

Committee(s)	Dated:
Education Board - For information	24 April 2023
Subject: Culture Mile Learning – School Visits Fund	Public
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Summary

This paper provides the quarterly update information on the Schools Visits Fund that Culture Mile Learning (CML) was asked to provide as a condition of its funding for 2022/23. It includes data on uptake of the fund as well as its impact on schools.

Main Report

1) Applications

The data below is provided by month from the date of our previous report in November 2022 until 31 March 2023, along with comparison data from 2021/22.

- November 11th – November 30th 2022: 21 applications were made set to benefit 884 pupils. A total of 36 application were made in November, benefitting 1,420 pupils.
(November 2021: 29 applications, benefitting 941 pupils)
- December 1st – December 31st 2022: 9 applications were made set to benefit 363 pupils
(December 2021: 8 applications, benefitting 338 pupils)
- January 1st – January 31st 2023: 22 applications were made set to benefit 937 pupils
(January 2022: 14 applications, benefitting 772 pupils)
- February 1st – February 28th 2023: 27 applications were made set to benefit 1,320 pupils
(February 2022: 15 applications, benefitting 689 pupils)
- March 1st – March 31st 2023: 27 applications were made, set to benefit 1,151 pupils
(March 2022: 13 applications, benefitting 518 pupils)

A total of 106 applications were made in this period by 85 different schools/organisations from 17 different boroughs to visit seven different cultural venues supported by the City and within the Culture Mile Learning network.

Specifically, applications were made by

- 66 primary schools
- 14 secondary schools
- 1 pupil referral unit (PRU)
- 1 college
- 3 charitable organisations working with school aged children

This takes the total number of applications for this financial year to 291 from 158 different schools/organisations with an average Pupil Premium level of 47%.

Applications from the City Family of Schools

Galleywall Primary School is the only primary school in the City Family of Schools which meets the required Pupil Premium threshold of 35% and the school has made the maximum three applications for this academic year. As discussed at the December Education Board meeting, we would accept an application from schools which don't meet the 35% threshold if it was for a visit which was targeted at students in receipt of free schools meals or experiencing other disadvantage.

No applications have been made this year by the City's secondary academies. We regularly remind the schools about the fund when working with them on our projects as do our partners, but often they do not need its support. For example, City of London Academy Islington took part in our Fusion Futures programme and also Culturally Speaking, but didn't need financial assistance as both programmes are free and took place at Barbican and the Museum of the Order of St John respectively, which are both in walking distance of the school. City of London Academy Highbury Grove also took part in Culturally Speaking at Keats House, which they were able to travel to for free on public transport.

Patterns of note:

- The most popular venues applied for in this period were:
 - Barbican & London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) (joint programming of their LSO Key Stage concerts) with 24.47% of applications overall and popular with both secondary and primary schools. The fund is mostly used to help with the £5 per person ticket costs for multiple classes within the same year.
 - The Monument with 23% of applications overall which was popular with year 1 and 2 classes as it supports study of the Great Fire of London and British landmarks.
 - Natural Environments (Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest) with 22.22% of applications overall. Both sites are popular with primary schools who want to encourage KS2 learning around the Iron Age and to support the Outdoor Adventurous Activities PE KS2 curriculum unit.

- Applications reduced in December due to school closures for the Christmas holidays but saw a steady increase in January through to March as teachers returned. 54.41% of applications made during January – March were for visits happening in the spring term, whilst 45.59 % were for visits taking place in the summer term.
- The fund continues to be predominately used by primary schools. 62.26% of all applications were made by primary schools and 13.21% of applications were made by secondary schools.
- The main use of funding for schools in this period has been to cover entrance fees (including workshop charges) and transportation costs.
- Other commonly cited reasons for applications were to:
 - improve mental health and wellbeing
 - provide extracurricular activities
 - support curriculum learning
 - enable students from disadvantaged areas to experience culture and know more about their city
 - support COVID recovery for schools whose pupils have experienced significant financial hardship and a lack of access to environments other than school and the home over the last 2 years.

