



Engage  
Inspire  
Learn  
Succeed

*Open Futures* is a transforming force in education: an ambitious and proven curriculum programme that integrates inspiring, practical experiences into the heart of the curriculum.

Working with schools and their communities in the UK and India, *Open Futures* has been running with widespread success and now reaches more than 30,000 children.

*Open Futures* was initiated and is generously supported by The Helen Hamlyn Trust.

**‘Other projects and enthusiasms come and go, but *Open Futures* tends to be sustained: changes are evident in schools years after initial training, with the effects on the curriculum underpinned by changes to school planning, budgeting and physical space.’**

Professor David Leat *Executive Director at The Research Centre for Learning & Teaching Newcastle University 2013*

## What is *Open Futures*?

An enquiry-based learning strategy for schools to complement, extend and reinforce their existing educational curriculum.

A catalyst for whole school change, the *Open Futures* programme is comprised of three key elements:

- Professional advice and mentoring for senior leadership teams
- High quality Continuing Professional Development for teachers in enquiry-based learning through *askit* - *Philosophy For Children (P4C)*
- A proven programme of skills-based training for teachers in three educational strands; horticulture (*growit*), cooking (*cookit*) and digital filmmaking (*filmit*)

## Our key objectives

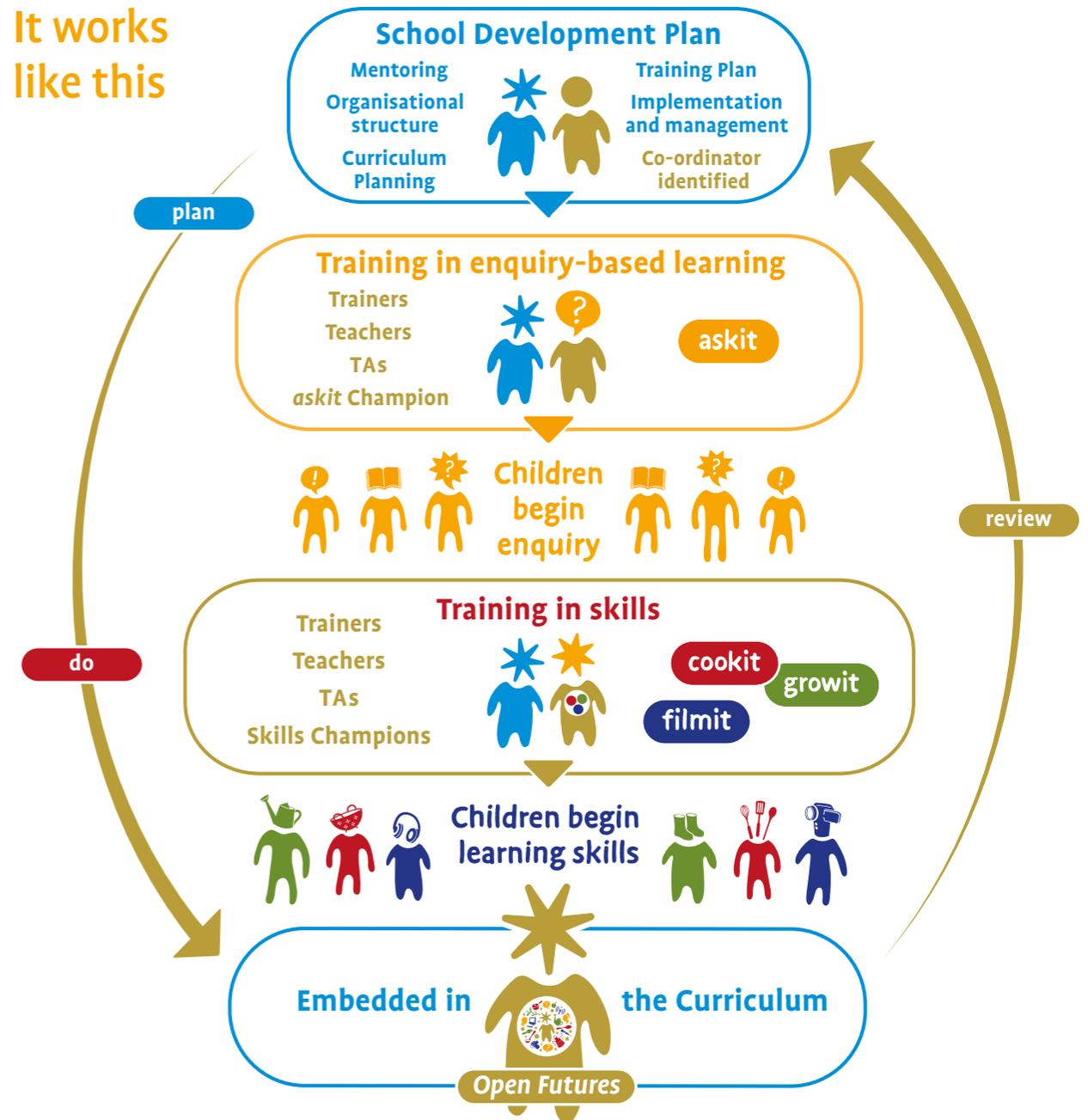
To engage and inspire children to want to learn, to develop an 'I can' attitude and to succeed in life.

