

Primary Arts

Quarterly Report: December 2024

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Introduction

A New Direction is pleased to share this quarterly update on delivery of the first year of Primary Arts at full scale for the City Educational Trust Fund. Following successful completion of the pilot programme in July 2024, we were extremely grateful to secure funding to enable us to plan and deliver the programme over the next three and a half years. Over the summer since securing the funding, we have made adjustments to some elements of delivery in response to evaluation findings, but the fundamental structure and offer of the programme remain unchanged, other than the scale of the offer. The five strands of the programme are:

For pupils (with support for staff)

- Go & See (offered in the autumn and summer terms)
- In-Schools Touring (offered in the spring term)

For teachers:

- Cultural Education Leadership Programme (year-long)
- Masterclasses (single day sessions delivered year-round)

For any school staff

- Come & Try (twilights delivered year-round)

A list of delivery partners can be found at the end of this report.

Key Achievements This Quarter

Programme Launch

The key achievement of the quarter is the successful launch of the full-scale programme offer on 25 September 2024 (with the exception of the summer season of Go & See, which will open for bookings in the spring). We have been delighted with interest in and uptake of the programme, with 294 settings registered on our booking platform, and all programme strands with a robust number of bookings or applications.

31 Boroughs are represented across the registered schools. Boroughs with no sign-ups are Bexley and Sutton (of these, Sutton did participate in last year's pilot). We are working with our Pathfinder Advisory group and connecting with local authority contacts to help encourage schools from these boroughs to engage in the programme. We are also looking at uptake data, establishing our Teacher Advisory group and exploring other ways to gain a better understanding of how and why schools are engaging with the programme in order to drive greater uptake.

We are receiving a steady stream of enquiries from schools interested in the 2025/26 Cultural Education Leadership Programme, which suggests an increasing and continued awareness of the programme as well as its relevance and interest to

schools. We have seen continued new registrations onto the booking platform which suggests a more general interest. The next key moment for schools recruitment will be the launch of applications to the summer season of the Go & See programme in the spring term. We continue to profile ongoing opportunities such as Masterclasses and Come & Try events through our schools e-newsletters, social media channels, and through targeted Primary Arts direct mailings.

Marketing & Communications

To support launch we were pleased to secure the following:

- Teach Primary print advert (September 2024 issue, page 56) and paid social media posts.
 - Link: <https://cdn.teachwire.net/e-mag/Teach-Primary-Issue-18.6/>
- Arts Professional (23/09/2024) 'Creative education in London gets £3.6m boost'.
 - Link: <https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/creative-education-london-gets-ps36m-boost>
- The Educator – '1000s of pupils and teachers from London's state primary schools and SEND settings will receive access to free cultural and creative opportunities in A New Direction's new primary Arts programme' (24/09/2024)
 - Link: <https://the-educator.org/1000s-of-pupils-and-teachers-from-londons-state-primary-schools-and-send-settings-will-receive-access-to-free-cultural-and-creative-opportunities-in-a-new-directions-new-primary-arts/>
- Michelle Walker, London Area Director, Arts Council England, said: "A New Direction's commitment to empowering children—and now their teachers—to embrace creativity, shape culture, and achieve their potential is truly inspiring. Arts Council England is thrilled to support the new Primary Arts free programme across London's state primary schools and primary SEND settings."
- The Arty Teacher (art teacher / education blogger with over 10,000 followers) @the.arty.teacher, [The Arty Teacher](#).
- Direct postal mailing to 2,100 schools.

Booking Platform

Our newly-developed, bespoke online [booking platform](#) has proven to be a useful and effective tool for schools to manage their engagement with the programme, and has worked smoothly from launch. It is also a valuable tool for the team in terms of managing and monitoring school bookings and associated administrative processes.

Programme Delivery

Following launch, bookings and an allocations phase, all strands of the programme except for In-Schools Touring are now in delivery. On-the-day evaluations are being undertaken and the leadership cohort and touring organisations have completed their baseline evaluation questionnaires. Feedback has been very positive so far and the team have been delighted to see children and teachers enjoying their experiences, learning, and being inspired.

Highlights

As mentioned above, the positive interest in and uptake of the programme has been a significant highlight. We were also delighted to bring together all delivery partners and members of the CETF team and board for a launch celebration in September.

Highlights for each strand of the programme include:

Go & See

- Programme oversubscribed at launch.
- It has been joyful to see hundreds of excited children in cultural venues having a wonderful time.
- Very positive feedback to the programme – see quotes, below.

In-Schools Touring

- Programme oversubscribed at launch.
- Two successful Network Meetings with the 10 delivery organisations to support their onboarding and their planning around inclusion.
- Initial planning underway between organisations and their allocated schools.

Masterclasses

- Successful delivery of our first Masterclass, 'Building Reading for Pleasure Schools' with CLPE, featuring author SF Said. See quotes, below.

Come & Try

- Five out of six sessions fully booked, one place remaining at the sixth.
- Successful delivery of the second planned session (session 1 has been rearranged to February due to planned ASLEF strike action in November).

Cultural Education Leadership Programme

- 18 teachers participating.

