



Education Board

Date: TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025
Time: 10.30 am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM 1 - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members: Naresh Hari Sonpar (Chair)
Tim McNally (Deputy Chair)
Deputy Anne Corbett
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Steve Goodman OBE
Deputy Caroline Haines
Shravan Joshi MBE
Alderman Robert Howard
Mandeep Thandi
James Adeleke
Bolu Faseun
Jane Hindle
Floyd Steadman OBE

Enquiries: Jayne Moore
Jayne.Moore@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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<https://youtube.com/live/1j3tutcv9Ys?feature=share>

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**
To agree the public minutes of the meeting of 10 June 2025.

For Decision
(Pages 7 - 12)
4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**
Report of the Town Clerk.

For Information
(Pages 13 - 14)
5. **APPOINTMENTS TO SUB-COMMITTEES AND RENEWAL OF TERM**
To consider the report of the Clerk.

For Decision
(Pages 15 - 20)

Supporting Educational Excellence

6. **EDUCATION BOARD BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - 2025/26 PERIOD 3**
To receive the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services

For Information
(Pages 21 - 26)

Embracing Culture, Creativity and the Arts

7. **THE CITY EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (CHARITY NO. 290840) GRANT MANAGEMENT UPDATE**
To consider the report of the Acting Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation.

For Decision
(Pages 27 - 106)

Improving Employability

8. **WORKFORCE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE**
To receive the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services

For Information
(Pages 107 - 120)
9. **MENTORING UPDATE**

For Information
(Verbal Report)
10. **LONDON CAREERS FESTIVAL UPDATE**

For Information
(Verbal Report)
11. **OUTCOME OF RESEARCH PROJECTS**

For Information
(To Follow)
12. **2025-26 ESU EVENTS CALENDAR**
To note the Education calendar of events.

For Information
(Pages 121 - 124)
13. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
15. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

16. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
To agree the non-public minutes of the meeting of 10 June 2025.

For Decision
(Pages 125 - 130)

Supporting Educational Excellence

17. **FINANCE UPDATE - 1. THE CITY EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (CETF) (290840) & 2. CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION COMBINED EDUCATION CHARITY (CEC) (312836)**
To receive the report of the City Bridge Foundation & Charities Finance Director (representing the Chamberlain)

For Information
(Pages 131 - 178)
18. **CLFS DEVELOPMENT REPORT**
To receive the report of the Headmaster of City of London Freeman's School.

For Information
(Pages 179 - 186)
19. **CITY FAMILY OF SCHOOLS UNVALIDATED RESULTS 2025: GCSE AND A-LEVEL**
To receive the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services

For Information
(Pages 187 - 196)
20. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
21. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

EDUCATION BOARD

Tuesday, 10 June 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Board held in Committee Room 2 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 10 June 2025 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Robert Howard
Steve Goodman OBE
Naresh Hari Sonpar
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Deputy Anne Corbett

Deputy Caroline Haines
Tim McNally
James Adeleke
Jane Hindle

In Attendance

Officers:

Deborah Bell	- Community & Children's Services Department
Scott Caizley	- Community & Children's Services Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Jack Joslin	- The City Bridge Trust
Torriano Stewart	- Community & Children's Services Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's Department
Jayne Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Kevin Colville	- Comptroller and City Solicitors
Roland Martin	- Headmaster -City of London Freeman's School
Mark Emmerson	- City of London Academies Trust - CEO
Vasima Patel	- Community and Children's Services Department
Melanie Peel	- City of London Schools
Diana Nathan	- City of London Academies Trust
Rebecca Branch	- A New Direction
Veronica Pearce	- City Bridge Foundation
Doreen Channa	- City Bridge Foundation
Charlie Binns	- Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Julia Megone	- City Bridge Foundation

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Floyd Steadman.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT**
The Board received the Order of the Court of the meeting of the Court of Common Council on 25 April 2025.
4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**
A single expression of interest having been received, Naresh Sonpar was duly elected Chair of the Board for the ensuing municipal year.
5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**
A single expression of interest having been received, Timoth McNally was duly elected Deputy Chair for the ensuing municipal year.
6. **PUBLIC MINUTES**
RESOLVED, That the minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2025 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.
7. **ACTIONS**
The Board received the report of the Clerk.
8. **PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT TOOLKITS REPORT**
The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community & Children's Services and the Strategic Education and Skills Director updating Members on the pilot evaluation of the Parental Engagement Toolkits implemented across schools within the City of London Academies Trust.

In response to a question on the cost of the research, the meeting noted that the cost was less than £10K.
9. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2024/25**
The Board received the report of the Director of Community & Children's Services and the Chamberlain setting out the 2024/25 revenue outturn for the Education Board with the final agreed budget for the year, noting in particular that total net local risk expenditure during the year was £897,000k - an overspend of £3,000 when compared to the Final agreed budget of £894,000.
10. **THE CITY EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (CHARITY NO. 290840) GRANT MANAGEMENT UPDATE**
The Board received the report of the Acting Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation, noting that the City of London Corporation is the sole corporate trustee of the following Charity which operates, in summary, to further education for the public benefit: the City Educational Trust Fund ("CETF") (Charity No. 290840).

Members noted that at the Education Board in April 2024, Members agreed to award a £3,649,998 grant to A New Direction (Charity No. 1126216) to deliver Primary Arts – a cultural arts programme within London's primary schools, to enhance the education and teaching in and of the cultural arts for the public benefit, spanning 48 months.

Acting collectively for the City of London Corporation as Trustee of the City Education Fund (290840), the Board noted the quarterly update of the work undertaken by A New Direction, agreeing that the report is in the best interests of the charity.

Noting the discrepancy between registered and participating schools, a Member asked what methods are in place to encourage registered schools to participate in the programme. The meeting heard that any discrepancy was due to issues around the capacity to deliver in line with demand, and in some cases due to registration timings that did not align with delivery options, and that registered schools are supported in their placements and options.

A Member asked for more information on registered schools that had subsequently not participated, alongside figures for over-subscribed sessions (see action point).

11. EDUCATION STRATEGY 2024-29 EVENTS UPDATE

The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and the Strategic Education and Skills Director updating Members with a summary of recent activities that the Education Strategy Unit has provided to the Family of Schools since the last meeting (January 2025), noting also the upcoming activities for the remainder of the academic year.

Members were reminded that they are welcome to attend events.

12. VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER REPORT

The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community & Children's Services providing Members with information about the role of The City of London Virtual School. Members noted the School Development Plan.

A Member asked for more granular information on users of the virtual school including age, location and numbers of NEETs. The meeting noted that the information is contained in the annual report provided to Members, and that the information will be circulated to Members (see Action Point).

Members commented on apparent miscommunication between the virtual school and CoLAT in respect of excluded students, and asked for more information on the liaison role of the CoL virtual school with borough virtual schools. The meeting heard that the CoL virtual head liaises with pan-London virtual headteachers on a monthly basis, that communication gaps of that nature will be raised at the next such meeting, and that additional staff training has been offered to CoLAT schools on trauma-informed practices and support, with delivery expected to take place from September 2025.

A Member commented that targeted support should be offered to relevant CoLAT schools where appropriate that would include an early alert system. The meeting heard that affected City resident students are supported.

Members commented on the benefits of tracking students that had been involved in the virtual school and asked whether information on destinations of

young people after the age of 25 was available, including those who had an EHCP that went on to University.

13. LONDON CAREERS FESTIVAL 2025 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board noted the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and the Strategic Education and Skills Director updating Members on the outcomes of the London Careers Festival (LCF) 2025 which engaged primary and secondary school pupils, sixth form and college students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), all from across London and adjacent counties. The Board noted the LCF 2025 evaluation report, and the recommendations for LCF 2026 onwards.

Members asked for more information about the question 'Do you feel you could work in central London?', and the meeting heard that the term 'central London' was chosen rather than 'Square Mile' for the sake of clarity, and that most respondents who were resident in boroughs bordering the Square Mile had responded that they did not feel they could work in central London. Members commented that it was not clear what was meant by the term 'central London'. The meeting noted that social mobility initiatives under way work with City and London-based employers, government and schools to address the perception of central London careers and improve confidence and connections, including among students from varying socio-economic backgrounds, noting also that there is scope for the LCF to further enhance those opportunities working more with organisations such as Young Professionals YP-UK and Pathways.

Members noted the City financial service firms that run online careers-orientated platforms, commenting that there is merit in ensuring that those and other work placement initiatives are communicated to schools.

14. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN - CPG AND CCL FUNDING

The Board noted the report of the Clerk that set out these three decisions approved via the Delegated Authority procedure in line with Standing Order 40A:

- City Premium Grant: To delegate authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Education Board and the Strategic Director of Education and Skills to distribute Round 1 awards from the City Premium Grant: Disadvantaged Pupils Grant, the City Premium Grant: Partnerships Grant, and the City Premium Grant: Responsive Grant to the schools;
- Cultural and Creative Learning: To delegate authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Education Board and the Strategic Director of Education and Skills to distribute the CCL funds to the relevant cultural partners noting that the panel recommends that 11 out of 17 of the applications be awarded funding from the CCL budget; and
- To confirm that these grants will be made available in the usual way.

15. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
There were no questions.
16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were no items of urgent business.
17. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.
18. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
The non-public minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2025 were considered.
19. **ADULT SKILLS EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP – TAILORED LEARNING CHANGES IN COURSE PRIORITIES**
The Board considered the report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services and the Strategic Director, Education and Skills.
20. **INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AT CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AND CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL: PROGRESS AND STRATEGIC INSIGHTS**
The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services
21. **CITY OF LONDON ACADEMY TRUST GROWTH - RECONSIDERATION OF EXISTING STRATEGY**
The Board considered the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services.
22. **FINANCE UPDATE - 1. THE CITY EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (CETF) (290840) & 2. CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION COMBINED EDUCATION CHARITY (CEC) (312836)**
The Board reviewed the report of the CBF & Charities Interim Finance Director
23. **SUMMARY OF CITY EDUCATION SPEND**
The Board received the report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services
24. **CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION COMBINED EDUCATION CHARITY (CHARITY NO. 312836) MANAGEMENT UPDATE**
The Board considered the report of the Acting Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation.
25. **REVIEW OF FUNDING TO THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC & DRAMA FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**
The Board considered the report of the Principal, Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

26. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no questions.

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

One item was raised.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Jayne Moore
Jayne.Moore@cityoflondon.gov.uk

EDUCATION BOARD
Summary of actions - updated June 2025

Item	Title	Action (Responsible Officer/Governor)	Timeframe/Deadline
Action from meeting of 10 June 2025			
10	Schools registering/participating in AND programme	Provide figures for schools that were registered and did not subsequently participate, also figures for over-subscribed sessions	Completed

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Committee(s): Education Board	Dated: 23 September 2025
Subject: Appointment of Sub-Committees 2025/26 & renewal of term of external co-optee	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	N/A
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: The Town Clerk	For Decision
Report author: Jayne Moore, Committee and Member Services Officer	

Summary

This report outlines the terms of reference and composition of these two Sub Committees: Nominations; and Member Development and Standards.

Recommendation(s)

That the Education Board,

- Review and approve the proposed terms of reference and composition of the Nominations Sub-Committee; and review the proposed terms of reference and composition of the Member Development and Standards Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year;
- Appoint (or re-appoint) two Members of the Education Board to the Nominations Sub-Committee, at least one of whom will be a Court of Common Council Member, to serve alongside the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Education Board;
- Appoint two Members of the Education Board to the Member Development and Standards Committee; and
- Approve the renewal of the term of office of external Member Jane Hindle for a four-year term expiring on 30 October 2029.

Main Report

Background

1. For the 2025-26 period, the Education Board will be appointing to the Nominations Sub-Committee and to the Member Standards and Development Committee.
2. The Nominations Sub Committee usually meets once a year. No meeting dates have yet been agreed for 2025-26.
3. A Member Development Steering Group first agreed its terms of reference in 2003. Following the meeting of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee on 7th October 2022, it was agreed that the group would be revised and renamed to reflect a wider remit and the expansion of membership categories of the Steering Group. The next meeting date for the MSDC is 09 December 2025 at 2pm. There are generally three meetings a year.
4. One of the four external no-opted Members (Jane Hindle) was appointed on 11 October 2024 to complete a term of office begun by former external Member Mary Robey to expire on 20 October 2025, and renewable for a further four years. Members are asked to approve the renewal of that term of office in respect of Jane Hindle for a 4-year period expiring on 30 October 2029.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference of the Nominations Sub (Education Board) Committee
Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference of the Member Standards and Development Committee

Jayne Moore

Town Clerk's Department

**Nominations Sub (Education Board) Committee
Terms of Reference**

Constitution

- Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Education Board.
- Up to two further Members of the Education Board at least one of whom will be a Court of Common Council Member

Quorum

- Any three members.

Terms of Reference

- Review the skills audit of the Education Board's membership and identify areas in which the Board would benefit from the addition of expertise;
- Review supporting statements from interested parties who wish to be considered as external members of the Education Board;
- Review the process of advertising, reviewing and shortlisting applications from interested parties who wish to be considered as external members of the Education Board, reporting to the Education Board in due course for approval;
- Make recommendations on the appointment of external candidates to the Education Board;
- Make recommendations to the Education Board on the appointment, where relevant, of Sponsor Trustees to the City of London Academies Trust.

2024/25 Membership

Naresh Sonpar
Caroline Haines
John Griffiths

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Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee

Composition

- The Chief Commoner (to act as Chairman)
- Immediate past Chief Commoner*
- Chairman and Deputy Chairman (or a Vice Chairman) of the Policy & Resources Committee
- One Alderman nominated by the Court of Aldermen
- Two Members nominated by the Policy & Resources Committee
- Two Members nominated by the Education Board
- Two Members nominated by the Corporate Services Committee
- Together with two Members of the Court of Common Council, to be elected by the Court.

**For part of the year and then the Chief Commoner Designate for the remainder of the year (elected in October each year)*

Terms of Reference

To be responsible for:-

Member Learning and Development

- (a) To agree, a programme of Member training and development, to ensure that all Members have access to opportunities

Standards

- (b) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the City of London Corporation and to assist Members and Co-opted Members to observe the City of London Corporation's Code of Conduct;
- (c) preparing, keeping under review and monitoring the City of London Corporation's Member Code of Conduct and making recommendations to the Court of Common Council in respect of the adoption or revision, as appropriate, of such Code of Conduct;
- (d) keeping under review, monitoring and revising as appropriate the City of London Corporation's Guidance to Members on the Code of Conduct;
- (e) keeping under review by way of an annual update by the Director of HR, the City of London Corporation's Employee Code of Conduct and, in relation to any revisions, making recommendations to the Corporate Services Committee;
- (f) keeping under review and monitoring the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations and, in relation to any revisions, making recommendations to the Corporate Services Committee;
- (g) advising and training Members and Co-opted Members on matters relating to the City of London Corporation's Code of Conduct.

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Education Board	Dated: 23/09/2025
Subject: Education Board Budget Monitoring Report – 2025/26 Period 3	Public report: For Information
This proposal: • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides business enabling functions	Diverse Engaged Communities Vibrant Thriving Destination Providing Excellent Services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of:	Judith Finlay CBE Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services
Report author:	Dr Scott Caizley, Lead Policy Officer for Education

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the Period 3 (P3) position for 2025/26, outlining current expenditure and financial activity across the Education Board’s strategic areas. It highlights spend to date, committed allocations, and the forecast outturn for both Local Risk and Central Risk budgets, with a breakdown of key grant funding, partnership contributions, and strategic initiatives supported during the year.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Education Board is responsible for reviewing the Education Strategy 2024-29 and making recommendations to Committees and the Court as appropriate on the delivery of the City Corporation's vision and strategic objectives in this area. The Board also has responsibility for distributing funds allocated to it for educational purposes.

Current Position

2. Members will see an overview of the current position for Period 3 of the 2025/26 financial year in **Appendix One**. Expenditure to date is broadly in line with planned allocations, with spend reflecting the Education Board's agreed priorities. Key headlines include:

- **Local Risk budget:** £880k, with actuals and commitments of £171k to date, on track to deliver against full year allocations.
- **Central Risk budget:** £2.226m, of which £2.068m has already been committed, primarily through grants to academies and partner organisations.
- **Grants allocation:** £1.39m directed to academies (supporting disadvantaged pupils), alongside £352k for partnerships and £323k for strategic activities, totalling £2.068m.
- Forecasts indicate a balanced outturn position across both Local and Central Risk areas by year end.

Key Data

3. Embedded in the report and available in Appendix One of this report.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – The budget position supports delivery of the Education Strategy 2024–29 and ensures that resources remain aligned with the City Corporation's Corporate Plan ambitions around learning, skills, and community impact. Monitoring spend against planned allocations helps Members ensure funding continues to support the Board's agreed priorities, including disadvantaged pupils and cultural learning.

Financial implications – The Period 3 position shows spend broadly in line with budget. A balanced outturn is forecast for year end across both Local and Central Risk areas. No overspends are anticipated, though a small number of allocations remain to be drawn down in later quarters.

Resource implications – The Education Strategy Unit continues to manage these budgets within existing officer capacity. Delivery of funded activities is supported by

schools, academies, and partner organisations, with no additional resource implications.

Legal implications – All grant allocations and expenditure have been made in line with the City Corporation’s financial regulations and governance requirements.

Risk implications – The key risks are financial slippage or underspend if certain allocations are not taken up in full. These risks are being managed through regular monitoring and ongoing engagement with grant recipients and between officers at the City Corporation.

Equalities implications – A significant proportion of funding is directed towards academies and initiatives that support disadvantaged pupils, advancing equality of access and outcomes across the City Family of Schools.

Climate implications – Minimal direct implications. Where funding supports events or partnership activities, sustainable delivery methods (e.g. hybrid meetings, reduced travel) will be encouraged.

Security implications – None identified beyond standard data protection and financial controls.

Conclusion

4. The Education Board’s Period 3 budget position for 2025/26 demonstrates that expenditure is on track and aligned with planned allocations across both Local Risk and Central Risk areas. Spend to date reflects the Board’s continued commitment to its strategic priorities, including support for academies, disadvantaged pupils, partnerships, and wider cultural and creative learning activities. The outturn forecast indicates a balanced position, with no significant variances anticipated at year end

Appendices

- Appendix One: Education Board Budget Monitoring Report – 2025/26 Period 3

Dr Scott Caizley

Lead Policy Officer for Education

E: scott.caizley@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appendix One: Education Board Budget Monitoring Report – 2025/26 Period 3

Key Data 2025/26 Budget Period 3 Local Risk £		Actuals and Commitments 2025/26	Current Balance	Outturn 2025/26
450,000	SALARIES	103,117	346,883	450,000
14,000	CENTRAL EDUCATION UNIT	3,167	10,833	14,000
47,000	EDUCATION EXCELLANCE ACTIVITY	15,977	31,023	47,000
65,000	EMPLOYABILITY ACTIVITY	31,502	33,498	65,000
230,000	CULTURAL & CREATIVE LEARNING FUND	5,953	224,048	230,000
18,000	S,H &W ACTIVITY	6,052	11,948	18,000
38,000	PERSONAL DEVEOLPMENT ACTIVITY	1,285	36,715	38,000
18,000	CULTURAL & CREATIVE LEARNING ACTIVITY	4,000	14,000	18,000
880,000		171,052	708,948	880,000
Central Risk £				
768,000	PARTNERSHIP AND STRATEGIC FEES AND SERVICES	675,997	92,003	768,000
1,458,000	GRANTS TO ACADEMIES/OTHER ORGANISATIONS	1,392,204	65,796	1,458,000
2,226,000		2,068,201	157,799	2,226,000
3,106,000		2,239,253	866,747	3,106,000
LIST OF GRANTS ALLOCATED TO ACADEMIES/OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO DATE	ACADEMIES (Disadvantaged Pupils)	PARTNERTSHIPS	STRATEGIC	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
Christ Hospital School	-	-	-	-

City of London Academy Southwark	273,351	171,460	120,000	564,811
City of London Academy Highbury Grove	217,652	-	133,556	351,208
City of London Academy Highgate Hill	138,290	48,500	-	186,790
City of London Academy Islington	200,542	-	-	200,542
City of London Academy Shoreditch Park	167,500	18,000		185,500
City of London Primary Academy Islington	27,217	-	-	27,217
Galleywall Primary School	57,797	7,500	-	65,297
Newham Collegiate Sixth Form	52,337	14,000	12,000	78,337
Redriff Educational Trust	41,415	17,350	21,950	80,715
The City Academy Hackney	200,178	22,000	-	222,178
CoLAT (Partnership Co-Ordinator)	-	-	-	-
The Aldgate School	-	-	-	-
City of London School	-	12,250	9,000	21,250
City of London School for Girls	-	15,656	12,850	28,506
City of London Freemans School	-	18,000	-	18,000
ImpactED	15,925	7,963	7,963	31,850
King Edwards School, Witley	-	-	6,000	6,000
TOTAL ALLOCATION TO DATE	1,392,204	352,679	323,319	2,068,201

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Education Board	23/09/2025
Subject: The City Educational Trust Fund (Charity No. 290840) Grant Management Update	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: · Delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Diverse Engaged Communities Providing Excellent Services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	n/a
Report of:	Simon Latham, Acting Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation
Report authors:	Veronica Pearce, Central Funding and Charity Management Team

Summary

The City of London Corporation is the sole corporate trustee of the following Charity which operates, in summary, to further education for the public benefit: the City Educational Trust Fund ("CETF") (Charity No. 290840).

The charitable purposes of the CETF for the public benefit are:

- 1. for the advancement of the objects of The City University constituted by Royal Charter granted on 23 May, 1966, or any of such objects, or for other educational purposes connected with, or related to, the said university;*
- 2. without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing paragraph, for the advancement of education in science and technology, business management and commerce by the promotion of research, study, teaching and training in and of such subjects, or any of them, or, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, for the advancement of the study and teaching of biology and ecology, or for the advancement of research, study and teaching in and of the cultural arts.*

At the Education Board in April 2024 Members agreed to award a £3,649,998 grant to A New Direction (Charity No. 1126216) to deliver Primary Arts – a cultural arts programme within London’s primary schools, to enhance the education and teaching in and of the cultural arts for the public benefit, spanning 48 months. This follows on from a 14-month pilot to develop this programme.

This paper provides the evaluation report for Year One of the work undertaken by A New Direction.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked, acting collectively for the City of London Corporation as Trustee CETF and being satisfied that it is in the best interests of the charity to:

1. Note the end of Year One update report for the Primary Arts programme funded by the CETF.
2. Consider and approve the request to extend the eligibility criteria for the programme to include SEND settings working with secondary aged pupils, details found in paragraphs 27 & 28.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation acting by the Common Council is the sole corporate trustee of this charity (“the Trustee”) and in July 2021, the Trustee has, in considering options for the charity’s good administration, resolved to spend out the charity’s funds strategically and impactfully, and to close the charity as recommended by the Corporate Charities Review. In implementing the decision to take a strategic funding approach in spending out the charity’s funds the Trustee funded ‘Primary Arts’ – a project focussed on primary schools in Greater London which delivers against the Charity’s objects: research, study and teaching in the cultural arts. This report provides an update of the work delivered across Year 1 of Primary Arts and a request to extend the eligibility criteria for the programme to include SEND settings working with secondary aged pupils.
2. The Central Funding and Charity Management Team (“CFCMT”) has been managing the CETF since October 2016 under the oversight of this Board. During that time the CFCMT has endeavoured to deliver an open access grant programme for the CEFT which looked to further its charitable educational purposes under the charity’s second object (see paragraph 4 below). In July 2019, the CFCMT in reporting upon the outcomes of the City Corporation’s Corporate Charity Review made recommendations to the Education Board to support a large strategic project which would further the advancement of research, study and teaching in and of the cultural arts. Recommendations were based on evidence from the CFCMT from its various open grant programmes and an analysis of demand since 2016.

Current Position

3. A New Direction was awarded a £3,649,998 grant from the CETF across 48 months in April 2024 to rollout Primary Arts – a cultural arts programme across London’s primary schools beginning in July 2024, delivery in school’s commenced in September 2024.
4. This work is intended to enhance the research, study and teaching of cultural arts, meeting the CETF’s charitable objects - namely, for the public benefit to advance research, study and teaching in and of the cultural arts that will enable exposure and experience to a varying range of arts opportunities, learning and resources for teachers and students.
5. The full rollout of Primary Arts began in July 2024, following a year’s pilot. Quarterly reporting has been brought to the Board across the first year, a full evaluation of Year 1 between July 2024 – July 2025 has been provided within this report (**Appendix 1**) as well as an executive summary (**Appendix 2**).

Update on Primary Arts Programme

6. Officers met with A New Direction in August 2025 to receive an update on the Year 1 evaluation of Primary Arts, Officers ensure the delivery furthers CETF’s charitable objects, ensuring reporting is reflective on what has been awarded.
7. Across Year 1, Primary Arts engaged with a total of 198 schools from 30 London boroughs, with 13,399 pupils directly participating and 1,234 school staff participating in CPD activities.
8. **In-Schools Touring** was delivered by 10 cultural organisations and provided performances and workshops to 9,471 pupils across 100 schools.
9. **Go & See** provided free tickets for 3,908 pupils to experience theatre, film and visual arts across 75 events at 10 cultural venues.
10. **Masterclasses** delivered six CPD days exploring creative approaches to literacy and reader development in partnership with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE), attracting 95 individuals in 143 attendances.
11. **Come & Try** offered six creative, practical twilight sessions for school staff in partnership with the Crafts Council, engaging 53 individuals in 113 attendances.
12. **Cultural Education Leadership Programme (CELP)** supported 18 London primary teachers through an 11-month programme delivered in partnership with UCL Centre for Educational Leadership.
13. The evaluation provides compelling evidence of positive outcomes across all programme strands. Teachers consistently reported high achievement of intended pupil outcomes, with 99% of respondents (87 respondents) strongly agreeing (85%) or agreeing (14%) that children enjoyed activities and had fun.