By integrating engaging, practical and relevant activities into the learning environment, children access contexts which enable independent learning and the acquisition of fundamental life skills and knowledge. Our approach supports attainment in literacy, numeracy, science and technology. It allows all learners to engage and contribute positively to the classroom, the school and the community.

## How does it work?

*Open Futures* works in partnership with groups of schools in local clusters to develop bespoke training programmes, which extend the existing curriculum and nurture independent learning.

## It works like this





## Curriculum planning and development

Our curriculum team of professional advisors work with Headteachers and their leadership team to plan the *Open Futures* programme in the context of their own school improvement plans. A framework is developed to track progress and measure outcomes.

## Introduction and training

Drawing on the experience gathered from our school network, the curriculum advisors then develop a programme of Continuing Professional Development and mentoring to give teachers the skills and confidence to implement the programme and achieve their objectives.



A launch takes place to introduce *Open Futures* to the whole school community. Our training approach is highly endorsed by teachers and consistently delivers successful outcomes.

We believe that critical thinking, the ability to question and effective communication are the skills required to nurture independent learning. We achieve this through our enquiry-based programme *askit*.



# askit

Developed with and accredited by SAPERE, the internationally recognised UK charity for *Philosophy for Children (P4C)*

Promotes questioning, critical thinking and communication, enabling children to make choices and decisions for themselves and as part of a community.

Enquiry is a mode of learning that is stimulated by a desire to know or a need to know something. Enquiry-based learning is introduced throughout a school via *askit* and informs the whole *Open Futures* approach to learning and teaching. Research has clearly established that *Philosophy for Children (P4C)* is very effective in raising academic achievement.

‘The children have huge enjoyment of everything they do in *Open Futures*. We now have enthusiastic children who never want to stop learning.’

Kirsty Golds *Teacher trained to askit Level 3*

askit is building on other peoples ideas' Year 4 pupil. 'The thing I like best about askit is building on other peoples ideas' Year 4 pupil.





Year 6 pupil 'It makes us feel good about something'; 'It makes us feel good about ourselves, makes us feel proud like we're actually good at something'. 'It makes us feel good about ourselves, makes us feel proud like we're actually good at something'; 'It makes us feel good about ourselves, makes us feel proud like we're actually good at something'.



# growit

Developed with and delivered through the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)



Helps children to learn about growing and harvesting their own fruit and vegetables, acquire new skills and develop their knowledge of literacy, numeracy and science.

An RHS-accredited trainer works with a school to plan and develop suitable growing areas. Advice is provided on the equipment required according to the space available. Guidance is given to help teachers and their pupils manage their gardening throughout the seasons. Children then have the chance to harvest, prepare and cook what they have grown through *cookit*.

'Activities were tailored perfectly for that class and their level of understanding. They all looked very proud taking their plants home and were talking about wanting to grow more at home. It was very pleasing to hear.'

*Stefanie Reay Teacher at Brampton Primary School, Newham, London*



# cookit

Developed originally with the RSA Focus on Food Campaign

Encourages children to learn about food, nutrition and cooking, and start to take an active interest in their diet, health and well-being.

*Open Futures'* trainers provide guidance for teachers on how to introduce and manage practical cooking in their school. Recommendations are made on how to make the best use of the resources available. We have also developed a complete set of equipment, our 'cook kit', to facilitate safe cooking with groups of children.

**'Cooking helps me when I'm an adult because you can't always get street food and take-aways, sometimes you just have to use what you've got in your cupboard and get inspiration from that to make loads of different stuff.'**

Year 5 pupil





# filmit

Developed with renowned interaction designers  
Andy Cameron and Andy Huntington

An inspiring introduction to the world of digital filmmaking, children work in teams to explore, shape and articulate their ideas through the process of making films. Results are shared with schools in the UK and India through our unique and secure '*filmit*' website platform.

