



Arts Alive single sessions evaluation

August 2022

Report created by Scottish Book Trust

scottishbooktrust.com



Scottish Book Trust is a registered company (SC184248)
and a Scottish charity (SC027669).

Photo: Julie Howden for NTS. Raploch Primary School project.

Contents

Background	4
Scope of this evaluation	4
What is Arts Alive?	4
How was it developed?	4
Original timeline	5
Impact of Covid-19	5
Activity in 2020/21 programme year (Sept 2021 – March 2022)	7
Activity in 2021/22 programme year (April – June 2022).....	7
Evaluation methodology	8
Overall aims of Arts Alive.....	9
Provide more support for the cultural workforce.....	9
Ensure that more children can experience culture, regardless of location or background	10
Outcomes	14
Outcomes for children and young people.....	14
Think the arts are fun and delight in self-expression	14
Feel confident.....	15
Broadened world view	16
Know more about the arts and how they can engage.....	16
Engage with the arts.....	16
Outcomes for learning professionals and schools.....	18
Belief that the arts are valuable	18
Increased engagement with the arts.....	19
Arts are prioritised in schools.....	19
Outcomes for artists	20
Feel valued by all partners	20

Continue working in schools	21
Learn new skills / approaches	21
Process – what were the challenges?	22
Space.....	22
Limited time for planning / relationship building	22
Staff capacity	23
Part-funding cost to schools.....	23
Process – what worked well?	24
Skilled artists.....	24
'Off the shelf products'.....	24
Partners	25
Arts Alive staff	25
Conclusion.....	26
Appendix 1: Arts Alive evaluation strategy and framework.....	27
Theory of change	27
Monitoring and evaluation framework	27
Table 1: Extract from Scottish Book Trust's theory of change process.....	28
Table 2: Theory of change for Arts Alive	30
Table 3: Monitoring and evaluation framework.....	32

Background

Scope of this evaluation

In the evaluation of the year 1 residencies, submitted in March 2022, it was noted, 'given that a minority of planned single sessions have taken place to date, it is recommended that a separate evaluation of the single sessions delivered through the pilot phase be undertaken following the completion of delivery. This should include consideration of the logistics, delivery, fit with each art form, and relative impact of the single sessions to assess whether the time and capacity involved in organising them is commensurate with their impact'.

This evaluation report focuses on the single sessions delivered through the programme to date, including both 2020/21 and 2021/22 activity, and considers the above questions.

What is Arts Alive?

Arts Alive brings artists into schools across Scotland by supporting fully-funded residencies in schools where cost is a barrier to working with artists, and subsidised, one-off sessions with artists from Scotland's National Performing Companies (the National Theatre of Scotland, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Ballet and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra). Schools can apply for support using a simple application form that asks about their circumstances and the anticipated benefits for their pupils. Artists are nominated by National Companies to carry out residencies and sessions.

How was it developed?

Arts Alive brings the highly successful Live Literature model to new art forms. Live Literature has brought authors into communities across Scotland for 50 years. The programme is funded by Creative Scotland and delivered by Scottish Book Trust. Live Literature funds over 900 events and a (trust-funded) fully-funded residency programme each year. The key components of this model are:

- Schools apply for sessions and residencies

- Learning professionals and other programmers applying are respected as the experts of their own experience and the needs of their community
- Pupils access high-quality arts experiences delivered by professional artists, contributing to wellbeing, attainment and a broader understanding of the arts
- Artists are supported by an additional income stream and by opportunities to develop their practice and expand their networks

The Scottish Government funded a pilot of Arts Alive in December 2019.

Timeline

The programme was scheduled to invite school applications in March 2020, with applications to be assessed by summer 2020. Sessions and residencies were due to be delivered in the 2020/21 school year and completed by summer 2021. This timeline was designed to position the programme to build momentum year-on-year by recruiting schools before each summer break.

Impact of Covid-19

The pandemic had a significant impact on the planned timeline. Due to school closures during the spring / summer of 2020, applications were instead launched in autumn 2020 and assessed by the end of the 2020 calendar year. Ten residency programmes and 101 artist fees in 29 schools were awarded through a panel process in November and December 2020. These residencies and sessions were initially scheduled to take place between January and June of 2021.

Demand was reasonable for a new programme in a challenging year for learning professionals. The difference between the expected level of applications and what was received was in line with similar, more established programmes at Scottish Book Trust and the National Companies.

The Arts Alive Manager maintained communication with partners and other programmes, including the Creative Learning team at Creative Scotland, to promote

the programme, share practice and to learn about the situation at local authority level.

The programme was preparing to enter its January – June 2021 delivery phase when delayed by lockdown, further school closures and paused by the Scottish Government until April 2021. The team re-planned the pilot and delivered three residencies in schools by summer 2021, as set out in the 2021/22 evaluation reports.

Single session events with Scottish Ballet were delivered between September 2021 and March 2022. This delivery phase was impacted by the Omicron variant and continued restrictions – several workshops were moved to remote delivery, necessitating studio arrangements by Scottish Ballet at short notice, and rescheduled multiple times. The final set of single sessions was delivered by artists from NTS, the RSNO and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in April to June 2022, with the vast majority in-person and one delivered remotely.

Artists, National Company representatives and learning professionals were enthusiastic, committed and imaginative in adapting to restrictions with a direct impact on their work, including pupils not being allowed to sing or play wind instruments, external visitors not being allowed in schools, and pupils not being allowed to gather in large groups. The focus throughout was on meaningful delivery and high quality, whether delivered remotely or in-person.

Although restrictions were legislated at national or local authority level, the programme has found that their interpretation varied between local authorities and between schools within the same authority because of the differences between communities and facilities, for example, the level of ventilation possible, learning professionals' experiences of pupils' adherence to Covid-19 prevention measures etc. This required flexibility from artists and close collaboration with learning professionals, who are the experts on their school's experience and know their pupils best.