14. 97% of teachers (87 respondents) strongly agreed (74%) or agreed (23%) that activities encouraged children to be curious by exploring new ideas, knowledge, artforms and places.
15. Pupils gained new cultural experiences, often attending live performances for the first time. For Go & See, 93% of teachers (87 respondents) strongly agreed (85%) or agreed (8%) that the programme developed cultural capital.
16. The inclusive nature of the programmes was praised and resulted in positive outcomes for all pupils. In-Schools Touring demonstrated particular success in SEND settings, with 100% of SEND school respondents (7 respondents) strongly agreeing on the success of all programme aspects – noting the sample size is small.
17. Follow-up surveys revealed lasting benefits, with children continuing to reference experiences as highlights of their year and demonstrating changed attitudes, motivation and enthusiasm towards arts and creative activities.
18. The programme achieved strong professional development outcomes for staff. 94% of survey respondents (548 respondents) strongly agreed (65%) or agreed (29%) that they felt more confident and motivated to apply new creative approaches across the curriculum. This was supported by practical outcomes, with 97% strongly agreeing (68%) or agreeing (29%) that they had been given new skills, practical strategies and resources to use in their classrooms.
19. Teachers reported increased confidence in delivering creative subjects, particularly in previously intimidating areas such as poetry and drama, and using creative approaches across the curriculum.
20. Staff identified specific activities and approaches they planned to utilise, with evidence from follow-up surveys confirming implementation of these intended actions including curriculum revisions and staff training.
21. CELP participants demonstrated substantial growth, with 100% rating their capabilities in advocacy, utilising the creative sector and leadership confidence as high or very high by the end of the programme.
22. The evaluation incorporated mechanisms to assess longer-term impact, including follow-up surveys and longitudinal tracking of CELP participants. Teachers used their learning to advocate for cultural education, revise curriculum areas and share knowledge with colleagues through staff meetings and CPD. All strands provided resources to enable follow-up work which were well received. For In-Schools Touring, for example, 64% undertook follow-up activities using the resources provided.
23. The evaluation identified key mechanisms contributing to programme success including high-quality arts and cultural experiences, practical application, inclusive practice, peer learning and support.

24. The Year 1 evaluation provides clear evidence that Primary Arts is achieving strong outcomes against its Theory of Change (**Appendix 3**), for all stakeholder groups. The programme demonstrates strength in combining immediate positive experiences with sustained professional development that extends impact beyond participating individuals to the whole-school community.
25. A New Direction has provided comprehensive uptake and demographic data (**Appendix 4**), which includes school borough breakdown, registered schools and active schools, strand participation by borough.
26. Pupil demographics were collected understanding the percentage of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium, speaking English as an Additional Language (EAL), with SEND, with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This was collected across the Go & See and In-Schools Touring. Schools with the highest levels of Pupil Premium eligibility on the In-Schools programme came from boroughs such as Camden, Islington, Lewisham, Havering, Newham and Tower Hamlets. Lower levels of Pupil Premium were found in schools in Richmond, Redbridge, Croydon, and Haringey. The range in SEND and EHCP percentages reflects the range typically found between mainstream and special schools.
27. A New Direction would like to extend the eligibility criteria for the programme to include SEND settings working with secondary aged pupils (i.e. aged 11 and over), but which use the primary National Curriculum or enrichment framework. Since launching the programme in September 2024, A New Direction have been approached by three such settings keen to join the programme. It anticipates that over the remaining duration of the programme there could be 10-20 such schools that might seek to engage. In general, it expects these to be PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities) or SLD (Severe Learning Disabilities) settings.
28. The potential impact of participating in Primary Arts for these schools and their pupils is significant. The independent evaluation of Year 1 of the programme has shown consistently positive feedback about the inclusive nature of the programme and its positive impact on pupils and teachers in SEND settings. A New Direction know that many such settings struggle to find suitable opportunities for their pupils and would highly value the Go & See programme and In-Schools Touring programme in particular. If approved, all strands of the programme will be open to these settings so that staff could also benefit from participation in Masterclasses, Come & Try or the Cultural Education Leadership Programme.
29. Members are asked to approve the above amendment to the eligibility criteria; this would not impact the overall budget of the grant and will allow for provision for secondary SEND schools who may otherwise struggle to find suitable opportunities as well as continuing to positively contribute, to the delivery of the Charity's objects.

Conclusion

30. This report provides Members with the evaluation of Year 1 of Primary Arts (July 2024 – July 2025) the full report can be found in Appendix 1. Members are asked to approve the decision widening the eligibility of Primary Arts to enable SEND secondary schools access to the full programme.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Primary Arts Year 1 Evaluation Report
- Appendix 2 – Primary Arts Year 1 Evaluation Executive Summary
- Appendix 3 – Primary Arts Year 1 Theory of Change
- Appendix 4 – Primary Arts Year 1 Uptake and Demographic Data

Background Papers

- Report and Minute of the Policy & Resources Committee, 4 July 2019
- Report and Minute of the Education Board, 24 April 2023
- Report and Minute of the Education Board, 5 February 2023
- Report and Minute of the Education Board, 16 April 2024
- Report and Minute of the Education Board, 9 October 2024
- Report and Minute of the Education Board, 21 January 2025
- Report and Minute of the Education Board, 21 May 2025

Veronica Pearce

Funding Manager Central Funding and Charity Management Team

E: veronica.pearce@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Primary Arts

Year 1 – Evaluation Report



Hannah Wilmot

August 2025

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Primary Arts – Year 1 Evaluation Report

1 Introduction

1.1 The Primary Arts programme

Designed and managed by A New Direction, the Primary Arts programme¹ aims to increase access to high quality, inspiring arts, cultural and creative opportunities for children and staff in London's state mainstream primary schools and primary SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) settings. In 2024/25 (Year 1), the programme was delivered in partnership with 23 cultural organisations and offered free opportunities for schools. It aims to unlock the creative potential, cultural capital and skills of teachers and children, offering opportunities to support wellbeing, confidence, personal interest and development.

The City of London Corporation City Educational Trust Fund supported a successful pilot programme in 2023/24 and agreed to support a further three and a half years of Primary Arts. The component strands remained the same as the pilot, but improvements were made in response to recommendations from the evaluation of the pilot programme and strands were extended and expanded.

The five strands were:

- **In-Schools Touring** – delivered in partnership with 10 cultural organisations², each working with 10 schools and offering a performance and in-class workshops for pupils within a single year group, plus staff CPD, resources, creative materials and books.
- **Go & See** - free tickets for pupils to experience theatre, film and visual arts, in partnership with cultural organisations³.
- **Masterclasses** – six CPD days exploring a range of creative approaches to literacy and reader development, in partnership with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE).
- **Come & Try** – six creative, practical twilights for school staff, in partnership with the Crafts Council.
- **Cultural Education Leadership Programme** – a 11-month programme for London primary teachers (ECT+1) interested in leading a change in their school's approach to arts, culture and creativity across all subject areas. Delivered in partnership with UCL⁴ Centre for Educational Leadership.

¹ <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/primary-arts>

² Animate Arts, Arvon, Clowns Without Borders, Conductive Music, Embracing Arts, Emma & PJ, LAsTheatre, Mbilla Arts, Musiko Musika and the Postal Museum

³ Aardman, BFI Southbank, Brixton House, Frameless, Greenwich Theatre, Into Film, Little Angel Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith, Polka Children's Theatre, the Royal Academy, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Unicorn Theatre.

⁴ University College London

1.2 Primary Arts in numbers

198 schools from 30 London boroughs
13,399 pupils directly participated
1,234 school staff participated in CPD
647 school staff accompanied pupils to arts events
23 cultural partners

The majority of schools engaged with a single strand of Primary Arts, although for Come & Try and Masterclasses, this might involve multiple teachers from a single school engaging. However, 54 schools (27%) engaged with two or more strands, including 9 that engaged with three strands and two that engaged with four strands. Whilst the programme is over-subscribed, it would be beneficial to extend the reach of the programme to new settings as well as ensuring that schools registered on the Primary Arts platform but not yet engaged in activity are encouraged to take part in Year 2.

2 The Evaluation

2.1 Objectives

Following the evaluation of the pilot programme, the Evaluator worked with the Primary Arts team at A New Direction (AND) to review the Theory of Change (ToC). The findings confirmed the efficacy of the ToC, with all outcomes being achieved by one or more strands of the programme. The pilot tested the causal relationships between activities, mechanisms of change, outcomes and wider impact, and evidence supported the theory underlying the model. Minor amendments were made to the ToC, adding two outcomes for school staff (on leadership and exploration of own creativity) and removing an outcome for pupils (on improved attitude to learning as this couldn't be measured within the scope of the programme). A new mechanism of change was added: 'working with experienced, high quality creative practitioners.' This was implicit in the original ToC, but findings from both teachers and pupils highlighted how central this was to successful outcomes, and this was therefore made explicit on the amended ToC. The Theory of Change for Year 1 of the programme can be found in Appendix 1.

The evaluation of Primary Arts had the following objectives:

- Outcome evaluation: to assess and understand the outcomes of the programme for participating pupils, school staff and cultural partners, and thus further test out the Theory of Change.
- Process evaluation: to consider what worked well, what worked less well and why.
- Formative evaluation: to provide recommendations to inform future delivery of the programme.

2.2 Data collection

The Evaluator reviewed and, where necessary, amended the evaluation frameworks for each strand drawing on the findings from the pilot evaluation. The data collection for each strand is outlined below ('attendance' refers to the Evaluator):

- **In-Schools Touring** – attendance at all four Network Days (which brought together lead representatives from the 10 Delivery Organisations) including facilitation of reflective activities and inputs on the evaluation process; baseline and final surveys for these lead representatives and also for members of their delivery teams; attendance at school visits for six of the organisations; on-the-day survey completed by teachers attending the CPD; post-visit and follow-up surveys (sent six weeks after the In-Schools touring visit) for schools; CPD Reports and Event Reports completed by the Delivery Organisations for all their CPD and school visits; pupil feedback gathered by the organisations from a 50% sample of their schools.
- **Go & See** – post visit, online survey for teachers; attendance at three events.
- **Masterclasses** – on-the-day survey completed by participants at all six sessions; attendance at one of the sessions; follow-up survey sent out six weeks after the Masterclass.
- **Come & Try** – on-the-day survey completed by participants at all six sessions; attendance at one session; follow-up survey sent out six weeks after the Come & Try session.
- **Cultural Education Leadership Programme (CELP)** – application forms; baseline and final surveys; attendance at two of the sessions, including the final presentations; reflective data gathered by the course facilitators; follow-up survey and interviews with participants from the 2023/24 pilot programme of CELP.

The Evaluator used a mixed-methods approach, including surveys, interviews and observation to gather data and assess programme outcomes. Wherever possible, evidence has been triangulated through multiple perspectives on the same event and methodological triangulation (multiple methods at the same event and/or the same method at multiple events). Thematic analysis was undertaken for responses to open questions in the surveys.

Scheduled conversations and ongoing communications with members of the AND team informed the evaluation at all stages. Alongside the evaluation, AND commissioned a Listener-in-Residence. As a consequence, this evaluation focussed primarily on participant outcomes so as not to duplicate the Listener-in-Residence's work on processes, practices and partnership development. The Evaluator and Listener-in-Residence met periodically to exchange findings and discuss areas of cross-over and mutual interest.

2.2 This report

This report is based on the analysis of the data gathered, conversations with the AND team and partners, and the Evaluator's observations from attendance at programme activities. The findings and recommendations for each strand of Primary Arts are presented in the following four sections and conclusions are summarised in Section 7. Where relevant, comparisons are made to findings from the evaluation of the pilot programme.

3 In-Schools Touring

3.1 Recruitment

As in the pilot, the In-Schools Touring programme was oversubscribed with 131 schools applying for 100 places. In the event of over-subscription, selection criteria included the proportions of SEND, EHCPs, EAL⁵ and Pupil Premium pupils at each school (used as proxies for disadvantage). Geographical spread was also considered, and schools that had benefitted from the In-Schools Touring programme in the pilot were made a lower priority. However, 51 of the schools applying had also applied for Go & See, and to ensure the broadest reach, schools were awarded just one of the two pupil-facing programmes meaning the selection criteria did not come into play⁶.

Data submitted by the Delivery Organisations indicated that 9,421 pupils participated in In-Schools Touring. Further details are provided below:

Figure 1	Total for 100 schools	Range
Pupils attending performance	9,471 ⁷	7 - 360 ⁸
Pupils participating in workshops	6,175	7 - 120
Staff participating in CPD (90 schools)	1,108	1 - 35

The performance and workshop were offered as a package to a single year group in each school. However, some of the organisations were happy to open the performance to other year groups, hence the significantly higher number in the table above.

The post-visit survey was completed by 89 schools and the follow-up survey by 53 schools, giving high response rates of 89% and 53% respectively. This compares favourably with the pilot where response rates were 80% and 40%, and supports the reliability and validity of findings. There was

⁵ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP); English as an Additional Language (EAL).

⁶ 11 schools across the programme benefitted from both Go & See and Touring – this was due to the applications and allocations process for the Summer season of Go & See, where schools that had already been part of the Touring programme were included in Go & See for a different year group of pupils.

⁷ This figure includes the pupils who also participated in the workshop.

⁸ This ranged from 7 pupils in a school for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs to 360 pupils which represented the whole of KS2 in a three-form entry school.

some variation in the response rate between the Delivery Organisations, particularly for the follow-up survey as illustrated in the table below.

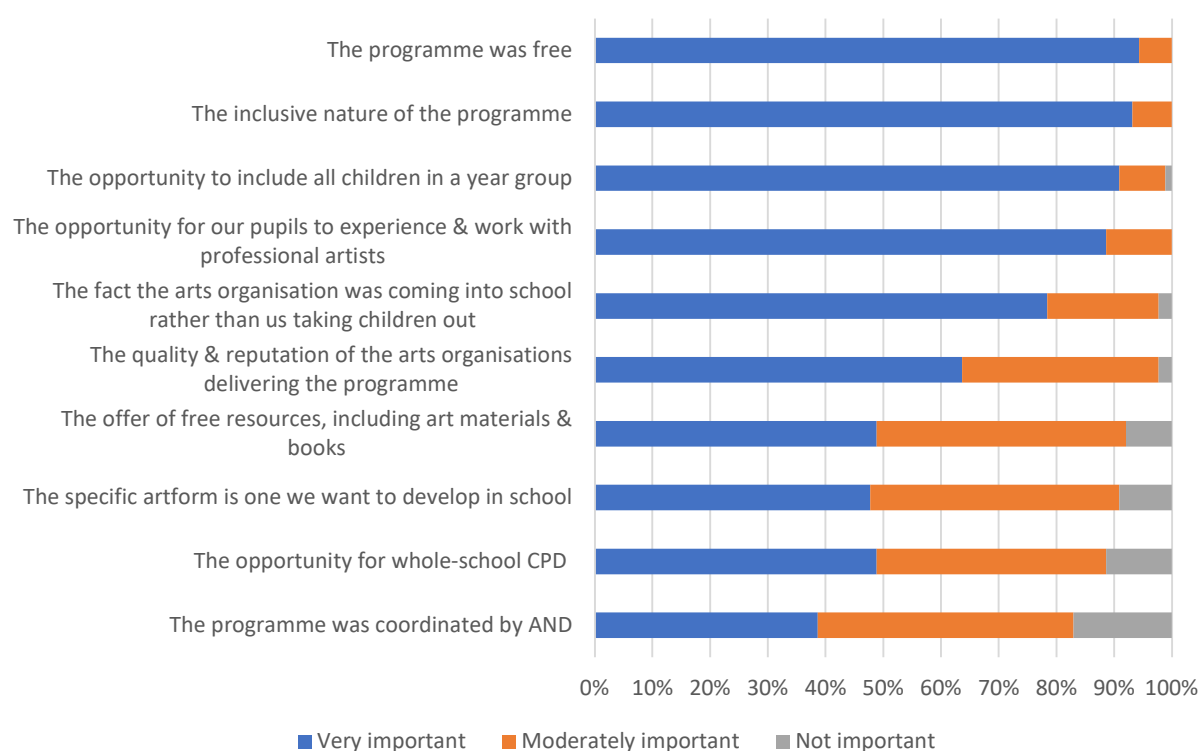
Figure 2	Post-visit survey responses	Follow-up survey responses
Animate Arts	9	6
Arvon	9	5
Clowns Without Borders	9	5
Conductive Music	9	5
Embracing Arts	9	5
Emma & PJ	10	8
LASTheatre	8	4
Mbilla Arts	9	4
Musiko Musika	7	5
The Postal Museum	10	6

3.2 Schools' overall experience of the programme

Teachers were asked about the factors that had informed their school's decision to book In-Schools Touring. The results are illustrated in Figure 3 below. The relative importance of the factors mirrored that for the pilot, with the programme being free and inclusive viewed as very important by over 93% of respondents. Schools also placed high value on the opportunity for children to work with professional artists and to include all children in a year group (seen as very important by over 89%). The fact that the arts organisation was going into schools was also very important to 78% of respondents. The role of AND as coordinator was seen as least important but still at least moderately important to over 80% of respondents. Although the sample size for SEND settings was relatively low (accounting for just 8% of respondents⁹), it was interesting to note that all rated the role of AND as very or moderately important. This could be explained by AND's work with SEND settings through the I Am Festival and Network, resulting in AND being viewed as a trusted partner.

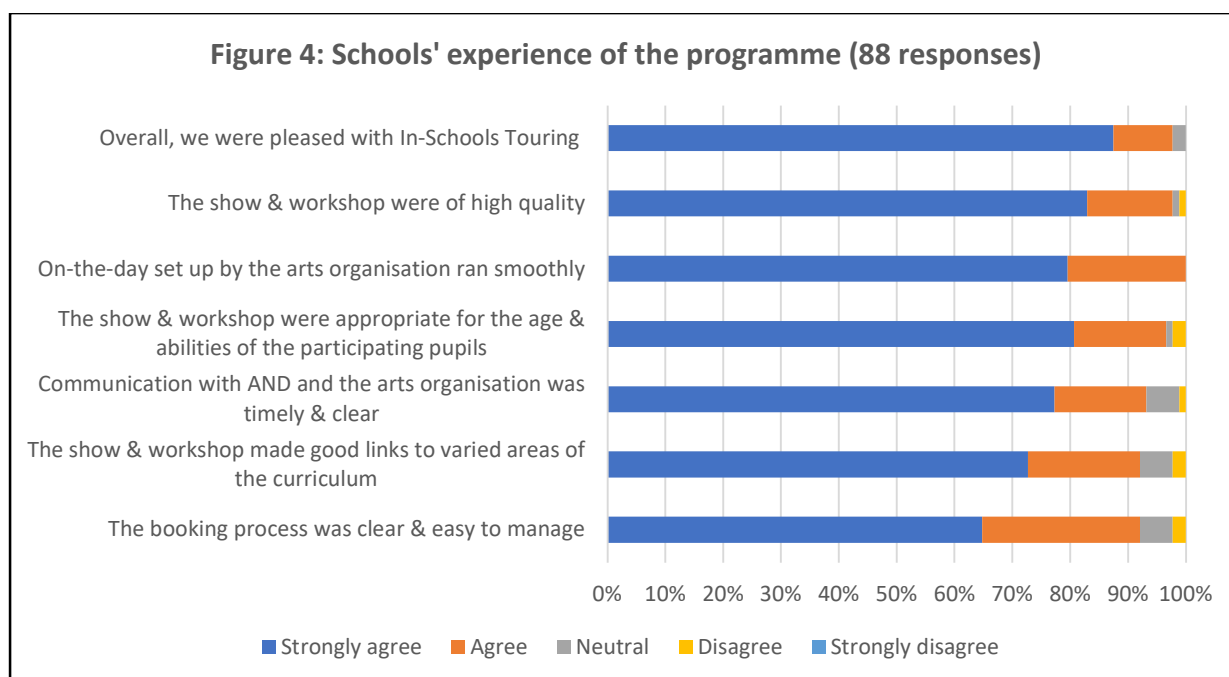
⁹ For reference, 6% of participating schools were SEND settings so this response rate is in line with that proportion.

Figure 3: Factors informing schools' decision to book (88 responses)



The importance of the quality and reputation of delivery organisations decreased slightly from the pilot, with 64% rating it as very important compared to 72% in the pilot. A bigger drop was seen in the importance placed on the choice of artform, falling from 67% in the pilot to 48% in Year 1. Teacher feedback suggested that many schools placed higher value on giving pupils a fun new experience with artists than choosing a specific artform or linking closely to the curriculum. As one teacher put it, 'Something fun, new and innovative delivered by professionals meant the children were fully engaged and enjoyed the experience, thereby learning and benefitting!'

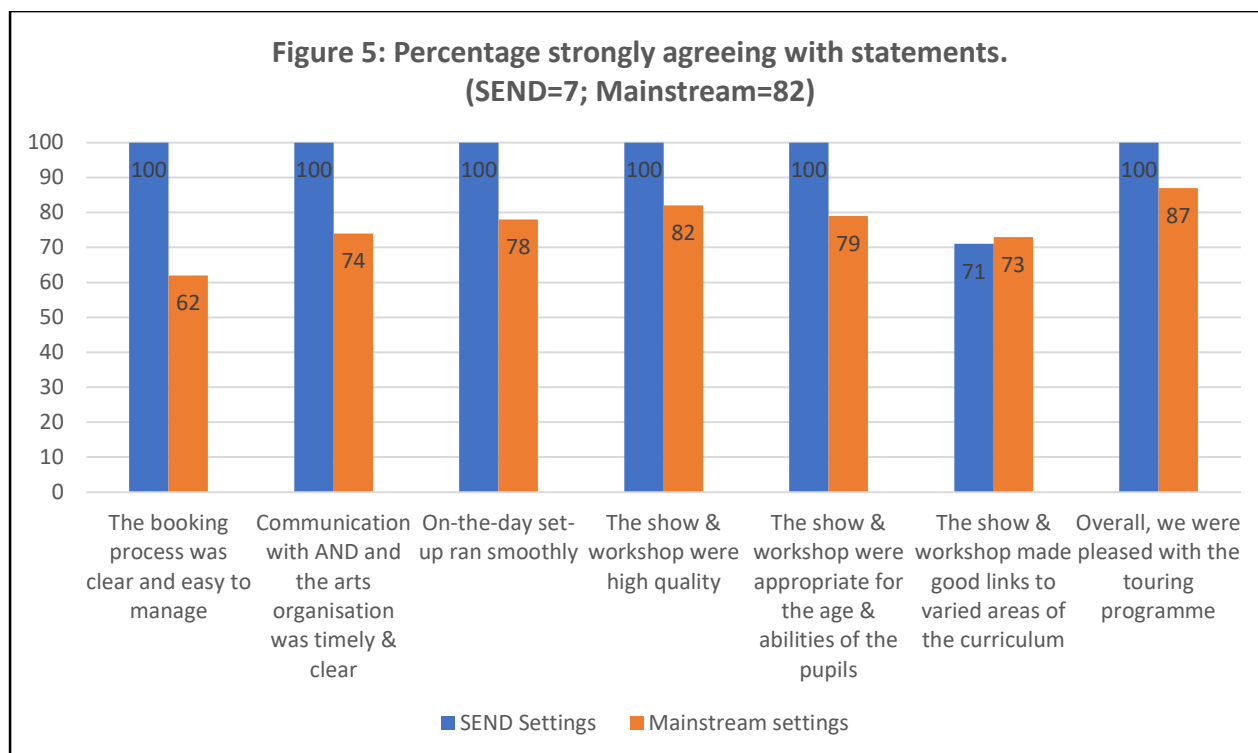
This helps explain why the specific artform was a lower priority for schools. However, it doesn't fully explain why the importance rating dropped so sharply from the pilot. One possible reason is that schools choosing poetry or writing organisations often did so to meet specific school development goals. For example, all schools that booked Apples and Snakes in the pilot and 78% of those that booked Arvon in Year 1 rated the artform as very important. Since each organisation in the pilot worked with 20% of schools - compared to just 10% in Year 1 - their strong ratings had a greater impact on the overall figures in the pilot than they did in Year 1.



Survey respondents were also asked about their experiences of the programme (see Figure 4 above). Overall, 88% of respondents strongly agreed and 10% agreed that they were pleased with In-Schools Touring. Ratings for the quality of the show and workshop, the age and ability appropriateness and the on-the-day set up, were all high although slightly lower than for the pilot. There were differences in feedback about the 10 Delivery Organisations and these reduced ratings were largely attributable to feedback about two organisations where two respondents disagreed that the programme made good links to the curriculum, was appropriate for the ages and abilities of the children and one also disagreed that the show was high quality. Feedback to other questions (such as pupil outcomes) confirmed that teachers were less pleased with one of these organisations (which is not part of the Year 2 programme) whilst the feedback about the second organisation appeared to be the view of a single individual.

Ratings about the booking process and communication with AND and the Delivery Organisations improved from the pilot, confirming the success of changes implemented for Year 1, including earlier handover from AND to the Delivery Organisations and attempts to reduce the volume of emails. However, three respondents disagreed with these statements referring to excessive 'back and forth' to confirm arrangements and 'a lot of paperwork, emails and my time involved.' The AND team have already developed plans to streamline the booking and planning process still further and it will be interesting to track the success of this in Year 2.

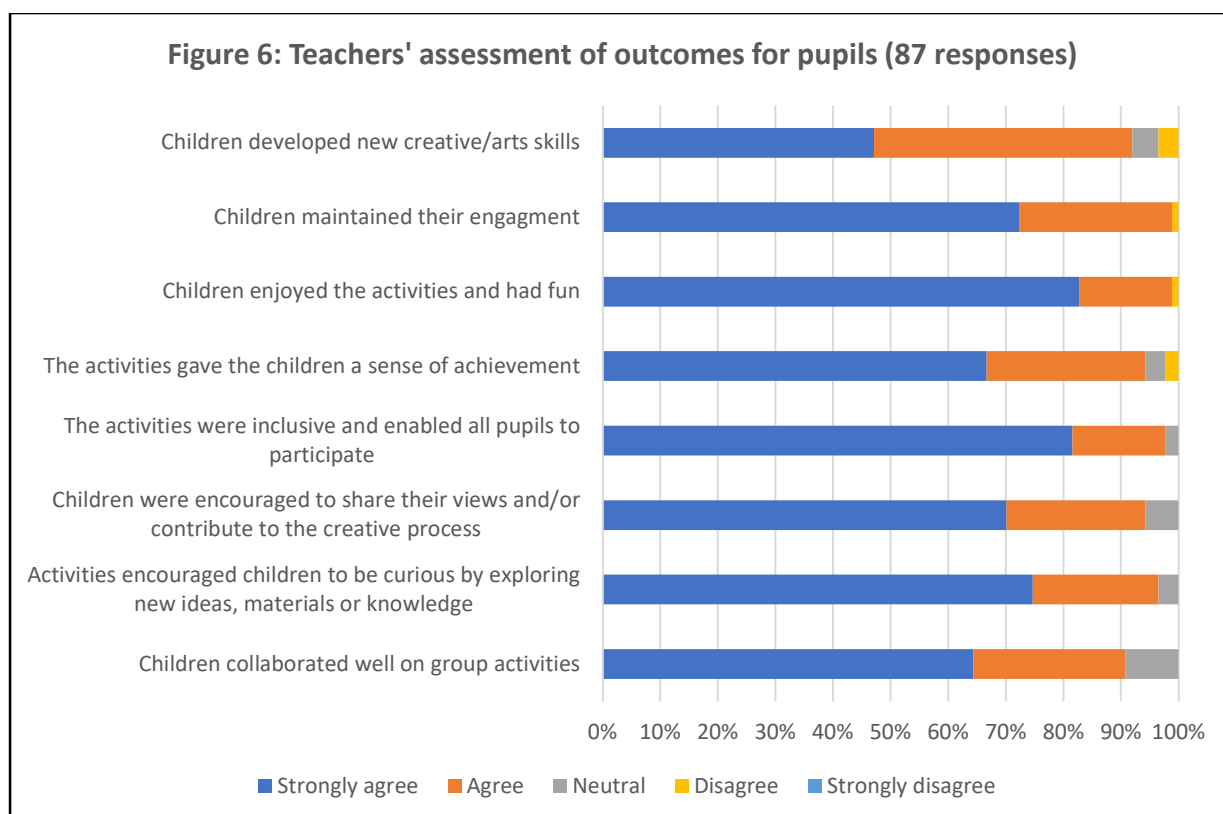
Further analysis of the data revealed that ratings from SEND settings were consistently higher than mainstream settings with 100% of respondents strongly agreeing on the success of all aspects of the booking, communications, set-up and quality of the programme (see Figure 5). Only curriculum links fell short of 100%. It is important to recognise that the sample size of seven SEND settings is small but the results do seem to indicate that the additional support provided by AND to both the Delivery Organisations and SEND schools at planning and delivery, was worthwhile and ensured an extremely positive and inclusive experience for pupils with additional needs.