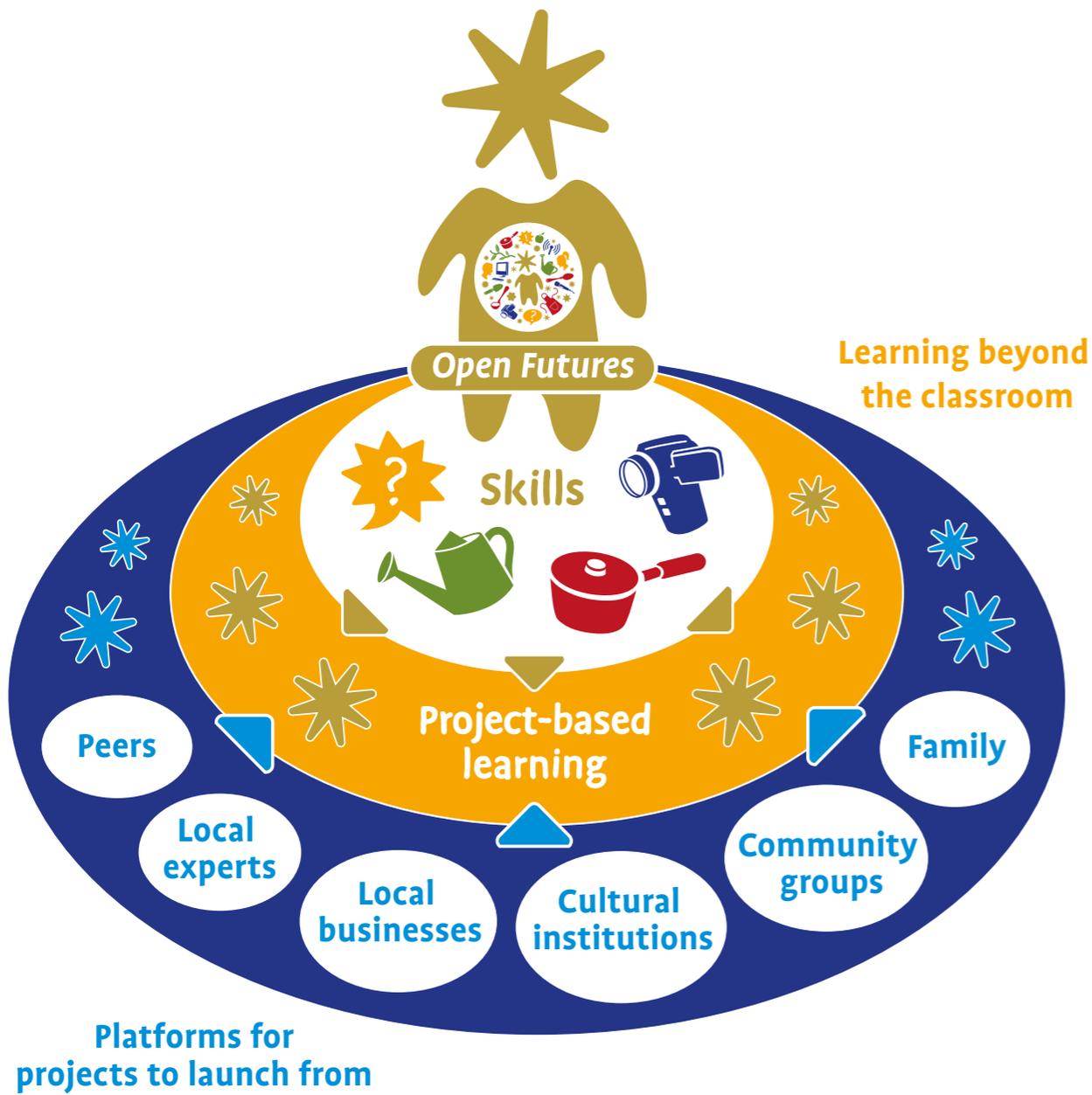
Our *filmit* experts train teachers in filmmaking and in how to integrate film activities across the curriculum to develop literacy and communication skills. On-going professional support is provided to ensure teachers keep pace with the rapid changes in technology.

**'Pupils understand that they need to be organised and to plan carefully when working on a film or animation either as an individual or collaboratively as a member of a team.'**

Liz Hankin *Open Futures filmit trainer*

You get to make your own adventures up: Year 5 pupil 'To make a good film you have to plan it and it's a good lesson for literacy. I like being creative because you get to make your own adventures up: Year 5 pupil 'To make a good film you have to plan it and it's a good lesson for literacy. I like being creative because you get to make your own adventures up: Year 5 pupil





## Open Futures and beyond

*Open Futures* actively encourages schools to develop relationships with organisations and businesses in their local community. It is important that children have the opportunity to develop and apply the 21st century skills they will require to succeed in education, the work place and life.

A collaborative approach, through project-based learning, gives children opportunities to experience real-world education. This drives the discovery of broader skills such as intercultural competences, problem-solving, initiative and entrepreneurship, teamwork and creativity.

**‘The more collaboration there is the better. We anticipate clusters of companies providing help for clusters of local schools.’**

*Fiona Rawes MBE Education Campaign Director for Business in the Community*



askit



growit



cookit



filmit

## Our Flagship Schools

The outstanding achievements of our network of schools are fundamental to the success, long-term growth and sustainability of *Open Futures*. Our Flagship Schools consistently demonstrate excellence and are our greatest ambassadors. To qualify for Flagship School Status, schools are independently assessed using the *Open Futures* Quality Mark.

At the core of our development strategy is the partnership with our Flagship School teams. Together we work to promote initiatives which help to extend the effectiveness of the programme.

**‘We were delighted to be recognised as a Flagship School. *Open Futures* has had the impact of ensuring a broad, balanced, relevant, creative and exciting curriculum. It is a way of working which has led the teaching, learning and achievement of pupils across the school to be judged outstanding.’**

**Mary Isherwood Headteacher at Camberwell Park Specialist Support School**



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