

Can the Creativity and enthusiasm of children engage and connect a community more deeply to the arts and to the gallery?

Art Inspiring Change in Margate

'We don't need to give young people a voice. They have a voice. It's us that need to listen.'
Lemn Sissay

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Photo: Jason Pay

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Photo: Jason Pay

Art Inspiring Change

'My Nan gets up out of her chair to do art now' Young arts Leader



Photo: Joel Knight

Art Inspiring Change has been an intense, in-depth community wide enterprise.

This ambitious work was initiated by Turner Contemporary as an exploration of what might be possible if children were placed at the heart of arts led community regeneration. It was made possible through the considerable expertise, commitment, shared vision and investment of multiple partners. All of those directly involved have expanded their thinking, explored new ideas and felt the power of being part of a shared arts venture. Art Inspiring Change has had impact on a diverse range of children and adults living and working in Margate, many of whom had little or no connection with the Arts or Turner Contemporary before this project. The project has achieved outcomes that go well beyond what was anticipated. This work has touched children, families, artists and educators, officers and politicians in Margate and beyond. For very many of those involved, the experience has been genuinely transformational.

Over 18 months, Art Inspiring Change has invaded and occupied spaces where children are not always seen or heard. It has created spaces of the mind where fresh thinking and open dialogue can flourish. It has found places to make, create, and present children's art in a new way, to new audiences.

Art Inspiring Change has been an intervention into the lives of children who are living in an area with historically high levels of deprivation, but has benefited in recent years from culturally driven regeneration. They attend schools where the arts may be valued, but the time and resources available for cultural learning are limited. They live in a country that has record levels of mental health issues amongst children and young people, where their voices do not have weight. The UK is rated 156th on the international KidsRights Index¹ - below countries such as Iraq, Romania and Senegal. This programme is an ambitious, idealistic bid to empower children to have agency and influence over the community in which they live.

The programme has made a difference to the way that 70 children connect and communicate with their community. They have developed high level skills in spoken language, critical thinking and creating art in public spaces. These children have become more confident, more resilient and more visible. They have changed the way that their community sees them - as young leaders and artists. They have changed the way that their community engages with the arts, and with Turner Contemporary. They have changed the way that those making strategic decisions for the community engage with children. They have found a way to be heard, through their art.

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All partners involved agree that the project has exceeded all expectations, on every level. It has not been without challenges; not everybody has had a comfortable experience. A great deal has been learned about the need for clearly defined roles, expectations and communication. Thorough preparation and training for key delivery partners and their schools is essential if future work is to have greatest impact at an acceptable cost to all involved.

Debate around the qualities and functions of leadership was brought into the children's arena. It lies at the heart of this work and is the key to unlocking creative potential to make change. When people recognise their own capacity for leadership and act upon it, change happens. The Young Arts Leaders recognised this. A conversation between Practical Philosopher Ayisha De Lanerolle, and two Young Arts Leaders², Emily and Maya shows us how leadership might be fostered.

- *"Who do you think has been your leader?"*
- *"Um..Emily. I think we have all been a leader though. I think everybody is a leader in this world. I don't think they feel it, but they should"*
- *"How can we make them feel like leaders?"*

¹ <http://www.kidsrightsindex.org> The KidsRights Index is the annual global index which ranks how countries adhere to and are equipped to improve children's rights.

² Young Arts Leaders or 'YAL's are 70 primary school children from four Margate schools.

- *“Be kind to them and make them feel happy.”*
- *“We could tell people they are leaders, that could be like a compliment - ‘you are a leader’. In 2018, maybe that would be a compliment - ‘you’re a leader!’”*