3.3 Outcomes for pupils

In-Schools Touring had seven objectives for pupils, and responses from teachers indicated that in the vast majority of schools, all objectives were achieved (see Figure 6). Over 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the outcome statements. As in the pilot, the strongest response was for children enjoying themselves and having fun, where 83% strongly agreed and 16% agreed with this statement. Unlike the pilot, a very small number of respondents (up to a maximum of three) disagreed with four of the statements. These responses came from three respondents and related to three separate Delivery Organisations which also scored lower than the average for other pupil outcomes¹⁰.

¹⁰ This included one of the organisations mentioned in 3.2 that received lower ratings for quality, curriculum links and age and ability appropriateness from one school.



Feedback from teachers about the benefits for pupils was overwhelmingly positive. A thematic analysis of the responses revealed the following benefits which align well with In-Schools Touring's intended outcomes and Primary Arts' Theory of Change.

Figure 7: Teachers' perceptions of the main benefits for pupils (87 responses)

Benefits	Description	Frequency
Creativity and self-expression	Opportunities to be imaginative, creative, expressive or work outside traditional classroom constraints.	32
Engagement and enjoyment	Children being highly engaged, enthusiastic and having fun.	29
Experiencing arts and culture - enhancing Cultural Capital	Experiencing live theatre, music, dance, puppetry, poetry, art etc. Often from different/varied cultures.	26
Skill development	Growth in oracy, listening, storytelling, drama, writing, musical skills, or technical/scientific understanding.	24
Confidence and self-esteem	Building self-confidence, pride in achievements and willingness to participate.	20
Inclusion and accessibility	Experiences being inclusive for all pupils (e.g., use of sensory elements and breakout spaces).	18
Teamwork and collaboration	Working with others, communicating and supporting peers.	14
Cross-curricular links	Reinforcement or introduction of cross-curricular knowledge e.g. online safety, African history.	12
Wellbeing and emotional development	Opportunities for reflection, emotional expression and regulation.	8

Cultural identity and heritage	Opportunities for children to see their own cultures represented and/or celebrated.	7
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Feedback demonstrated that the benefits were rich and multifaceted as the following quotes illustrate:

This activity was a fantastic opportunity for the pupils to develop their creativity, work together as a team, and practice perseverance. They also learnt about the important role of the Queen and the exciting life inside the castle which linked to our topic of Kings and Queens.

Engagement, understanding, appreciation and enthusiasm for poetry as a reading and writing opportunity. Increased confidence to play around with vocabulary choices and build descriptive phrases.

Confidence building, pupil voice opportunities, creative drama, oracy, teamwork, listening skills, observation and comprehension of what they had seen.

Opportunity to enjoy a high-quality production, with talented actors who were able to pose 'big questions' to the children in accessible ways. During the workshops children had the opportunity to develop their drama skills, confidence and presentation skills, they were also able to work on inference and prediction skills.

Learning about their musical cultural heritage and how influential it was in the music world; understanding more about different instruments and their unique sounds; learning about a specific musical genre; understanding how music unites people from all cultures; the opportunity to play panpipes.

3.4 Feedback from pupils

In the pilot programme, Delivery Organisations asked pupils three questions:

- Q1 – How do you feel about what you've done today?
- Q2 – Can you tell us about anything you've done today that is new or different?
- Q3 – *Today I found out...*

Feedback gathered from pupils in this way in the pilot gave valuable insights into their experiences and the outcomes of the programme. However, methods used were overly reliant on written responses and for Year 1, the aim was to devise more inclusive approaches. Further considerations included the need for consistency to enable the Evaluator to collate responses across In-Schools Touring; and the workload of the Delivery Organisations and AND staff to record, upload and transcribe responses. As part of this consideration, each organisation was asked to gather feedback in only 50% of their schools. The following changes were agreed in discussion with the Delivery Organisations:

- Q1 – **How do you feel about what you’ve done today?** Pupils were invited to choose from a standard set of eight emotions¹¹. The emotions were presented in text and visual image. In SEND settings, a reduced list of four emotions¹² was used.
- Q2 – **You did some new things today. Which do you think was most interesting?** Rather than an open question, this became a multiple-choice question. Analysis of data from the pilot, revealed that pupils’ responses fell into six categories¹³. Organisations devised a statement for each category.
- Q3 – **Today I found out...** This sentence starter remained the same with a recommendation that gathering responses could be facilitated and scribed by an adult where appropriate.

Q1 – How do you feel about what you’ve done today?

Feedback was gathered from 2,851 pupils in 50 schools, including 3 SEND settings. Responses are illustrated in the word clouds below.

‘Amazed’ was the predominant feeling selected by 684 children, with ‘happy’ in second place, chosen by 583 children. ‘Confused’ was chosen by fewest children (83) whilst ‘bored’ was selected by 107 children. In SEND settings, no child selected bored, and ‘happy’ and ‘excited’ were the predominant emotions, chosen by 34 and 28 children respectively.



Figure 8: Feedback from pupils in 47 mainstream schools.

¹¹ These were the top eight emotions chosen by pupils in the pilot: happy, proud, surprised, excited, good/OK, confused, amazed, bored.

¹² Happy, good/OK, excited, bored.

¹³ Working with artists; artform skills/knowledge/experience; social skills/experience; creativity/imagination; cross-curricular; theme related knowledge and curiosity.

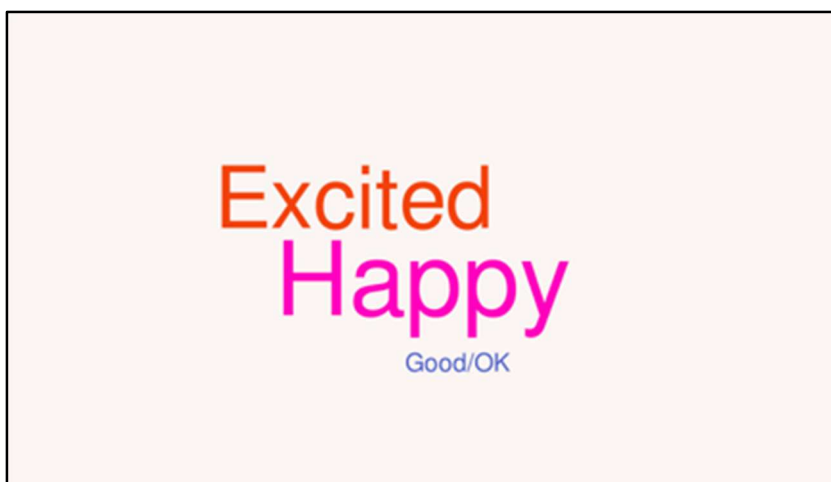


Figure 9: Feedback from pupils in 3 SEND settings.

Q2: You did some new things today. Which do you think was the most interesting?

The ranking of the categories varied across the organisations with all categories receiving the most votes for at least one organisation. However, it was clear that across the 10 organisations, what children found most interesting was working with artists and engaging in creative arts activities, especially if these were new (skills or experiences) and/or had a tangible outcome. Thus, statements selected most frequently included:

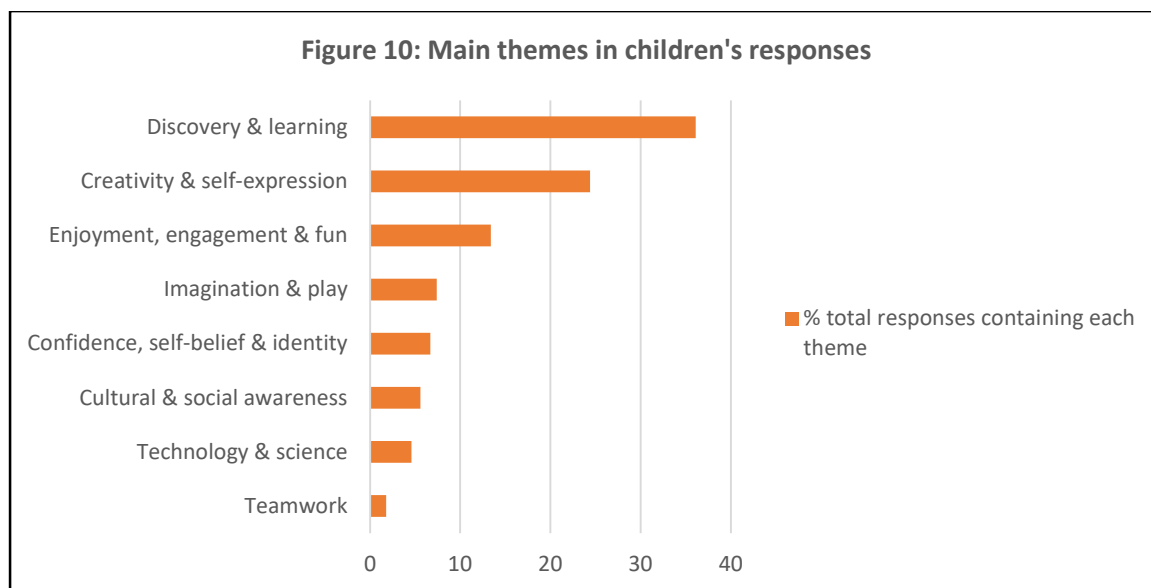
- I met a professional writer; I met some clowns; I heard and saw a band playing in my school.
- I created a puppet; I played an instrument I haven't tried before; I made a story with its own sound effects.

Where performances and workshops had a strong theme or knowledge element, children expressed keen interest in these. Examples included:

- I learnt about children's rights; I learnt about the history of African and Caribbean music and dance; I sang in Spanish.

Q3 – Today I found out...

Responses were collected from over 2,500 children and, not surprisingly, were incredibly varied and reflected both the individual child's interests and the artform and themes of the show and workshop. A thematic analysis was undertaken and the percentage of responses linked to each theme are illustrated in Figure 10.



The themes highlight children's experiences, learning, reflections and emotional engagement. There was crossover in the two most prevalent themes, with children most frequently referring to their engagement with new knowledge, skills or experiences (discovery & learning) and further references to creative practices such as making, writing or performing (creativity & self-expression).

Enjoyment and emotional engagement were widely expressed with many children calling the experience 'fun,' 'amazing' or 'the best day ever.' Children also frequently reported increased confidence, self-belief and sense of identity, often surprised by their talents and evidently proud of their achievements. Imagination and play were central mechanisms through which discovery and creativity were fostered, particularly in activities involving role-play and improvisation. Not all workshops involved teamwork but for those organisations where this was a feature, this emerged strongly in responses.

A notable proportion of responses included cultural and social awareness, as children learnt about diverse traditions, languages and rights. Finally, while less frequent, there was excitement around technology and science from children participating in the minority of programmes that incorporated these elements.

A selection of responses exemplifies these themes.

Today I found out...

- *about a new instrument called djembe drum and learnt about the history of Africa and the Caribbean islands – Year 6*
- *if you have a bit of cardboard paper and a pencil, you can make anything – Year 4*
- *that I can act; that there is bad information – SEND mixed years*
- *about the need to work together to solve a problem – Year 3*
- *that I can make my imagination into a poem – Year 6*
- *that you are you; you are perfect – Y1/2*

- *that anything green can act as a green screen – Year 6*

This distribution of outcomes highlights how arts engagement fosters a holistic developmental experience, combining creativity and cognitive, social and emotional development.

Challenges and best practice

During the year, the Delivery Organisations came together for four Network Days (further details are provided on page 22). The final Network Day took place in May 2025, after programme delivery, and the organisations reflected on all aspects of In-Schools Touring, including gathering feedback from pupils. Whilst the questions remained the same, the organisations had approached this task in different ways which, together with the ages and abilities of the pupils they were working with, affected their experiences of data gathering. The main challenges included:

- reliability of the responses with the risk of children copying friends or selecting a response based on liking an image rather than agreeing with what the image represented,
- reliance on literacy for Q3 (*Today I found out...*) but also for Q2 where pupils who couldn't read needed to remember the six options,
- gathering feedback from SEND pupils,
- finding the time for the evaluation.

The organisations also identified what had worked well with the evaluation questions which included the following:

- Evaluation method/design – using activities linked to the theme/artform.
- Making the evaluation a workshop activity and incorporating it playfully.
- Providing options for responding such as writing or talking to an adult scribe.
- Interviewing (with scribe) or using a Dictaphone for Q3.
- Including images to support the text for Q2.
- Ways of making choices that are invisible to peers, for example, posting into a treasure box.
- Using Widgits¹⁴ (rather than emojis) for Q1 as these are more accessible.

These examples of best practice provide solutions to most of the challenges identified and could usefully be shared with the cohort of Delivery Organisations in Year 2.

Triangulating the evidence

The evaluation was designed to triangulate the evidence on pupil outcomes and it is useful, therefore, to compare the responses from pupils with those from their teachers (see Figures 6 and 7) and the Delivery Organisations. There is very close alignment between these sources of data with all identifying benefits including:

¹⁴ Widgit Symbols are simply drawn, colourful symbols designed to illustrate a single concept clearly and concisely. They are frequently used by schools to support communication with pupils with additional needs.

- engaging in fun, inclusive, enjoyable activities that contributed to feelings of accomplishment and positive wellbeing
- developing capabilities including, creativity, teamwork, confidence, self-belief and arts skills,
- having opportunities to experience live arts events, learn about diverse topics and cultures in interesting and accessible ways, use their imaginations, have their voices heard and express themselves through varied art forms.

3.5 Wider and longer-term impact

Follow-up work

In the follow-up survey (sent six weeks after the visit, with responses from 53 schools), the vast majority of respondents had undertaken some form of follow-up work with pupils, which ranged from class discussions and a written task to reflect on the day, through to integrating the experience into topic-based learning, with the cardboard castle built by Animate Arts, for example, providing the ‘WOW’ moment for several schools embarking on their *Kings and Queens* topic. It was clear in the responses that in many schools, the impact of the visit would extend across the curriculum and beyond the year group involved. In the quotes below, the wider impact has been highlighted in bold:

*Pupils wrote about their workshop in their English lessons the following week and used the art resources provided to create circus-themed art. **Staff have incorporated sensory learning we explored in the CPD as part of their History lessons, for example when learning about WW2, Y6 pupils sampled some food that would have been common at the time.***

*The show was delivered to our children with SEND needs. **Active storytelling and participation have become routine and we have built roleplay into our PSHE sessions.***

*We have used the songs in our music lessons and **intend to build in the lesson plans and resources into our next year's scheme of learning.** We have also listened to the CD that Musiko Musika kindly donated as part of the National Curriculum Listening & Appraising element.*

*The children **completed a sequence of poetry lessons linked to the ideas and suggestion from the CPD in both year 3 and year 6.** The art resources were used to bring the poems to life.*

*We discussed the play with our classes and used this to begin **discussions about misinformation and online safety. This linked to our PSHE, computing and the ideas around the validity of sources in history.***

Lasting benefits for pupils

In the follow-up survey, teachers were asked about pupil outcomes that had persisted or developed over time. The most common responses referred to children continuing to talk about the event and casting it as a highlight of their year, as one teacher described, ‘In a pupil voice questionnaire, many

children from the year group who took part noted the visit as a highlight of their musical experience at our school.' Teachers also reported changed attitudes, motivation and enthusiasm towards arts and creative activities, together with increased confidence and skills. Illustrative quotes include:

The children were so excited and continued to talk about the music and performers for a long time. Lots of our students linked this to their own musical interest and have started taking up more instruments. Interest in learning drumming too.

Oracy skills and confidence have developed.

Children's attitudes towards poetry much more positive.

Children want to perform more - we are channelling this into an end of term performance assembly.

The story is now a favourite that we read again and again and the children often make puppets to use in their play.

Use of resources

In the follow-up survey, teachers reported on their use of the pre-show information, post-show resources, the creative materials, the book box and book list. Ratings for inclusivity were very high with:

- 96% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the resources and activities were accessible for all ages and abilities in primary and SEND settings (the remainder neither agreed nor disagreed).
- 92% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the book box and book list were inclusive (the remainder neither agreed nor disagreed).

Survey respondents were asked about their use of the resources. Some of the questions also referred to 'other teachers' and between 8-14% responded 'don't know'. Key findings included:

- 76% used the information provided by AND to inform parents/carers about the visit.
- 82% used the pre-show resource to introduce pupils to the project before the visit.
- 64% used the visual guide to introduce pupils to the project before the visit.
- 65% were happy for the visit to be a stand-alone event, but...
- 64% used post-show resources to undertake follow-up activities (10-, 30- and 60-minute activities).
- 27% said there was no time in the curriculum for follow-up work.
- 10% didn't find anything in the post-show resource that was relevant to their planned curriculum but all respondents felt there were activities relevant to the children they taught.

These findings confirm the utility of the resources provided to schools and support their ongoing use.

The majority (64%) of respondents had used the creative materials in teacher-planned activities although 22% had used them in activities suggested by the Delivery Organisations. Use was equally split between the year group involved in the visit and other year groups. Ten respondents (20%) said they hadn't used the materials yet but were planning to do so in activities such as Arts Weeks at the end of the summer term. In some schools, the creative materials had been added to the schools' general art supplies, but the majority cited specific projects including:

- Mothers' Day cards.
- A *Very Hungry Caterpillar* collage.
- Costume-making workshops for families linked to World Book Day.
- Circus-themed art and craft.
- Glue and lollipop sticks used in science projects.
- To bring writing to life and support poetry.

It was clear that schools were extremely grateful for the creative materials and books, especially as budgets are so tight. It also enabled teachers to act on new-found creative approaches introduced in the CPD, visit and resources, such as making puppets to integrate in storytelling.

3.6 Outcomes for school staff

The CPD

In line with recommendations from the pilot, schools were strongly encouraged to take up the offer of a CPD session before the visit to prepare relevant staff for the visit and extend the impact by sharing skills more widely across the school. Ninety of the 100 schools booked a CPD session. Of the 89 schools that completed the post-visit survey, 80 booked CPD but, owing to issues with timing and capacity, nine schools did not. An earlier hand-over from AND to the Delivery Organisations is planned for Year 2 which may mitigate timing and capacity issues.

Participants completed a short survey at the end of the CPD session; 571 responses were received from 86 schools¹⁵. Attendance was evenly split between staff who would be involved in the visit and those from the wider school, with strong representation from senior leaders. Participants included:

- 20 Heads/Exec Heads (4%)
- 49 Assistant/Deputy Heads (9%)
- 23 Arts leads (4%)
- 89 other subject leads (16%)
- 357 class teachers (63%)
- 77 teaching support staff (14%)
- 47 'other' (8%), including: 16 SENDCo¹⁶

¹⁵ This equates to just over 50% of participants. Delivery organisations reported that occasionally they ran out of time to administer the survey and some members of staff needed to leave early to meet other commitments.

¹⁶ SEND Coordinator.

Participants were asked for three words to describe the CPD. The results are illustrated below.



Figure 11: Three words to describe the CPD

Just over half (51%) chose 'fun' as one of their words, with other frequent choices including: engaging (25%), informative (20%), creative (16%), interesting (14%), inspiring (11%), and interactive (11%). This range suggests that the organisations struck a good balance, providing sessions that were enjoyable and creative but also useful and motivating. The utility of the CPD was affirmed by survey respondents¹⁷ with 96% agreeing or strongly agreeing that knowing more about the performance and workshop would help them plan how best to deploy learning support, how best to prepare children for the visit, and how to use the visit in curriculum planning.

All respondents were asked to rate their experiences of the CPD, and a minimum of 96% agreed or strongly agreed that the CPD was high quality, the activities inclusive and they had welcomed the opportunity to participate in creative and practical activities (see Figure 12). Typical responses included,

Best CPD we've ever had! And I've worked here for 19 years!!!

The leaders of the session were engaging, professional, friendly and made us all feel valued.

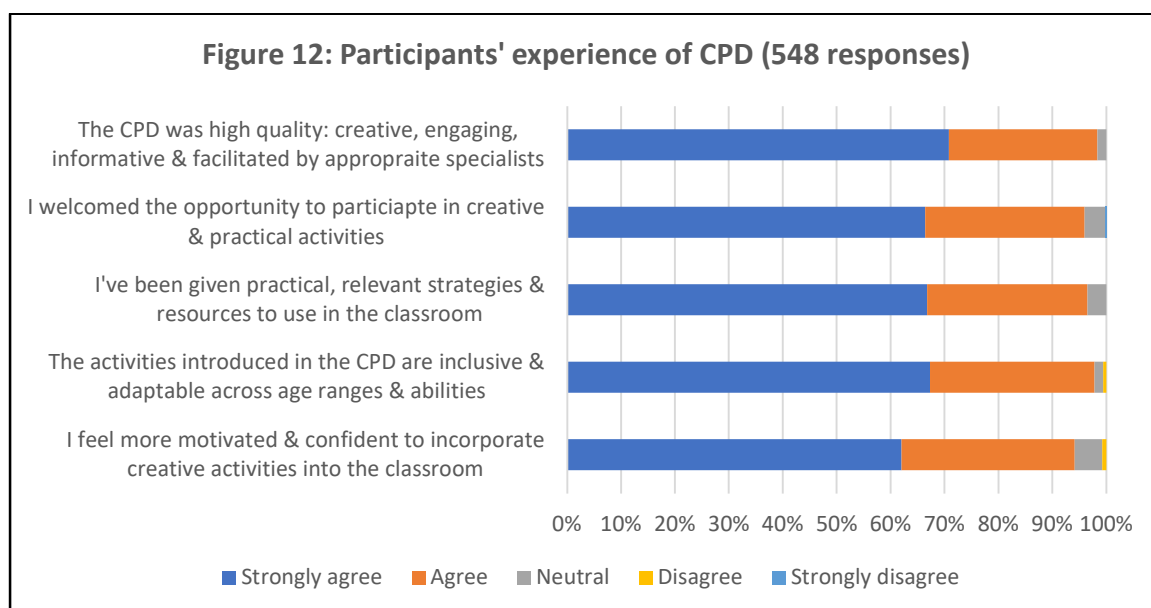
The second quote above suggests that as in the pilot, participating in a creative session achieved additional benefits linked to staff wellbeing which is a mid-term outcome on Primary Arts' Theory of Change. The following quotes illustrate these benefits:

¹⁷ This question was only asked of the 283 staff members in the year group that would be participating in the visit.

I really enjoyed this session. After a hard day this was amazing. I came out of work feeling happy and in a great mood.

Thanks so much. You made everyone smile and for this time, we were able to forget our troubles and enjoy being together.

I usually go home really stressed and heavy with the day but in that yellow door exercise I felt the monsters leaving... I feel completely light.



Almost all respondents cited specific activities or approaches they would use in the classroom with 96% agreeing or strongly agreeing this objective had been achieved. As one teacher explained,

The storytelling activity is brilliant, I'm going to use it tomorrow. It's great for getting everyone involved - will really help with speech and language, which is a major area of challenge for our children.

The CPD also raised confidence and motivation to incorporate creative activities across the curriculum. Depending on the artform and focus of the session, teachers referred to outcomes such as greater use of sensory activities or recognising the value of getting children to move and use their bodies. Reflecting on the sessions, Delivery Organisations highlighted how some staff members were sceptical or nervous at the outset, but this generally dissipated during the session. Putting people at ease and taking the fear out of facilitating creative activities was a key element in the success of the CPD (and a key element in Primary Arts achieving sustainable impact). One teacher commented, 'Thank you so much! This made me a bit less scared of drama which is a difficult task!'

Although ratings were very high, there were a small number of neutral responses and a very small number of 'disagrees' to the statements. Feedback indicated two issues that led to these responses: the content being enjoyable and useful as preparation for the visit but having limited professional

development benefit; and the content being targeted at one Key Stage rather than being applicable across the age range in primary schools. As one teacher said, 'It was a pre-session introduction for the teachers. Teachers enjoyed the session but struggled to see any professional development that could be applied to their own practice.'

These issues could be addressed in the future through clearer briefing (and where necessary, support) for Delivery Organisations and potentially, making it clear to school staff that the CPD would focus on a specific age range.

Overall benefits for school staff

In the post-visit survey, respondents reflected on the outcomes for them and other school staff from the CPD and the performance and workshop. Thematic analysis of the responses identified the following areas of benefit:

Figure 13: Main benefits for teachers (87 responses)

Benefits	Description	Frequency
Creative teaching ideas and strategies	Gained ideas for incorporating e.g. drama, art, storytelling and music into the curriculum.	34
Confidence building	Increased confidence in delivering creative subjects e.g. poetry, drama, and music.	26
Inclusive practice & SEND strategies	Improved awareness of inclusive methods, particularly for SEND learners.	22
Classroom application & curriculum links	Practical strategies, tools or resources for classroom planning or delivery.	21
Sensory learning approaches	Use of senses and low-cost sensory tools to enhance learning.	16
Teamwork and collaboration, supporting wellbeing	Opportunity for staff bonding, collaborative learning or shared experience.	14
Engagement and enjoyment	Descriptions of the CPD being fun, inspiring and motivating.	13
Subject-specific arts and creative skills	Specific skills such as teaching djembe or poetry, or making puppets.	12
Working with diverse cultures	Learning about and integrating cross-cultural or heritage-based content.	9
Technology and cross-curricular tools	Use of tools such as music apps or creative writing across subjects.	6

The CPD sessions, performances, and workshops provided meaningful professional development for teachers, particularly by: introducing creative, inclusive teaching methods across the arts; equipping staff with practical ideas for creative and engaging lessons, often with minimal resources; building confidence to apply creative pedagogies across the curriculum; and encouraging teamwork and fostering a supportive and collaborative environment among staff, thus promoting wellbeing.

3.7 Outcomes for the Delivery Organisations

In response to recommendations in the pilot evaluation, the nature of the relationship with the cultural organisations delivering the In-Schools Touring programme was clarified: for this strand of work, A New Direction is a commissioner, not a partner. Terminology shifted accordingly with lead representatives from the 10 ‘Delivery Organisations’ invited to attend four, day-long, in-person, ‘Network Meetings’ across the year, each with a specific focus:

1. A general introduction to Primary Arts, In-Schools Touring (including learning from the pilot) and the other organisations (September 2024).
2. Access and inclusion (November 2024).
3. Evaluation (January 2025).
4. Reflection and celebration (May 2025).

