



Northern Saints Design Sprint

**St. Wilfrid's, St. Joseph's
and St. Bede's RC Colleges**

National Curriculum subject content

Cross-curricular: Project was based on developing independent thinking skills, teamwork development, idea creation, community links and problem solving, working across the Trust and in teams with different year groups and abilities.

Project Summary

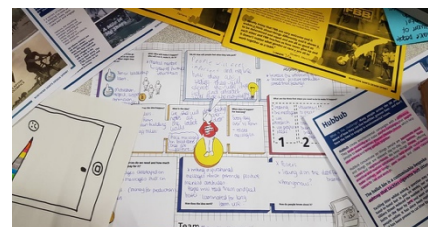
The Design Sprint had two aims. Firstly, for students to design 9 projects that aim to tackle one of the three topics; How Boys Learn and Achieve, Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Growing our Neighbourhood. Secondly, to create a space for teachers and students to experience and reflect on the skills and capabilities required for Project Based Learning. Over the week, Northern Saints embarked on a process of Project Based Learning for Social Change. Over five days, mixed teams from across all three schools and across year groups collectively defined challenges, found opportunities for innovation, and came up with brand new solutions to these real world challenges. Each of the 5 days were broken up into the following five stages and introduced students to a new way of working; Collaborating, Ideating, Relaxing, Prototyping, and Mobilising.

Skill development

- Teamwork and leadership skills
- Listening and feedback skills
- Working independently and in a group
- Developing a collaborative idea and creating a final product (interactive presentation)
- Communicating ideas to an external audience and presenting a final project outline
- Developing confidence and respect for others

Cultural capital

Students worked on the development of communication skills and social skills by collaborating with students and teachers from different schools within the Trust and different age ranges. Students were able to engage in challenges that directly affected them and offered them the space to do something about it. The creative processes also allowed those who struggle with other elements of the school system to find their form of contribution; for example, using Lego to describe abstract thought and embracing the ethos of 'no right answer'. The blend of different age groups would equate to a multitude of interpretations of activities and conversations spanning wider fields.



Gatsby Benchmarks

BM4: Linking curriculum learning to careers
 BM 5: Encounters with employers and employees
 BM 6: Experience of workplaces
 BM7: Encounters with further and higher education



Project activity and timescale

Initial Meeting	Design Sprint Day 1	Design Sprint Day 2	Design Sprint Day 3	Design Sprint Day 4	Design Sprint Day 5
Three chosen students, selected teachers and local employers attended an initial training meeting. Led by external facilitators	Collaborating: share thinking, ideas, and perspectives around social challenges. Led by external facilitators and supported by teaching staff	Ideating: collectively develop ideas and widen imaginations about what's possible to explore their challenge. Led by external facilitators and supported by teaching staff	Relaxing: let ideas 'percolate' and to create a reflective space for their learning to sink in Led by external facilitators and supported by teaching staff	Prototyping: test ideas in cheap ways in order to iteratively fail quick and learn fast from feedback and critical reflection. Led by external facilitators and supported by teaching staff	Mobilising: articulate learning and investigations into an exhibition and presentation that aims to energise an audience Led by external facilitators and supported by teaching staff

Launch event/ Final product and showcase

In the initial meeting, three chosen students worked with selected teachers and external employers to discuss how they could use a design process to tackle real-world challenges in their school contexts. These students then selected seven others from across the age and ability range at their school. During the Design Sprint (five days off timetable based at one school), the Design Team students collectively identified and articulated a social challenge they wanted to tackle. Students then reframed this challenge into an opportunity.

At the end of the five days, each Design Team built an exhibition showcasing their idea and also created a 5 minute presentation to mobilise the invited audience (made up of students, staff, leadership team, local community members, and parents) about the social impact their idea would create.

Project feedback

"Working with different schools created a clean slate to work with new people and encouraged all of us to take part"
(Student)

"Everyone has the opportunity to make change, you've just got to grab it when it's there. It's not only for others, but for yourself and knowing you've put something out into the world"
(Student)

"The lack of direct instruction allowed students to create their own processes and make sense of their own activities in ways that mattered to them."
(Facilitator)

Learning for next time

Feedback from PBL lead teacher:

- Teachers needed more ownership and involvement from the beginning. The projects would have benefitted from teachers co-constructing them alongside the students and facilitators, as this would have helped the teachers to continue the learning back into the classroom and help create a more sustainable, long-term impact. Not being co-architects meant that the teachers were unsure of what they could contribute or facilitate.
- One school being the base was a good idea in terms of giving the students a grounded base for the week, but in future all schools could take a turn.
- Issues brought up by teachers involved included:
 - Pace needed to be brisker to maintain engagement and motivation. There was a lot of sitting around, particularly on the “relaxing” day, which left students with no structure and no guidance.
 - Research time could have been increased, as students had excellent ideas and went home to do research, but were given limited time in the sessions to research. More research time would have led to more extensive project outcomes.
 - Teacher involvement needed to be increased. The process showed the importance of co-construction with teachers, students and facilitators taking equal parts.
 - A week off timetable was ambitious and some teachers were concerned about the impact on curriculum lessons. It also meant the students saw the process as a one-off, stand-alone project rather than something incorporated into their curriculum and with links to other areas.

The Trust has several ideas on how to develop and grow PBL across the schools and will use this project as a starting point for discussion and planning.

Useful links/resources/ideas

Northern Saints Catholic Education Trust

<http://www.northernsaintscatholiceducationtrust.org/>

Design Sprint resources are available online, such as this one by Google:

<https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/>

Resources relating to this specific project on our website.

General resources on our website: blank planning tools, links to useful websites, more case studies.

