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## *Learning Journeys*

*Our children go on 'Learning Journeys'. We use the term Learning Journey rather than theme or topic not because of semantics but because of the very different belief and culture of learning that belies this phrase.*

*The Learning Journey is more than a theme, or topic, because it takes the children from a start point (the children's start point\*) to a planned and specific end point where each week builds upon the knowledge, skills and understanding of the weeks preceding it.*

The aim of a Learning Journey is to build upon children's prior learning and is designed to **ignite a desire to learn.**

### Beginning & End WOWs!

#### Beginning WOW!

Each Learning Journey begins with a beginning 'WOW!' The intention of the beginning WOW! is to create excitement and enthusiasm, a real buzz about the learning focus. The beginning WOW! should also succeed in setting the learning in a context. The more creative, engaging and fun the beginning WOW! the better the commitment of the children (The knock on effects are clear – i.e. good commitment/ engagement from the children,) Therefore it is worth putting thought, time and energy in to the beginning WOW! from which rewards will be reaped.

#### **Great Example** (and there are many more!)

*Year 1 children's literacy is connected to Science Fiction Stories and writing. For their beginning WOW! Dr Who crashes to Earth at Risdene Academy and the children are swept along in a mini drama as they help Dr Who to find his sonic screwdriver, avoid Cybermen, and successfully help him back to his Tardis and time travel. (A relatively simple WOW! but it creates great excitement and a buzz about the learning.)*

#### End WOW!

The End WOW! is used to celebrate the children's learning by sharing their learning with parents/ or other children. This may take place in the form of a play, presentation, dance, or even setting up a restaurant!

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The beginning and End WOW! are thought through before the start of the Learning Journey and will feature as an aspect of a Risdene's teacher's medium term plan (see *planning expectations*).

*\* Every Learning Journey will begin and end with the children completing a mind map around what they know of the Learning Journey. This may be new to some of our children but by teaching it consistently and making it a part of our learning and teaching armoury we aim to give our children greater ownership and understanding of their learning and the ability to be reflective learners (as opposed to passive receivers).*