting with new ways of working. The case studies that follow are indicative of the distance each school travelled and how they put their inquisitiveness into practice.

Case studies
Cragside Primary School

Whole School Change at Cragside Primary School
A Roadmap to Creativity

This case study highlights the work that Cragside Primary School has undertaken in order to bring about whole school change when embedding creativity. It also shines a light on the importance of developing professional discourse and viewing schools themselves as professional learning organisations.

School Context
Cragside is a pioneering school that provides all children with an outstanding education. An education that:

• inspires and nurtures

• celebrates individuality and diversity

• equips every child to make a positive

    contribution to their community

An education that will change the world for the better.

Cragside Primary School is a vibrant community school situated a couple of miles out of the centre of Newcastle Upon Tyne, the local area is distinctive for its social, cultural and economic diversity. They currently have 418 children on roll out of a possible 420.

"Schools, in their structure and organisation can do more than simply reflect the society we have; they can try to be a precursor of the kind of society that we wish to have."
Gorard (2010)

Getting started: staff engagement in teaching for creativity

Over the past three years we've learnt that staff understanding of creativity and how this aligns with a school's ethos/vision is key when working towards system-wide organisational change and this initial phase takes time and space:

• time for staff to understand the inter-

   disciplinary nature of The Creative Habits

• time to reflect and share with colleagues

• time for staff to try out pedagogical approaches in their own classrooms

• time to feedback and learn from one another

For this to happen, staff require access to quality research and resources to support their creativity journey as well as the support of senior leadership to 'try things out' and permission 'to give it a go'. Making space during staff meetings and INSET days to enable professional discourse, dig a little deeper and reflect on classroom practice is pivotal too.

In this initial stage, a key moment for our staff was the realisation that creativity was not a huge entity that required us to radically change our approach to teaching and learning but was in fact about looking at our curriculum offer through a different lens, e.g. tweaking the way in which we use questioning in our classrooms.

It also made us look at what we are required to teach (National Curriculum). In doing so, we found that we were over-teaching content. This then allowed us to begin to strip back substantive knowledge in lessons which in turn created space for creativity to flourish. This of course is a work in progress and again takes time to develop.

Mapping out our journey

Embedding creativity is indeed a journey and is one that requires a clear roadmap – it will not happen by chance. This is where formulation of our theory of change comes into play: a plan of action that helped us as an organisation to better articulate the intermediate steps required to fully embed creativity across the school. This tool helped us as a school to evaluate our vision, set our primary goal and intermediate goals, and most importantly the interventions required to achieve this. Actions and outcomes in our theory of change then fed directly into our school development plan.

Distributed leadership within school

At Cragside, not only do we have two creativity leads but we also have a team committed to being 'pioneers' for creativity and this team has been carefully chosen to ensure that we have staff representation from each phase - EYFS to UKS2.

This has been particularly useful in driving forward creativity in classroom practice and has also meant that we have a range of perspectives on our team, allowing us to highlight promising practice in all year groups and learn from one another. As we all know, playfulness in Year 6 will look and feel very different to playfulness in Reception class.

Wider stakeholders

To allow whole school change to take place, genuine engagement across the entire community, including staff, pupils, governors, and families is key. At Cragside, termly meetings with governors have meant that we are able to share our practice

and update them on progress. Similarly, information/workshop sessions with families have served to raise awareness and deepen understanding of creativity and its place in our curriculum. We also use our website and weekly bulletin to highlight promising practice which demonstrates to the wider school community that creativity is the heart and spirit of our school.

References

Gorard, S. (2010). Education Can Compensate for Society – a Bit. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 58 (1), 47–65. jstor.org/stable/40962571