Statements from applications included:

‘I would like the fund to be used for my EAL students, many of whom are PP or FSM recipients and do not speak English fluently. The economic as well as a language barrier seriously limit their educational opportunities. I believe a school trip to Tower Bridge would enable them to understand British history better and motivate them to learn the English language.’ (Secondary School)

‘We are a pupil referral unit, where our cohort predominantly have SEMH and SEN. The children come from deprived backgrounds. The majority of the children come from families where their experiences of the world are limited so giving them the experiences with this funding will give them the opportunity to experience something that they might not otherwise. With the funding we are hoping to go on a trip to Hampstead Heath and have a session in the education centre. It will support us in getting transport to and from the venue and support our learning in Science.’ (PRU)

2) Grants paid out

Twenty-seven grants have been paid out in this period totalling £8,671, taking the total number of grants this financial year to 67 and the combined amount awarded to

£20,716. The number of grants paid out is different to the number of applications received because schools are paid after they have made their visits, not on approval of their applications, and the majority of the visits that are the subject of the 106 applications are due to take place later this academic year.

3) Evaluation and feedback

Feedback forms completed by grantees show the value of the fund to schools and their pupils and also the ease of the application process.

- The visit increased young people's confidence and motivation
76% of teachers 'strongly agree' and 24% 'agree'
- The young people learnt something new as a result of the visit
76% of teachers 'strongly agree' and 24% 'agree'
- The young people were engaged and enjoyed the visit
92% of teachers 'strongly agree' and 8% 'agree'
- The visit supported our objectives and/or curriculum
92% of teachers 'strongly agree' and 8% 'agree'
- The visit helped develop young people's communication, thinking, organisational, or creative skills:
76% of teachers 'strongly agree' and 24% 'agree'
- Ease of applying
100% of teachers found the application process 'very easy'

Quotes from teachers include:

'Learning outside the classroom is vitally important to our pupils, due to Covid pupils lost 2 years of meaningful trips and integration opportunities. With the rising costs we are not always able to provide transport for trips far away from our school. A fund such as the Culture Mile Fund enables us to provide an irresistible opportunity for classes to not only attend the visit but to also reflect and celebrate the experience back in school afterwards meaning the trip has long lasting impact for all those who attended.'

'It makes a huge difference to our school that we are able to apply for financial support for these visits, as many of our parents would struggle to afford extra trip payments. The fund makes our musical visits possible, and these events make up part of our strong music curriculum.'

'We know this trip far exceeded the students' expectations, even though one said he has been looking forward to this since the day we announced it at parents' evening.'

Genuinely, they were the happiest I have seen them in a long time, some also remarking that they were finally able to be their "true self" as they were in a safe environment around people who cared about them, and having a good time.'

'One of our biggest barriers is suitable transport for our pupils, especially as we are a SEND school. Being able to book transport which is both comfortable and appropriate for our pupils to travel safely is an absolute gift to us. Cost is the overall biggest barrier for us.'

'They were able to experience a new open space they hadn't visited before and use maps in an unfamiliar location. They were able to learn about compasses and using maps in a real life context, developing their geographical skills, spatial awareness and gaining fieldwork experience. They used these skills to take part in an active, practical activity which was really engaging.'

'It was also an opportunity for our children to see many landmarks in London. It is very common for our children not to leave the local area.'

'This fund has been vitally important in ensuring that the children at our school have access to high quality arts experiences.'

'The visit brought the topic to life in a way we could not have replicated in school. It provided children with a real insight into Victorian life and gave them access to a wide range of resources that catered to the different learning needs of the children. Experiencing the river up close provided an excellent foundation for the Geography unit on rivers. This was a very memorable learning experience for the children. The fund is increasing access and removing barriers of disadvantage.'

4) School Visits Fund development

In response to the introduction made by Education Board Member James Adeleke, a link has now been made between Action for Conservation and the City's Natural Environment Learning Team. Action for Conservation run a range of projects with London schools and youth groups which include action days out in green spaces. These days out could take place at the City's sites of Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest and West Ham Park and would therefore be eligible for support through the fund.

5) Changes to the administration of the fund

With the upcoming changes to how Cultural and Creative Learning is funded from August 2023, the administration of the fund will move from the Museum of London to the City of London's Education Strategy Unit (ESU) at the end of July. A key focus for the next four months therefore is ensuring that any existing claims are paid out and enabling a smooth handover to the ESU.

Schools have been informed of the following:

- The last date for applications for visits this academic year is 1st June 2023, after which no further applications will be accepted.
- Any visits applied for must take place before 30th June 2023 (excluding the London Careers Festival).
- The last date for submitting claim invoices is 30th June 2023 (excluding the London Careers Festival).
- The last date for submitting claim invoices for the London Careers Festival is 14th July 2023.

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