The pandemic required flexibility and continual adaptation of the timeline, budget, workshop content and methods of delivery. This necessitated an increased reliance on new and developing technologies for session delivery and preparation, and ongoing communication between artists, National Companies and the Arts Alive Manager.

Activity in 2020/21 programme year (Sept 2021 – March 2022)

Workshops were held in the following schools during September 2021 – March 2022:

School	Local Authority	National Company
Douglas Academy	East Dunbartonshire	NTS
New Pitsligo & St John's Primary School	Aberdeenshire	Scottish Ballet
Inverbrothock Primary School	Angus	Scottish Ballet
Inchture Primary School	Perth and Kinross	Scottish Ballet
Kirkmichael Primary School	Perth and Kinross	Scottish Ballet
Milnathort Primary School	Perth and Kinross	Scottish Ballet
Burrelton Primary School	Perth and Kinross	Scottish Ballet
Fallin Primary School	Stirling	Scottish Ballet

Activity in 2021/22 programme year (April – June 2022)

Workshops were held in the following schools during April – June 2022:

School	Local Authority	National Company
Friockheim Primary School	Angus	NTS
Ardrossan Academy	North Ayrshire	NTS
Newhill Primary School	Perth and Kinross	NTS
Portmoak Primary School	Perth and Kinross	NTS
Wallace Primary School	Renfrewshire	NTS
Elrick School	Aberdeenshire	RSNO
Portlethen Academy	Aberdeenshire	RSNO
Kinross Primary School	Perth and Kinross	RSNO
Stirling High School	Stirling	RSNO
Buchlyvie Primary School	Stirling	RSNO
Muckhart Primary School	Clackmannanshire	Scottish Chamber Orchestra
ONEREN on behalf of St Catherine's Primary School	Renfrewshire	Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Fountainhall Primary School	Scottish Borders	Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Heriot Primary School	Scottish Borders	Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Bridge of Allan Primary School	Stirling	Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Riverside Primary School	Stirling	Scottish Chamber Orchestra

Evaluation methodology

In September 2020, Scottish Book Trust ran a workshop with the five National Companies to co-produce a theory of change for Arts Alive which subsequently informed the monitoring and evaluation framework. Full details of the theory of change and monitoring and evaluation framework can be found in appendix 1.

For single sessions, the monitoring and evaluation tools are post-event surveys for learning professionals and artists. As detailed in the framework, this relatively light-touch approach was designed to be commensurate with the level of activity involved in a single session.

There has been reasonable engagement with the surveys, in line with expectations, given the context for schools over the past two years. As seen in the residency 'session diaries', artists have been particularly generous and thoughtful in providing rich qualitative data in the surveys. This has been supplemented with data drawn from a number of artist interviews and feedback from partners and the Arts Alive Manager, in order to make as full as possible an assessment of learnings around, and the impact of, single sessions to date.

Overall aims of Arts Alive

The overall aim of the Arts Alive programme is to provide more support for the cultural workforce and ensure that more children can experience culture, regardless of location or background. There is some evidence that single sessions have contributed towards both of these aims, as detailed below.

Provide more support for the cultural workforce

In total, Arts Alive single sessions have provided 76 session fees among 24 artists. Arts Alive single sessions offered a new earning stream for the artists, many of whom who had not previously worked in a single session format.

One artist noted in an interview that single sessions 'fit in nicely into gaps in our schedule and we were delighted to say yes'.

A National Company partner noted that Arts Alive expanded the administrative capacity to provide this sort of work for artists:

[We are a small team], so there is a limit to what we can achieve. The freelance practitioners and members of the orchestra have more capacity than we can cater for. Arts Alive provides admin capacity to link that up; we couldn't have set up these [events] without [the Arts Alive Manager's] support.'

– National Company partner, interview

Artists also fed back that the Arts Alive Manager had further facilitated these opportunities through their ethos and careful management of the programme:

'I really enjoy working with Arts Alive. It is always such a positive experience. The ethos of the Organisation is so refreshing and enables us as creatives to deliver at the highest level.' – Artist, feedback survey

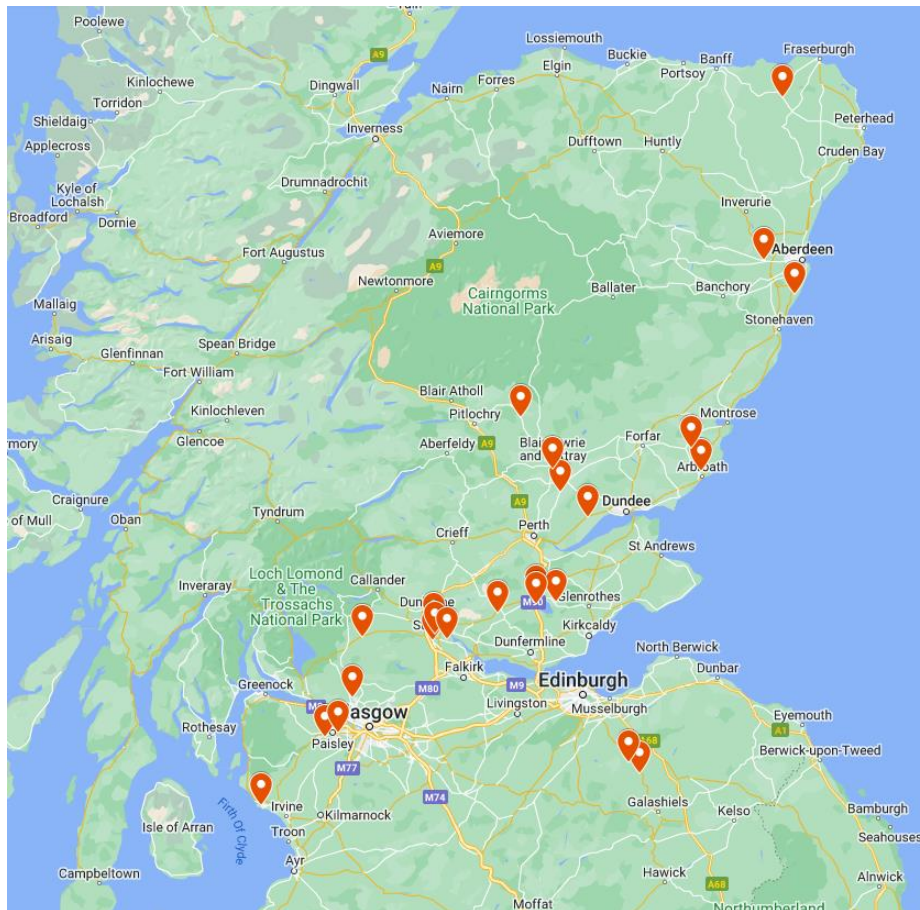
Finally, as detailed in the outcomes for artists section, some artists noted that they had developed new skills and approaches through the sessions, supporting their future work in schools; 100% of artists responding to the feedback survey indicated they would be 'very likely' to work in schools in the future.