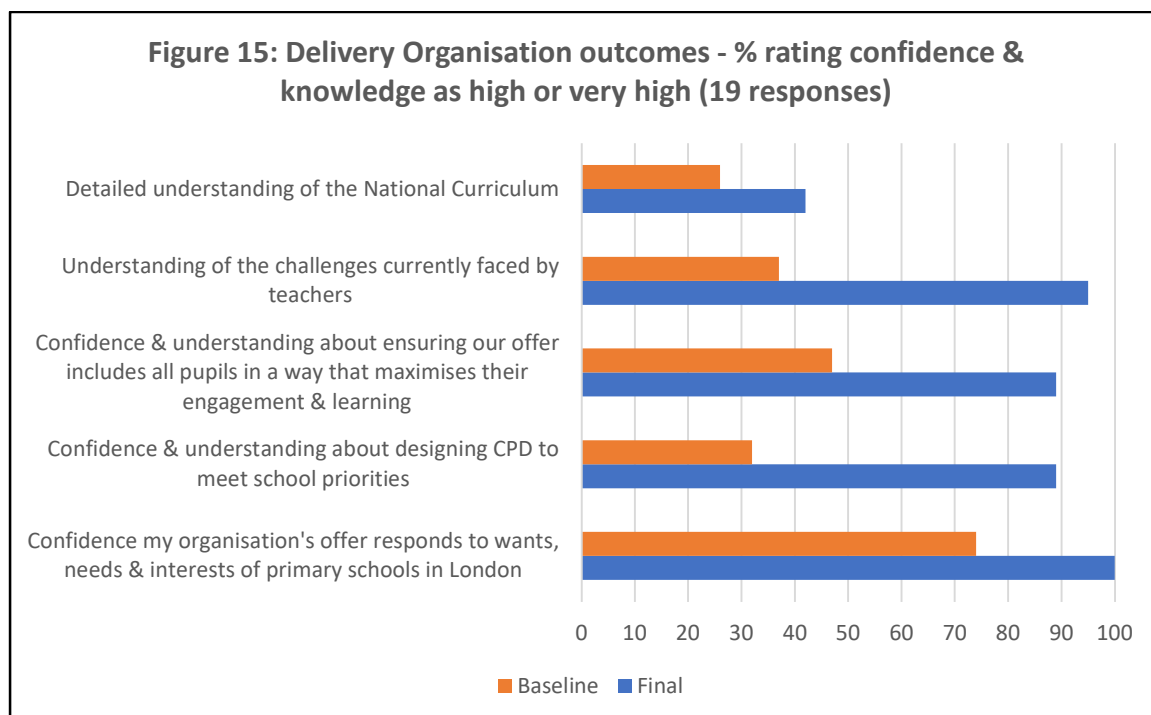
Participants at the Network Meetings completed a baseline and final survey in sessions 1 and 4, which included a rating scale linked to the In-Schools Touring objectives for the Delivery Organisations. The mean ratings are presented in Figure 14 together with those from the pilot. As in the pilot, increases in the ratings were evident for all outcomes and excepting for, ‘detailed understanding of the national curriculum,’ these increases were greater than in the pilot. Year 1 participants had lower baseline ratings for all outcomes compared to the pilot which may account for the increased degree of change. The greatest change was in participants’ confidence to design relevant CPD which probably reflects the fact that this was a new area of delivery for some individuals. However, the increased ratings for the top four outcomes¹⁸ suggests that the Network Meetings and additional support provided by AND staff were effective in developing the relevant confidence and understanding of participants. It also suggests a cohort open to learn from others and improve their practice.

Figure 14: Delivery Organisation outcomes – individuals’ ratings on a five-point scale (In descending order of degree of change)	Baseline mean score	Final mean rating	Change in rating
Confidence & understanding about designing CPD to meet school priorities	3.37 3.45	4.32 4.09	+0.95 +0.64
Confidence my organisation's offer responds to wants, needs & interests of primary schools in London	4.00 4.27	4.79 4.64	+0.79 +0.37
Confidence & understanding about ensuring our offer includes all pupils in a way that maximises their engagement & learning	3.68 3.82	4.42 4.45	+0.74 +0.63
Understanding of the challenges currently faced by teachers	3.42 4.18	4.16 4.36	+0.74 +0.63
Detailed understanding of the National Curriculum	3.11 3.27	3.47 3.73	+0.36 +0.46

Key Year 1 (19 matched responses)
 Pilot year (11 matched responses)

¹⁸ Network Meetings did not directly address the National Curriculum.

As can be seen in Figure 15, by the end of the programme, at least 89% of participants¹⁹ rated their capabilities as high or very high for four of the five outcomes.



In the final survey, participants identified key takeaways from their experience of the programme. These were varied and often unique to the specific organisation or individual, but a small number of common areas emerged:

- Increased knowledge and confidence to work with SEND children in mainstream and SEND settings.
- Greater appreciation of the diversity of school environments and locations in London.
- Developed practice in relation to primary schools, specifically, new skills in evaluation, designing and delivery CPD and working effectively in SEND settings.
- Affirmed the value of the organisation's work and identified areas to build on.

Delivery Organisations' reflections on the Network Meetings

Delivery Organisation leads were asked to rate the usefulness of the Network Meetings. The mean rating was 8/10 but the range was 5.4 to 10, indicating the diverging views of participants. Those giving a high score described the days as 'a rare opportunity' and 'really valuable and inspiring'. Regardless of the score given, all participants identified benefits which included the following (the number of responses is bracketed):

- **Peer learning and best-practice sharing (18)** – *It was brilliant to meet the other organisations and to share practice and learn from their approaches and ideas.*

¹⁹ This represents 17 of the 19 survey respondents.

- **Opportunities to reflect on and develop own practice** (7) – *The Network Days have also gently identified things that we could be doing better.*
- **Getting to know AND and the programme** (4) – *Information on AND so useful when in schools and discussing the wider project.*
- **Collaboration and community-building** (3) – *It was useful to generate a sense of community and collaboration among the organisations.*
- **Insights on access and inclusion** (3) – *I found the session on access and inclusion particularly useful, given that it's an area of practice that we were initially less familiar with.*
- **Insights on evaluation** (3) – *I especially found the evaluation day useful...it really opened my eyes.*

The reason a small minority of participants gave the Network Meetings a lower score was the length of the sessions with some feeling that 'there are definitely diminishing returns after about a half-day activity.' Six participants suggested shorter days ranging from half-days to an earlier finish time with an allied suggestion (from four participants) that 'sections of information could be distilled down and distributed in email form.' However, this was a minority view and feedback also indicated that some information provided in emails had been missed by a small number of organisations (such as the requirement for delivery teams to attend a Facilitators' Onboarding session), reinforcing the need for information sharing in-person. Other suggested improvements included providing a summary of action points after each day and scheduling the final day closer to the end of the delivery period.

Outcomes for delivery teams

In line with a recommendation from the evaluation of the pilot, online Facilitator Onboarding sessions were provided for members of the delivery teams²⁰ shortly before the delivery period. The sessions included background on AND, Primary Arts and In-Schools Touring together with information on programme evaluation, inclusion and safeguarding. Freelancers were paid to attend these sessions.

Facilitators completed a baseline survey before attending the Onboarding and a final survey at the end of programme delivery. The baseline was completed by 33 individuals and the final survey by 31 individuals. However, owing primarily to changes in team members, there were just 25 facilitators who completed both surveys, and this is the data used for the rating scale linked to the achievement of programme objectives (see Figure 16).

²⁰ A choice of four, 1.5-hour sessions were offered and attendance was, in theory, compulsory.

Figure 16: Delivery Team outcomes – individuals’ ratings on a five-point scale (n=25) (In descending order of degree of change)	Baseline mean score	Final mean rating	Change in rating
Understanding about AND, In-Schools Touring & wider Primary Arts programme	2.36	3.52	+1.16
Confidence & understanding about evaluating arts programmes in schools	2.96	3.64	+0.68
Confidence, experience & understanding about how to work with primary aged pupils in their settings	3.88	4.48	+0.60
Confidence & understanding about ensuring my work in school includes all pupils in a way that maximises their engagement & learning	3.88	4.44	+0.56
Understanding of the challenges currently faced by teachers	3.56	3.84	+0.28
Detailed understanding of the National Curriculum	2.96	3.20	+0.24

The mean ratings for all outcomes increased with ‘understanding about AND, In-Schools Touring and the wider Primary Arts programme’ showing the greatest change. The fact that the baseline for this outcome was low (with 6 participants rating their understanding as average; 11 as low; and 3 as very low) affirms the need for this onboarding as the facilitators are the interface between Primary Arts and school staff and pupils. By the end of the programme, over half the facilitators rated their understanding as high or very high with only 4 rating this as low. The range of ratings decreased between the baseline and final surveys, but the breadth of this range was notable and indicated very varied levels of capabilities amongst the delivery teams. Respondents were asked how long they had worked with their Delivery Organisation²¹ but there was no correlation between this and capability ratings.

In the final survey, respondents were asked how useful they had found the onboarding, the mean was 6/10 but the range was 0-10. Those giving a low score mostly questioned the necessity of the sessions, with one practitioner asserting, ‘Freelancers’ time is at a premium. Although it was nice to meet the team, I didn’t think it was necessary...for more seasoned facilitators.’ It is worth noting that this practitioner was working for a Delivery Organisation that hadn’t realised they were supposed to be paying their facilitators to attend the Onboarding and this may have been a factor in the response.

Asked what they had found useful from the Onboarding, survey respondents identified specific and varied benefits, but a strong theme emerged of understanding the wider context within which they were working and ‘feeling part of something bigger’. Specific benefits included,

- Meeting other practitioners (13)
- Overview of AND and In-Schools Touring (10)
- Hearing other people’s experiences (6)
- Clear explanation of the evaluation (6).

²¹ Given the choices: First time; less than a year; 1-4 years; 5+ years.

Confidence and understanding about evaluation recorded the second highest change in mean ratings and comments in the survey indicated that for some practitioners, this was a significant area of development. As one wrote,

I found it useful to hear how the evaluation had been planned. I was inspired by the thoughtfulness and meticulous work that had gone into the planning process and will try to take a similar approach for any evaluation I have ownership of in the future.

The evaluation is a good example, however, of the challenges inherent in delivering a unified approach to planning, support and guidance to organisations with diverse artform practices, employing facilitators with varied levels of expertise, and who are working with children across the primary spectrum of ages and abilities. Hence, another survey respondent wrote, ‘The evaluation was not suited to our KS1 audience. It would have been nice to have some ideas on how to adapt it to our audience.’ (See Section 3.4 for further discussion on gathering feedback from children).

Suggestions for improving the Onboarding were wide ranging and often reflected the existing experience level of the practitioner and also, the training provided by the relevant Delivery Organisation. Where comprehensive training had been provided and/or experience was high, respondents tended to feel the sessions were too long or unnecessary. Brevity was the main recommendation (albeit from a minority) but an equal number of respondents praised the sessions as ‘concise, engaging and enlightening.’ In terms of content, there were requests for advice on working in SEND settings and information about the challenges schools are facing. Whilst these are important areas of professional development for facilitators, it could be argued that this should be covered by the Delivery Organisations.

Key takeaways for the facilitators from their involvement in In-Schools touring were similar to those highlighted by the lead representatives (see page 24) and included:

- Improved understanding of primary schools; current challenges; and the differences between schools and how to work with different age groups – *As someone who hadn’t delivered workshops before, I learnt a lot about how to deliver to children and how much that varies between age groups.*
- The need and ability to be responsive and adapt to the situation in a specific school setting – *Often, what we plan is very different from what gets delivered, I really like being responsive, on the spot.*
- Increased knowledge and confidence about making work more inclusive and how to work most effectively with SEND children – *eye-opening to see teachers/support staff working with SEND pupils, it built my confidence to observe their practice.*

3.8 Recommendations for In-Schools Touring

- **Consolidate and share best practice on evaluation methods:** Disseminate the inclusive feedback methods and evaluation tools that worked well in Year 1 across all Delivery

Organisations ahead of Year 2. Consider purchasing Dictaphones for use by each organisation.

- **Tailor CPD content and support:** Ensure CPD sessions balance preparation for visits with professional development and, if appropriate, clarify where content is intended for a specific Key Stage. Provide support to Delivery Organisations with less experience of delivering CPD.
- **Refine facilitator onboarding:** Review and reduce the content of onboarding sessions while maintaining key information on inclusion, evaluation and the wider context of Primary Arts.
- **Continue support for SEND inclusion:** Maintain the tailored planning and delivery support offered to SEND settings, given the exceptional feedback from these schools.
- **Improve clarity of communication with Delivery Organisations:** Build on improvements from Year 1 by providing succinct action summaries after Network Days and ensuring key information is shared both verbally and in writing.
- **Streamline communication with schools:** Consider ways to avoid duplication between AND and Delivery organisations and minimise emails to schools.

4 Go & See

4.1 Attendances

10 cultural venues
67 schools visiting 77 events²²
3,908 pupils²³
647 accompanying adults (school staff and parents)

Responses were received from 31 of the 34 school visits made to the Winter programme of Go & See but only 17 of the 41 school visits made to the Summer programme. This was due in part to certain activities taking place close to the end of term and also, a technical issue at AND which meant surveys were not sent to schools as scheduled for some of the events and by the time this error was recognised, it was the end of term. The response rate for the Winter programme was very high at 91% but only 41% for the Summer programme, with an overall rate of 64%.

The total number of children booked was slightly higher than the number that attended. The most common reason cited by schools for these differences was pupil absence. In a small number of cases, one or two pupils had also left the school. Although a minority response, it is worth noting that in two schools, SEND children were excluded from the trip by the school. In one case this

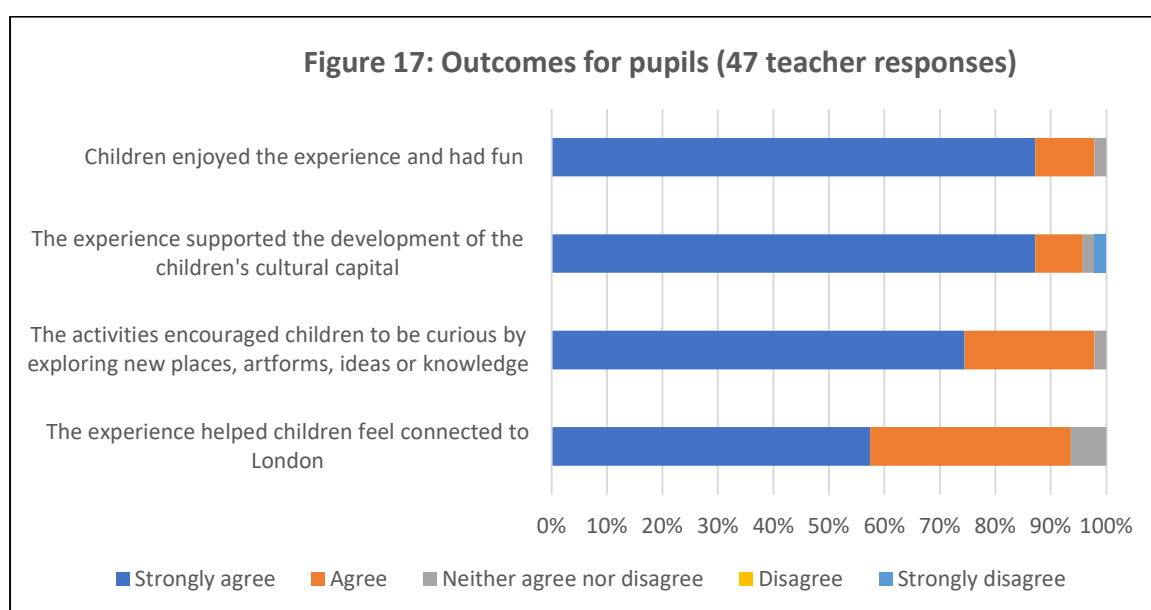
²² Five schools were affected by the cancellation of a performance at the Polka Theatre in Summer 2025 due to flooding. Two attended alternative performances in July, one is attending an alternative in October and the remaining two will book alternative performances in the autumn term. They have therefore all been included in these numbers.

²³ A New Direction's proposal set a target of 4,500 tickets for children in this programme, which proved unaffordable in Year 1 given the high number of tickets needed for accompanying adults. The total of 3,903 is from a total allocation of 3,996 but was affected by some child absences, and included one school with 70 pupils which dropped out the day before their planned visit to the Royal Academy due to insufficient parent helpers. The combined total number of pupils participating in the Primary Arts programme this year was 13,374, which is higher than the target set in the proposal of 11,500 (7,000 touring, 4,500 Go & See).

resulted from a risk assessment undertaken by the school and in the other, a parent wasn't available to accompany their child. Suggested improvements included earlier notification of the access budget but in reality, the delay was probably internal to the school rather than the timing of information provided by A New Direction.

4.2 Outcomes for pupils

Over 94% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the desired outcomes for pupils had been achieved with the highest ratings for children enjoying the experience, having fun and developing cultural capital. The findings are broadly similar to those for the pilot except for 'children feel connected to London' which had an average rating of 4.13 in the pilot and 4.51 this year. There is no obvious reason for this difference.



Asked about the main benefits for the children, teachers' comments illustrated how the desired outcomes had been achieved.

- **Fun and enjoyment** – the majority of comments included words such as *enjoyment*, *excitement*, *immersion* and *amazing*.

Our children really engaged with the art work and had so many questions following the experience. They loved almost being a part of the art and were excited to be able to manipulate certain pieces. We had so many boys that were really engaged and interested in all of the art, when our data shows that usually our boys aren't as engaged with art as our girls. A lot of the children said that it was 'the best thing ever'.

- **Cultural capital**²⁴ – through new experiences such as attending a live performance for the first time, understanding social etiquette in cultural spaces and seeing their own cultural backgrounds represented at the event.

The children thoroughly enjoyed this experience and had an amazing time at the theatre. For many of them, it was their first time attending a theatre or watching a live pantomime, and they were brimming with excitement and curiosity both before and after the performance. This exposure to live theatre, encouraged many children to portray their own stories through role play and further in class discussion.

Learning social expectations of visiting a theatre.

It was the first time that the majority of the class visited a theatre and saw a live show. Before, most of them had only been to a cinema. They also saw a diverse show with actresses from different backgrounds and also learnt some sign language.

- **Exploring new places and feeling connected to London** – several teachers referred to the journey as a learning experience in itself.

Children going on a journey and exploring the underground and different areas of London. (Year 1 pupils from a school in Chiswick travelling to Islington).

The children loved travelling outside of their local community to visit a theatre to watch a production. (Year 5/6 pupils from a school in Limehouse travelling to Greenwich Theatre).

- **Encouraging curiosity, imagination and creativity** – as illustrated in the quotes below.

They were really inspired by seeing the animation on large screen. They felt it was a very special building. They loved using the resources to make their own 3D stop motion animations. The free modelling resources made their animations look so professional and they were able to discuss, predict and analyse the clever plot lines and jokes to add to their own work.

The experience sparked their creativity and encouraged them to think beyond the ordinary. Meeting a character like the boy with wings helped them explore themes of heroism, courage, and believing in themselves.

- **Curriculum links** – several respondents referred to general and/or specific curriculum links.

Children now have prior knowledge of Vikings and some of the stories, names that they will come across in Year 4 when they learn about Vikings as a history topic.

²⁴ See this blog about Cultural Capital in schools. <https://nationalcollege.com/news/ofsted-cultural-capital-guide>

Watching a puppet show, which supports the DT curriculum, reading and writing.

Immersion into art, awe and wonder, fascination and links to the upcoming art unit of work on Chris Ofilli in their art unit next term.

Children's speech & language skills retelling the story and creating recounts of our trip.

- **New experiences for pupils who are under-served** – the inclusive nature of the programme and additional support offered, facilitated access for children who are often excluded from cultural visits.

Our pupils rarely get the chance to go out due to their needs and [school] budgets so this was magical for my pupils. Also, it was the first time the school has ever been to the Little Angel Theatre and we absolutely loved it, and as we have signed up to the Hackney 10 x 10 programme it gave our under tens a theatre opportunity. (SEND school)

Children who normally find it challenging to go on trips were supported to access a theatre event with space for a movement break. Many of the children are also in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and had never been to a theatre before, so it was a great opportunity to enrich their cultural capital. (SEND pupils in a mainstream school)

4.3 Outcomes for Teachers

Online CPD was developed for the visual arts events, specifically Frameless (in the Winter and Summer programmes) and the Royal Academy (Summer only). There was a total of 11 survey respondents from these events but only five said that staff had accessed the CPD. All five agreed or strongly agreed that the CPD was engaging, informative and creative, had helped them prepare pupils for the show, and provided practical and relevant strategies and resources for the classroom.

Of the six schools that didn't access the CPD, the main cause was relevant staff not having time with two also reporting that the subject wasn't a CPD priority for their schools.

Responses to this and other questions suggested that staff had used the other resources provided. Examples included:

The information sent out was very useful - especially the pre and post show information to share with the children, it helped me focus my questioning.

The resources provided before the performance were incredibly helpful. The visual story allowed some of our children with additional needs to access the performance more easily, and the teachers valued the supportive materials, which guided meaningful questions and discussions both before and after the show.

The children love Julia Donaldson so using the trailer for the show and other materials really built-up excitement for reading in general.

Although teachers were asked about the main benefits for them from the event and the CPD, the majority referred to their witnessing outcomes such as cultural capital for pupils, for example, 'Seeing the joy on my pupils' faces was unbeatable!' Comments also included:

- **Opportunities for pupil learning arising from the event**

We are having a creative afternoon, where the children are planning and making their own artwork (with no set outcome). [Frameless] gave them lots of inspiration and gave some of them the comfort of knowing that there are so many different forms and themes of artwork available.

It was an opportunity for discussion regarding the performance and elements that make up a performance (script, rehearsals, production team, sound team, director).

- **Seeing children in new environments**

School trips give teachers opportunities to get to know children better and see the children in a different environment.

- **Learning for teachers**

A better understanding of how digital art enhances the classroom experience and how to build digital art in the curriculum.

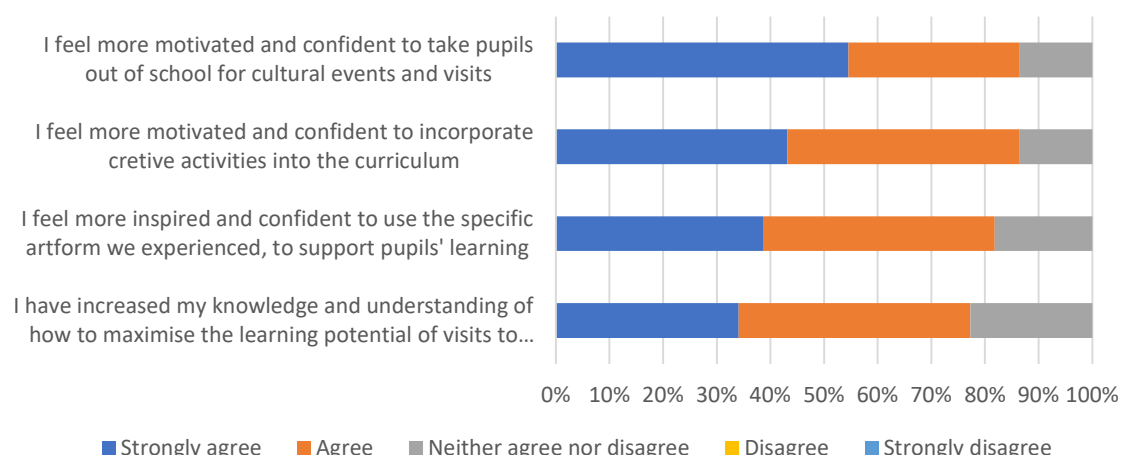
Useful to think about ways to engage pupils in other trips.

The show provided fresh inspiration for how I might use drama, visual storytelling, and character exploration in my teaching to deepen pupils' comprehension and enjoyment of reading.

Better knowledge and understanding of the book and a chance to see how to incorporate puppetry into theatre

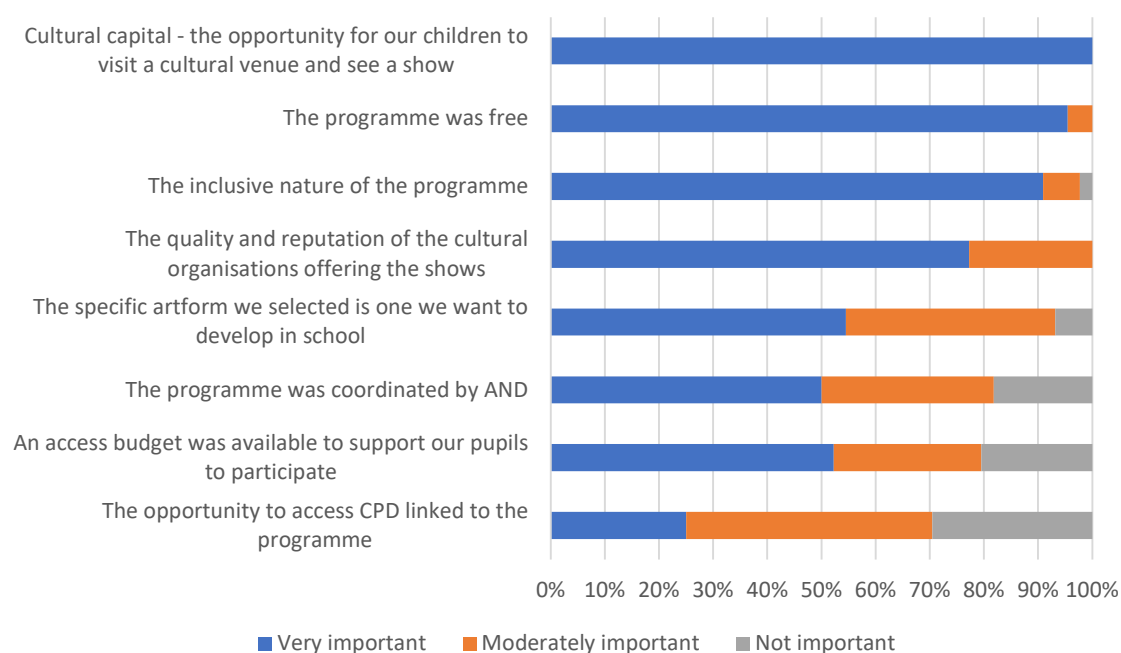
Asked about the desired outcomes, as in the pilot, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that these had been achieved (see Figure 18 below). Motivation and confidence to take pupils on cultural visits, to incorporate creative activities in the curriculum and to use the specific artform to support learning, had all increased for at least 82% of respondents. And generalising what they had learnt from Go & See about how to maximise the learning potential of visits had also increased for 77% of respondents.

