

9 February 2016		ITEM: 8
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Cultural Entitlement – An update on the Trailblazer Programme		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: All	
Report of: Carmel Littleton - Director of Children's Services and Roger Edwardson – Interim Strategic Leader School Improvement, Learning and Skills		
Accountable Head of Service: Roger Edwardson, Interim Strategic Leader School Improvement, Learning and Skills		
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

There is a huge challenge in improving access to the arts and culture for all, however, with challenge comes the opportunity for innovation. Through the Royal Opera House and Bridge, the Local Authority has encouraged all Thurrock schools to take up the Cultural Education Challenge, to connect more children and young people with great art and culture and really make a difference to their educational achievement and progress. This report shows the work of the Royal Opera House (ROH) in increasing the participation of our children and young people as part of a cultural entitlement.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to endorse the work of the Royal Opera House and to encourage all Thurrock schools to participate in the challenge.**
- 1.2 As part of this cultural entitlement, the Committee is asked to explore new opportunities to secure funding from sponsors to widen access to arts and culture across the borough.**

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Programme Overview

The Thurrock Trailblazer programme has been established following detailed research into how to achieve Thurrock wide cultural entitlement to enrich the lives of young people in Thurrock, raising their attainment and aspiration

through opportunities to engage with a rich programme of high quality cultural activities.

Now in its second year following the highly successful initial pathfinder year, the programme is working with more schools, more cultural providers and is seeking to embed cultural learning at the heart of Thurrock schools and academies within their school improvement plans.

For 2015/16 Thurrock Trailblazer is working with 28 Thurrock schools (2 SEN, 19 Primary and 7 Secondary schools) and 21 cultural providers. Schools have signed up for 110 projects and activities in total including 27 CPD initiated projects, 27 Cultural Visits and 56 in-school projects. Teachers from all schools have taken part in 12 CPD events so far, with 231 attendances.

2.1.1 The Programme Objectives

- Act as a catalyst for positive change across all schools in Thurrock
- Deliver a needs-led cultural learning programme to develop skills and knowledge of young people as audiences, critics and makers of art
- Initiate a coherent cultural offer comprising a universal offer open to all young people in the Trailblazer schools and targeted offers for schools designed through a process of consultation and with programmes of work both inside and outside of the classroom
- Harness the local, regional and national cultural sector – ROH, HHPP partners, Thames Gateway and wider Eastern region and London national arts organisations to build a high quality, coherent cross-arts model
- Encourage schools to build a strong infrastructure to support cultural and creative learning in and out of school and maximize Artsmark and Arts Award uptake as a tool to support this
- Build a sustainable funding model through building trust within schools and developing long term relationships with key stakeholders, supporters and funders in the most effective way
- Ensure opportunities for progression are signposted
- Celebrate achievement and success
- Help to connect Thurrock to wider cultural landscape, both ROH and beyond

2.1.2 Success Criteria

- All schools to engage with the Artsmark process
- All schools to embark upon Arts Award training for staff and at least one Arts Award project per school
- Schools have an increasing cohort of teachers coming forward to take part in CPD and in-school programmes
- Students, teachers and wider community: an increased understanding and awareness of Thurrock Trailblazer and its value and benefit
- A strong and active network of schools working with each other to learn and develop.

2.1.3 Progress to date

In-school projects and cultural visits

8 projects are complete (including in-school performances by the Mercury Theatre Colchester, dance workshops with Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company, Kent and cross curricular printmaking workshops with Natalie Ryde, visual artist). 30 projects have confirmed dates in the diary and 45 have yet to confirm dates but are in communication with their cultural providers.

Outcome- To date, 23 projects are complete, 32 have confirmed dates and 28 have yet to confirm dates but are in communication with their cultural providers.

Teacher training and CPD

10 of 21 CPD sessions have been completed with 191 attendances overall. The sessions have included Arts Award and Artsmark Training, digital technology in music making, the ROH National Nutcracker (pilot of its new flagship national dance programme with Trailblazer schools), ROH Design Challenge and Cultural School Governor Training. Many more projects are now under way within the schools initiated by CPD sessions.

Outcome - To date, 12 of 21 CPD events have taken place with 231 attendances.

Cultural Champions

1 of 5 cultural champion meetings/ CPDs has been completed. All Cultural Champions (plus members of Senior Leadership Teams [SLT's]) have taken part in an Artsmark Training Day in Purfleet.

Outcome - To date, 2 of 5 have now been completed

2.2 Next steps (including timescales)

2.2.1 Artsmark:

All schools have formally signed-up with Arts Council England as Artsmark schools: The completion of Artsmark registration and 'statement of commitment' submission has been supported by Trailblazer Artsmark Advisors where required.

Outcome - To date, 17 schools have submitted their Statement of Commitment. 2 successfully took part in the pilot and will now spend time reflecting on their process to apply for the next level, the remaining 9 schools are nearing the completion of their Statement of Commitment.