'It is brilliant to see artists who may not have worked in schools before embracing education work and finding it so rewarding. One National Company

contact emailed to say a group of artists were now "hooked" on this kind of work after an event. It's great to be making this high calibre of performing artist available to young people in Scotland by giving artists a safe, supported way to try working in schools if they haven't before, and expanding their skills and range if they have, especially those working with young people who have additional support needs for the first time.' – Arts Alive Manager, interview

Ensure that more children can experience culture, regardless of location or background

In total, 33 workshops were delivered by teams of artists across 24 schools in nine local authorities and organisations as shown on this map:



A reported average of 37 pupils and two learning professionals took part in each session meaning the 33 workshops benefitted an estimated total of 1,221 pupils and 66 learning professionals. Each workshop was 90 minutes, totalling 49.5 hours

across the 33 sessions, and 1,831.5 hours of pupil engagement across the 1,221 pupils.

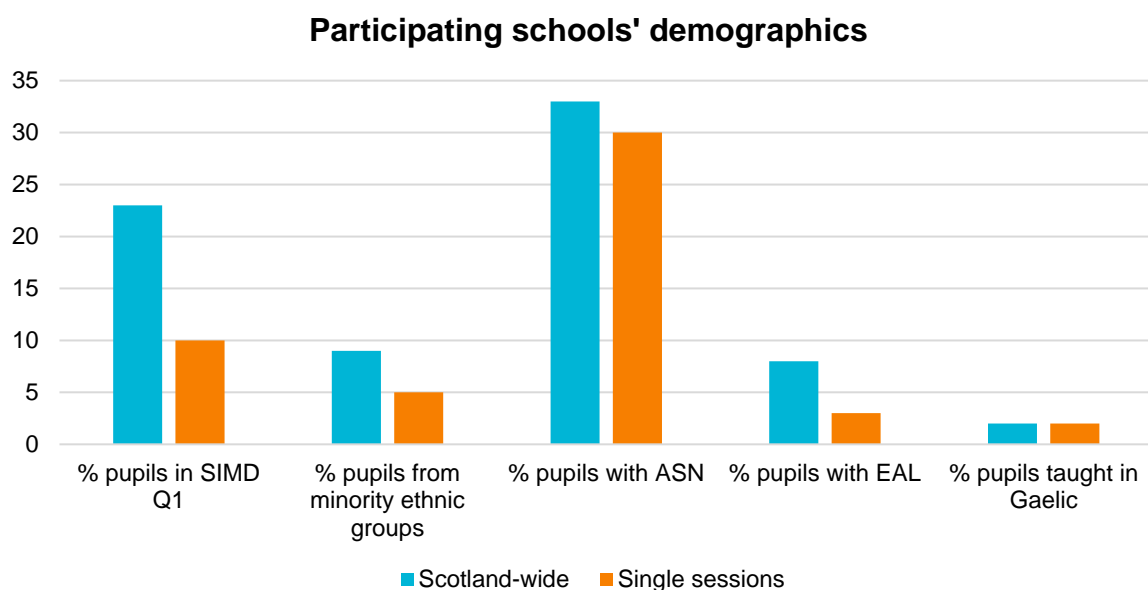
Over one third of schools reported that they had not had artist sessions of any kind in school before. 100% said they would be likely to have artist sessions in the future as a result of their engagement with Arts Alive, suggesting that Arts Alive single sessions can act as a good 'introduction' to hosting artists in school. This was also mentioned by artists:

'One-offs are really valuable too – a spark that a teacher will want to follow up with more.' – Artist, interview

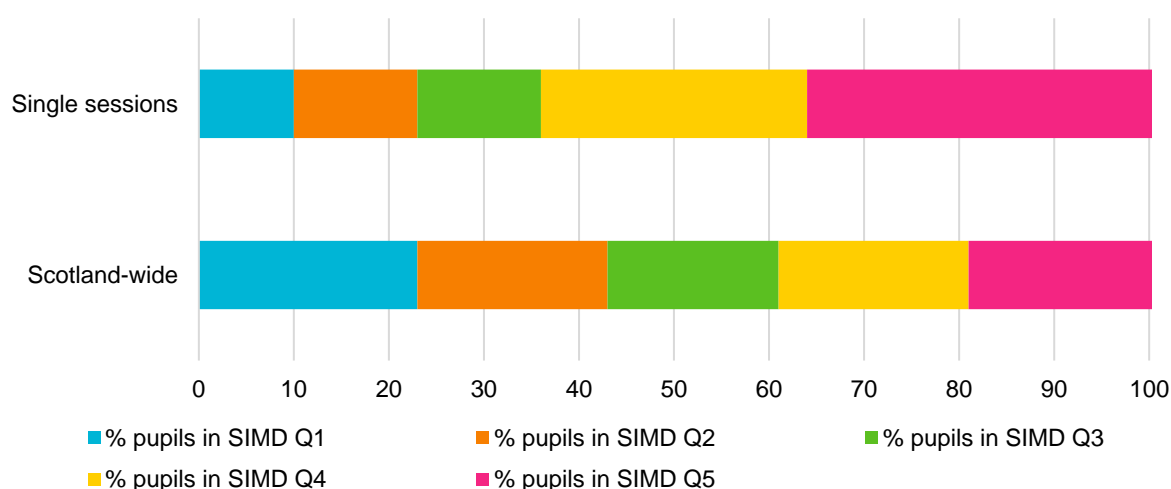
'The short ones are always what they are. They're a moment to make a high impact – adverts for us, and adverts for music in general. When you have that amount of time, that's what it's going to be.' – Artist, interview