Figure 18: Outcomes for teachers (44 responses)



4.4 Reflections on the Go & See programme

Figure 19: The importance of programme factors (44 responses)



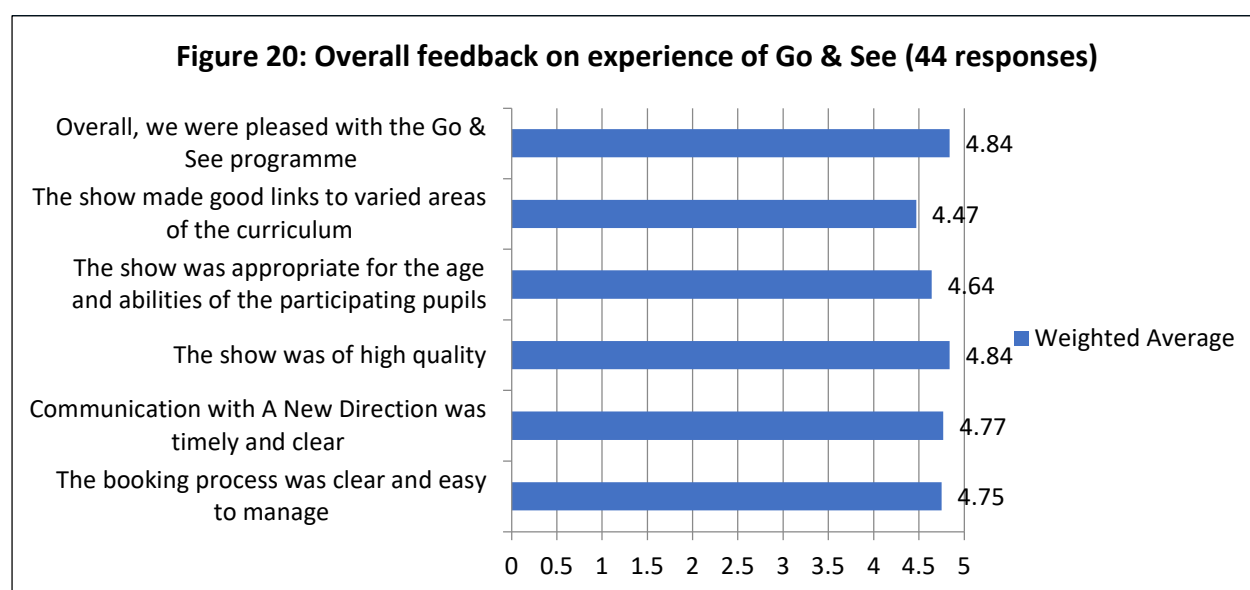
Teachers were asked about the factors that had influenced their decision to book Go & See (see Figure 19 above). As in the pilot, the chance to develop cultural capital was very important for all respondents and the fact that the programme was inclusive and free was very important for over 90% of respondents (the survey for the pilot didn't list inclusivity as a factor). For over 75% of respondents, the quality and reputation of the cultural organisations was very important, and the provision of an access budget was very important for 50% of respondents but not important for 20%, suggesting this was a school-specific factor. As with the pilot, the CPD was the least important factor.

All aspects of the Go & See experience were rated very highly (see Figure 20), with all mean scores above 4.4 (where 5 = strongly agree). A New Direction factors (the booking process and communication) and provider factors (quality, curriculum links and pitch) were equally well regarded. The ratings in the pilot were all the same (for curriculum links) or slightly higher but the sample size of 15 for the pilot survey was relatively low so these differences are not significant.

General comments were overwhelmingly positive, however, after referring to visiting Frameless as ‘brilliant,’ one teacher did note,

Needed more of a warning of how much nudity was in one of the rooms – it was a lot for the age group/demographic. We would have left the room during this point, and then returned later if we knew the nudity was on every wall and at the scale it was.

A similar concern was raised by a teacher during an observation visit by the Evaluator and it may be advisable to provide a content warning in advance. Comments from respondents in SEND settings highlighted their appreciation of the programme including relaxed performances with a plea to ‘Keep offering SEND complex needs schools more opportunities.’



4.5 Recommendations

- **Continue to prioritise inclusive practice for SEND pupils:** Maintain and possibly expand the offer of relaxed performances and accessible venues, with targeted outreach to special schools and SEND coordinators.
- **Continue supporting access needs:** Explore whether further mitigations are appropriate to ensure schools can include all pupils in Go & See visits.
- **Enhance content guidance:** Where appropriate, provide advance content warnings (e.g., visual art nudity) to allow schools to prepare or adapt their visit accordingly.

- **Extend the offer of CPD across the Go & See programme:** Explore options for providing CPD for performing arts offers.

5 Masterclasses and Come & Try

5.1 Overview

Each of these single-session professional development strands comprised six sessions, covering varied themes and artforms. The maximum capacity for each Masterclass was 30 and for Come & Try it was 25, giving a potential total number of participants of 180 and 150 respectively. However, owing to last-minute cancellations, actual attendances were lower, with a total of 143 participants for the Masterclasses and 113 for Come & Try²⁵. There was no restriction on how many sessions an individual teacher could book and for the Masterclasses, 24% of participants attended more than one session (between two and six sessions) whilst for Come & Try, the majority (56%) attended more than one session (between two and five sessions). This resulted in 95 individuals from 43 schools taking part in the Masterclasses and 53 individuals from 47 schools in Come & Try. As some sessions in these strands were over-subscribed, it may be worth putting a limit on the number of sessions a school or individual can book to extend the reach of the programme.

Participants completed an online survey at the end of each session. A total of 101 completed surveys were received across the Masterclasses (giving a response rate of 73%) and 84 responses from the Come & Try sessions (giving a response rate of 74%). For Come & Try, this is identical to last year and as these are more informal, twilight sessions, there are always participants who need to leave towards the end of the session and therefore miss the evaluation activity. For the Masterclasses, however, the response rate dropped from the pilot when it was 87%. The response rates for two of the Masterclasses were below 45% suggesting the sessions may have overrun with insufficient time left for the evaluation. It would be useful to restate the importance of the evaluation with partners and participants to gather as representative a sample of feedback as possible.

In the pilot, it was noted that for the Masterclasses, attendance from EYFS and SEND settings was very low. However, this was not the case for Year 1, where there was good representation across phases and settings. A recommendation for Come & Try from the pilot was to try to increase attendance from non-teaching and support staff but numbers actually fell, with no administrative staff attending and just one member of support staff. The nature of work contracts for administrative and support staff may deter them from engaging in twilight sessions and they may also feel the sessions are more appropriate for teachers.

Evidence from the surveys suggests that both strands reached teachers who were not aware and/or had not previously participated in events run by the Crafts Council, CLPE and/or AND.

- 49% of Masterclass participants were new to CLPE and 60% new to AND
- 31% of Come & Try participants were new to the Crafts Council and 30% new to AND.

²⁵ Masterclass attendance was 77% of capacity; Come & Try was 76% of capacity.

Participants placed high value on learning more about these organisations and their support for schools, with 97-99% agreeing or strongly agreeing with these statements (see Figures 23 and 24 below). This contributes to the Theory of Change outcome of increased understanding about how to access and use London’s creative assets to develop rich stimulus for children.

In both surveys, participants were asked for three words to describe their experience. As with the pilot, the words selected align with the differing objectives of the two strands. Although both strands of CPD were viewed as inspiring, creative and engaging, the word selected most often to describe Come & Try was ‘fun’²⁶. Other words included relaxing, exciting, enjoyable and calming, indicating the social and creative ambitions of the sessions were achieved. For the Masterclasses, 82% of respondents chose ‘inspiring’ as one of their three words with other words reflecting the professional development nature of the sessions, these included informative, motivating, insightful and thought-provoking.



Figure 21: 3 words to describe Come & Try – minimum of 2 mentions

²⁶ Chosen by 36% of respondents.

Figure 23: Masterclasses – Outcome ratings	Mean rating*	
	Year 1 (n=101)	Pilot (n=76)
The INSET was of high quality: engaging, informative and facilitated by appropriate specialists	4.87	4.92
I feel empowered & energised to experiment & apply new, creative pedagogical approaches	4.75	4.85
I have been given practical strategies and resources that I can use in my classroom to support reader development	4.74	4.85
It was useful to find out more about CLPE and how my school can access their support	4.68	4.77
I felt supported by and connected with a group of my peers	4.64	4.70
The INSET has left me feeling valued as an education professional	4.62	4.79
The content of the INSET related well to pupil needs and curriculum requirements	4.57	4.78
The INSET took an inclusive approach and was appropriate for primary and SEND settings	4.55	4.66
I intend to stay in touch with one or more of the other participants I met through the Masterclass	3.50	3.78

* Where 5=Strongly agree and 1=Strongly disagree

All survey respondents identified how they had benefitted from the Masterclasses and action they planned to take. Responses to an open question about the most useful learning aligned closely with the planned outcomes in the table above, with the highest number of responses relating to being given practical classroom strategies and resources; and feeling inspired and equipped to apply new creative pedagogies in literacy and the wider curriculum. Further details are provided below with the number of mentions bracketed and an illustrative quote included.

- **Practical classroom strategies and resources (58)** – across all sessions, teachers appreciated lesson ideas and ready-to-use activities. *Clear walk-through examples.*
- **Creativity and arts in literacy (36)** – participants highlighted the value of integrating creative arts (art, drama and storytelling) in literacy and how these enhance student engagement, expression and writing. *Drama strategies that can be applied to day-to-day teaching.*
- **Inspiration and confidence (34)** – participants referred to being inspired and gaining confidence, particularly in areas they previously found intimidating such as poetry or storytelling. *Building the confidence to tell stories in the classroom.*
- **Working with authors and illustrators (31)** – frequently cited as both memorable and practically useful, hearing directly from authors or illustrators provided insight into their working processes which could be shared with pupils. *Hearing a story told by such a masterful storyteller, who made it so accessible and achievable for us as teachers.*
- **How to engage pupils with reading (25)** – ideas on promoting reading for pleasure with reflection on current practices and how to rejuvenate these. *Helping me to think about reviewing our reading for pleasure approach after a few years of doing the same things.*

- **Professional reflection and peer dialogue** (17) – appreciation for the time to reflect and share practice with other teachers, something not always possible in daily teaching. *A chance to breath and think and reflect on current practice.*

Asked about action they planned to take as a result of the Masterclass, the most common response, mentioned by about half the respondents, was an intention to apply the new strategies directly in the classroom. This included a focus on fostering children’s creativity, imagination and agency in reading and writing. Approximately a quarter of respondents planned to disseminate the learning to colleagues in staff meetings, INSET sessions or through informal discussions. Just under 20% of respondents mentioned revisiting and refreshing curriculum planning. A similar proportion cited plans to reinvigorate the reading culture in their schools, choosing more diverse or high-quality texts and creating more time for pupil choice. These plans sometimes included engaging with parents particularly on plans to promote reading for pleasure. The quotes below illustrate these actions:

As arts lead I will include the ‘drawing before writing’ mantra in staff training and suggest the picture book project to the literacy lead.

Read more poetry, make it easier for other teachers to access poetry, check which poetry books we have in school and buy some more.

To have more forward-facing books in the book corner and to have a review of the library and the amount of books in the book corner.

Look again at the books we teach and make sure they are contemporary across the school.

Reaching out to parents about reading for pleasure. CPD on reading for pleasure at school. Assembly for children on reading for pleasure.

Participants were sent a follow-up survey approximately six weeks after the Masterclass. Although the response rate was low, with just 13 surveys received, the findings confirmed that respondents had implemented the actions they outlined at the end of the sessions which included ‘changes to my classroom practice’, ‘tweaks to the curriculum’ and ‘training teachers to develop creativity’ or incorporate drawing and storytelling.

5.3 Benefits for pupils

Respondents outlined how their learning would benefit pupils:

- Increased engagement, fun and love of reading.
- Access to a wider range of genres (e.g., increased access to poetry and picture books for all ages), contemporary texts and books that reflect pupils’ backgrounds and life experiences.
- Increased opportunities for self-expression through creative approaches including drawing, drama and free writing.
- Increased autonomy and opportunities for pupil voice, helping children feel heard and empowered.

- Improved writing outcomes and motivation through more creative and pupil-led approaches.
- Improved access and inclusion through more varied and creative approaches to literacy teaching.

The quotes below exemplify these benefits:

There are those with amazing minds who can't "spell" or "punctuate" who now may feel brilliantly inspired, included and heard.

They have an understanding of the process an author goes through, which could give them more confidence when they are doing their own work.

Allow more creative juices to flow in the classroom.

Make the children become 'writers', not just good at writing.

5.4 Suggested improvements for Masterclasses

Asked about improvements, the vast majority of respondents replied that none were needed as 'the sessions are great!' As in the pilot, a small number of respondents suggested extending the length of sessions to give more time for teachers to share practice and/or 'work through more classroom examples and implementation.' However, attendance at the optional twilight (to browse the library and talk further with peers and CLPE staff) was relatively low²⁷ with the majority of respondents saying they needed to leave for family or school-related commitments, suggesting that the existing timeframe is probably the most viable.

Three respondents suggested a need for more 'SEND resources' and two other respondents raised adaptation for early years in suggested improvements. In the follow-up survey, a different three participants asked for sessions dedicated to SEND and EYFS in the question about other topics they would like covered. One wrote, 'A session on engaging SEND children in particular through multi-sensory approaches (within a mainstream setting) would be fantastic!' It was notable that in the outcome ratings (see Figure 23), although the mean rating for the inclusiveness of sessions was high (4.55), it was the second lowest rating and a very small number of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. This issue was explored further in the case study interviews undertaken by the Evaluator in July 2025. One English Lead in a mainstream school who had attended several of the Masterclasses elaborated on the issue,

'I can't really remember anyone...talking specifically about SEND children...No one kind of said, Oh, you could adapt this for SEND children this way or this particularly would be more appropriate. And obviously we are professionals and we can do that ourselves... But I just think it wasn't really discussed. It didn't seem to be a priority.'

²⁷ 20 of the 101 survey respondents had attended the twilights.

Whilst this feedback came from a small minority of participants, it would be useful to ensure that adaptations for SEND and EYFS are discussed in sessions.

5.5 Come & Try – participant outcomes

In the survey completed at the end of the Come & Try sessions, 94% agreed (80% strongly agreed and 14% agreed) that the sessions were high quality: engaging, fun and facilitated by appropriate specialists (see Figure 24). Ratings were very similar to the pilot and demonstrate that the sessions were successful in achieving the stated ambition of ‘supporting playful exploration, reimagining craft for the classroom as well as for personal enjoyment and enrichment’²⁸. This dual focus was achieved through engaging, fun and creative activities that introduced school staff to new materials and techniques, developed skills and improved wellbeing and motivation.

Figure 24: Come & Try – Outcome ratings

	Mean rating*	
	Year 1 (n=84)	Pilot (n=54)
The session was of high quality: engaging, fun and facilitated by appropriate specialists	4.70	4.91
I felt supported by and connected with a group of my peers	4.86	4.76
I welcomed the opportunity to explore my own creativity	4.83	4.91
It was useful to find out more about Craft School and the Craft Council’s support for schools	4.83	4.83
I feel energised to try out new creative approaches in the classroom	4.80	4.81
My awareness of craft opportunities for learners has increased	4.65	4.62
I have developed skills and knowledge of a new craft	4.62	4.74
I feel more confident about teaching craft in the classroom	4.62	4.54
I intend to stay in touch with one or more of the other participants I met through the programme	3.75	3.74

* Where 5=Strongly agree and 1=Strongly disagree

Asked about the main benefits, participants’ responses echoed the personal and professional objectives as detailed below:

- **Practical ideas for the classroom** (43) - participants consistently mentioned gaining ideas and techniques to take back to the classroom, often noting how easily adaptable they were to various age groups and topics.
- **Learning new skills, techniques or mediums** (39) - many participants valued hands-on learning with unfamiliar materials (e.g., clay, metal, textiles and dyes); they appreciated the chance to broaden their personal creative repertoire.

²⁸ <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/primary-arts/come-and-try>

- **Personal wellbeing and relaxation** (29) – school staff highlighted how the sessions supported positive mental health: a chance to unwind, explore freely and enjoy creative time outside the pressures of teaching.
- **Inspiration and creative rejuvenation** (22) - participants found the sessions inspiring, noting renewed enthusiasm and motivation to be more creative themselves or bring more creativity to their classrooms.
- **Collaborating and connecting with others** (18) – school staff valued the social aspects of the sessions: chatting with colleagues, sharing ideas and networking with like-minded people.
- **Working with professional artists and makers** (11) – although mentioned less frequently, some participants highlighted the benefits of gaining greater understanding of artistic process and pedagogy; how artists work and how to embed those ideas into teaching practice.

As with the Masterclasses, the most frequently cited benefit was being given new, practical ideas for the classroom. Other areas of shared benefit included inspiration, motivation, professional dialogue and learning from professional artists. However, benefits linked to the acquisition of new arts-based skills and wellbeing were more prevalent for Come & Try. Illustrative quotes include:

Working with new materials and experiencing art I'd never tried before. A chance to get creative and inspired, whilst connecting with other teachers and the arts.

Trying something I've never done before and using materials I've never worked with. Everything was really accessible and applicable to school.

Such a lovely atmosphere, learn a new skill, inspired by a working artist, meet and connect with other like-minded teachers and delicious food & drink.

Wellbeing - art for joy - inspiration for the classroom

I will defo take elements back to the classroom and these sessions are excellent for my mental health. Teachers need taking care of!

Two-thirds of survey respondents outlined ways they would use their learning back at school. A minority mentioned sharing these skills with other teachers but the majority cited specific curriculum areas and topics where they would introduce their new skills and activities. Examples included:

I am planning to make wire sculptures with Art Club

Natural pigments are perfect for our Stone Age topic and Explore and Draw, which I am currently doing with my Y2s. We will go on a nature hunt and use the materials to make prints.

I really liked the activity of creating different parts of a body [in clay] as a team to create various body sculptures as a bigger group. This would be good in a classroom activity to enable the children that are more hesitant, to become more at ease as the ultimate goal is to create a collective work.

There were several references to using activities in PSHE and to support pupils' wellbeing, as one teacher commented about an embroidery activity, 'I think this could work as a mindfulness activity after school as well as textile projects in class.'

Although feedback was overwhelmingly positive, it did vary between sessions. The activities in some sessions were viewed as less adaptable for the classroom either because of cost, health and safety or the time constraints in school which mean teachers are reluctant to undertake activities that require significant set-up and clear-down. Makers with obvious experience of working in schools were praised for their practical and informed suggestions about how to manage activities with children.

5.6 Recommendations

- **Consider introducing booking limitations:** Given that both strands were over-subscribed, consider introducing limits on the number of sessions a school or individual can book to extend the programme's reach.
- **Improve end-of-session survey completion rates:** Restate the importance of evaluation with session facilitators and participants, ensuring adequate time is allocated at the end of sessions for survey completion.
- **Further enhance the inclusivity of Masterclasses:** Consider developing a dedicated session for SEND and EYFS or ensure all sessions explicitly discuss adaptations for these contexts.
- **Ensure an appropriate balance between the dual aims of Come & Try:** Ensure all sessions include activities that can be realistically adapted for the classroom with appropriate consideration given to cost, time and health and safety.
- **Support peer networking:** In the Masterclasses, consider asking participants to move tables at lunchtime to broaden peer networking.

6 Cultural Education Leadership Programme

6.1 Experience of the programme

In the final survey, participants were asked for three words to describe their experiences of the Cultural Education Leadership Programme (CELP). The most popular word, chosen by eight of the 17 respondents, was 'inspiring'. Beyond this word, however, responses were much more individual with supportive, reflective, thought-provoking, challenging and insightful, each chosen by three participants. Although only selected by one individual, other words highlighted the emotional resonance of the programme with participants choosing joyous, profound, uplifting and deep.



Figure 25: Three words to describe your experience of CELP (minimum of 2 mentions)

6.2 Participant outcomes

At the start and end of the programme, participants rated their capabilities (on a five-point scale from very low to very high) in relation to the programme's intended outcomes. The ratings and the change in ratings are presented in Figure 26. The ratings for the pilot are also included for comparison.

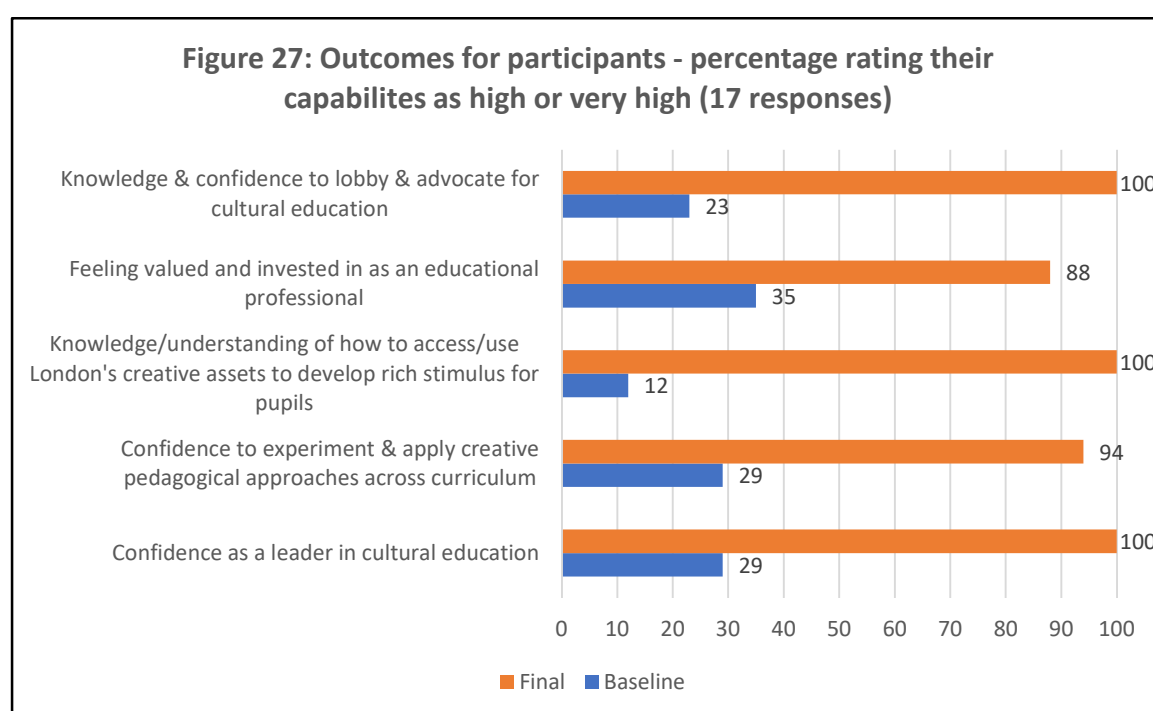
Figure 26: Change in leaders mean ratings where 5=very high and 1=very low (In descending order of degree of change)	Baseline mean rating	Final mean rating	Change in rating
My knowledge & understanding of how to access & use London's creative assets to develop rich stimulus for pupils	2.59 2.78	4.29 4.39	+1.70 +1.61
My knowledge & confidence to lobby & advocate for cultural education	2.88 3.11	4.47 4.56	+1.59 +1.45
My skills & confidence as a leader in cultural education in school	2.88 3.11	4.18 4.39	+1.30 +1.28
The extent to which I feel confident to experiment & apply creative pedagogies across the curriculum	3.18 3.11	4.24 4.50	+1.06 +1.39
My feeling of being valued & invested in as an educational professional	3.18 3.28	4.24 4.33	+1.06 +1.05

Key Year 1 - 17 matched respondents
 Pilot - 18 matched respondents

Positive change (of at least +1.0) was recorded for all five outcomes and as in the pilot, the greatest change was for an increased knowledge and understanding about how to access and use London's creative assets to develop rich stimulus for pupils. The degree of change for each statement was

very similar to the pilot year although slightly higher for all but one statement. The difference is probably explained by the lower baseline ratings of the Year 1 cohort which reflect the facilitators' reflections that this was a less experienced and confident cohort, compared with the pilot participants.

It is interesting to compare the range of participants' ratings and the proportion rating themselves as high or very high (see Figure 27). At the start of the programme, the majority (65-88%) rated their capabilities as very low, low or average. By the end of the year, 100% of the participants rated their capabilities in advocacy, utilising the creative sector and leadership confidence as high or very high. And, for the other two outcome statements (confidence to apply creative pedagogies; and feeling valued) this rose to 94% and 88% which equates to one or two individuals rating themselves as average. This demonstrates the success of the programme in achieving its objectives, providing participants with the knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence to be an effective leader in cultural education.



Participants identified what they had learnt that was most useful for them as a cultural education leader (see Figure 28). Unsurprisingly, the most frequently cited category was learning more about leadership including understanding their own leadership style, how to empower and inspire others and how to lead and manage change. For example, one leader wrote, 'leadership is listening, not directing'. Several participants also highlighted the value of the research shared during the programme and how this improved their confidence to advocate for cultural education. As one participant reflected:

Public speaking is not my strong point but I feel the course has given me the assurance to feel like I deserve to be heard and should expect people to listen!

This self-confidence, allied to motivation were pivotal for a number of participants, enabling them to act on newfound knowledge and skills, including how to work effectively in partnership with the cultural sector.

Figure: Most useful learning from CELP		
Category	Frequency	Illustrative quote
Leadership principles and practice	9	<i>That leadership entails a number of varied styles. Leadership is far more collaborative than I previously thought. Any change will lead to positive change - eventually.</i>
Research and evidence-based practice	6	<i>The research shared really resonated with me and gave me evidence for what I believe in.</i>
Personal development and confidence	5	<i>Finding my voice again, reigniting my passion.</i>
Knowledge of cultural provision in London and how to access and use	5	<i>The accessibility of cultural activities in London and how to incorporate them within the curriculum.</i>
Collaboration and support in the cohort	3	<i>Networking with other schools.</i>
Strategic planning and implementation	3	<i>The value of clear planning and clear impact criteria when implementing an intervention or project.</i>

As part of CELP, each participant undertook a supported action research project: *Leadership for Change*. In the final survey, respondents were unanimous in stating that this had added to their learning, as one identified,

I think by actually practicing what you preach and going through the steps - some of which were quite difficult - built my own confidence and self-belief in what I can do as a leader.

In the final survey, participants identified what they were doing differently and/or what action they were taking as a result of the programme. Responses were similar to the pilot programme with key behaviour change linked to increased leadership confidence to advocate for cultural education and plan and implement improved cultural education provision across the school. The following quotes exemplify this impact,

I think being more of an advocate for the change I want to see and having the confidence for this.

To formulate a plan to increase the cultural education experiences of children in my school and roll out my leadership project more widely in school.

Plan projects or interventions with quite clear aims and limitations in mind, with a view to breaking things up into phases.

Other changes related to utilising the tools and learning from CELP to inform leadership style and practice, including ‘deep listening and honouring other people’s contributions’ and ‘communication, team building and change’.

6.3 Mechanisms of change

Survey respondents highlighted the factors that had facilitated their learning. Whilst responses were varied and individual, there were commonalities which are listed below.

