Invitation to participate in a European project aimed at fostering creativity in early years science

Why creativity in early years science?

School in Europe today would benefit considerably from acknowledging and fostering the link between science education and creativity. There is increasing recognition of young children’s capabilities and the importance of early years education in building on early experiences and promoting knowledge and understanding, skills and dispositions. Interestingly, an inherent link seems to exist between creativity and science education. Science intrinsically involves inquiry and invention, which are triggered by curiosity, intuition, imagination, all of them elements closely related to creativity; it is also widely accepted nowadays that effective science education is based on inquiry, which can lead to wonderment, and is fuelled by curiosity.

Creativity has moved away from the traditional link with the arts to a focus on problem finding and problem solving. Motivation has an important role to play in creativity too.

In the teaching and learning of science, a more creative approach based on curiosity and inquiry would be beneficial, involving, for instance, opening up opportunities for children to raise questions, make decisions, and be able to take risks and unlock their creativity. Creativity, in this framework, is focused on generating and evaluating ideas and strategies in science.

There is on the whole consensus that any materials to be used by teachers should be designed in collaboration with them and with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in order to be relevant and have the maximum potential for impact. Collaboration between schools and higher education institutions not only improves initial teacher education but also contributes to school development and teachers’ professional development.

What is CEYS?

CEYS is an Erasmus+ funded partnership that is aiming to develop a teacher development course and accompanying materials, this could also be used in professional development to promote the use of creative approaches in teaching science in preschool and early primary education, in the frame of inquiry-based educational environments.

Participating teachers will take part in professional development workshops held in the 4 participating countries aimed at promoting the use of creative approaches in science teaching. They will have an opportunity to take part in curriculum development as co-designers in the iterative phases of development of the CEYS course, enhancing their ownership and thus facilitating their adoption of the approach though the use of action research.

Propose concrete training materials that can be used in teacher education for early years and primary teachers in order to foster their use of creative and inquiry-based approaches in science teaching.

Involve teachers as co-designers in the iterative phases of development of its interventions, sharing their ownership and thus facilitating their adoption.

Implement and validate a number of training activities at national and international levels with the scope to improve early years and primary teachers’ knowledge and skills.

Develop a systematic evaluation methodology in order to identify the impact of the proposed training process and materials in terms of both effectiveness and efficiency.

The CEYS project is funded by the Erasmus+ programme
What you can gain from participating in CEYS

- 5 days professional development and support focused on creativity in early years science education (travel costs will be covered)
- Opportunity to collaborate with the local CEYS project team and the other lead teachers
- Professional development and mentoring sessions from the CEYS team (including minimum of 2 visits to each lead school during the year)
- Opportunity to attend a summer school in summer 2016 to work with colleagues across Europe sharing their own practice and profiling the work undertaken in their school
- Opportunity to liaise and partner with teachers from 25 schools across Europe (in Greece, Belgium, Romania and the UK)
- Opportunity to actively participate in the development and validation of teacher education resources in close collaboration with key stakeholders

What your school can gain from participating in CEYS

- Support to enable the quality and efficacy of teaching science creatively to be raised across the school
- Opportunity to liaise and partner with some of the other 25 CEYS schools across Europe (in Greece, Belgium, Romania and the UK)
- Opportunities to liaise with CEYS project partners who are actively involved in a variety of EU-funded and national projects as well as a large network of schools
- Reports on the European project recognising the school’s contribution
- Support for schools that wish to participate in e-Twinning projects which promote school collaboration in Europe through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- High profile and publicity as part of the CEYS project nationally and the CEYS European network

For more information on the course and the project visit the official website at [www.ceys-project.eu](http://www.ceys-project.eu)

Or contact
Jessica Baines-Holmes
University of Brighton
Tel 01273 641156
e-mail: J.m.baines-holmes@brighton.ac.uk