



Primary Arts 2026/27

In-Schools Touring Programme

A New Direction is delighted to be seeking Expressions of Interest from cultural organisations in London to collaborate with us on the delivery of our Primary Arts In-Schools Touring Programme in 2026/27. Through this programme, we aim to reach 120 state primary and special schools across London (all boroughs) with an offer comprising performances and in-class workshops for pupils, and twilight CPD for teachers, as well as resources and materials, delivered in schools across London. There is a fee of up to £38,000 (inclusive of VAT) available per organisation, on the basis of each organisation working with 12 schools each.

We welcome Expressions of Interest across all art forms including (but not limited to) drama, dance, music, visual and digital art, spoken word and cross art form. To express your interest in being part of the 2026/27 programme, please read the programme information and [application guidance](#), before completing and submitting the [Expression of Interest Form](#) online by 12pm on Friday 20 March. If you have any questions that aren't answered in this document and the guidance, please contact the Primary Arts team at A New Direction by email at schools@anewdirection.org.uk before expressing interest in the programme.

Thank you.

Programme Information

About Primary Arts

A New Direction's Primary Arts programme aims to increase access to high quality and inspiring arts, cultural and creative opportunities for children and staff in London's state primary and special schools. Delivered in collaboration with a range of cultural organisations, this menu of free opportunities aims to unlock the creative potential, cultural capital and skills of school staff and children, offering opportunities to support wellbeing, confidence, personal interest and professional development.

In addition to our Cultural Education Leadership Programme which supports mid-career teachers to act as leaders in cultural education, schools and their staff can access free in-school performances, masterclasses, tickets to a range of cultural experiences, and hands-on creative activities, reflecting the breadth and quality of London's cultural offering.

The Primary Arts programme was piloted in 2023/24 and delivered at full scale in 2024/25 and 2025/26. We are now delighted to be delivering the programme for a third year with expanded capacity to primary and special schools across London.

Primary Arts is supported by The City of London Corporation City Educational Trust Fund (29084), a City of London Corporation charity.

Note

Please note that we use the word 'performance' in this document – we recognise that for some organisations the experience offered to children may not be a straightforward performance, so please take this as a shorthand for the group experience offered to the whole year group, rather than the workshops delivered to individual classes.

About the In-Schools Touring Programme

The Primary Arts In-Schools Touring Programme aims to bring high quality arts experiences into schools through performances and workshops.

Participating schools receive:

- A performance (or experience) lasting around 1 hour, for all classes in one year group.
- In-class workshops lasting 45 minutes to 1 hour, for each class in the same year group, further exploring the artform, themes and curriculum areas linked to the performance.
- A one-hour in-person teacher twilight CPD session in the 4 weeks prior to the performance, to support whole-school engagement, teacher and pupil learning.
- A range of resources to support communication and learning about the performance, including information for pupils, staff and families, as well as classroom activities.

- Creative materials to support creative classroom activities.
- Booklists linked to the programme curated by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education.
- A set of books worth around £150 to support reading for pleasure linked to the programme.

The programme is for all primary year groups from Reception to Year 6. It is offered free of charge to state primary schools in any London borough as well as to special schools working with children of any age using primary approaches.

[You can see the programme brochure for 2025/26 using this link.](#)

The role of participating organisations:

We are seeking 10 organisations to work with us to codeliver the In-Schools Touring programme. We are planning on the basis of each organisation working in 12 primary or special schools across London, but depending on the uptake of the programme this may be slightly lower or higher (no fewer than five schools, no more than 15).

Organisations will work with one year group per school (this may vary in special schools where classes may be arranged differently). Delivery in schools will take place in Spring 2, i.e. 22 Feb to 26 March 2027, with the possibility of one week of ‘mop up’ delivery in Summer 1 (12 to 16 April) for larger schools or where delivery plans have been affected by, for example, Ofsted inspections.

Participating organisations should be able to deliver engaging, inclusive, high quality performances and workshops for children and effective, inspiring and enjoyable CPD for teachers, as well as contributing to accessible, age appropriate resources and materials produced by A New Direction for the programme.

The programme is for all primary year groups from Reception to Year 6. Organisations do not have to be able to deliver to all year groups – we will curate the programme to ensure that all year groups are covered by the cohort of organisations we select. Our aim is for all offers within the In-Schools Touring programme to be accessible to mainstream and SEND settings – this includes special schools working with secondary-aged children using primary approaches.

