



HOLBROOK ACADEMY
AN ACADEMY SERVING
THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

CASE STUDY

Holbrook Academy
Maritime Futures careers curriculum



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Holbrook Academy is a secondary school situated on a rural Suffolk peninsula. A popular community school, our core purpose is to be an ambitious and aspirational school for all.

Holbrook provides a broad and rich curriculum through quality-first teaching to promote student engagement; we aspire to instil a sense of awe and wonder within our students

Geographically, our school is surrounded by a landscape that encapsulates this awe and wonder. On the border of Suffolk and Essex, we are surrounded by the rivers and countryside that inspired John Constable. The rivers Orwell, Gipping, Deben and Stour, together with the local reservoir Alton Water, are points of reference for our children who sail, swim, kayak, cycle, paddleboard - live and thrive, in and around this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Commercially, from Ipswich to Felixstowe, the Gipping, Orwell and Stour culminate at Harwich Harbour, and then feed into the North Sea. Felixstowe is the largest container port in the UK, and both rivers are home to a variety of maritime businesses, both logistical and leisure.

Despite this, Ipswich itself is demographically a relatively deprived area, with 37% of children living in poverty [End Child Poverty Coalition, 2022]

At Holbrook, we want all our students to know for themselves what it means to be in their element and to think of their future lives without limits; living life “to infinity and beyond”. Embracing the maritime context gives us the opportunity to redefine the boundaries of ambition, to show children that their careers could take them further than they might imagine.

WHAT IS THE NEED FOR THE MARITIME SECTOR?



The UK is one of the world's leading maritime nations. Its status is built upon our geography, a remarkable historical foundation and a large and vibrant economy.

But leading maritime nations only hold that position because they adapt and plan for the future. So, the UK is looking far ahead, to allow it to support and grow the maritime sector with strength and determination.

Maritime 2050 is a maritime strategy to take the UK into the second half of the 21st century. The strategy identifies a need for a 'greater emphasis' on STEM subjects linked to the maritime sector "to create the training that equips the maritime workforce with the skills that will be needed in the future ... For UK maritime firms, an ageing population makes the challenges they already face in promoting the sector as an attractive career choice amongst young people even more acute. With firms competing to recruit from a relatively smaller pool of young people in future, the maritime sector will have to make itself increasingly attractive to recruit future seafarers from within the UK." Whilst the maritime sector is hugely important and rapidly growing there are not enough skilled workers to fill these positions. It is predicted that there will be a Marine skills shortage of over 300,000 seafarers by 2050 [Robert, 2018] and currently a shortage of 147,000 workers [World Maritime University, 2019].

The maritime industry also has a history of gender inequality. Recent figures show that women only make up 2% of the global maritime industry, with the majority of women working in ferries and cruise ships. [Maritime UK, 2018]. Alongside an ageing workforce there is a need for a clear pathway for young people to join the maritime sector.

Our Maritime Futures curriculum goes some way to addressing this with young people aged 11 to 16.

WHAT IS THE EDUCATIONAL NEED?



Holbrook prides itself on offering a wide-ranging and effective curriculum. Maritime Futures presents an opportunity to deepen learning, and ensure that our work better reflects the real world applications of knowledge with profound links to our local context.

Remaining relevant for Holbrook means creating deeper learning opportunities that connect with students, that will allow them to think critically, creatively and beyond the notions of individual academic fields. Ultimately, Maritime Futures is Holbrook's cross-curricular link to an industry that has thrived in various forms on the peninsula since the 7th Century.

We may not have titles for the jobs that we are training our students for, and it may be that their futures have nothing to do with the maritime sector. Contextualising the craft of our teachers is not about creating a workforce, but an ethos. The national curriculum defines what we teach, our local environment suggests how we deliver that content, and future careers prove that it is relevant and meaningful.

"...if schools are to retain any semblance of utility, they must reorient their work around the goal of preparing students to navigate a complex and uncertain future; to do otherwise is to doom themselves to obsolescence"

(Mehta, Schwartz, & Hess 2012)





WHAT IS THE EXISTING OFFER?

First, we looked at the curriculum elements that we already had in place for Year 7, which could include links to maritime futures.

Examples include:

- Morse code is used as an example as part of networking in Computer Science
- A sailing enrichment programme that has operated for many years
- In History: 'Whatever happened to Dunwich?' – students study the history of Dunwich and complete a tourist brochure. They also explore the strategic importance of the Channel in the Norman conquest.
- In Geography, a unit explores the complex roles that rivers play in flooding, with a focus on Bangladesh.

We then explored ways in which these topics might be expanded upon, to take in local context and to create deeper learning that is fundamentally relevant to where our children are growing up:

- In History, linking learning on Mediaeval England and King John to the development of Ipswich as a port for trade, and the impact this would have on the development of the town.
- Contextualising elements of the Dunwich case study with cross-curricular elements:
- Establishment of a port for soldiers (Roman)
- Development of a harbour for trade (Saxon & Medieval)
- Importance of fishing & shipbuilding in Dunwich's economic development.
- The Constant battle against erosion
- Great storm of 1286 – which destroys the harbour – economic decline
- Drawing comparisons between flooding in Bangladesh and the behaviours of our own waterways.

WHAT IS OUR IMPLEMENTATION SO FAR?



The greatest opportunity for innovation presented itself in Design and Technology, where the KS3 curriculum previously had very little to connect with local industry, and served mainly as a preparatory stage for Product Design at KS4.

Projects that previously used CAD and a laser cutter to make a novelty clock were adapted to create a wooden block and tackle, using the same skills and materials. This was then presented to the students with cross-curricular links:

- What is this used for in the real world? (History link, modern example from local chandlery)
- Why does it work? (Physics, forces)
- How can I change its properties? (Maths, circle theorem, ratios)
- How do you make an ancient design seem appealing, modern? (Art and design)

This project is a great example of how contextualisation of the curriculum allows teachers to create an environment for STEAM and other cross-curricular models to be more than a gimmick of planning: a methodical exploration of a familiar world that illuminates otherwise abstract theoretical knowledge.

Finally, we explored ways that we could connect our learning with the local community, bringing on board a governor with maritime experience and connections to help form an advisory board that will ensure we continue to innovate in a relevant and constructive way.

WHAT IS OUR NEXT STEP



Launching in September 2022, seven subject areas will deliver their rejuvenated curricula with maritime context, and use of the OAT futures career portal to further extend our scope beyond the classroom.

Two new extracurricular experiences will run for the first time: a tour of the port, and a river cruise. These field trips coincide with specific learning in the seven pilot subjects.

Time with middle leaders and senior leaders has been restructured, to free up directed time for protected cross-curricular planning.





HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR IMPACT?

We hope to see the impact of our work in the bi-annual Pass survey, which explores students' attitudes to learning. We would also hope to see some impact on the termly assessments that students undertake.

Our goal is to establish a maritime curriculum at Holbrook as part of the identity of the school, as a unique selling point that delivers on our commitment to put students at the heart of our community. To this end, there will be no grand launch, and maritime will not be explicitly signposted in lessons. We hope to hear students identify and connect with this thread naturally, and for this to be apparent through student voice.

Find out more

For our full 'How to Guide' and Maritime Futures curriculum map go to:

<http://holbrookacademy.org/curriculum/maritime-futures>

For the OAT Futures Career Portal see: <https://oatfutures.co.uk>

If you would like to hear more about a local maritime curriculum please contact Kerrick Newstead. Email: kerrick.newstead@holbrookacademy.org Phone: 01473 328317



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