Figure 29: Mechanisms of change (n=17)		
Factor	Frequency	Illustrative quote
Inspiring, supportive and experienced facilitators	8	<i>The nature of the facilitators — their candour and way of speaking about things. Excellent facilitators who brought the best out in people.</i>
Community of practice: peer learning and shared reflection	7	<i>Collaboration with others to help develop ideas. Time to reflect and share in groups.</i>
Research and evidence base	6	<i>High quality and relevant research. I really enjoyed that all the input sessions delivered NEW information – other CPD sessions from other providers have felt repetitive in my opinion. This was a delightfully fresh experience.</i>
Practical tools and leadership models	5	<i>Leadership models were really helpful in supporting my thinking and helped me to think about the process of learning and the impact I wanted to make.</i>
Inspiring venues and cultural visits	5	<i>Loved the locations. Inspiring. Food was great! Practical activities and tours of the spaces.</i>
Small group support: coaching and action sets	4	<i>Coaching session in triads.</i>

The responses highlight a balanced and comprehensive learning environment driven by: expert facilitators who encouraged openness and reflection; peer learning mechanisms; a rich blend of theory, research and practical tools; and inspiring cultural and educational venues that sparked creativity and engagement. Together these mechanisms enhanced both personal insight and leadership development.

6.4 Impact for schools and pupils

During the programme, the UCL facilitators shared several leadership and change models with participants. One model maps the journey from CPD to pupil outcomes (see Figure 30). The model is useful as it illustrates that CPD does not lead automatically to pupil outcomes but requires reflection on the learning, opportunities to use new skills and knowledge and crucially, organisational (and senior leadership) support.

This whole-school impact was often mediated through others and/or delivered in collaboration with others, thus aiding sustainability through shared ownership and responsibility. In their Leadership for Change presentations and in the final survey, all leaders outlined how their participation in CELP was benefitting pupils and their school in general. Common themes included: increased access to varied, diverse and relevant cultural opportunities in London and within the curriculum; greater pupil autonomy and voice in arts learning leading to increased confidence and self-esteem; and enhanced teaching practice and planning. The following quotes exemplify these benefits:

The cultural connections I have made have really changed how enrichment and educational trips look at our school. With the new mission to include 'uniquely London' trips.

Children will see their cultures represented in the learning, visitors, workshops and trips.

Increased awareness of good practice among staff.

[Children will] love themselves; be more confident; and enjoy their time at school.

6.5 Challenges and improvements

The pilot programme was delivered through six days spanning two terms, and the time commitment and workload were raised as an issue by some of the cohort. The AND and UCL facilitators were keen to explore whether the time commitment was more manageable when the programme was spread across eight days, spanning the full academic year. Participants rated the manageability of the time commitment (on a scale of 0-10) resulting in a mean score of 8.3 which was higher than for the pilot which was 7.5. Except for one outlier who gave a score of 5.2, the range of scores was 6.7-10.0 which was considerably narrower than for the pilot where it was 3.8-9.2 with noticeable clusters around 5.0 and 8.0. Discussion in the pilot cohort revealed differing experiences and as related in the evaluation report, some participants found they were not given the agreed time out of class for independent study which was therefore completed in their own time. The evaluation recommended clarifying the guidance given to schools and in Year 1, Headteachers were required to sign an agreement that committed them to releasing the teacher for 12 days (8 taught days out of school + 4 days for independent learning and project work). A New Direction covered the cost of the 8 days out of school.

In the survey, several respondents referenced the cover provided for independent study as being critical to the manageability of the workload. As one reflected,

Due to funding cover, my school was happy to comply with my time out. The 4 additional project days were instrumental in protecting time for implementing change and working on the final project.

Whilst grateful for cover being funded, one participant 'wondered if elements could be condensed to make it a shorter programme to alleviate... disruption at school of staff absences.' Feedback from the pilot suggested the shorter programme was more difficult for the participants to manage (and

affect change) but it is important to remember that even if cover is funded, participants and schools may be concerned about taking time away from their classes, as one said, '[I] made it work [but] lots of conflicts with teaching and learning'.

The other time-related challenge, raised by four participants concerned the timing of the final session which was held on 9 July 2025, just two weeks before the end of the academic year. As participants outlined, 'at the end of the year, there are so many other things to focus on at school' such as report writing and 'this added element made life more pressurised and stressful'. The programme needs to allow sufficient time for participants to implement and evaluate their change projects but it may be wise to schedule the final session a week or two earlier to avoid the end of term and/or provide additional guidance to reduce the workload associated with the presentations.

The final suggestions for improvement related to the content of sessions and how this could better accommodate the differing learning styles of participants. It should be stressed that feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and the following comments were shared in the spirit of enhancement rather than criticism.

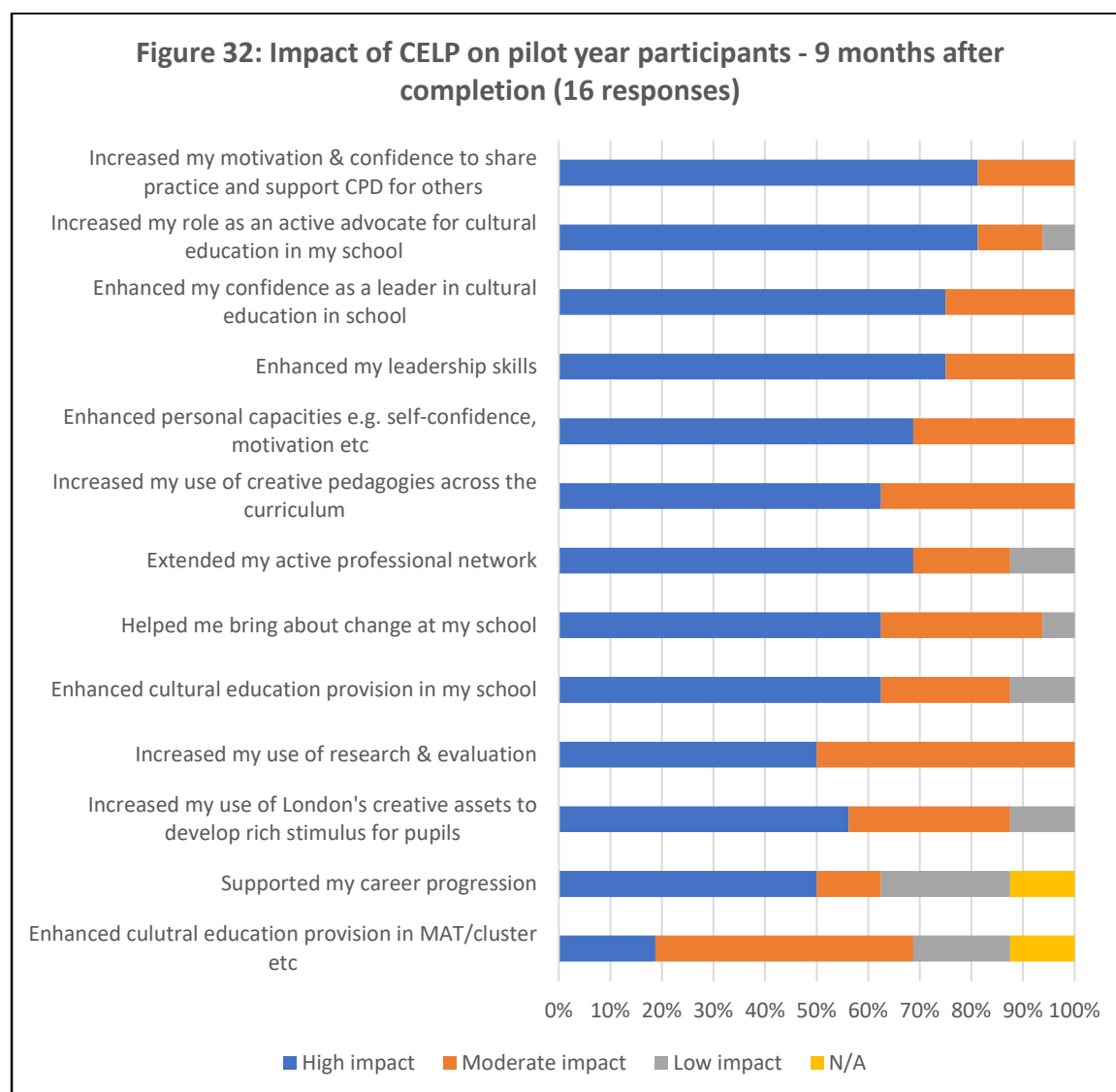
- One participant asked for 'examples of projects, posters, logic models to guide me where I needed to go, as a visual learner, [I] found it hard at times [to know] where to go with some of the homework.' A second suggested that 'past participants be invited to one of the earlier meetings to 'share examples of what people did' in their projects.
- Another leader stated they 'would have preferred more time practicing tools or skills needed in middle leadership and less pedagogy because I'm more of a practical learner and when it came to implementing what I learnt at my school, sometimes I wasn't sure how to tackle things'.

6.6 Lasting impact of the programme

The Cultural Education Leadership Programme provides an opportunity to undertake a longitudinal study of impact and, in line with a recommendation in the pilot evaluation, all participants in the pilot programme were asked to complete a survey in March 2025 and a 50% sample were interviewed by the Evaluator in June 2025. (Material from the interviews has been incorporated into a separate case study).

In the survey, respondents identified the ways in which CELP had impacted their practice, career and school (see Figure 32). It is evident that the focus on school-wide impact identified by the Year 1 cohort (and reported above) is mirrored by the pilot participants with over 75% of survey respondents reporting high levels of impact on their skills and confidence as a leader of cultural education which enables them to be an active advocate for cultural education in their schools and provides the motivation and confidence to support colleagues in improving their practice. Over 62% recorded high impact on their ability to bring about change in their school which included enhancing the cultural education provision. Although at a slightly lower level, there was strong evidence of impact on leaders' use of London's creative assets, with 62% rating this as high impact and 31% as moderate impact.

Alongside the school-wide impact, the pilot participants reported strong impact on their own practice, such as an increased use of creative pedagogies across the curriculum and increased use of research and evaluation. As a middle-leader, modelling and sharing these new approaches also have the potential to impact other staff members.



Responses to an open question about the most significant change that participants attributed to CELP align closely with the findings in Figure 32 above. With key themes emerging of increased skills, confidence and self-belief as a leader; strategic thinking, planning and advocacy; affecting school-wide change including curriculum change; and use of creative approaches and partnerships. The following quotes exemplify the lasting impact of CELP:

My outlook on cultural education shifted completely. I developed a greater appreciation for its impact on students, staff and the wider school community. I now recognise the importance of embedding cultural awareness into the curriculum in meaningful ways, ensuring it is not just an add-on but a fundamental part of the learning experience.

The most significant change I attribute to CELP is the tremendous boost in my confidence. Through the programme, I've gained a deeper understanding of myself, my capabilities, and my potential to lead. I now see myself not just as a participant in the institution but as a leader and advocate for change. This shift in perspective has empowered me to take on more responsibility and actively work toward creating positive changes within my institution.

Overall, CELP has had a lasting effect on my priorities, skills, and approach, allowing me to contribute more effectively to cultural education in my school. Through CELP, my skills improved significantly as I had access to first-hand information, expert insights, and the support of professionals who could guide and recommend best practices for implementing cultural education. This exposure not only deepened my understanding but also gave me the confidence to advocate for and integrate cultural education more effectively.

The pilot participants were asked about the significance of the changes and impact they had identified. Key themes emerged and are summarised in Figure 33.

Figure 33: Leaders' perception of significance of changes		
Theme	Frequency	Indicative Quote
Greater access and opportunity for pupils	9	<i>Change is important for our pupils because they absolutely need meaningful and impactful creative outlets in their lives.</i>
Empowerment in professional role and leadership	7	<i>These changes empower me to create an environment where the arts become a core part of the learning experience.</i>
Access and inclusion, especially in SEND settings	4	<i>By recognizing the significance of the arts to support students to access learning, I can now highlight its transformative power, especially for students who might otherwise struggle...</i>
Cultural capital	4	<i>It has enhanced the offer for our children as I was introduced to a number of cultural institutions across London that can support our children's cultural capital.</i>
Improved school ethos and long-term vision for the arts	4	<i>The school included Creative Arts in their school development plan and I am co-leading this core priority.</i>
Sector-wide implications for equity, diversity and inclusion	3	<i>In the broader cultural education sector, these changes contribute to a more inclusive and well-rounded curriculum...ensuring that cultural learning is...a fundamental part of education, helping to develop socially aware and culturally competent individuals.</i>

From these findings, it is clear that the Cultural Education Leadership Programme is delivering short-term and mid-term outcomes, and the wider impact described in Primary Arts' Theory of Change as illustrated below³⁰:

³⁰ There is evidence of additional outcomes and impact for teachers and pupils but the diagram focuses on those from the ToC.

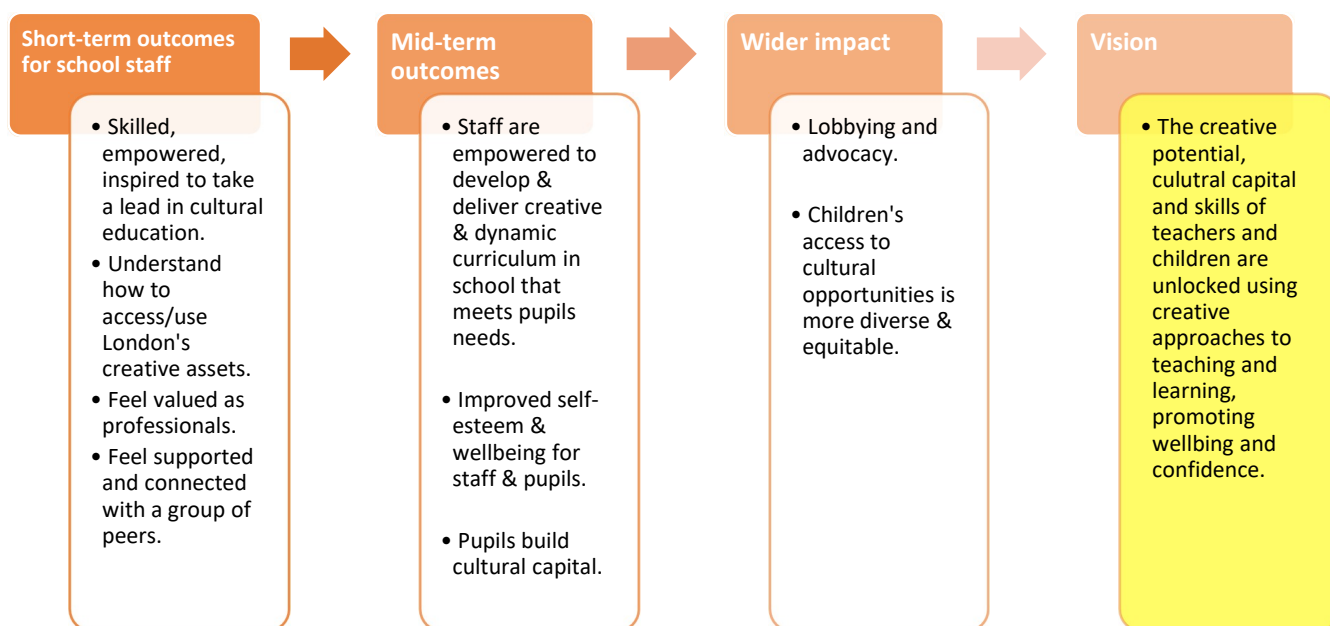


Figure 34: How CELP aligns with the Primary Arts Theory of Change

Participants identified specific insights and approaches that continue to inform their practice, and these included (but are not limited to) leadership and change models, peer networking, teaching for creativity and cross-curricular approaches, and reflective practice and evidence gathering.

6.7 Recommendations

- **Review the session schedule:** To reduce end-of-year pressure and promote full engagement from participants, consider moving the final session to earlier in the summer term.
- **Ensure access for diverse learning styles:** Explore the inclusion of more visual aids and practical examples, particularly to support understanding of the Leadership for Change project.
- **Maintain funding for teacher cover:** Continue to fund classroom cover for days out of schools and remind Headteachers part-way through the year about the time required for independent study and project work.
- **Include CELP alumni early in the year:** To inspire and orient the new cohort, invite alumni to early sessions to share their journey and project examples.

7 Programme-wide recommendations

Whilst feedback was overwhelmingly positive, there is scope to refine all strands of Primary Arts and recommendations appear at the end of each section. A small number of programme-wide recommendations have arisen through the evaluation and include:

- **Extend programme reach:** Explore ways of engaging new schools in Primary Arts. Encourage those schools registered but not yet active to book events in Year 2.

- **Promote sustainable impact:** Encourage schools to engage further with CPD, share learning across staff teams and embed creative approaches in planning and practice to sustain the programme's legacy.
- **Further refine the evaluation:** Use the findings from Year 1 to review and refine the Theory of Change and evaluation frameworks and tools.

8 Conclusions

The Year 1 evaluation of Primary Arts provides clear evidence that the programme is achieving its intended outcomes for pupils, teachers and cultural partners. The programme was extremely well-received, with high levels of engagement across all five strands and compelling evidence of impact on creativity, confidence, skills, motivation, cultural capital and wellbeing. It is evident that Primary Arts offers more than one-off experiences: it provides meaningful, sustained opportunities for professional development and creative and cultural enrichment, underpinned by inclusive practice and a strong commitment to high quality.

Teachers consistently reported increased confidence and motivation to apply new creative approaches across the curriculum with 94% of survey respondents³¹ strongly agreeing (65%) or agreeing (29%) this outcome had been achieved. And importantly, they also felt they had been given new skills, practical strategies and resources to use in their classrooms with 97% strongly agreeing (68%) or agreeing (29%) that this was the case. Crucially, through follow-up surveys, there was clear evidence of ongoing impact at school-level with participating teachers using their learning to advocate for cultural education, revise relevant areas of the curriculum and share their new-found knowledge and skills with colleagues through staff meetings, CPD and support with planning and pedagogy.

For pupils, the programme opened up new creative experiences and cultural spaces, supporting creativity and cognitive, social and emotional development. The programme had a positive impact on children's mood (and potentially, wellbeing) with participants in In-Schools Touring reporting feeling amazed, happy, excited and proud about what they had done and experienced. This was supported by teachers' assessment of the outcomes for pupils from In-Schools Touring and Go & See, with 99% of respondents strongly agreeing (85%) or agreeing (14%) that the children enjoyed the activity and had fun. Alongside this, there is evidence of strong impact on children's curiosity, imagination and creativity through the exploration of new ideas, knowledge, artforms and places. 97% of teachers strongly agreed (74%) or agreed (23%) this outcome had been achieved. Another significant outcome for pupils was the development of new creative and/or artform skills which 92% of teachers strongly agreed (46%) or agreed (46%) had been achieved. Finally, the development of cultural capital was given a high priority by schools (generally above the need for curriculum links) and this was viewed as a highly successful outcome from both the pupil-facing programmes. For Go & See, 93% of teachers strongly agreed (85%) or agreed (8%) that the programme had supported cultural capital.

³¹ This is the mean from surveys for In-Schools Touring, Masterclasses and Come & Try

Whilst teachers and pupils are the principal beneficiaries of Primary Arts, the programme also has objectives for those cultural organisations and practitioners who delivered the work. Cultural organisations reflected on how the programme had supported their professional development, particularly in inclusive practice and their understanding of school priorities.

Across the strands and beneficiaries, the most valued elements included: access to high-quality arts and cultural experiences; working with skilled and inspiring practitioners; inclusive practices; and opportunities to participate in new creative activities. For school staff and cultural practitioners, additional mechanisms of change included access to practical and ready-to-use classroom ideas and resources; opportunities to work with a group of their peers and feel supported by the group; to feel valued as professionals; and the generous, well-organised support provided by A New Direction. These core features should be protected and embedded as the programme evolves and extends to include new settings.

9 List of Appendices and Addendums

- Appendix 1: Theory of Change, Primary Arts Year 1
- Addendum: Uptake and Demographic Data
- Addendum: Recommendations and Implementation
- Addendum: Narrative on Programmatic Spend

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Primary Arts Year 1 - Executive Summary

Programme overview

The Primary Arts programme, designed and managed by A New Direction in partnership with 23 cultural organisations, aims to increase access to high-quality, inspiring arts, cultural and creative opportunities for children and staff in London's state mainstream primary schools and SEND settings. Building on a successful pilot programme in 2023/24, Year 1 of the expanded three-year initiative was supported by the City of London Corporation City Educational Trust Fund and delivered free opportunities across five programme strands.

The programme achieved significant scale and reach in Year 1, engaging **198 schools** from **30 London boroughs**, with **13,399 pupils** directly participating and **1,234 school staff participating in CPD activities**. An additional **647 school staff accompanied pupils to arts events**, demonstrating strong commitment from schools.

The evaluation, based on survey data, interviews, case studies and direct observation, assessed the outcomes and processes of the programme, focusing on what worked well and what could be improved for future iterations.

Programme strands and delivery

The five programme strands comprised:

In-Schools Touring was delivered by 10 cultural organisations and provided performances and workshops to 9,471 pupils across 100 schools. Each school received a performance and workshops for pupils within a single year group, plus staff CPD (with 1,108 participants), resources, creative materials and books. Rated as high-quality and inclusive by schools, the programme supported pupils' creativity and cognitive, social and emotional development.

Go & See provided free tickets for 3,908 pupils to experience theatre, film and visual arts across 75 events at 10 cultural venues. The programme reached 68 schools and was particularly valued for developing pupils' cultural capital, with many experiencing live theatre for the first time.

Masterclasses delivered six CPD days exploring creative approaches to literacy and reader development in partnership with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE), attracting 95 individuals in 143 attendances. Sessions were consistently rated as inspiring and informative.

Come & Try offered six creative, practical twilight sessions for school staff in partnership with the Crafts Council, engaging 53 individuals in 113 attendances. These sessions

successfully balanced personal creative exploration with professional development, providing wellbeing benefits alongside practical classroom applications.

Cultural Education Leadership Programme (CELP) supported 18 London primary teachers through an 11-month programme delivered in partnership with UCL Centre for Educational Leadership. Participants developed leadership skills, confidence and strategic thinking to drive cultural education change in their schools.

Key outcomes for pupils

The evaluation provides compelling evidence of positive outcomes across all programme strands. Teachers consistently reported high achievement of intended pupil outcomes, with 99% of respondents strongly agreeing (85%) or agreeing (14%) that children enjoyed activities and had fun. The top three feelings selected by pupils in In-Schools Touring were 'amazed', 'happy' and 'proud', suggesting positive impact on children's mood and wellbeing.

Other significant outcomes included:

- **Creativity, curiosity and arts skills:** 97% of teachers strongly agreed (74%) or agreed (23%) that activities encouraged children to be curious by exploring new ideas, knowledge, artforms and places. Additionally, 92% of teachers strongly agreed (46%) or agreed (46%) that children developed new creative and/or artform skills.
- **Development of cultural capital:** Pupils gained new cultural experiences, often attending live performances for the first time. For Go & See, 93% of teachers strongly agreed (85%) or agreed (8%) that the programme developed cultural capital.
- **Inclusion and accessibility:** The inclusive nature of the programmes was praised and resulted in positive outcomes for all pupils. In-Schools Touring demonstrated particular success in SEND settings, with 100% of SEND school respondents strongly agreeing on the success of all programme aspects.
- **Sustained impact:** Follow-up surveys revealed lasting benefits, with children continuing to reference experiences as highlights of their year and demonstrating changed attitudes, motivation and enthusiasm towards arts and creative activities.

Key outcomes for school staff

The programme achieved strong professional development outcomes. Most significantly, 94% of survey respondents strongly agreed (65%) or agreed (29%) that they felt more confident and motivated to apply new creative approaches across the curriculum. This was supported by practical outcomes, with 97% strongly agreeing (68%) or agreeing (29%) that they had been given new skills, practical strategies and resources to use in their classrooms.

Key outcomes for school staff included:

- **Enhanced confidence:** Teachers reported increased confidence in delivering creative subjects, particularly in previously intimidating areas such as poetry and drama, and using creative approaches across the curriculum.
- **Practical application:** Staff identified specific activities and approaches they planned to utilise, with evidence from follow-up surveys confirming implementation of these intended actions including curriculum revisions and staff training.
- **Leadership development:** CELP participants demonstrated substantial growth, with 100% rating their capabilities in advocacy, utilising the creative sector and leadership confidence as high or very high by the end of the programme.
- **Wellbeing benefits:** Creative CPD sessions contributed to teacher wellbeing, with over 98% strongly agreeing or agreeing that sessions left them feeling valued as educational professionals and supported by their peers.

Key outcomes for cultural organisations

The programme supported professional development for cultural organisations delivering In-Schools Touring. Delivery organisations demonstrated increased confidence and understanding across programme objectives, with the greatest change recorded for confidence in designing CPD to meet school priorities (+0.95 on a five-point scale).

Key outcomes included increased knowledge and confidence to work with SEND children, greater appreciation of the diversity of school environments across London, developed practice for primary schools and enhanced skills in evaluation, CPD design and delivery, and inclusive practice.

Evidence of sustained impact

The evaluation incorporated mechanisms to assess longer-term impact, including follow-up surveys and longitudinal tracking of CELP participants. Evidence demonstrated:

- **School-level change:** Teachers used their learning to advocate for cultural education, revise curriculum areas and share knowledge with colleagues through staff meetings and CPD.
- **Use of Primary Arts resources:** All strands provided resources to enable follow-up work which were well received. For In-Schools Touring, for example, 64% undertook follow-up activities using the resources provided.
- **Leadership impact:** CELP participants from the pilot year continued to demonstrate impact on their schools, with over 75% reporting high levels of impact on their skills and confidence as leaders of cultural education. Evidence from other strands, such as Masterclasses, also highlighted how the CPD provided knowledge, inspiration and motivation to middle and senior leaders to lead change in their subject areas.

Programme quality and Mechanisms of Change

The evaluation identified key mechanisms contributing to programme success:

- **High-quality arts and cultural experiences:** Consistently high ratings for programme quality, with participants praising skilled, inspiring practitioners delivering new creative activities.
- **Practical application:** Emphasis on providing ready-to-use classroom strategies and resources that teachers could immediately implement.
- **Inclusive practice:** Strong commitment to access and inclusion, with particular success in SEND settings and provision of access budgets to support participation.
- **Peer learning and support:** Valued opportunities for professional dialogue and networking, contributing to teachers feeling supported and connected to peers.

Programme-wide recommendations.

