

# Partnerships in practice



**SEND schools, cultural organisations and  
Arts Award; a report on A New  
Direction's Action Research Programme  
2018-19**

**A NEW  
DIRECTION**  
We create opportunity

**arts  
award**

## Introduction

This report has been produced through the endeavours of three partnerships, each consisting of a cultural organisation and a special school working on an Arts Award qualification.

Arts Award is a range of accredited qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), that support anyone up to the age of 25 to grow as artists and arts leaders, inspiring them to connect with and take part in the wider arts world through taking challenges in an art form - from fashion to filmmaking, pottery to poetry. In this project, the cultural organisations and schools together designed and facilitated a Bronze Arts Award and participated as a cohort in A New Direction's Arts Award Action Learning Programme.

The partnerships were invited to think anew about how best to plan for and support young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to engage with and complete the award. Each partnership identified:

- the challenges that had prompted them to explore Arts Award,
- the approaches they needed to employ for success,
- the assumptions held about this area of work,
- the difference they were aiming to make,
- the activity that would achieve the difference.

They then combined these factors to create a *Theory of Change*.

## Action research participants

### **Garratt Park, Wandsworth**

For children and young people aged 11-19 with moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder and speech, language and communication difficulties.

Worked  
with...

### **Coral Dance Company**

A leader in dance created by artists with learning disabilities, Coral Dance explore the relationship between dance and other artforms, between performers with and without a learning disabilities, and between professional and participatory artwork.

### **Greenvale School, Lewisham**

For children and young people between the ages of 11 and 19 years who have significant learning difficulties including those with an additional diagnosis of autism and additional medical needs.

Worked  
with...

### **Museum of London**

Based in the City of London, the museum tells the story of the capital from its first settlers to modern times.

**Ickburgh School, Hackney**  
For children and young people  
aged 3 to 19 who have  
severe and profound learning  
difficulties.



**Live Music Now**

UK-wide initiative delivering  
thousands of interactive music  
programmes in care homes,  
hospitals, healthcare settings and  
special schools - all places where  
music can make a huge  
difference to people's lives.

## Mutual gains identified through project activity

### Schools working with cultural organisations

- New opportunities for student success, challenging perceptions of what's possible
- Arts-based approaches to student communication
- Life skills enhancement through new interactions with people and experiences
- Alternative practices for teachers to learn from and employ
- Different ideas and stories about the world we live in
- Access to and engagement with London's culturally rich offers
- Active agents in the diversification of cultural organisations and audiences
- Opportunity for whole school learning

### Cultural organisations working with schools

- Enhanced artist practice through access to teacher's expertise, skills and knowledge
- Opportunity to plan for and deliver inclusive activity
- Improved knowledge about different disabilities
- Experience of working directly with students
- Opportunity to be truly student focused, adaptable, flexible, quick and calm!
- Opportunity to be part of student and school communities, grounding practice and policy

## Theory of change

CHALLENGES		
<p><b>How can students...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for GCSEs</li> <li>• Authentically evidence learning and participation</li> <li>• Reflect on achievements and experiences</li> <li>• Share responses and learning with others</li> <li>• Progress to college, training or employment</li> </ul>	<p><b>How can schools...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the value of Arts Award in their context</li> <li>• Address competing curriculum demands to deliver the Award</li> <li>• Allocate time and resource</li> <li>• Access and work with cultural organisations</li> </ul>	<p><b>How can cultural organisations...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise and fund SEND partnerships</li> <li>• Support schools to deliver Arts Award</li> <li>• Engage society with SEND schools and students' achievements</li> </ul>
ASSUMPTIONS		
<p><b>Students experience difficulties...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking publicly</li> <li>• Socialising with new people</li> <li>• Transitioning</li> <li>• Verbal communication</li> <li>• Memory and recall</li> </ul>	<p><b>Schools experience difficulties...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging parents in students learning, especially the arts</li> <li>• Whole school commitment to the arts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cultural organisations...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to work with schools and school protocols</li> <li>• Understand how to engage students</li> </ul>
		