We welcome Expressions of Interest across all art forms including (but not limited to) drama, dance, music, visual and digital art and cross art form. The performances, workshops and associated materials must link either to an aspect of the National Curriculum or to current school priorities (e.g. supporting mental health and wellbeing, developing a growth mindset, British Values, raising attainment in speaking and listening).

Due to budget constraints, we envisage that organisations collaborating with us on this programme will deliver an existing performance that has already been performed to primary school audiences, rather than devising something new.

Delivery

Each organisation must be able to deliver:

- A performance (or experience) lasting around 1 hour, for all classes in one year group (though not necessarily all classes at the same time).
- An in-class workshop lasting 45 minutes to 1 hour, for each class in the same year group, further exploring the artform, themes and curriculum areas linked to the performance.
- A one-hour in-person teacher twilight CPD session in the 4 weeks prior to the performance, to support whole-school engagement, teacher and pupil learning.

You must be able to work with up to 4 classes in one day for the pupil-facing element of the programme (performances and workshops).

While the majority of London primary schools are 1 or 2 form entry, it is not uncommon to find schools of 3 or 4 form entry. The largest state primary school we are aware of in London is 10 form entry, though this is very unusual.

For schools larger than 4 form entry, an additional fee will be paid to accommodate additional delivery (on consecutive days where possible).

Performances and workshops must be designed to be delivered flexibly in a wide variety of spaces, though we anticipate that performances will be delivered mainly in school halls/gyms and that workshops will be delivered in classrooms. Partners will need to provide all the equipment, materials, staging and transport they need for the performances and workshops within the given budget.

Performances and workshops must be designed to be delivered inclusively, with consideration of how your work will be accessed by students with a range of additional learning needs or disabilities. A New Direction will support inclusion across the programme (see Role of A New Direction, below). Organisations should bear in mind that they might be booked to deliver work to students in KS3 or KS4 in special schools that use primary approaches, which may require content to be adjusted accordingly.

Safeguarding and safety

A New Direction will only work with practitioners who hold a valid Enhanced Level Disclosure and Barring Check. Organisations will be responsible for ensuring that all practitioners visiting schools (whether employed, sub-contracted or volunteers) have an up-to-date Enhanced Level Disclosure and Barring Check and photo ID. Please note that only certificates dated within 2 years of the project end date or sooner will be considered valid. For individuals registered with the DBS Update Service, confirmation of a check against this service for older certificates will be accepted. A New Direction may share issue dates and certificate reference numbers with schools.

Organisations will also be expected to complete a detailed risk assessment for their programme offer, which will be signed off by A New Direction before being shared with schools.

Scheduling and planning

A New Direction will manage promotion, booking and all initial scheduling of pupil-facing delivery with schools before handing over the relationship to organisations to enable relationship-building, co-planning, and scheduling of CPD.

Intended timeline:

- w/c 7 September – programme launch to schools and open for bookings
- 2 October – bookings close
- w/c 5 October – allocations and scheduling start
- 19 October – allocations and scheduling complete
- 6 November – deadline for school agreements to be signed
- Mid-late November (around 18/11) – relationship with schools handed over to organisation to begin co planning and arrange CPDs
- 22 February – delivery phase begins
- End of Spring 2 (26 March) – delivery phase ends
- 12-16 April (if needed) – ‘mop up’ week

Communications and resources

Organisations will also be asked to:

- Contribute to marketing and communications materials by providing logos, photos, and written materials relating to their offer. Written materials will need to be provided to A New Direction in June 2026 in order to be ready for launch.
- Contribute to the development of resources for schools, using templates developed by A New Direction. This work will be undertaken in the autumn term.
- Promote the programme, support the launch and celebrate delivery through their online platforms, including social media and newsletters.

Evaluation

Organisations will be expected to participate in programme evaluation in the following ways:

- Undertaking baseline and endpoint evaluation of their own experiences and learning (including facilitators).
- Undertaking evaluation activities in some schools to gather feedback from pupils.
- Completing an event report for each school they visit.
- Monitoring (rough) numbers of pupils participating in their activities and (accurate) number of teachers participating in CPD.

A New Direction will lead on evaluation and provide tools and support for organisations to undertake this activity, based on our Theory of Change for the programme. Where relevant, we will work with organisations to codesign evaluation processes that work with each organisation’s practice. All raw evaluation data from schools will be shared with each organisation at the end of the programme – organisations should not undertake additional evaluation activity.