'Single sessions are really, really fun – excitement levels are palpable between students and teachers. Teachers are tired [at the end of the year] and excited to have other ways to engage. A good time of year, pupils ready to play ... a good shake / refresh for everyone, leaves everyone in a good mood.' – Artist, interview

However, analysis of pupil demographics shows that the 23 participating schools have lower than average levels of pupils who may stand to benefit the most from arts engagement in school:



SIMD profile of participating schools



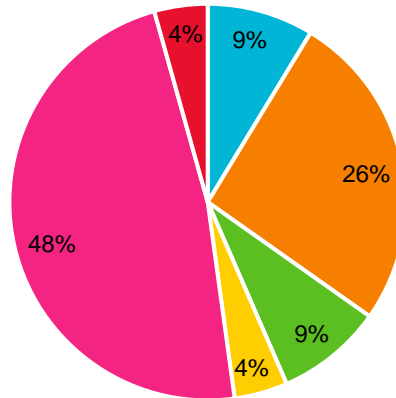
The success of the Arts Alive residencies in reaching schools with highly diverse student populations suggests that this may be due to the fact that, under the current Arts Alive funding model, single sessions require a financial contribution from the school:

'In the April – June 2022 programme, it has become clear that the part-funding obligation is both a financial and practical barrier for schools. They found the part-funding expensive and confusing. This is better suited to the Live Literature programme, where one fee often equates to one *event* delivered by an individual author, so the cost per event is much lower. Even in Live Literature, however, there is evidence it is a barrier to participation. We funded a significant number of Arts Alive single sessions fully when it became apparent that the financial strain of the pandemic had been a blow to school budgets and schools could no longer afford part-funding.' – Arts Alive Manager, interview

It may also reflect that learning professionals in schools with more diverse pupil populations often have less time to apply for funding opportunities and may not see part-funding for a 'one-off' session as commensurate with the effort involved.

The single sessions were successful in reaching a range of geographic locations, with nearly 50% of participating schools being in accessible rural areas; this reflects a strong interest from Perth & Kinross.

Urban / rural classifications of participating schools



■ Large urban areas

■ Other urban areas

■ Accessible small towns

■ Remote small towns

■ Accessible rural areas

■ Remote rural areas

Outcomes

The outcomes for Arts Alive were co-produced by Scottish Book Trust and the National Companies using a collaborative Theory of Change process. For more information please see appendix 1.

Outcomes for children and young people

The outcomes for children and young people are:

- Think the arts are fun and delight in self-expression
- Feel confident
 - Feel increased positivity about themselves and their creativity
- Broadened world view
 - Have learned or experienced something new
- Know more about the arts and how they can engage
 - Raised awareness
 - Know that creative arts are viable careers
 - Know how to access more info / the next step
- Engage with the arts
 - Engage more with the arts (whatever their starting position)
 - New ways and vocabularies to express themselves and access emotion
 - Able to access the curriculum in new ways

Think the arts are fun and delight in self-expression

There is good evidence that pupils who took part in the single sessions enjoyed the experience.

92% of learning professionals who fed back agreed that their pupils enjoyed the sessions, and many added comments with further detail:

'Johnny was very engaging and inspiring. Our pupils loved the virtual session.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

'The children enjoyed hearing live music.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

'The pupils loved the fact that they could use their own imagination a lot of the time. They enjoyed working in groups as well as the whole class activities.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

'Pupils were asking if they were getting to have another session, it was a very thoughtful session which they enjoyed immensely.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

'The pupils responded so well and loved the session.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

'Excellent session. The children were enthralled.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

Feel confident

There is good evidence that the single session improved pupils' confidence. 92% of learning professionals who fed back agreed that their pupils engaged confidently in the session, and there were a number of qualitative comments from both learning professionals and artists that support this:

'The pupils engaged really well with the session and demonstrated lots of creativity. I could see their confidence increase throughout the session too.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

'Pupils who I didn't expect to, stood out and loved the experience, feeling of success and opportunity to work with Jack and Hayley.'
– Learning professional, feedback survey

'The children loved every minute. The girl managed to excite even the more quieter children in the class. They had a great way of pulling the children and making the children want to engage with the activities. It was very fast paced.'

'They were a fantastic team. It was just what this particular class needed.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'This was a really enjoyable day. It was great to see how the students started to grow in confidence and explore their musical thoughts and ideas.' – Artist, feedback survey

Broadened world view

There was some qualitative evidence that pupils had had the opportunity to explore and/or consolidate new information and concepts through the single sessions. This was particularly the case for pupils who engaged with Scottish Ballet's Safe to be Me workshops, which are an existing format developed by Scottish Ballet to explore themes that include identity, respect, acceptance, family diversity, and LGBTQ+ communities, through dance.

'The session was fantastic – I was so proud of the children's maturity and respect.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'The pupils in my class loved the session – they really enjoyed trying to recreate the movements they were shown and really enjoyed that each dance move was related to a person within a family unit. They enjoyed discussing how every family is different but are a family nonetheless. They were keen to share their thoughts and ideas and over time, became more confident in contributing to discussions and following the dance routines.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

Know more about the arts and how they can engage

Engage with the arts

Whilst it is likely that many participating pupils learned more about the arts and how they can engage, and that some went on to engage further with the arts, there is no direct evidence submitted by learning professionals or artists supporting these two outcomes.