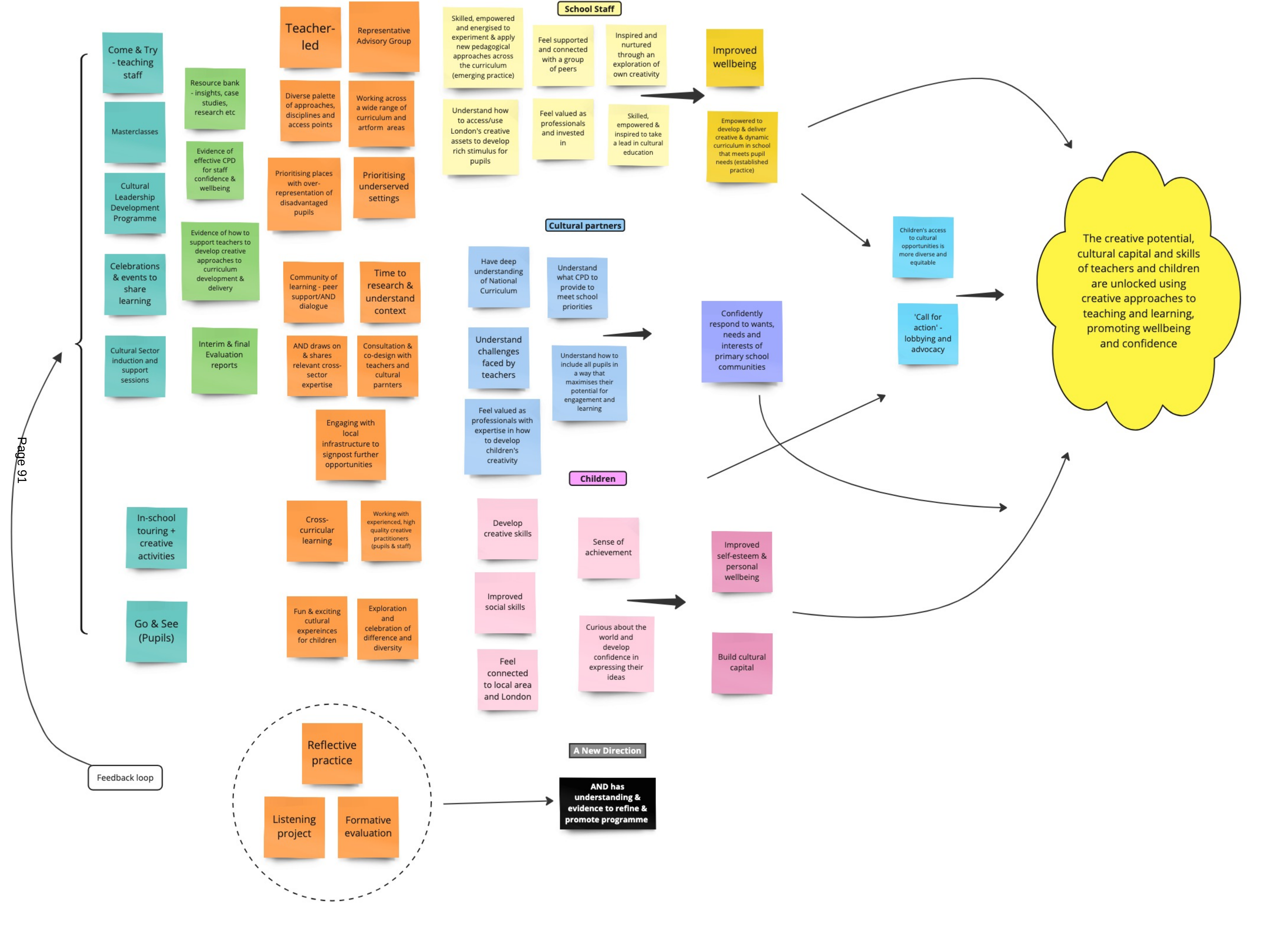
Alongside recommendations linked to each strand, the evaluation identified a small number of programme-wide recommendations to maintain and enhance programme effectiveness:

- **Extend programme reach:** Introduce booking limits for CPD and explore ways of engaging new schools in Primary Arts.
- **Consolidate best practice:** Share learning from Year 1 with partners in Year 2.
- **Maintain inclusive practice:** Support diverse learning needs of pupils and teachers.
- **Promote sustainable impact:** Encourage schools to engage further with CPD, share learning across staff teams and embed creative approaches in planning and practice.
- **Further refine the evaluation:** Use the findings from Year 1 to review and refine the Theory of Change and evaluation frameworks and tools.

Conclusions and future sustainability

The Year 1 evaluation provides clear evidence that Primary Arts is achieving strong outcomes against its Theory of Change, for all stakeholder groups. The programme demonstrates particular strength in combining immediate positive experiences with sustained professional development that extends impact beyond participating individuals to the whole-school community.

The programme's success rests on its core features of high-quality arts and cultural experiences, skilled practitioners, inclusive practices and opportunities for creative participation. These elements, combined with generous and well-organised support from A New Direction, create the conditions for sustainable impact through embedding creative approaches in school planning and practice.



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ADDENDUM

Primary Arts Year 1 (2024/25) Uptake and Demographic Data

Introduction

This document sets out key data for Primary Arts Year 1, including analysis of school registrations and engagement, and comparison with the 2023/24 pilot. It also includes demographic data (age, ethnicity and disability) for adults involved in the programme plus school proxy data for pupils, as this could not be submitted through the City of London online grant report form.

In order make data easier to read, tables have been moved on to a new page where necessary to avoid run on across pages, hence some pages have a larger amount of white space than usual.

Uptake Data

Registered and Active Schools by Borough

408 schools registered on the Primary Arts booking platform in Year 1. Of these, 198 were active in at least one strand of the programme. The majority of the inactive schools registered for the programme in spring/ summer 2025 when all strands of the programme were fully booked, meaning it was not possible for them to engage. All schools registered but not yet active on the programme will be prioritised for engagement in 2025/26.

173 schools registered for the Primary Arts pilot in 2023/24. Ostensibly this suggests that 235 new schools registered this year, but this does not account for the schools that did not return to the programme following the pilot. 76 schools took part in the pilot and did not then register for the 2024/25 programme. This means that new registrations were in fact received from 311 schools, an increase of 179% on the pilot year.

Data for individual boroughs can be seen below. The figures for new schools and the % change accounts for drop-offs and new registrations.

Table 1: Registered and Active Schools, Pilot and Year 1

Borough	Registered Schools				Active Schools		Y1 Active Schools as a % of Registered Schools
	Pilot	Year 1	New in Year 1	% Y1 Schs New to the Programme	Pilot	Year 1	
Barking and Dagenham	3	11	9	82%	2	9	82%
Barnet	0	8	8	100%	0	2	25%
Bexley	2	1	1	100%	0	0	0%
Brent	5	13	10	77%	2	5	38%
Bromley	4	3	1	33%	3	2	67%
Camden	10	20	14	70%	5	10	50%
City of London	0	1	1	100%	0	0	0%
Croydon	2	14	12	86%	1	7	50%
Ealing	17	18	9	50%	5	11	61%
Enfield	3	10	8	80%	2	4	40%
Greenwich	13	13	8	62%	6	5	38%
Hackney	5	16	13	81%	5	10	63%
Hammersmith & Fulham	4	10	6	60%	3	4	40%
Haringey	3	13	12	92%	3	4	31%
Harrow	3	3	3	100%	2	2	67%
Havering	1	12	12	100%	0	2	17%
Hillingdon	5	12	10	83%	3	5	42%
Hounslow	3	12	11	92%	2	2	17%
Islington	4	11	8	73%	4	9	82%
Kensington and Chelsea	0	6	6	100%	0	2	33%
Kingston Upon Thames	1	10	9	90%	1	5	50%
Lambeth	17	21	11	52%	10	10	48%
Lewisham	9	25	22	88%	4	15	60%
Merton	5	12	10	83%	2	3	25%
Newham	11	24	16	67%	7	14	58%
Redbridge	7	13	8	62%	6	8	62%
Richmond Upon Thames	0	15	15	100%	0	6	40%
Southwark	9	22	16	73%	6	10	45%
Sutton	1	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Tower Hamlets	7	20	16	80%	3	10	50%
Waltham Forest	7	18	12	67%	7	12	67%
Wandsworth	7	14	10	71%	6	8	57%
Westminster	5	6	4	67%	4	2	33%
TOTAL	173	408	311	179%	105	198	49%

Table 2: Inner vs Outer London

	Registered Schools		Registered Boroughs		Active Schools		Active Boroughs	
	Pilot	Year 1	Pilot	Year 1	Pilot	Year 1	Pilot	Year 1
Inner London ¹	90	185	11	13	56	95	11	12
Outer London ²	83	223	19	20	49	103	16	18
TOTAL	173	408	30	33	105	198	27	30

A higher proportion of registered and active schools in Year 1 were from outer London boroughs, as might be expected given that there are more outer London boroughs (20) than inner (13³). However, the average number for both registered and active schools per borough in inner London is higher than for outer London (average 14 registered schools per borough in inner London vs 11 in outer London, and average 8 active schools per borough in inner London vs 6 in outer London).

With the exception of the City of London, which only has one school eligible for the programme, our lowest uptake boroughs in terms of active engagement and registrations are in outer London, particularly Bexley and Sutton. These and other lower-engagement boroughs⁴ will be an area of focus for Year 2, to increase the reach of the programme.

Strand Participation

Strand participation is broadly reflective of the distribution of schools across the programme – boroughs with more registered and/or active schools are represented in more strands of the programme.

One third of participating schools engaged in more than one strand of the programme in 2024/25. Most commonly this entailed participation in the In-Schools Touring Programme plus one other strand (38 schools), usually Masterclasses and/ or Come & Try. Both of the two schools that participated in four strands had teachers participating in the Cultural Education Leadership Programme who were highly motivated to find additional opportunities for their schools. One participated additionally in Touring, Go & See and Masterclasses, and the other in Go & See, Masterclasses and Come & Try. In both schools this meant that the Leadership

¹ Inner London boroughs (13): Camden, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, Westminster, and City of London.

² Outer London boroughs (20): Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond, Sutton, Waltham Forest.

³ Figure includes City of London

⁴ Bexley, Sutton, Bromley, Harrow, Barnet (all outer London).

participant then involved another member of staff in the programme, broadening its impact.

Table 3: School Engagement in Multiple Strands

	Number	Percentage
Total schools	198	
Engaged with 1 strand only	133	67%
Engaged with 2 strands	54	27%
Engaged with 3 strands	9	5%
Engaged with 4 strands	2	1%
Engaged with 5 strands	0	0%

Table 4 is on the next page.

Table 4: Strand Participation by Borough

Borough	No Active Schools	Leadership	Masterclasses	Come & Try	In-Schools Touring	Go & See
Barking and Dagenham	9	0	1	3	4	3
Barnet	2	0	0	0	1	1
Bexley	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brent	5	0	2	1	1	2
Bromley	2	1	0	1	1	0
Camden	10	2	1	3	4	3
City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0
Croydon	7	3	1	2	5	2
Ealing	11	3	4	2	7	5
Enfield	4	0	1	2	2	0
Greenwich	5	0	2	1	2	1
Hackney	10	1	1	3	6	4
Hammersmith and Fulham	4	0	0	0	4	0
Haringey	4	0	0	2	2	0
Harrow	2	0	0	2	1	0
Havering	2	0	0	0	1	0
Hillingdon	5	0	1	1	4	1
Hounslow	2	2	0	0	0	1
Islington	9	0	3	4	4	4
Kensington and Chelsea	2	0	1	1	0	1
Kingston Upon Thames	5	0	2	0	0	3
Lambeth	10	2	5	1	6	4
Lewisham	15	1	2	0	11	7
Merton	3	0	0	0	3	0
Newham	14	0	2	1	6	6
Redbridge	8	0	4	3	4	2
Richmond Upon Thames	6	0	1	1	5	1
Southwark	10	2	1	3	5	4
Sutton	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tower Hamlets	10	0	1	2	3	6
Waltham Forest	12	0	5	6	5	3
Wandsworth	8	1	2	1	3	2
Westminster	2	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	198⁵	18	43	47	100	67

⁵ The totals in the other columns of this table total more than the total active schools because some schools participated in more than one strand of the programme.

Masterclasses and Come & Try

Table 5: Summary of Attendance: Masterclasses and Come & Try

Strand	Number of attendances	Number of individuals	Number of schools	Individuals attending more than one session – number of sessions:					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
Masterclasses	143	95	43	73	9	6	2	4	1
Come & Try	113	53	47	21	13	13	3	3	0

As outlined in the evaluation report, attendances at Come & Try and Masterclasses sessions was good, but repeat attendances by individuals reduced the number of schools engaged. For Masterclasses, the proportion of individual repeat attenders is not as high as for Come & Try, but this is because a number of schools sent different teachers to different sessions. As can be seen below, there were no schools represented at all six Come & Try sessions, but 13% of schools in the Masterclasses attended all six, suggesting that they viewed this as a complete suite of CPD for their staff.

Table 6: School Attendance at Multiple Sessions: Masterclasses and Come & Try

	No sessions attended	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL
Masterclasses	No schools:	17	3	7	6	5	6	43
	As % of total schools	39%	7%	16%	13%	12%	13%	100%
Come & Try	No schools:	20	11	9	5	2	0	47
	As % of total schools	43%	23%	19%	11%	4%	0%	100%

Demographic Data

Our demographic data was not submitted through the City of London online grant report form, in agreement with the Grants team. The online report asks for a breakdown of participants by age, ethnicity and disability. While it is possible for us to gather this data directly from adults participating in some programme activity, it is not possible for us to gather it for all adults. Data has been collected from:

- Cultural Education Leadership Programme participants
- Come & Try participants
- Masterclass participants
- Participants in CPD sessions delivered through the In-Schools Touring Programme.

This monitoring data is gathered through our end-of-session evaluation form, but is optional for participants to complete, in line with sector best practice.

It is not possible for us to gather data from the adults accompanying trips through the Go & See programme as we have contact only with the lead teacher, and it would not be appropriate for us to ask them to gather data on our behalf from accompanying adults (particularly parent/ carer helpers).

In addition, we do not gather this data about the children participating in the programme. With schools working with sometimes more than 120 children at a time through the programme, this would place an unreasonable administrative burden on teachers, and many schools would be very reluctant to share this level of data about their pupils.

In agreement with the Grants team, we have instead gathered the following school-level data for each school participating in the In-Schools Touring programme and the Go & See programme:

- Percentage of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium⁶
- Percentage of children speaking English as an Additional Language⁷
- Percentage of children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)⁸
- Percentage of children with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan)⁹

⁶ Pupil Premium is a grant for schools that provides additional funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Funding is allocated to schools based on the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (or who have been eligible in the last 6 years), and the number of children previously looked after by the local authority or other state care. For more information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>.

⁷ A child is considered by the DfE to have English as an Additional Language "if she/he is exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English." For more information see https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/868209/English_proficiency_of_EAL_pupils.pdf.

⁸ Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child or young person's ability to learn. They can affect their behaviour or ability to socialise, their skills in reading and writing, their ability to understand things, their concentration levels, and/ or their physical ability. Pupils with SEND receive extra support at school. For more information see: <https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs>

⁹ An EHCP is for pupils who need more support than is available in school through special educational needs support. See <https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help> for detailed information on EHCPs.

Of the 1,234 adults participating in the programme, we received 542 completed monitoring forms.

Figures given in each category below draw on this sample.

For age, we have separated the table to allow us to report the proportion of 0-15 year olds (all pupils participating) as a proportion of total participants. This calculation is made from our knowledge that all pupils at primary school are under 15 rather than from the monitoring forms.

Participation Numbers:

Total children: 13,399

Total adult participants across all strands: 1,234

Total adults accompanying Go & See visits: 647

Total form responses for adults: 542

Age

School pupils made up 88.62% of programme participants:

Table 7: Age Data (Pupils)

Age group	% of total (incl adults accompanying visits)
0-15	88.62%

The below table shows adult participant age-groups taken from completed monitoring forms:

Total form responses received: 542

Table 8: Age data (Adults)

Age group	% of respondents
16-24	4%
25-44	43%
45-64	24%
65-74	1%
75 and over	0%
Not known	28%

Ethnicity

Total adult participants (NB excludes adults accompanying Go & See visits):

Total form responses received: 542

Table 9: Ethnicity Data (Adults)

Category	% of respondents
White (including English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British; Irish; Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller; any other White background)	50%
Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups (including White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background)	3%
Asian/ Asian British (including Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Chinese; any other Asian background)	10%
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British (including African; Caribbean; any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background)	6%
Other ethnic group	0%
Not known	31%

Disability

Total form responses received: 542

- % respondents reporting a disability: 4%

Pupils: School-Level Data

In-Schools Touring Programme

Total schools: 100

Table 10: Boroughs/ Schools Participating in the In-Schools Touring Programme

Borough	No schools	Borough	No Schools
Barking and Dagenham	4	Havering	1
Barnet	1	Hillingdon	4
Brent	1	Islington	4
Bromley	1	Lambeth	6
Camden	4	Lewisham	11
Croydon	5	Merton	3
Ealing	7	Newham	6
Enfield	2	Redbridge	4
Greenwich	2	Richmond upon Thames	5
Hackney	6	Southwark	5
Hammersmith and Fulham	4	Tower Hamlets	3
Haringey	2	Waltham Forest	5
Harrow	1	Wandsworth	3

Table 11: Inner/ Outer London Boroughs, In-Schools Touring Programme

	Total	Inner London ¹⁰	Outer London ¹¹
Boroughs	26	10	16
Schools	100	48	52
Pupils Attended	9,491	3,862	5,629

Table 12: School-Level Data (Proxy Data for Pupils), In-Schools Touring Programme

Category	Average %	Max %	Min %	National ¹² Average	London Average
Pupil Premium	32%	80%	3%	25.7%	34%
EAL	46%	98%	0%	21%	56% / 43% ¹³
SEND	25%	100%	7%	18%	17%
EHCP	10%	100%	1%	4%	4.8%

¹⁰ Inner London boroughs (13): Camden, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, Westminster, and City of London.

¹¹ Outer London boroughs (20): Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond, Sutton, Waltham Forest.

¹² Further information on national and London statistics can be found at <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2024-25>.

¹³ These figures are for inner and outer London respectively

The schools participating in the In-Schools Touring programme 2024/25 represent a wide range of demographics. This is to be expected in a pan-London programme – while we prioritise working with schools with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils (using these statistics as a proxy), the relative levels of disadvantage vary depending on the borough.

Schools with the highest levels of Pupil Premium eligibility on the programme came from boroughs such as Camden, Islington, Lewisham, Havering, Newham and Tower Hamlets. Lower levels of Pupil Premium were found in schools in Richmond, Redbridge, Croydon, and Haringey.

The range in SEND and EHCP percentages reflects the range typically found between mainstream and special schools.

Go & See

Total schools:

Table 13: Boroughs/ Schools Participating in the Go & See Programme

Borough	No schools	Borough	No Schools
Barking and Dagenham	3	Kingston upon Thames	3
Barnet	1	Lambeth	5
Brent	2	Lewisham	7
Camden	3	Newham	6
Croydon	2	Redbridge	2
Ealing	5	Richmond upon Thames	1
Greenwich	1	Southwark	4
Hackney	4	Tower Hamlets	6
Hillingdon	1	Waltham Forest	3
Hounslow	1	Wandsworth	2
Islington	4	Westminster	1
Kensington and Chelsea	1		

Table 14: Inner/ Outer London Boroughs, Go & See

	Total	Inner London	Outer London
Boroughs	23	11	12
Schools	68	38	30
Events Attended	77	45	32
Pupils Attended	3,908	1,891	2,017
Adults Attended	647	332	315

Table 15: School-Level Data (Proxy Data for Pupils), Go & See

Category	Average %	Max %	Min %	National Average	London Average
Pupil Premium	36%	80%	3%	25.7%	34%
EAL	51%	98%	2%	21%	56% / 43% ¹⁴
SEND	24%	100%	9%	18%	17%
EHCP	8%	100%	0%	4%	4.8%

The data for Go & See is broadly in line with that for Touring and is reflective of the diversity of schools and boroughs engaging in the programme.

It is interesting to note that for Touring we had higher uptake from outer London schools than inner (16 and 10 boroughs respectively), whereas uptake for Go & See was more balanced (12 outer London boroughs and 11 inner). This suggests that schools in outer London boroughs that might find the longer journey time for a school trip challenging have used the opportunity to have a cultural organisation to come to them instead.

¹⁴ These figures are for inner and outer London respectively

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Education Board	Dated: 23/09/2025
Subject: Workforce Skills Development Performance Update	Public report: For information
This proposal: • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • delivers Education Strategy 2024-29 outcomes • delivers SME Strategy 2024-29 outcomes	Diverse engaged communities. Dynamic economic growth. Providing excellent services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	City Cash, CIL and external grant funding
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes
Report of:	Judith Finlay CBE, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services
Report author:	Dr Deborah Bell, Strategic Director of Education and Skills

Summary

At its meeting on 2 December 2025 and 21 January 2025, Members of the Education Board sought clarity on the extent and impact of the City Corporation's collective skills development activities. This is framed through the lens of ensuring a skilled and diverse workforce that can drive dynamic economic growth in the City, London, and beyond. The paper provides the first annual update on skills development performance.

It is also set in the context of Members' ambition to develop a City Youth Guarantee for residents and City-affiliated students, complementing the proposed national Youth Guarantee. This report does not expand further on a City Youth Guarantee while the national pilots are still underway. Once findings from those pilots are

available, design options for a City approach will be brought back to the Education Board for consideration.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Two key tenants of the City Corporation's Corporate Plan 2024-29 are *Dynamic Economic Growth: The City of London is the engine in the country's economy. Driving dynamic economic growth in financial and professional services at local, national, and international levels will create jobs, attract investment, and support businesses across communities and the country.* Also, *Providing Excellent Services: Supporting people to live healthy, independent lives and achieve their ambitions is dependent on excellent services. Vital to that continued pursuit is enabling access to effective adult and children's social care, outstanding education, lifelong learning, quality housing, and combatting homelessness.*
2. Skills development activity is structured across the City Corporation as illustrated below. This flightpath has been updated with activity during 2024-25:

SCHOOL

EARLY CAREER

MID CAREER

LORD MAYOR'S APPEAL

We Can Be
Inspiring young women to consider a career in the City
Annual. KS4. c.280 learners.

GUILDHALL SCHOOL

Young Artists
Performing and Production Arts for ages 4-18 in City, Kings Cross, Taunton, and Norwich.

EDUCATION STRATEGY UNIT

London Careers Festival
Ages 5 to 25, inc. for EHCP, SEND.
C. 10-15,000 learners.

Workshops, visits, webinars.

Work Experience Week

New for 2025. Summer. 20 learners.

CoLA KS4. Co-delivered with business.

Future Entrepreneurs

New for 2025. Summer. 30 learners.
CoLA or City-connected KS5.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Children and Young People with social worker ages 0-25
5 Apprentices aged 18+

BARBICAN CENTRE

Backstage Experience Mornings

140 learners pa, KS3-5, schools with PP 35%+

Barbican Young Poets

Annual. Nov-Jun. Ages 16-29. 25 learners.

Barbican Young Film Programmers

Annual. Oct-Jun. Ages 16-29. 20 learners.

Work Experience Week

Annual. Summer. CoLA KS4, 10 learners.

PEOPLE & HR

Work Experience Week

New for 2025. Summer. 20 learners.

CoLA KS4. Co-delivered with Big Alliance.

Utilises City Corporation volunteers.

Apprenticeships Lvl 2&3, some Lvl 4-7

100 centrally funded per year.

Up to 20 extra externally funded.

ADULT SKILLS and EDUCATION SERVICE

Supported Internships.

7 places available but no eligible candidates in the City of London.

Learning Courses and Programmes

(multiple)

C. 3,000 learners / enrolments per year.
Please refer to accompanying board paper.

INNOVATION AND GROWTH

Skills for a Sustainable Skyline

Bridging the skills gap for a globally competitive commercial built environment. The Skyline Skills Hub website has avg. 123,170 users per month.

Skills and Talent in UK FPS

Ongoing projects, reports, insights to maintain a strong talent FPS pipeline for London and UK.

Women Pivoting to Digital Taskforce

Support women with non-technical backgrounds to pivot to digital. Several Taskforce organisations have launched internal reskilling programmes.

AI Skills for the FPS Workforce

Unlocking employer investment in AI upskilling. Publicised in national/international forums.

Financial Capability in the Workplace

(Planned launch by end of 2025). Proposed outcome: *More employers take action to improve workforce financial capability, leading to increased access to financial wellbeing packages.*



The items here serve as a snapshot.
Please see accompanying board paper.



Prepared 2 Sep 2025

Current Position

Skills and Workforce Policy team

3. The Skills and Workforce Policy (SWP) team within the Department for Innovation and Growth leads the City Corporation's work to ensure London and the UK cultivate a strong pipeline of skills and talent for financial and professional services (FPS). This work underpins the sector's long-term global competitiveness:
 - a. The SWP team delivers this by running targeted projects, generating insights, and making evidence-based recommendations to inform policy. The focus is on driving systemic change in the Financial and Professional (FPS) sector and advocating for continued Government support in developing skills across the UK.
 - b. The aim is to foster a positive, lifelong learning culture, supported by employer investment. This approach helps build a strong domestic talent pool while also attracting the best global talent. It encourages businesses to upskill employees, recruit from the widest possible pool, and retain staff who can continue to contribute productively throughout their careers.
 - c. The SWP team's projects and insights provide direct value to FPS employers across the UK. The team engages with a wide range of large and small employers, co-creating solutions, convening stakeholders to align on policy priorities, and gathering frontline insights. The team also works closely with central and local government to ensure skills provision reflects employer needs. The focus is not on delivering services directly to employers or employees, but on enabling employers to meet their talent and skills challenges more effectively.
 - d. Current projects include:
 - i. The Women Pivoting to Digital Taskforce, which brings together business, government, third sector, and industry groups to bring more attention to and action around the digital talent solution that women from non-technical backgrounds provide. The Taskforce is chaired by Caroline Haines CC.
 - ii. The Skills for a Sustainable Skyline Taskforce, which is working to identify and bridge skill gaps to ensure that Central London has a globally competitive sustainable commercial built environment which we need to retain our world leading financial and professional services sector. The Taskforce is chaired by Keith Bottomley CC.
 - iii. Producing reports and insights on AI skills in the FPS sector, including our recent report on the Future of AI and the Workforce, which provided quantitative and qualitative analysis of how AI is impacting jobs across FPS sectors in front, middle and back-end jobs.