Collaboration and support

While we anticipate organisations delivering existing work under the auspices of the Primary Arts programme, they will still be expected to take a collaborative approach to planning and delivery. This will be supported by A New Direction through a series of network meetings focussing on

collaboration and best practice sharing between the organisations working to deliver the programme.

These will take place as follows:

- Monday 28 September 2026 (followed by programme launch event)
- Monday 16 November 2026
- Monday 11 January 2027
- Thursday 13 May 2027

Network Meetings will cover onboarding and logistics, best practice in in-schools delivery, planning for inclusion, evaluation methodology and planning (including inclusive approaches to evaluation), reflection, sharing learning, and celebration.

All organisations will be expected to attend these meetings – up to two members of your team will be welcome to attend, and it should be the same two people each time.

In addition, wider delivery teams (including freelancers) will be expected to attend a short online onboarding session in January/February 2027 to ensure everyone working in schools has a good understanding of the wider Primary Arts programme and that they are supported to deliver evaluation effectively.

In the lead up to and during delivery, there will also be regular check-ins between A New Direction and organisations for support, troubleshooting and feedback.

Time for these meetings (including freelancer fees where relevant) should be included in organisation budgets.

Role of A New Direction

A New Direction will manage, curate, support, promote and evaluate the In-Schools Touring Programme as part of the wider Primary Arts Programme. A dedicated Programme Manager will manage the programme, along with support from a Programme Officer and oversight by the Senior Programme Manager responsible for Primary Arts as a whole.

We will:

- Promote the programme through market-warming activity in the summer term, and through the wider launch of the second year of the Primary Arts programme in September 2026, including through our programme brochure, website, newsletters and social media.
- Deal with programme enquiries from schools.
- Manage the bookings process and initial scheduling with participating schools, including gathering information about each setting and the spaces available in which delivery can take place.
- Broker relationships between participating schools and their delivery organisations to facilitate co-planning.
- Support school/organisation relationships to ensure effective delivery through regular partner check-ins.
- Support inclusion across the programme, including:
 - Inclusion focus during network meetings
 - Specialist support available from the wider AND team

- Provision of an Access and Sensory Toolkit for every organisation so that these resources can be used by teachers for their pupils if needed, and guidance on best practice in use of these. (NB Items from the toolkits must be returned at the end of delivery)
- Guidance on inclusive approaches to evaluation
- Ensure safety and safeguarding across the programme.
- Manage photo permissions.
- Coordinate photography across the programme and share assets where permissions allow.
- Communicate and celebrate delivery through our social media.
- Lead on programme evaluation, including:
 - Theory of Change that guides delivery and evaluation processes.
 - Creation of evaluation tools and support for organisations to implement these.
 - Transcription of pupil evaluations.
 - Sharing evaluation findings with organisations.
- Lead on the development of resources, including editorial and design.
- Support organisations through network meetings, freelancer onboarding and regular check-ins.
- Foster a spirit of collaboration, kindness, generosity and inclusion in all our dealings with organisations and schools.

Budget

There is a budget of up to £38,000 (inclusive of VAT) available per organisation to undertake programme activity as described above in 12 schools. If the number of schools is more or less than 12, the fee will be adjusted accordingly.

What to submit

Please complete the online [Expression of Interest](#) form along with:

- A detailed budget (a [template](#) is available for you to use if you wish).
- Supporting materials.
- [The organisation declaration](#).

For detailed guidance and a list of the EOI questions, please see the [EOI Guidance](#).

Timeline for expressions of interest

Deadline for submissions: 12pm Friday 20 March 2026

Shortlisted organisations will be contacted by email to arrange interviews in the week of 30 March 2026.

Interviews (approx 45 mins duration):

- Tuesday 28 April (am or pm)
- Wednesday 29 April (pm only)
- Thursday 30 April (pm only)
- Tuesday 5 May (am only)

Offers to successful organisations: No later than 7 May 2026.

Successful organisations

Successful organisations will be contracted in May/June 2026.

Successful organisations will be asked to supply logos, images and comms materials in May/ June 2026 in order for us to promote the programme and prepare for launch in September 2026.

Unsuccessful organisations

Unsuccessful organisations will be contacted in early April, or, if shortlisted, in early May after interviews.