Artists noted that in their experience, longer-term engagement is needed for more meaningful impact:

'[At residency schools] the children see us as part of their school – then they see music as part of their school and creative artistic activity as a normal everyday thing. With residency work – the children have a chance to think about the material between the weeks. That's fantastic for me, they'll come back with ideas, thoughts, and suggestions. One offs don't have that processing time. There can be a greater understanding of the work [in residencies]. The opportunity to ask a question next week is so valuable for young people. Residency work is tricky to coordinate but it's so valuable. Children really gain a deeper understanding.' – Artist, interview

'It's always better to have a residency. When you go into a school for the first time you always feel like an outsider for at least the first day. When you go back you know where you're going and who you're talking to. The staff as much as the kids get used to you – you aren't a drop in drop out/one off. You become part of the team. If it's possible, residencies are the way to go. Especially with ASN schools – it takes longer to build rapport, I'm not sure a single visit to an ASN group will really have benefits for the young people.' – Artist, interview

'[A residency] affords the children a memorable experience – it stands out, they remember. It allows the space – the noise of the rest of the school day isn't there ... The intensive experience resonates for longer.' – Artist, interview

The evaluation of the next wave of Arts Alive activity should consider if and how feedback on this can be collected in a way that is proportionate to the level of activity in single sessions.

Outcomes for learning professionals and schools

The outcomes for learning professionals and schools are:

- Belief that the arts are valuable
 - Think that engaging with the arts is beneficial to their pupils
 - Encourage their pupils to engage in the arts
- Increased engagement with the arts
 - Reflect and use the experience and resources
 - Incorporate the arts across their work
 - Take up performance opportunities
 - Apply for future opportunities
- Arts are prioritised in schools
 - SMTs prioritise the arts
 - Teachers share the experience and information about opportunities with others

Belief that the arts are valuable

There is good evidence that learning professionals who engaged with the programme believe the arts are valuable. 92% agreed both that the session was a valuable experience for their pupils and for themselves. 100% said that they enjoyed the session. This sentiment was evident throughout the qualitative data:

'The session was brilliant. Just what we need in school. The girls were extremely enthusiastic.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'The virtual session was pitched just right, giving pupils an insight into acting, writing and performing and also inspiring them to have the courage to follow their interests. As our main focus is literacy, talking about reading scripts and comics and what appeals to you (no matter what other people think) was really useful as was his take on social media.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'I thoroughly enjoyed the session and found it to be a valuable experience for the learners.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

Increased engagement with the arts

Arts are prioritised in schools

There is also good evidence that participating schools intend to continue engaging with the arts and that the quality of the Arts Alive sessions has increased the profile of the arts in schools. 100% of learning professionals said they were likely to hold an arts-based event in school again in the future, with over a third never having hosted visiting artists prior to this opportunity. Comments suggest that a number of learning professionals have taken direct practical action to incorporate their learning into their practice and to spread the word:

'Would love to have more involvement (esp from Scottish Ballet) and would love to see this evolve into more than 1 session – even if we did work without the artists and then they came to pull it all together!' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'I have retired now but I have recommended this to the head teacher for the next academic year.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'I have told all the teachers about this opportunity.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'I would like to thank the girls. I learned loads myself. I took their ideas and taught adapted lessons in other areas of the school. All children loved it. But I was not as good at it as the girls were. They were so professional and full of energy.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

Outcomes for artists

The outcomes for artists are:

- Feel valued by all partners
- Continue working in schools
- Learn new skills / approaches
 - Have added to their skills and resource base
 - Sparked new ideas or prompted next steps

Feel valued by all partners

There is good evidence that participating artists felt valued. 100% of artists who fed back said they enjoyed the session, and 94% agreed that the school provided the support they needed to run a high-quality session. Comments elaborated on this, suggesting that artists felt and appreciated the support of both school staff and pupils alike:

'Julie [learning professional] was very enthusiastic and made sure we felt very welcomed at the school. The young people had a great time and we enjoyed ourselves as well.' – Artist, feedback survey

'It was lovely to work with these young people. They were receptive to live music and enjoyed working interactively.' – Artist, feedback survey

'Thoroughly enjoyable. The children really engaged with the workshops and it was a lot of fun.' – Artist, feedback survey

'I also did a session at Buchylvie Primary School which I really enjoyed. The whole school community was so receptive, and we had a lot of fun.' – Artist, feedback survey

Comments also suggested that artists felt highly valued by the Arts Alive Manager:

'It is always a pleasure to work for Arts Alive. I always feel fully supported and respected for the skills that I bring to the projects. There is always consideration about all aspects surrounding the project and not just the delivery. It is a refreshing and inspiring experience which allows for creativity,

the core of what we are trying to enable and make that connection with the young people. Thank you Arts Alive!' – Artist, feedback survey

Continue working in schools

Learn new skills / approaches

100% of artists feeding back said they were 'very likely' to work in schools again in the future and 100% said that the session was a valuable experience for them.

There is some good qualitative evidence to suggest that artists learned new skills and approaches through the sessions:

'The classroom teachers were very supportive with these sessions and there were students with additional support needs fully integrated into the groups.' – Artist, feedback survey

'This project also got me working with a younger group of people. It really developed my skills on communicating with younger ages, I feel like I got a lot of practice. It was something I really wanted to develop but I couldn't find a way to do it, I feel a lot more comfortable now working with young people, especially such big groups. I had worked with big groups before but not that big. Managing big numbers was one of the skills I developed. Because we did so many dates, so many schools, I feel like I could create, in a way, the pace. I could pace myself. And find balance and not burn out by the end of it, keep going with the strength I had before.' – Artist, interview

Furthermore, through Arts Alive funding and opportunities, some artists were able to develop existing 'off the shelf products' to be delivered in different ways or to different groups, as well as training new artists to deliver these:

'The ideas are strong enough that the older young people can pick up on them and make them their own – completely new for me – up until Arts Alive we've been preschool and P1, but I've realised the project can be for all ages. How I present the ideas and really listen to young people, we can develop the material, there's a real musical understanding of it all.' – Artist, interview

Process – what were the challenges?