- Successful delivery of two learning days, including cultural exploration visits at Kensington Palace and Discover Story Centre, plus learning visit to two primary schools and London Museum Docklands.

Number of Booked Places

294 Schools registered (of which 15 are SEND settings).

- 131 Touring Applications (100 selected)
- 88 Go & See Applications (35 selected)
- 40 Schools attending Masterclasses (96 individual teachers)
- 45 Schools attending Come & Try sessions (67 individuals)
- 18 Schools on leadership programme (recruited summer 2024)

Uptake by borough

The table below shows school engagement by borough on the basis of registrations and bookings made.

Please note: *Schools registered* – all schools registered on booking platform.

Individuals registered – each school can have multiple teachers linked to it as individuals book their own places on specific programme strands.

Schools participating – schools that are actively signed up for any programme strands (counted only once irrespective of the number of individuals participating or the number of strands engaged with).

Borough	Schools registered	Individuals registered	Schools participating
Barking & Dagenham	10	23	9
Barnet	5	5	2
Bexley	0	0	0
Brent	8	22	5
Bromley	5	6	3
Camden	20	32	11
City of London	1	2	0
Croydon	6	14	5
Ealing	17	30	11
Enfield	8	14	3
Greenwich	12	22	5
Hackney	14	25	10
Hammersmith & Fulham	6	6	4
Haringey	9	11	4
Harrow	3	4	2
Havering	2	2	1
Hillingdon	10	16	5

Borough	Schools registered	Individuals registered	Schools participating
Hounslow	6	10	2
Islington	9	20	9
Kensington & Chelsea	3	4	2
Kingston	3	3	1
Lambeth	16	30	11
Lewisham	19	24	12
Merton	9	12	3
Newham	19	22	13
Redbridge	10	15	7
Richmond	8	11	5
Southwark	15	22	10
Sutton	0	0	0
Tower Hamlets	12	23	7
Waltham Forest	15	35	9
Wandsworth	11	17	7
Westminster	3	4	1
TOTAL	294	486	179

Sessions Taken Place

Date	Strand	Event	Venue
19/9/24	Leadership	Warm up social	Phoenix Garden (WC2H) Cambridge Theatre
30/9/24	Touring	Delivery organisations network meeting 1 (onboarding)	Good Growth Hub
30/9/24	All	Launch celebration	Good Growth Hub
10/10/24	Leadership	Session 1: The foundations of successful schools and effective cultural education + learning visit Kensington Palace	Kensington Palace
13/11/24	Leadership	Session 2: Hallmarks of a successful cultural education curriculum + learning visit London Museum Docklands	Mayflower Primary School /Lauriston Primary School (both LBTH) London Museum Docklands
20/11/24	Touring	Delivery organisations network meeting 2 (inclusion)	Good Growth Hub
22/11/24	Go & See	Alice in Wonderland Returns	Brixton House
22/11/24	Go & See	Immersive art experience	Frameless
26/11/24	Masterclasses	Masterclass 1: Building 'Reading for Pleasure' Schools	CLPE
26/11/24	Leadership Alumni	Alumni meet-up 1	Royal Academy
27/11/24	Go & See	Dick Whittington & His Cat	Greenwich Theatre
27/11/24	Come & Try	Make with Natural Dyes and Materials	Crafts Council
28/11/24	Go & See	Aladdin	Lyric Hammersmith
28/11/24	Go & See	Dick Whittington & His Cat	Greenwich Theatre
3/12/24	Go & See	Pinocchio	Stratford East
3/12/24	Leadership	Session 3: Understanding self and planning for impact + learning visit Discover Centre	UCL East Discover Centre
4/12/24	Go & See	Aladdin	Lyric Hammersmith
5/12/24	Go & See	Pinocchio	Stratford East
6/12/24	Go & See	The Singing Mermaid	Little Angel Theatre
6/12/24	Go & See	Aladdin	Lyric Hammersmith
10/12/24	Go & See	Alice in Wonderland Returns	Brixton House
13/12/24	Go & See	The Singing Mermaid	Little Angel Theatre

In addition, the Pathfinder Advisory Group has met on the following dates:

- 4 July
- 23 September
- 21 November

Number of Children/Teachers Involved this Quarter

Please note some numbers are based on bookings rather than actual attendance as monitoring forms have not yet been received for all sessions.

Some teachers may have participated in more than one strand of the programme – please note these figures have not been deduplicated.

For Go & See and Come & Try the total for ‘teachers’ includes non-teaching adults such as parent helpers supporting Go & See visits, or non-teaching school staff attending a Go & See session.

Strand	Children	Teachers	Booked or actual	Notes
Go & See	1783	312	Booked	May include other adults (eg parent helpers)
In-Schools Touring	n/a	n/a	n/a	Delivery commences February 2025
Masterclasses	n/a	27	Actual	All teachers
Come & Try	n/a	21	Actual	May include non-teaching staff
Leadership	n/a	18	Actual	All teachers
TOTAL	1783	378		

Case Studies/ Quotes

Go & See (Theatre)

“I accompanied the children with the class teacher. I got to see the awe and wonder in the children’s faces and share in their joy. Many children had never been in a theatre before and it was great to see how the children listened to the rules concerning the show and their complete immersion in the experience.”