- iv. Producing reports and insights on international talent in the FPS sector, including our recent report on International Talent and Economic Impact, which reviews global competitor trends in national strategies, and rationales, for attracting global talent.
 - v. Collaboration with the Financial Services Skills Commission on skills needs in the FS sector and Progress Together on socio-economic diversity at senior levels in FS.
- e. Key impacts to date include:
- i. Women Pivoting to Digital Taskforce aims to help businesses close their digital talent gaps while empowering more women to pivot to a digital career by equipping them with technical skills to build a stronger, more inclusive future for the UK digital workforce.
 - 1. Over 100 businesses recruited to join and is Co-Chaired by Sheridan Ash, voted 2025 'Most Influential Woman in Tech'.
 - 2. Three organisations on the Taskforce have launched internal reskilling programmes with six others planning to launch similar programmes.
 - 3. Successful launch of a storytelling campaign, Turn to Tech, in Q2 of 2025 with 250+ signups for the newsletter and the most popular storytelling video viewed over 400 times on YouTube.
 - ii. Skills for a Sustainable Skyline Taskforce has influenced employers, local and national government and training providers to invest in green upskilling, reskilling and the attraction and retention of diverse new talent. It has done this by:
 - 1. The Skyline Skills Hub, which showcases over 100 green skills best practice resources and includes content from over 200 built environment firms.
 - 2. The upcoming Future Skyline Skills Commitment (an industry pledge to incentivise recruitment and retention of new talent), of which 35 firms have signed up and over 40 other firms are in the process of signing, in advance of the launch.
 - 3. Wider influence has resulted in Skills England and the Department for Education having designated construction as a priority sector, supported by the Chancellor's recent £600 million investment in construction training.
 - iii. AI Skills: Our joint report provides a robust, sector-specific evidence base on AI's impacts at a role and task level across FPS. It has since underpinned policy engagement, external events and parliamentary evidence.
 - 1. Evidence base taken into national and industry forums, shifting tone from fear to opportunity. Findings were cited in our memorandum to the House of Commons Treasury Committee inquiry into AI in financial services (Apr 2025) and used to brief/co-frame external engagements, including

Developing the right AI skills: futureproofing the FPS workforce (23 Oct 2024) and NextGenAI (26 Nov 2024).

2. Authoritative dataset now referenced by stakeholders.
- iv. International Talent: This work reframed the talent debate around productivity and competitiveness, gave a clear set of policy asks (including a UK Global Talent Strategy), and catalysed a follow-on programme of work on SMCR and international talent.
 1. Policy influence and alignment. Subsequent changes to the business visitor route and expansions to Youth Mobility Schemes were in line with our asks on business mobility and talent attraction highlighted in the programme's materials.
 2. Concrete follow-on policy programme. The report's recommendations seeded a sustained strand of work on the Senior Managers & Certification Regime (SMCR), resulting in this year's Mansion House announcement to conduct a new consultation with many significant changes proposed that we support.

The Adult Skills and Education Services

4. The Adult Skills and Education Services, within the Department of Community and Children's Services, delivers practical, operational programmes that provide measurable skills and qualifications to residents in the City and across London boroughs. This work focuses on helping Londoners move closer to the workforce or supporting career changes that respond to current and future skills needs. The current offer can be found here: [Adult Skills Education Service Prospectus 25/26](#).
5. In 2024/25, the Adult Skills and Education Services supported 80 apprentices, of whom 78 were City Corporation employees. Representation across the cohort was strong, with 52.5% female participation, 36% from ethnic minority backgrounds, and 22.5% aged 16–18. In addition, 18.8% of learners declared a learning difficulty and/or disability. The overall apprenticeship success rate rose significantly to 85.3% (from 69.2% in 2023/24), well above the last published national average of 60.5%.
6. Alongside apprenticeships, ASES delivered a broad portfolio of training programmes. In 2024/25, 218 participants successfully completed digital training courses, with 91 gaining interview opportunities or apprenticeships. A further 110 learners undertook intensive training in Data Science or Cybersecurity, with 79 progressing to interviews and 33 securing new jobs. The Multiply programme supported 385 learners in building numeracy confidence, while 103 learners participated in Bootcamp Green Retrofit programmes.
7. The City Corporation's involvement in community learning and wider engagement has also yielded strong outcomes. Over 1,000 residents took part in community learning programmes which prevent social isolation and promote wellbeing, whilst 1,200 school-aged children engaged in the DEFRA project. Together, these programmes demonstrate the reach and impact of ASES activity in equipping City residents and learners across London with the skills needed for progression into work and future opportunities.

The City Corporation's SME Strategy

8. The five-year City of London: Small and Medium Enterprise Strategy was agreed by Members of the Policy and Resources Committee in May 2024. Before the launch of the SME Strategy, there was no formal, coordinated approach to supporting small businesses within the City Corporation. While the Small Business Research + Enterprise Centre (SBREC) acted as the primary SME-facing function, many other departments – including City of London Police, Licensing, Planning, and Procurement – also interacted with SMEs, but this activity was fragmented and not centrally aligned or communicated. The SME Strategy was therefore developed to provide a coherent framework for support in line with the Destination City ambition for growth. It established three core priorities: (1) to de-silo operations across the Corporation; (2) to increase the visibility and accessibility of the universal support and training offer available to small businesses, and; (3) to design a new, targeted programme of support for early growth companies.
9. Significant progress has been made in the first year of the SME Strategy and the key achievements can be seen in the SME Strategy Factsheet Catalysing Business Growth: Highlights from the First Year. The priority for the first year was to streamline the City Corporation's services and training for SMEs by centralising our offer and breaking down internal silos. The SME team also wanted to increase access to all City Corporation SME services/training, connect with the wider SME ecosystem in the Square Mile through engagement of SMEs and key strategic partners, convene expertise from across the ecosystem to increase impact and increase the visibility of the SME Strategy itself.
10. The SME Delivery Team is currently situated within the Planning and Development Division and will soon transition to become part of the newly established City Business and Investment Unit (CBIU). In her report to the Policy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025, Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment, outlined her proposal to create a dedicated CBIU. This new unit is intended to enhance the City Corporation's ability to proactively and dynamically attract, retain, and grow business and investment in the Square Mile.
11. SME Strategy - skills and training progress to date include:
 - a. SME Gateway: the SME Team is currently developing a new City Corporation sub-brand to unify existing services and training programmes, while also streamlining communications with SMEs. The first phase of this project focused on improving how SMEs navigate the City Corporation's website. Previously, SME-related services and training were dispersed across various sections of the site, making it difficult for users to find the information they needed. The SME Gateway web portal was launched in February 2025. This centralised hub, consolidates key SME services and training in one accessible location, significantly reducing the number of clicks required to access relevant support. The next stage aims to better reflect the dynamic start-up and entrepreneurial culture of the Square Mile and will include the development of targeted marketing materials to help SMEs better understand and access the support and training available to them. The full launch of the SME Gateway is scheduled for Autumn 2025, with a high-profile event led by the Lead Member for SMEs

- b. SME Conference: the City of London Corporation successfully delivered its first flagship SME Conference, called "Access to Finance for Early-Stage SMEs" in partnership with the British Business Bank. It attracted over 240 SMEs who were at seed and venture investment stage. This event was designed to provide valuable insights and expertise on securing funding, and featured industry leaders and investors who shared their knowledge and strategies. The annual conference will now continue each year, demonstrating the impact that the City Corporation can have on training and upskilling the City and London SME Ecosystem.
- c. SME Events and Training programme: the SME Team have delivered a robust learning and development programme in the first year of the SME Strategy with 110 free events and training, comprising 57 onsite events and 53 online webinars. These sessions have collectively attracted over 600 SMEs and featured 36 speakers and experts, with most attendees based in London.
- d. Outreach Programme: the SME Team actively engage in a wide range of outreach activities, significantly impacting and supporting the SME community across the City and London. Last year, the team attended and supported just under 100 outreach sessions and partner training programmes, marking a 14% increase from the previous year and supporting over 500 delegates. These sessions were tailored to groups ranging from one-to-ones and workshops for up to twenty people. The qualified Business Advisers support a wide cross section of disadvantaged delegates looking to start or grow their business with training.
- e. Small Business Research + Enterprise Centre (SBREC) Membership and Centre Usage: last year, the Centre has seen significant growth and improvement in both membership and usage. A total of 1,768 new members joined, representing a 39% increase compared to the previous year. Member retention has also notably improved, with a 50% rise in retention rates year-on-year. Footfall within the Centre has increased by 70%, with a monthly average of 184 members accessing services such as research training, business advice, and shared workspace, up from 108 the previous year. This figure excludes footfall related to events and room hire.
- f. E- Business Programme: the SME Team were successful in securing £260k UK Social Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in 2023 as part of the London E-Business Support Programme. The aim of the programme was to upskill SMEs to make better use of online marketing, AI and other digital technology to boost their business growth, enhance efficiency, and maximise performance and productivity. 160 SMEs attended training between November 2023 and March 2025. The SME team met all UKSPF targets, helping to create and safeguard jobs, improve the business' internal processes, helped clients introduce new digital tools and helped them to learn how to harness the power of social media and AI. The SME Team also exceeded the programme's diversity targets that had been set by the Greater London Authority (GLA).

g. Skills/Training Priorities for Year Two of the SME Strategy include:

- I. SME Gateway branding launch: Involves the creation of a dedicated corporate sub-brand for the SME Gateway.
- II. SME Business STEP Training Programme: Launch and deliver this new business support programme which is being funded by an additional UKSPF grant direct from the GLA. This programme will support 38 SMEs in the Square Mile who need business advice and training to grow their business.
- III. The second annual SME Conference: The UK Inclusive Sourcing Summit 2025 is a first-of-its-kind conference hosted jointly by the City of London Corporation, MSDUK, OutBritain, Social Enterprise UK, Veteran Owned UK, and WEConnect International to accelerate growth in inclusive procurement and support diverse-owned businesses across the UK. It is being held in the Old Library at the Guildhall on 11 and 12 September 2025.
- IV. Refresh of the Small Business Research + Enterprise Centre: The Head of SME Delivery will lead a review and refresh of SBREC to align the centre with the corporate SME Gateway branding and to build on the success of the centre's new self-contained location at the Guildhall. This will involve a potential new centre name and updated branding to better reflect its core identity as a leading start-up training zone in the Square Mile.
- V. Expanding SME Upskilling and training: To build on the successful training delivery in the first year of the strategy, officers are exploring how they can expand training opportunities provided to ensure a targeted training offer is provided for City SMEs. Therefore, in Autumn 2025, the SME team will be seeking approval from the Policy and Resources Committee to utilise a portion of the remaining Section 106 skills and training funding. If approved, this funding will be used to expand business advice and develop a series of SME training programmes.
- VI. Skills for a Sustainable Skyline – as part of the development of the CBIU team, the responsibility of this project will transition from the Skills and Workforce Policy Team in I&G to CBIU from 2026.

Apprenticeships, Work Experience, and Graduate Programmes

12. The recruitment of Apprentices to the City Corporation and co-ordination and delivery of work experience opportunities within the City Corporation is the responsibility of Learning and Development within Peoples Services.
13. The Learning and Organisational Development team, situated within the People and HR Department, leads the City of London Corporation's efforts to develop a skilled, inclusive, and future-ready workforce. Through a coordinated approach to apprenticeships, work experience, and graduate development, the team ensures that both new entrants and existing employees are supported in their professional growth, while also addressing organisational skills gaps.
14. **For Apprenticeships:**
 - a. The City of London Corporation currently supports two primary apprenticeship pathways: one for new entrants via centrally funded programmes, and another for existing employees seeking to upskill through the apprenticeship levy.

b. Pathway One: Centrally Funded Apprenticeships - this pathway is designed to provide accessible entry points into the workforce, particularly for individuals with lower levels of formal education. Priority is given to applicants with qualifications at GCSE level or below, ensuring that opportunities are inclusive and supportive of those who may face barriers to employment.

- I. Recent changes to funding regulations have removed the requirement for English and Maths GCSEs for applicants over the age of 19. This has broadened access to manual and vocational apprenticeships, which are often more appealing to individuals who prefer practical roles over administrative ones.
- II. The City of London Corporation's central apprenticeship fund currently supports the salaries of up to 100 apprentices at Levels 2 and 3. These apprenticeships operate on a rolling basis, with new recruits joining as others complete their programmes. Apprenticeships span a diverse range of disciplines, from Accounting (AAT) and Arboriculture to Zookeeping, reflecting the breadth of services delivered by the Corporation.
- III. Progression is actively encouraged, with level 2 apprentices supported to advance to Level 3 upon successful completion. At present, 100 apprentices are engaged across departments, and demand remains high. A waitlist of managers eager to host apprentices demonstrates the strong internal appetite for participation. This sustained interest allows the Corporation to maintain, and potentially exceed, the 100-apprentice benchmark without the need for additional promotion, thanks to growing organisational awareness of the value apprentices bring.

c. Pathway Two: Two: Apprenticeship Levy for Existing Employees - the second pathway enables current employees to access apprenticeship training as part of their ongoing professional development. Currently, 190 employees are undertaking apprenticeships ranging from Level 3 to Level 7, including degree-level programmes in senior leadership.

- I. These apprenticeships are strategically aligned with organisational priorities, with a strong emphasis on data literacy, leadership, and management. In addition, bespoke programmes have been sourced to meet the needs of specialist teams—for example, ecology apprenticeships within the Environment Department.
- II. This approach not only supports individual career progression but also strengthens the Corporation's internal capabilities and resilience.

15. For Work Experience:

- a. The City Corporation continues to welcome work experience students into departments, offering valuable exposure to both office-based and open-space environments. These placements provide young people with insights into the diverse career opportunities available within the organisation.

- b. Many requests for placements come directly from schools. Learning and Development received a request from the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT). In the past year, five students from CoLAT schools completed structured placements consisting of one day per week over four weeks. These students gained experience across HR, Environment, and Facilities teams, including placements at the Guildhall and City schools.
- c. In partnership with the Big Alliance charity, the Corporation has also facilitated insight days for additional CoLAT students. These sessions provide an overview of the organisation, highlight work experience and apprenticeship opportunities, and include presentations from current graduate trainees, offering peer-to-peer insights into career pathways.

16. For Graduate Programme(s):

- a. The City Corporation launched its graduate programme in September 2024, welcoming an inaugural cohort of six graduates recruited through the IMPACT programme (formerly known as the National Graduate Development Programme, NGDP). This initiative is designed to attract high-potential individuals into public service careers, equipping them with the skills and experience needed to become future leaders.
 - b. Graduates undertake two six-month departmental rotations followed by a 12-month placement, allowing them to develop a deeper understanding of a key area while completing their Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) projects. The first cohort has contributed meaningfully across departments, bringing fresh perspectives and enhancing team dynamics.
 - c. A second cohort of nine graduates has been recruited and will join the organisation in September 2025. These individuals will initially be placed in departments aligned with their strengths and interests, with future rotations planned in response to organisational needs.
17. The City Corporation's integrated approach to apprenticeships, work experience, and graduate development demonstrates its commitment to workforce sustainability, inclusion, and professional growth. By investing in early career pathways and lifelong learning, these programmes create meaningful opportunities for individuals while delivering clear benefits to departments, with ongoing efforts focused on expanding access, enhancing quality, and aligning initiatives with strategic workforce priorities.

Education Strategy Unit

18. The Education Strategy Unit (ESU) has 'Improving Employability' as a key facet of the Education Strategy 2024-29 to deliver. Actions are;
- a. Better leverage the City Corporation's links with employers to contribute to the 'London Bridge the Gap' initiative currently being driven by the City of London Academies Trust, to help all learners – including those with SEND, and especially those without equal access – understand the landscape of careers and development opportunities in the Square Mile, access world-class careers pathways, and gain professional connections.

- b. Work collaboratively with ASES and our central apprenticeships team to help students leaving the Family of Schools better understand apprenticeships and access high quality City-based opportunities.
 - c. Better support learners leaving the Family of Schools, especially those in need of extra support, who are interested in entrepreneurship and innovation by working collaboratively with our Small Business Research + Enterprise Centre.
 - d. Map the landscape of Green Careers to offer learners a comprehensive overview and signpost them to careers pathways and green career development opportunities.
 - e. Refresh and relaunch FindFusion, positioning the platform as a knowledge hub that helps educators understand what Fusion Skills are, why they are so important to employers, and how they can help their learners to develop them.
19. In the ten months since the Education Strategy 2024-29 was approved, associated activity has delivered the following:
- a. Delivery of the London Careers Festival which took place over 2 weeks both in-person and digitally, engaging 167 employers representing 13 sectors and offering 48 workshop opportunities to learners aged 4 - 18. Approximately 10,300 learners participated. 82% reported that the events they attended were either good or excellent.
 - b. Delivery of a two-day 'Future Entrepreneurs' event designed to encourage and support aspiring entrepreneurs. The event was developed by the ESU and delivered in collaboration with SBREC and Northeastern University. Following the event, 100% of participants reported they had a better understanding of entrepreneurship, 71% reported they felt more confident with the idea of becoming an entrepreneur and 92% reported they felt more confident engaging with the world of work.
 - c. To assist some of the City-sponsored academies, delivery of a 1-week work experience adjacent programme was achieved. This was not in itself work experience - it was a programme designed to help young people who had not managed to secure work experience elsewhere to still improve their knowledge of the workplace, and to interact with a selection of employers via workshops. When asked if they felt the experience was of benefit, 82% of participants answered 'Yes'. When asked if it had improved their confidence in engaging with the world of work, 55% of participants answered 'Yes'.
 - d. Complete structural and visual redesign of the FindFusion website with relaunch is scheduled for Q4 2025. Signposting to at least 50 employability skills development programmes or workshops will be available to users at launch.
 - e. Opportunity for warm introductions to 44 organisations offering employability development opportunities has been shared with the *London Bridge the Gap* project via CoLAT by the ESU.

- f. Termly Skills forums have been facilitated by the ESU, engaging 25 teachers across the family of schools, with 12 curated skills opportunities shared with participants across the 3 sessions.
- g. Work focused on mapping the landscape of Green Careers will begin in the second half of the 2025/26 academic year as originally planned, and delivery of the apprenticeships-focused event will take place in the first half of the 2025/26 academic year. The latter will be delivered via a collaboration with the central apprenticeships team.

20. Immediate impacts of the activity outlined above include:

- a. **Scale and employer activation:** engagement of 167 employers and 10,300 learners demonstrate substantive reach and employer activation, helping to underpin local labour-market pathways.
- b. **Proximal learning outcomes:** consistently high self-reported gains in confidence and understanding provide short-term indicators of increased careers readiness; these measures are useful initial evidence of positive impact in lieu of full-scale destination tracking.
- c. **Inclusion and mitigation of access gaps:** the work-experience adjacent offer and curated enterprise support ensured that learners who would otherwise have been excluded from placements received employer exposure and workplace awareness. This aligns with current concerns about skills supply and employer demand.

21. The quantitative figures, collected through ESU monitoring, reflect scale and participation data. Qualitative measures are self-reported assessments of immediate and short-term impacts on participants' confidence and understanding after each activity.

Options

Members are invited to note this report.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications: Delivery of skills programmes directly supports the Corporation's strategic priority to develop a skilled, diverse workforce that underpins economic growth in the City, London and beyond.

Financial implications: ASES delivery is funded by grants secured from the Department for Education, Department for Work and Pensions and the Greater London Authority. Learning and Development apprenticeships are funded through the City Corporation's Apprenticeship Levy. Skills Policy work is resourced through Section 106 and Innovation & Growth local budgets, while Education Strategy Unit activity is funded through City Cash.

Resource implications: The delivery of skills training requires accessible public spaces. ASES currently uses Golden Lane Community Centre and City libraries, at a cost not covered by grant income. This presents an ongoing risk in terms of both cost and suitability.

Legal implications: None.

Risk implications: Non-delivery of funded projects against targets.

Equalities implications: All services for resident and non-resident learners are delivered in full compliance with the Public Sector Equalities Duties and the Equality Act 2010. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is embedded across the Skills & Workforce Policy Team's work, with initiatives such as the *Women Pivoting into Digital* Taskforce driving gender equality in technology and digital roles, and collaboration with Progress Together supporting socio-economic diversity.

Climate implications: Green skills development is reflected in both the Skills Policy Team's strategic work and ASES's operational delivery, including retrofit and sustainability programmes.

Security implications: Cyber security training forms a core element of the ASES prospectus.

Conclusion

Members have received a summary of skills development activity across the City Corporation during 2024-25. Members will receive proposals for a City Youth Guarantee when learning from the national pilot is available. Members will expect to receive an annual summary of skills development activity as agreed at Education Board on 21st January 2025.

Dr Deborah Bell

Strategic Education and Skills Director

E: deborah.bell@cityoflondon.gov.uk



2025-26

City of London & City of London Academies Trust Events Calendar



	Forums/Events for School leaders
	Events for pupils
	Education Board Members
	CoLAT Meetings & Events

CoLAT Meetings & Events 2025-26	Date	Time	Location
September			
Trust Board Meeting	18/09/2025	09:00 – 11:00	TBC
October			
Governance Conference	15/10/2025	TBC	TBC
People, Equality and Inclusion Committee	17/10/2025	10:00 – 11:00	TBC
Staff Conference	20/10/2025	TBC	TBC
November			
Standards and Accountability Committee	13/11/2025	10:00 – 11:30	TBC
Heads' Conference	20/11/2025	12:30 – 16:00	TBC
Finance & Operations / Audit & Risk Committee	21/11/2025	09:00 – 12:00	TBC
Remuneration Committee	27/11/2025	13:00 – 15:00	TBC
T&L Leaders Conference	27/11/2025	TBC	TBC
December			
Trust Board Meeting	12/12/2025	09:00 – 11:00	TBC
January			
People, Equality and Inclusion Committee	27/01/2026	09:00 – 10:30	TBC
February			
Standards and Accountability Committee	05/02/2026	13:30 – 15:00	TBC
March			
Finance & Operations / Audit & Risk Committee	03/03/2026	09:00 – 12:00	TBC
Company AGM	12/03/2026	10:00 – 11:30	TBC
Heads' Conference	12/03/2026	12:30 – 16:00	TBC
Trust Board Meeting	19/03/2026	09:00 – 11:00	TBC
T&L Leaders Conference	19/03/2026	TBC	TBC
April			
May			
People, Equality and Inclusion Committee	07/05/2026	10:00 – 11:00	TBC
Standards and Accountability Committee	13/05/2026	11:00 – 12:30	TBC
June			
T&L Leaders Conference	11/06/2026	TBC	TBC
Senior Leadership Conference	18/06/2026	TBC	TBC
Finance & Operations / Audit & Risk Committee	25/06/2026	TBC	TBC
July			
Trust Board Meeting	14/07/2026	09:00 – 11:00	TBC

A-Level Results Day – 13/08/2026

GCSE Results Day – 20/08/2026



Last updated – 2 September 2025

Please note, all dates, times and venues are subject to change

For more information, please contact COLEducation@StrategyUnit@cityoflondon.gov.uk

	Forums/Events for School leaders
	Events for pupils
	Education Board Members
	COLAT Meetings & Events

Events and Meetings 2025-26	Date	Time	Location
September			
Year 13 Alumni Networking	CANCELLED		
Education Board	23/09/2025	10:30 - 12:30	Committee Room 1, West Wing
October			
Partnerships Forum (Autumn)	14/10/2025	09:00 - 10:30	COL Room 2, North Wing
Skills Forum virtual drop-in (Autumn)	15/10/2025	12:30 – 13:15	Virtual
Autumn Half-Term			
Between 27 – 31 October 2025 (School dates may vary)			
November			
City Schools' Concert - Launch	4 or 5 Nov 2025 (TBC)	09:00 – 15:00	TBC
Skills Forum (Autumn)	11/11/2025	08:30 – 10:00	Visiting a business - TBC
Headteachers Forum (Autumn)	26/11/2025	14:00 – 16:00	Committee Room 2, West Wing
December			
Cultural and Creative Learning Forum (Autumn)	02/12/2025	10:00 - 11:30	COL Room 3, North Wing
Education Board	04/12/2025	10:30 - 12:30	Committee Room 1, West Wing
Liveries Education Network (Autumn)	11/12/2025	13:30 – 16:00	TBC
City Schools Concert - Composition Workshop 1	School Dependant	School Dependant	Participating School
Christmas Holidays			
Between 22 December 2025 – 2 January 2026 (School dates may vary)			
January			
Education Board	22/01/2026	10:30 - 12:30	Committee Room 2, West Wing
Headteachers Forum (Spring)	28/01/2026	10:00 - 13:00	COL Room 2, North Wing
City Schools Concert - Composition Workshops 2 & 3	School Dependant	School Dependant	Participating School
February			
Skills Forum (Spring)	03/02/2026	08:30 – 10:00	Visiting a business - TBC
Christ Hospital Maths Challenge	06/02/2026	09:00 - 15:15	Livery Hall, Guildhall
City Schools Concert - Rehearsal	06/02/2026	09:00 – 16:00	TBC
City Schools Concert	09/02/2026	09:00 - 19:00	Great Hall, Guildhall
Spring Half Term			
Between 16 - 20 February 2026 (School dates may vary)			
Chess Training workshop	26/02/2026	13:30 – 15:30	Virtual
March			
London Careers Festival	02/03/2026	All day	All of Guildhall
London Careers Festival	03/03/2026	All day	All of Guildhall
London Careers Festival	04/03/2026	All day	All of Guildhall
London Careers Festival	05/03/2026	All day	All of Guildhall
London Careers Festival	06/03/2026	All day	All of Guildhall



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	Forums/Events for School leaders
	Events for pupils
	Education Board Members
	COLAT Meetings & Events

Partnerships Forum (Spring)	17/03/2026	09:00 - 10:30	COL Room 2, North Wing
City Schools Conference	23/03/2026	08:30 – 13:00	Livery Hall, Guildhall & St Paul's Cathedral
Chess Tournament	25/03/2026	09:00 – 15:00	Old Library, Guildhall
Skills Forum virtual drop-in (Spring)	25/03/2026	12:30 – 13:15	Virtual
Education Board	26/03/2026	10:30 - 12:30	Committee Room 2, West Wing

Easter Holidays

Between 30 March – 10 April 2026 (School dates may vary)

April

Cultural and Creative Learning Forum (Spring)	21/04/2026	08:30 – 10:00	COL Room 2, North Wing
Liveries Education Network (Spring)	30/04/2026	13:30 – 16:00	TBC

May

Headteachers Forum (Summer)	05/05/2026	10:00 - 13:00	COL Room 2, North Wing
Education Board	14/05/2026	10:30 - 12:30	Committee Room 2, West Wing
Skills Forum (Summer)	19/05/2026	08:30 – 10:00	Visiting a business - TBC

Summer Half-Term

Between 25-29 May 2026 (School dates may vary)

June

Partnerships Forum (Summer)	16/06/2026	09:00 – 10:30	COL Room 2, North Wing
City Schools' Health Challenge	17/06/2026	09:00 – 15:00	West Ham Park
Skills Forum virtual drop-in (Summer)	24/06/2026	12:30 – 13:15	Virtual
Education Board Dinner	TBC	TBC	TBC

July

Cultural and Creative Learning Forum (Summer)	07/07/2026	08:30 – 10:00	COL Room 2, North Wing
Liveries Education Network (Summer)	09/07/2026	13:30 – 16:00	TBC
Education Board	16/07/2026	10:30 - 12:30	Committee Room 2, West Wing

Summer Holidays

20 July 2026 onwards (School dates may vary)

A-Level Results Day – 13/08/2026

GCSE Results Day – 20/08/2026

Guildhall is formed by a number of buildings and has multiple entrances. Please use the appropriate entrance when arriving for your meeting or event. <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/find-us>



Last updated – 2 September 2025

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