Space

There were a number of comments from artists around the challenges of ad hoc or shared spaced being used for sessions:

'The session was well received by the young people but the room was open plan and so challenging with sound distraction.' – Artist, feedback survey

'We delivered a playful and engaging session. We were in the school gym/cafeteria which was the most appropriate space available at the school, but not the most ideal to work in. Faculty, staff, and other students need to cross through the space while we're working and the sound echoes. It didn't massively interfere with the experience but would make it that much smoother.' – Artist, feedback survey

This was nothing noted in the residency evaluation, suggesting that this is an issue particular to single sessions; it may be that for a single session, schools are less minded to consider the suitability of the space used. In addition, for residencies schools are given a resources grant, which some schools have chosen to spend on hiring suitable spaces and learning professionals and artists have dedicated time to plan together, allowing this sort of issue to be ironed out before the commencement of activity.

Limited time for planning / relationship building

There were some comments relating to misunderstandings around expectations for sessions:

'Pupils enjoyed it overall but got quite fidgety – 45 minutes is a long time to sit and listen and even the S3 pupils struggled to maintain concentration.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'Since it was at the very end of the school year, the poor teachers seemed very stressed. The contact was a bit confused, originally thinking that we were musicians, but was open to us sharing theatre skills.' – Artist, feedback survey

'While appreciating that I was coming in last minute to run a session it would still have been useful to have a chat about the workshop content as what I prepared was perhaps not exactly what the teacher was expecting.' – Artist, feedback survey

As above, there is no set time for learning professionals and artists to plan together for single sessions. Further, as opposed to the Live Literature model, there is not as much of a tradition of freelancers delivering single sessions in schools in these art forms. This suggests that time for planning is important, as is training for artists to ensure they can adapt to circumstances as needed. These comments also highlight the need to ensure schools are aware of the 'type' of session they have booked, and the level of interactivity involved.

Artists also noted that planning time within their team is important in delivering a good session, and for their own professional development:

'If there's no prep time for everyone you end up as a lead artist directing the room, which doesn't allow other experienced artists to bring their voices and ideas – people don't feel as invested.' – Artist, interview

Staff capacity

The Arts Alive Manager noted that the organisation of single sessions took considerable time. In addition to their time, a freelance administrator was hired to work on the programme in May and June 2022, and staff at the National Companies were heavily involved in the delivery of these sessions.

Part-funding cost to schools

Part-funded session applications represented a more affluent range of schools and areas in terms of SIMD deciles. Anecdotal feedback through emails and conversations with teachers even in these more affluent areas, suggests increasing pressure on budgets for school essentials, makes part-funding a barrier to future participation in arts activities.

Process – what worked well?

Skilled artists

As seen throughout this report, skilled artists were able to mitigate many of the logistical challenges detailed above through experience and flexibility, and delivered impactful sessions by tailoring their approach to school and pupil circumstances:

'The session was tremendous and SR and R kept a class who are not easy fully engaged for an hour.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'Because of the cost, we did two sessions but the numbers were high... around 45 kids in each. We managed fine and adapted/selected exercises to work with the larger numbers. Lovely students and a beautiful little school.' – Artist, feedback survey

'This was an open plan school, so there was noise bleed from our work into the other classes. It was clear that the teachers and the students were feeling exhausted and a bit burnt out by the end of the school year. They all seemed a bit stressed so it felt like our session was very important by adding a bit of laughter, joy, and positivity back in to the group. Again everyone seemed to be very flexible and we were able to run an inspiring session.' – Artist, feedback survey

'Off the shelf products'

In many cases the most successful and impactful sessions, when impact is considered relative to the capacity used overall to organise sessions, were those adapted from existing National Company models, in particular Scottish Ballet's 'Safe to Be Me' and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's 'Dots & Lines' and 'Musical Storytelling'.

'The children were able to apply their knowledge of family diversity to dance movements and enjoyed engaging with Jack and Hayley.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'Jack and Hayley were fantastic and really engaging and workshop was well planned and implemented.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'Unlike the residency model, single session fees do not provide separate paid preparation time. The £175 fee covers "reasonable" preparation for the session. It's clear in artist feedback and interviews that this model worked best for those who already work in an established team or have extensive workshop experience and could repeat similar sessions in different schools.' – Arts Alive Manager, interview

Partners

The support and enthusiasm of National Company partners at NTS, the RSNO, Scottish Ballet and the SCO was key to the successful delivery of single sessions:

'The support from the National Theatre of Scotland was also excellent as Gillian Gourlay from NTS recommended Johnny McKnight.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

'AA is a super organisation to communicate with, I'm very lucky, SCO are also super, great comms, great support for me.' – Artist, interview

Arts Alive staff

All learning professionals that fed back rated the support from Arts Alive at 5/5, and comments from artists also confirm a high-level of support:

'It is always a pleasure to work for Arts Alive. I always feel fully supported and respected for the skills that I bring to the projects. There is always consideration about all aspects surrounding the project and not just the delivery. It is a refreshing and inspiring experience which allows for creativity, the core of what we are trying to enable and make that connection with the young people. Thank you Arts Alive!' – Artist, feedback survey

'I really enjoy working with Arts Alive. It is always such a positive experience. The ethos of the Organisation is so refreshing and enables us as creatives to deliver at the highest level.' – Artist, feedback survey

'Excellent support.' – Learning professional, feedback survey

Conclusion

- The single sessions delivered some good immediate outcomes, but are not reaching as diverse a pupil population as residencies. This may be in part due to single sessions requiring a financial contribution from schools; this has become increasingly difficult for schools to manage in recent years.
- Longer-term outcomes are difficult to evidence given the length of engagement and perhaps not as likely to be achieved as with residencies. If single sessions run in the future, the evaluation framework should be revisited to reassess what outcomes are proportionate to expect.
- Workshops need to be tailored to schools' needs and delivered by skilled artists in order to deliver impact for pupils. Training for artists has been a successful element of Arts Alive and should be incorporated where possible; this can support artists to be more adaptable and operate more independently, making the programme more scalable.
- The time and resource put into the organisation and delivery of single sessions by Arts Alive and National Company staff does not currently appear to be commensurate with reach, depth of engagement and impact, especially in comparison to residencies.
- The use of existing teams, or teams put together for a substantial number of sessions, delivering 'off the shelf products' seems to be the best fit for single sessions to ensure that the administrative effort involved in their organisation is not disproportionate to delivery and engagement. A focus on this type of session would also ensure schools and artists had clearer shared expectations for sessions, mitigating some of the logistical challenges detailed above.