<p><b>Respond to this by...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using alternatives to verbal communication</li> <li>• Rehearsing</li> <li>• Preparing photographs and symbols of what, who, where</li> <li>• Creating a visual story</li> <li>• Embedding reflection into activity</li> <li>• Using cross artform approaches</li> </ul>	<p><b>Respond to this by...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing transport to events</li> <li>• Inviting schools to performances</li> <li>• Using Arts Award branded materials as 'take homes'</li> </ul>	<p><b>Respond to this by...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring reciprocity and mutual wins</li> <li>• Building in shared reflection time</li> </ul>
APPROACH		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior leadership support from outset</li> <li>• Train all facilitators in Arts Award delivery</li> <li>• Act with honesty and respect, and establish agreed ways of working at the outset</li> <li>• Agree roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Invest upfront in planning and imagining</li> <li>• Embed evidence gathering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value the unique conditions created through partnerships - step away from 'business as usual'</li> <li>• Identify mutual/reciprocal learning opportunities</li> <li>• Ensure all activity is pupil-centered, echoing Arts Award personalisation</li> <li>• Plan how transport will frame activity</li> </ul>	
ACTIVITY		
<p><b>Take part in the arts</b> Artists work with students - sharing skills, artworks/performances and their creative journeys</p>	<p><b>Learn about the arts and attend events</b> Cultural organisations create the conditions for students to experience live art at schools and/or cultural venues</p>	<p><b>Share experiences and skills</b> Students become the enablers, passing on skills to others</p>

<b>OUTCOMES</b>		
<p><b>Students develop their...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to reflect, empathise, connect to and respect difference</li> <li>• Sense of personal identity and ability to express this</li> <li>• Confidence and sense of belonging</li> <li>• Communication and social skills</li> <li>• Ability to make independent choices and achieve</li> <li>• Understanding of and personal appreciation of the arts</li> <li>• Creative skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Wellbeing e.g. self-regulation</li> <li>• Sense of belonging to London's cultural provision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Schools develop their...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to celebrate and accredit students' achievements</li> <li>• Student voice and its impact</li> <li>• Involvement of and support from families and the school community</li> <li>• Perceptions of cultural organisations as inclusive and trusted spaces</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cultural organisations develop their...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive practices, resourcing, opportunities and environments</li> <li>• Ability to understand the value and contributions that SEND young people can make</li> </ul>

## **I. Garratt Park School and Corali Dance Company**

### **Partnership story**

#### **Project summary**

- The partnership explored how young people with learning disabilities can take a lead in part D of Bronze Arts Award and share their own art skills with integrity
- The approach was to capture weekly photographic evidence to support the young people to actively reflect on the project as it developed, and to use this as a tool to prompt memory and share exercises
- The evidence generated created a 'wallpaper' to share with others that charted each young person's journey through the project. The art skill they developed and shared was art appreciation

#### **Examples of impact**

##### **Tom Underwood - Teacher and Project Lead, Garratt Park School**

- One of the students is often isolated, with strategies for engagement often failing, but in the project he just – stepped in! From the beginning it was natural for him to communicate using his body

- Another student who has scoliosis in his spine, meaning he has to manage a lot of pain, was so easy with his movements - the pain seemed in the background. When he danced, we saw him starting a movement on one side of the room and moving incredibly slowly and beautifully to the other

### **Sarah Archdeacon - Director and Project Lead, Corali Dance**

- Arts Award as a learning frame put the students at the centre of the project throughout, and the work happened at their pace. The ongoing evidence gathering (required for the award) created a process whereby the team and the participants were all involved in 'continual reflection' - all looking at the same evidence, but through different eyes. This was a rich process

### **Project achievements**

- Each young person's creative process was authentic to them. This was demonstrated by high levels of confidence, ownership and personalisation of roles in the skill share activity at A New Direction's *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival*
- Students who can be reticent to participate were active creators - working together, collaborating and building shared ideas
- Student vocabulary was enriched, with the project's focus being on descriptive language in response to the artworks as the stimuli for the movement
- Approximately 50 people attended the skill share activity at Tate Modern and participated in the skill share sessions led by the young people at two events
- The young people took part in a video made by A New Direction which was shared across the sector
- Arts Award activity will now be extended as a part of the school's sixth form curriculum
- Thinking again about Part D (about the young people sharing arts skills) and repositioning it as sharing rather than teaching was very helpful. Students rarely get the opportunity to generate this level of agency, and making it more aligned with the student experience meant it was more impactful for them
- Documenting the project throughout using the 'wallpaper', dividing roles clearly and capturing all that took place allowed for ongoing reflection

### **Next time...**

Making sure the project was student-led was at the centre of this experiment, and although this was achieved, the timings were often stretched. Breaking the sessions down or having more of them could provide the capacity needed in future programmes.