“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 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."

Masterclasses

"I feel really inspired to take these new ideas back to my school."

"It made me reflect on my current school practices and how I am promoting reading for pleasure in school. It made me see more so the value of reading for pleasure."

"The message was most inspiring. Just the knowledge that what we instinctively want to do as a teacher (but perhaps are hindered by SLT etc) is the most valuable experience for our children."

Come & Try

"Extremely welcoming, friendly and knowledgeable artists and leads, no pressure of sharing creations, well resourced, great level of explanations. Loved that we were able to take samples for reference and a printed breakdown of the tried crafts. A brilliant evening!!"

"Learnt new skills to apply in school. Met really nice teachers. Really enjoyable time!"

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

"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."

"Thank you for such an engaging and enjoyable session. This has been the best CPD I've been on in a while."

Impact Quotes

We have completed on-the-day evaluation of sessions (see above) but have not yet undertaken follow-up surveys. These are sent out to schools around half a term after delivery has taken place, which means that participants in this term's activity will receive a questionnaire in February. As such we do not have evidence yet of longer-term impact to share.

The evaluation for the programme is based on our Theory of Change (ToC), which has been adjusted very slightly since the pilot of the programme. Linked to this ToC is

an overarching evaluation framework for the programme. From this, our independent evaluator has developed a series of evaluation tools and approaches for each strand of the programme, including:

Cultural Education Leadership Programme:

- Baseline & endpoint questionnaires for all participants.
- On-the-day 'what went well' / 'even better if' feedback for iterative programme design.
- Follow up questionnaire one term after completing the programme.

Masterclasses:

- On-the-day evaluation.
- Follow up questionnaire half a term after completing the programme.

Come & Try

- On-the-day evaluation.
- Follow up questionnaire half a term after completing the programme.

Go & See

- Post trip evaluation.
- Follow up questionnaire half a term after completing the programme.

In-Schools Touring

- Baseline and endpoint evaluation with delivery organisations.
- On-the-day evaluation of staff CPD session.
- On-the-day evaluation with pupils.
- On-the-day evaluation with teachers.
- On-the-day event report from delivery organisations.
- Follow up questionnaire half a term after completing the programme.

We will also be creating three case studies for the programme. These will be completed over summer 2025 and shared along with our Year 1 evaluation report.

Challenges

For Go & See there is a challenge around the value some schools place on a free offer, which can lead to a 'book in haste, reflect at leisure' approach. This has meant that in a few cases, schools have rushed to place a booking request without properly considering whether the date or venue is suitable for the group they are booking for, or without checking details properly. During the allocations phase this led to a number of schools significantly changing their booking request which caused additional administration for the team trying to fill spaces on the programme. There is also

(much more rarely) a challenge around schools not bringing as many children to the performance as they had booked for.

We are considering how we communicate with schools around this issue – more clearly articulating the cost of the programme, the number of schools on the waiting list for tickets, and the time it takes to confirm bookings – so that they understand the potential impact of them changing or cancelling their booking. We already have a cancellation policy in place (including a charge for no-shows or late cancellations) but this does not cover schools attending with a much lower number of pupils than planned, so we are reviewing the wording of this. It will never be possible to completely mitigate these sorts of challenges as they are not unusual when working with schools, but we want to ensure that we do everything we can to fill places on the programme to deliver it cost effectively and with maximum benefit to schools, teachers and pupils.

Advisory Group Learnings

Working with the Pathfinder Advisory Group has been very beneficial. The Pathfinder Group has been an interim measure, and we are currently working towards splitting into the two planned groups – a teacher advisory and a strategic development group. We anticipate these being in place by the end of March.

Across the three meetings held to date with the Pathfinder group, we have valued their input around:

- Working towards increasing the diversity of the membership of the group in the future (suggesting networks and mechanisms for recruitment).
- Networks and groups to engage with to support school recruitment into the programme.
- Forward planning and timelines (what works best for schools and the sector).
- Sustainability and legacy of the programme.

Appendix I: List of Partners

Go & See

Winter season:

The Winter offer for Go & See focusses on visual art and theatre.

- Frameless
- Brixton House
- Greenwich Theatre
- Little Angel Theatre
- Lyric Hammersmith
- Theatre Royal Stratford East

Summer season:

The Summer season focusses on visual art, film and theatre.

- Frameless
- Royal Academy
- BFI
- Into Film
- Little Angel Theatre
- Polka Theatre

In-Schools Touring Programme

- Animate Arts
- Arvon
- Clowns Without Borders
- Conductive Music
- Embracing Arts
- Emma and PJ
- LAStheatre
- Mbilla Arts
- Musiko Musika
- Postal Museum

Cultural Education Leadership Programme

Delivered in partnership with UCL Centre for Educational Leadership, and supported by:

- Mayflower Primary School
- Lansbury Lawrence Primary School
- Kensington Palace
- Tower Bridge
- Discover
- National Theatre

Masterclasses

Delivered in partnership with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education.

Come & Try

Delivered in partnership with the Crafts Council.