Appendix 1: Arts Alive evaluation strategy and framework

Theory of change

Scottish Book Trust use theory of change methodology for evaluation across our programmes (see table 1 for more information about our process). We ran a theory of change workshop for Arts Alive on Wednesday 16th September 2020.

Representatives from four of the five National Companies participated (the contact from National Theatre Scotland was unable to make the date, but a separate meeting was held with them in November to gather their input). The session first focused on discussing the activities each NC will be offering as part of Arts Alive and the impact they hope to see as a result of these. We then worked through the theory of change process to map out how these outcomes will come about (i.e. what the participants will need to experience, or do during, and following the activities, in order to make the impact more likely to happen, and how the delivery can influence this). Following the workshop the theory of change was finalised and signed-off; it is included below as table 2.

Monitoring and evaluation framework

We aim to collect consistent data from participants and have therefore made our evaluation tools relatively quick and simple, especially for single sessions. The theory of change process enabled us to pinpoint the experiences and actions most crucial to the success of the programme and our evaluation framework and tools focus on these areas. This allows us to concentrate on gathering the most valuable data without overwhelming schools and artists with evaluation paperwork.

Table 3 below details the monitoring and evaluation framework.

Table 1: Extract from Scottish Book Trust's theory of change process

Tailored from [New Philanthropy Capital's guidance](#)

Plain text version:

Table 1 visually displays Scottish Book Trust's theory of change process, detailing the six different areas that together explore and describe the chain of events that leads to an intervention or programme having a sustained impact. The six areas are: participants, activities, change mechanisms, delivery, outcomes and impact.

- **Participants**

The types of people or institutions we work with. This may be more than one group of people.

Example – Young writers and illustrators aged 14–17

- **Activities**

What do we actually do / deliver?

(Note: often the word 'output' is used to detail the numbers of 'things' delivered – eg. 10 CLPL sessions, 50,000 books etc.)

Example – A series of live-streamed author events

- **Change mechanisms**

Occur during the activities

What needs to happen during our activities to make it likely that the outcomes will happen? What do we want individuals to **think, feel, believe or do** whilst they are engaging with our activities?

Example – Teachers believe that reading for pleasure is a worthwhile and legitimate use of time

- **Delivery**

How do our activities need to be delivered to make it more likely that people will experience the change mechanisms?

Example – Bookbug bags should be gifted meaningfully

- **Outcomes**

Occur in the short–medium term following the activities

What knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviours do we want individuals to **gain and retain** in the short to medium term? What do we want them to **think, know or do differently**?

Example – Carers read regularly with those they care for

- **Impact**

Occurs in the long term

The **long-term sustained change** we hope to see as a result of the activities.

'Impact is something people achieve for themselves. Services don't make people healthy, educated or informed, people do that for themselves. Charities help people make these changes through outcomes.'

Example – Every child grows up with access to books

The further the area is down this list, the harder it is for the evaluation of a single intervention or programme to measure whether or not the actions and experiences specified under that area are happening, and to what extent they're happening as a result of that intervention or programme. However, a logical and robust theory of change linked to an existing body of research demonstrates that the measurable shorter-term effects contribute towards these longer-term impacts. For example, an evaluation may find that that an activity increases children's enjoyment of reading, and existing research shows that children who enjoy reading have a higher level of reading skill.

Participants	Activities	Change mechanisms	Delivery	Outcomes	Impact
The types of people or institutions we work with. This may be more than one group of people.	What do we actually do / deliver? (Note: often the word 'output' is used to detail the numbers of 'things' delivered – eg. 10 CLPL sessions, 50,000 books etc.)	Occur during the activities What needs to happen during our activities to make it likely that the outcomes will happen? What do we want individuals to think, feel, believe or do whilst they are engaging with our activities?	How do our activities need to be delivered to make it more likely that people will experience the change mechanisms?	Occur in the short–medium term following the activities What knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviours do we want individuals to gain and retain in the short to medium term? What do we want them to think, know or do differently ?	Occurs in the long term The long-term sustained change we hope to see as a result of the activities. 'Impact is something people achieve for themselves. Services don't make people healthy, educated or informed, people do that for themselves. Charities help people make these changes through outcomes.'
Example – Young writers and illustrators aged 14–17	Example – A series of live-streamed author events	Example – Teachers believe that reading for pleasure is a worthwhile and legitimate use of time	Example – Bookbug bags should be gifted meaningfully	Example – Carers read regularly with those they care for	Example – Every child grows up with access to books

The further to the right the harder it is for the evaluation of a single intervention or programme to measure whether or not these things are happening, and to what extent they're happening as a result of that intervention or programme. However, a logical and robust theory of change linked to an existing body of research demonstrates that the measurable shorter-term effects contribute towards these longer-term impacts. For example, an evaluation may find that that an activity increases children's enjoyment of reading, and existing research shows that children who enjoy reading have a higher level of reading skill.