## Partnership theory of change

PEOPLE		
<b>Garratt Park</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sixth form pupils</li> <li>Tom Underwood (teacher) and Teaching Assistants</li> <li>Students' families</li> <li>Senior Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<b>Coral Dance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sarah Archdeacon and Company Members</li> <li>Photographer</li> </ul>	<b>Others</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tate Exchange</li> <li>A New Direction</li> <li>Action research colleagues</li> </ul>
CHALLENGES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can evaluation be connected to the creative process?</li> <li>How can pupils with additional needs – some of whom have memory challenges – self-evaluate meaningfully?</li> <li>How can young people with learning disabilities meaningfully share skills relating to their own artwork? What approaches and methods can be used to support this?</li> <li>How can young people with learning disabilities complete Part D of Arts Award in a creative and meaningful way?</li> </ul>		
ASSUMPTIONS AND RESPONSES		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people's ability to explain is impaired because verbal communication skills are a barrier</li> <li>Young people's memory difficulties might impair their ability to explain</li> <li>Pressure of needing to pass Arts Award gets in the way</li> <li>Getting whole school/organisation up to speed with what we're doing</li> <li>Pupils are highly anxious</li> <li>Parents and staff may find it difficult to be involved on a Saturday</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use cross-disciplinary approaches to creativity and arts exploration</li> <li>Respond to this creatively - build into project design, use techniques to record explanations as you go rather than waiting until the end</li> <li>Make capturing and evidencing active from the start and a feature of all activity. Be creative with how to do this</li> <li>Do a talk/presentation at the start and have open dialogue with everyone throughout</li> <li>Build project content around their interests. 'Rehearsal' will also help with this</li> <li>Budget will help with this - possibly provide transport?</li> <li>Invite active involvement from the get-go so it's not a sudden expectation</li> </ol>
APPROACH		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-working between Corali and Garratt Park – expertise exchange</li> <li>Flexibility and communication – regular check-ins</li> <li>Draw on wider staff teams as a resource</li> <li>Embed evidence collection</li> </ul>		
ACTIVITY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dance workshops led by Corali – students to respond to Tate artworks</li> <li>Coral 'Flux Methodology' to frame dance workshops and overall approach</li> <li>Workshops to be weekly throughout the Spring term</li> <li>Content will combine practical activity and reflection/evaluation – integrating the two</li> <li>Evaluation to show students' sense of impact, collecting weekly feedback on a long strip of wallpaper – combine this with classroom monitoring data</li> </ul>		

- Ongoing photography and documentation to support creative evidencing and Flux Methodology
- School to embed learning across Arts Award programmes
- Share practice – Tom to speak at Festival of Education

## OUTCOMES

- Young people have an authentic understanding of a creative process
- They grow in confidence, particularly communication and life skills
- The voices of young people with learning disabilities are heard by many
- 'Cultural audiences' see and appreciate the creativity and achievements of young people with additional needs
- Families engage with their children's learning and achievement
- Arts Award becomes further embedded in the curriculum

## 2. Ickburgh School and Live Music Now

### Partnership story

#### Project summary

- The partnership explored how the 'extensive music making experience', Part A of the Bronze Arts Award, could support Part D, 'skill share' – planned to take place at A New Direction's *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival*
- Both partners were new to Arts Award. For the school, seeding it effectively in this first year was important in order to ensure support and commitment in the future
- Live Music Now artist Rachel Hayter led eight sessions for a group of eleven Year 6 and 7 students and at the term end. Students performed for their peers along with a performance from Live Music Now artists. Students also performed and led a session at *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival*

#### Examples of impact

##### Chris Mackin - Music Teacher and Project Lead, Ickburgh School

- A student with autism grew in confidence significantly during the project – participating in music making and taking instruction, both in the group and on individual pieces. Soon after the project, at a school performance event, unrehearsed, he 'rapped' a talk he'd written himself, to an audience of 100+
- At *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival*, students were confident in sharing their skills with others – clearly demonstrating the degree to which they felt had gained new skills