2.2.2 Arts Award:

Most schools have sent one or more teachers to participate in Arts Award Discover and Explore (Primary Schools) and Arts Award Bronze and Silver (Secondary Schools) training. The remaining schools are signed up for Arts

Award future training events. All schools are developing plans to select their in-school Arts award project.

Outcome - To date, 27 of the 28 schools have submitted plans to complete an Arts Award project with at least 30 students.

2.2.3 School Senior leadership and governor engagement:

There was a special event at Royal Opera House Covent Garden on 19th September where 35 governors/ leaders came together to explore the value of arts and culture education in schools and how to embed it within their school development plans. On the day they were also invited to attend a Welcome performance of Romeo and Juliet performed by the Royal Ballet and attend pre-performance activities in the front of house spaces aimed at audiences new to the Royal Opera House. The next event for school governors is planned for March 2016 at High House Production Park in Purfleet.

Outcome - To date, the Governor's event is planned for 10th March and an event for Head teachers is planned on 11th March at Covent Garden.

2.2.4 Communications:

A comprehensive communications and advocacy strategy is currently being designed focusing on stakeholder engagement, impact*, visibility and recruitment of schools; an action plan will be produced by the end of November 2016 timetabling next steps. * The strategy will include plans on how to share findings from the Trailblazer pathfinder evaluation report, which is due to be finalized within the next few weeks.

Outcome - To date, a communications strategy is in place and activities are in planning including producing printed materials.

2.2.5 Digital engagement:

The sharing of learning through digital platforms is a programme priority and training for all schools has taken place in October, with follow up support on offer. We expected all participating schools to have signed up their school no later than Christmas, with at least half of them also actively contributing by Christmas.

Outcome - To date, ROH are reviewing their approach with their Makewaves platform and are now planning to set up both a select teacher's group and a group of young people, who we will work with more closely to take on a leadership role in sharing activity and reporting to their peers on progress.

2.2.6 Evaluation:

On 26th November, all Cultural Champions took part in an evaluation CPD session where they started to produce an evaluation framework for their individual Trailblazer programme. This is linked to their school's Artsmark Statement of Commitment and their identified school improvement priorities.

The session was led by an evaluation specialist who will then provide ongoing support.

Outcome - To date, all schools are setting out their evaluation plans and working with the Trailblazer consultants to finalise and implement.

2.2.7 Work Experience & Apprenticeships at ROH

To further imbed the Council's objective around offering a range of work experience opportunities, as outlined in the recent report Pathways to Employment report, we have successfully negotiated a range of work experience opportunities with the Royal Opera House. These opportunities are being offered both locally at High House Production Park in Purfleet and at Convent Garden.

They are being offered in a range of different departments and will give young people a practical experience of working in the cultural sector.

The Royal Opera House have run a very successful apprenticeship programme for a number of years and this continues to offer young people apprenticeships in a range of different Departments within the organisation. They have been a strong partner in Thurrock's Next Top Boss and continue to support a wide range of employer engagement activities across a number of local schools.

3 Issues and/or Options

None.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To sustain this activity and expand the cultural offer, the Committee is asked to promote opportunities for sponsorship from a range of external sponsors. Currently the Council funding from the Education Commission generates 3 times the funding allocation and future activity is reliant on future funding.

5. Impact on Corporate Policies, Priorities, Performance and Community Impact

- 5.1 Create – a great place for learning and opportunity.
Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity.
Build pride, responsibility and respect.
Improve health and well being.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**
Finance Manager

In order for the project to be continued into Year 3 (2016/17) support continued funding is required from the Thurrock Education Alliance to the value of £92k for 2016/17.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

This report does not ask the Committee to make any decision. There are, therefore, no comments to make on it. The Committee is asked to endorse the work and explore funding options.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development and Equalities
Manager**

There are no direct diversity or equality issues in this report.

6.4 Other implications (where significant) –

None.

7. Risks/Issues

7.1 Artsmark:

Schools need to submit an online application for Artsmark and may struggle to make enough time for this. ROH are working closely with experts from Bridge and specialist advisors to support schools on an individual level to submit a high-quality application.

7.1.2 Accommodating different needs:

Each school is on a different and unique journey. ROH are working with specialists to work with the schools (cultural champions and SLT) on a case-by-case basis to support them to make the most of their programme.

7.1.3 Funding:

ROH are working with partners to produce a funding strategy for Thurrock Trailblazer going forward. They are hoping to have a series of recommendations for the programme steering group by the end of January 2016.

7.1.4 Staffing:

A key member of the Trailblazer team went on Maternity leave in December 2015. ROH set up a timely recruitment process for Maternity cover to allow for an overlap in roles to ensure the induction was comprehensive and detailed and as smooth as possible. **To date, the handover process ran very smoothly and the maternity cover has effectively settled into the team very well.**

8. Conclusion

8.1 This activity is funded from the Thurrock Education Alliance (TEA), Bridge (Arts Council) and a school contribution to the costs. This is the second year of funding from TEA and an application will be made to continue the work into year 3.

9. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None.

10. **Appendices to the report**

- None.

Report Author:

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Children's Services