Table 2: Theory of change for Arts Alive

Participants: children and young people

Activities	Change Mechanisms	Delivery	Outcomes	Impact
<p>Artists will carry out ~100 single sessions in schools Jan–May 2021 (delivered by individuals or teams)</p> <p>Artists will carry out ten fully-funded school residencies Jan–May 2021 (delivered by individuals or teams)</p> <p>One residency = 10 sessions, including planning time, celebration event, CLPL session and pupil workshops</p>	<p>Enjoy it and have fun!</p> <p>Feel supported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel safe, valued and heard • Feel confident and supported to give it a try <p>Actively engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute / actively engage (this can be by listening actively) • Absorb and understand the message, building empathy (specifically in the case of the more issue-based workshops) <p>Be inspired</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain insight into the broadness of what 'the arts' can be • Feel inspired and keen to find out more 	<p>Use artists with the skills to deliver a quality session.</p> <p>Buy-in from class and head teachers</p> <p>Support from NCs to facilitate between schools and artists</p> <p>Children and young people are signposted to next steps – through resources / materials or other means</p>	<p>Think the arts are fun and delight in self-expression</p> <p>Feel confident</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel increased positivity about themselves and their creativity <p>Broadened world view</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have learned or experienced something new <p>Know more about the arts and how they can engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised awareness • Know that creative arts are viable careers • Know how to access more info / the next step <p>Engage with the arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage more with the arts (whatever their starting position) • New ways and vocabularies to express themselves and access emotion • Able to access the curriculum in new ways 	<p>Increased enthusiasm for the creative arts amongst children and young people</p> <p>Children and young people develop self-expression</p> <p>Improved wellbeing of children and young people</p> <p>Increased sense of the 'value' of art and artists</p>

Participants: learning professionals

Activities	Change Mechanisms	Delivery	Outcomes	Impact
<p>Artists will carry out ~100 single sessions in schools Jan–May 2021 (delivered by individuals or teams)</p> <p>Artists will carry out ten fully-funded school residencies Jan–May 2021 (delivered by individuals or teams)</p>	<p>Think the session is valuable, both to their pupils and to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy it • Join in • See the opportunity as valuable 	<p>Comms from Arts Alive</p> <p>Support of school SMTs</p> <p>Artist has time with teachers beforehand; trust is built</p>	<p>Belief that the arts are valuable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think that engaging with the arts is beneficial to their pupils • Encourage their pupils to engage in the arts <p>Increased engagement with the arts</p>	<p>Schools have increased enthusiasm and capacity to engage with creative arts</p> <p>Increased sense of the 'value' of art and artists</p>

<p>One residency = 10 sessions, including planning time, celebration event, CLPL session and pupil workshops</p>	<p>Feel they have a voice – tailor as needed for their setting / pupils</p> <p>See perhaps unexpected strengths and skills in their pupils</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect and use the experience and resources • Incorporate the arts across their work • Take up performance opportunities • Apply for future opportunities <p>Arts are prioritised in schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMTs prioritise the arts • Teachers share the experience and information about opportunities with others 	
--	--	--	--	--

Participants: artists

Activities	Change Mechanisms	Delivery	Outcomes	Impact
<p>Artists will carry out ~100 single sessions in schools Jan–May 2021 (delivered by individuals or teams)</p> <p>Artists will carry out ten fully-funded school residencies Jan–May 2021 (delivered by individuals or teams)</p> <p>One residency = 10 sessions, including planning time, celebration event, CLPL session and pupil workshops</p>	<p>Enjoyment / job satisfaction</p> <p>Feel supported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools protect space and activity • Know the child protection arrangements and policies <p>Develop their practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from others (especially if working in a team / mentoring context) • Collaborate with teacher / school / children and young people 	<p>Supported to run a high-quality, impactful session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCs select artists with high level of confidence and skill for the list • Teacher is in the room throughout, and actively engages <p>Supported with logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know who their contact at the school is and other pertinent arrangements <p>Supported to learn from the experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time or opportunity for reflection after the session 	<p>Feel valued by all partners</p> <p>Continue working in schools</p> <p>Learn new skills / approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have added to their skills and resource base • Sparked new ideas or prompted next steps 	<p>Artists develop their skills and grow confidence around working in schools</p>

Table 3: Monitoring and evaluation framework

Single sessions

Participants: children and young people

Method & Tool	Data collected
Post-event online survey for learning professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of pupils engaged • Perceptions of pupil enjoyment • Perceptions of pupil confidence

Participants: learning professional and schools

Method & Tool	Data collected
Application data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile of school • Aspirations for session
Post-event online survey for learning professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of value • Likelihood to engage with the arts in the future • Perceptions of support / logistics

Participants: artists

Method & Tool	Data collected
Post-event online survey for artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Development (including whether they had worked in schools previously, how likely to again) • Perceptions of support / logistics

Residencies

Participants: children and young people

Method & Tool	Data collected
Baseline survey for pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Confidence • Engagement with the arts
Post-residency survey for pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Confidence • Things learned • Likelihood to engage with the arts in the future

Participants: learning professional and schools

Method & Tool	Data collected
Application data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile of school • Aspirations for residency
Baseline survey for learning professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Confidence • Perceptions of value, for themselves and pupils • Engagement with the arts
Session diary for learning professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Confidence • Perceptions of pupils' enjoyment, engagement and confidence • Perceptions of value, for themselves and pupils • Things learned / development of practice
Post-residency survey for learning professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of pupils engaged • Enjoyment • Confidence • Perceptions of value, for themselves and pupils • Things learned / development of practice • Likelihood to engage with the arts in future

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likelihood to share with / recommend to other learning professionals • Perceptions of support and logistics
Call with learning professional to reflect on project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Confidence • Perceptions of pupils' enjoyment, engagement and confidence • Perceptions of value, for themselves and pupils • Things learned / development of practice • Likelihood to engage with the arts in future • Likelihood to share with / recommend to other learning professionals • Perceptions of support and logistics

Participants: artists

Method & Tool	Data collected
Baseline survey for artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience working in schools • Aspirations for the residency
Session diary for artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Perceptions of pupils' enjoyment, engagement and confidence • Things learned / development of practice
Post-residency survey for artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment • Things learned / development of practice • Perceptions of support and logistics • Likelihood to work in schools in the future