### **Rachel Swann, Musician and project artist, Live Music Now**

- The Arts Award criteria framed an approach which allowed the workshops to really 'dig-in', resulting in the students taking greater ownership. For example, a student who finds group activity a real challenge became calm and collaborative when singing or using instruments. His level of participation grew throughout the project, resulting in him volunteering to hand out instruments and stepping forward to help regularly

### **Project achievements**

- Rachel's energy and passion were key to the success of the programme – she gave pupils their voice. Extending the curriculum by bringing in Brazilian music produced real enthusiasm. The music felt not only exciting but also relevant to students – encouraging movement, voice and percussive participation
- The project used the Trinity Arts Award logbooks to capture and prompt participation and reflection
- The books gave a tangible sense of quality of the work, validating students' achievements, for them and their families
- The flexible nature of the spaces inside the books allowed for personalisation
- The 'Sounds of Intent' monitoring framework demonstrated high levels of student progression. For Arts Award, reflection is an essential part of the process and the framework helped with this. Making use of logbooks to record outcomes and generate student responses was an effective way to do this
- The sharing and successful performance by the students at *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival* has seeded support from Senior Leaders, and Arts Award will now take place in the school in future years
- The opportunity to work with schools on Arts Award allowed musicians from Live Music Now to 'dig deeper' into their music making with young people

## Partnership theory of change

PEOPLE	
<b>Ickburgh school</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLT</li> <li>• Staff at Ickburgh School</li> <li>• Chris Mackin, Music Teacher</li> <li>• Eleven Year 6 and 7 pupils</li> <li>• Parents</li> </ul>	<b>Live Music Now</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musicians</li> <li>• Strategic lead</li> </ul>
CHALLENGES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can pupils' voice be authentic in evidence?</li> <li>• Part D is a new approach to learning, how can we do this starting from scratch?</li> <li>• The school is new to Arts Award, so knowledge needs to be built</li> <li>• With a Music Teacher leading the way, support needs to be gathered</li> <li>• How to make Arts Award attractive and meaningful to all?</li> <li>• How can pupils be supported to engage with their achievements?</li> </ul>	
ASSUMPTIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All pupils enjoy the arts</li> <li>• The project will be a meaningful experience</li> <li>• Art should be compulsory</li> <li>• There will be evidence to collect to demonstrate engagement</li> <li>• Evidence will need to be gathered throughout as part of the creative process</li> <li>• The whole school will need to get up to speed with Arts Award</li> <li>• Young peoples' impairments will make it hard for them to communicate their reflections</li> </ul>	
APPROACH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musicians and teachers trained in Arts Award</li> <li>• Funding invested from both organisations</li> <li>• Positive mental attitude – honesty in partnership, shared learning and mutual support</li> <li>• Energy for planning and reflection throughout</li> <li>• Pupil-centered evidence gathering and evaluation</li> </ul>	
ACTIVITY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in I Am At Tate Exchange Festival for Part D of Arts Award</li> <li>• Students attended and participated in a Live Music Now concert at the school</li> <li>• Eight workshops at the school, facilitated by Live Music Now</li> <li>• Planned communication activity within the school to celebrate the project with parents and pupils</li> <li>• Embedded evaluation and evidencing in each session</li> <li>• Presentation ceremony for students at project end</li> <li>• Live Music Now and Ickburgh view evidence together to draw out best observations and data</li> <li>• Arts Award supported by Live Music Now in other settings</li> </ul>	
OUTCOMES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils have a tangible sense of their personal achievements</li> <li>• Pupils' skills in music are developed, including singing, composition, percussion, leading, counting, dance</li> <li>• Pupils' confidence and sense of the world around them extends</li> <li>• Ickburgh values the pupils' achievements</li> <li>• Understanding of the impact, value and delivery of Arts Award in the school is developed</li> <li>• Arts Award is seen as valuable in the school curriculum</li> <li>• Pupils achieve a qualification that is meaningful to them and their families</li> </ul>	

## 3. Greenvale School and Museum of London

### Partnership story

#### Project summary

- Greenvale and Museum of London wanted to show students could meaningfully participate in *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival*, sharing skills learnt in the project to complete Part D of their Arts Award Bronze
- Through the partnership, Museum of London were keen to see if the work could impact on strategic approaches to inclusion and diversity at the museum, along with strengthening engagement practices
- Greenvale were keen to see how a partnership with a museum and the work of an artist could open up new ways of working

#### Examples of impact

##### **Evelyn Ward - Teacher, Greenvale School**

- A student who is easily overwhelmed by choice and stimuli and who finds concentration very difficult flourished during the project. He was able to make decisions, work alongside peers, return to and repeat activities, and communicate fluently, especially through the art he created

##### **Angela Wright - Project artist**

- On Valentine's Day, a student who finds it difficult to engage and participate didn't move from her task all session. She was absorbed and focused on creating her own original heart patterned piece of fabric

##### **Avni Patel - MoL, SEND Schools Programme Manager**

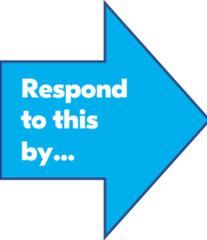
- Diversifying its workforce is important for Museum of London, and the project provided a great opportunity to reflect on this, specifically in relation to work experience and the freelance team

#### Project achievements

- The students' consistently high levels of engagement throughout the project, their enthusiasm at taking part, and their unification as a cohort were strong indicators of the activity's relevance
- At *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival*, the students were confident facilitators and comfortable sharing the skills they had learnt
- All involved observed how the students were quick to take on the role of facilitators in what was a very new, busy place – conditions that are often a challenge
- Personalising the skills share activity was a great opportunity to identify to what extent students had understood the creative process
- The ease with which they took on the sharing roles and the quality of exchanges showed that they had indeed become self-possessed makers of art

- Working on the project has equipped Museum of London with a greater understanding of students with additional needs. They can now use this to advocate for greater inclusion as the museum goes through a period of redevelopment
- Museum of London is working towards a conference to support collaboration and employability opportunities in museums for people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Understanding Arts Award and the school environment will help greatly with this

## Partnership theory of change

PEOPLE		
<b>Greenvale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headteacher</li> <li>• Support staff</li> <li>• Evelyn (teacher)</li> <li>• Students' parents</li> </ul>	<b>Museum of London</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND Schools Programme Manager</li> <li>• Artist</li> <li>• Front of House staff and Security Team</li> </ul>	<b>Others</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A New Direction</li> <li>• Action research colleagues</li> <li>• Tate Exchange participants</li> </ul>
CHALLENGES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaningful skill share – what does this look like and what approaches and methods can be employed to support this?</li> <li>• How can Museum of London be more inclusive? What does a comfortable environment look like?</li> <li>• What do special schools want from museums?</li> </ul>		
ASSUMPTIONS AND RESPONSES		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students find it hard to speak in public</li> <li>2. Students' struggle to concentrate and stay engaged for long periods of time</li> <li>3. Socialising with strangers can be distressing</li> <li>4. Being offsite can create anxiety</li> <li>5. Confidence building for artists is needed</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do a trial run within school first, and explore other methods of presenting e.g. posters and cue cards</li> <li>2. Engage students with the things they enjoy and give lots of encouragement to help them stay on task</li> <li>3. Prepare students with photos and symbols of what they are going to do and who they are going to see</li> <li>4. Have a transitioning timetable</li> <li>5. Understand the most effective ways to deliver, pitched at a level that is meaningful and accessible</li> </ol>
APPROACH		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared team learning</li> <li>• Staff training at Museum of London</li> <li>• Communication with families</li> <li>• Mutual observation and sharing of practice</li> <li>• Resources from Greenvale school alongside other specialist resources</li> </ul>		
ACTIVITY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarisation visits and observations</li> <li>• Museum of London staff visit the school on alternate weeks for one term</li> <li>• School to lead Part C (arts inspiration)</li> </ul>		

- Visit to Museum of London to look at Fashion in the Pleasure Gardens, trying on costumes and sketching in the galleries for Part B (exploring art as an audience member)
- Greenvale and Museum of London artist to teach weaving, fans and folding, draping and photography, jewellery and embossing, mosaics and printing on fabric. Assemble these to create a final piece for Part A (exploring art as a participant)
- Tate and Museum of London visits for Part D (skills share)
- Students share work at *I Am At Tate Exchange Festival*

## OUTCOMES

- Students understand what art and art process can be
- Students feel confident in sharing their ideas
- Museum of London 'ways of working' are strengthened and improved
- Museum of London's organisational culture is more inclusive
- Museum of London create an environment which is comfortable, welcoming and relaxed
- Special schools perceive Museum of London's work as inclusive and trusted