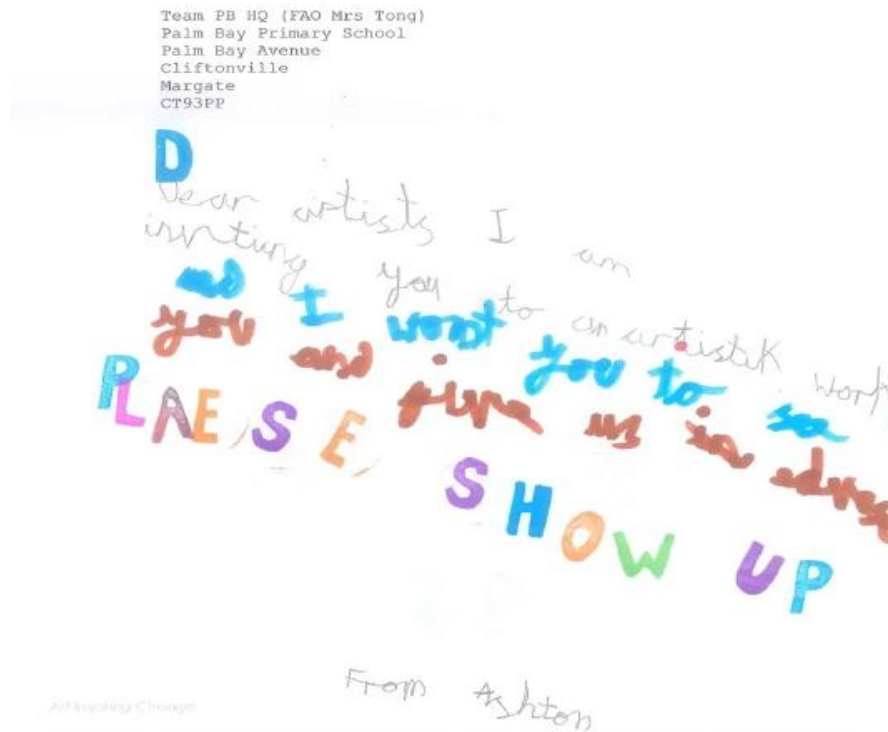
Emily and Maya have no doubts about what change might happen if we can achieve this.

- *“We can be leaders all at the same time, and listen to each other. We can all be Kings and Queens together. Decide what happens, all together”*

These young arts leaders dream of a world where we operate as equals - a kingdom where everybody is regal. Their fairytale is based on real world experience. The Young Arts Leaders understand how to create the conditions for change, how to invest in people, how to be heard, to be empowered to act and what can be achieved by working in partnership. They understand this because this has been their experience through Art Inspiring Change.

A mark of the success and potential of Art Inspiring Change is perhaps the consensus that even more could be achieved. This work has demonstrated that together, the Young Arts Leaders, their families, Thanet District Council and Turner Contemporary can be a formidable force for change in Thanet.

Background and Introduction



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In 2016 Turner Contemporary commissioned research into the impact the organisation is having on visitors and participants.³ This research outlined the context in which the gallery is working, and concluded that their work is having a positive impact in terms of social value. The report looked at the context in which this work is taking place and established a narrative of change.

'Margate is situated in the South East of the UK on the north Kent coastline. Until the 1970s Margate benefitted from a thriving tourist industry. However, with the advent of cheap package holidays the town's tourist industry began to decline. The combined effects of deprivation, limited access to local amenities, unemployment and a lack of resources and opportunities, has led to negative effects across the population of Margate. This includes generally poor health, a lack of social relations, limited education and poor sense of aspiration and achievement for the future...from the outset one of Turner Contemporary's key aims was to contribute to regeneration by changing people and communities.' (Jackson et al, pg. 19-20).

As part of this change agenda, Turner Contemporary has been developing approaches to working with children and young people in a more democratic way since it was first established. The learning programme was built around principles of celebrating curiosity above received ideas and pioneered the use of 'hands on philosophy' within gallery education. Since 2010 The 'Youth Navigators' programme has trained young teens from schools across Thanet to lead

³ Jackson A, Nettle A, Muzyka J and Dee T, 2016, Art Inspiring Change: Turner Contemporary Social Value Report (15/16), COaST Research and Knowledge Exchange Group
<https://www.turnercontemporary.org/media/documents/COaST%20Turner%20SROI%202015-2016%20FINAL.pdf>

conversations using techniques of Philosophical Inquiry.⁴ An interest in arts leadership is being shared by organisations across Kent. The culture strand of the Kent wide Schools Olympic Legacy programme was designed in consultation with Karen Eslea, (Head of Learning and Visitor Experience) and brought artists, organisations and pupils together as equal creative partners.

Having tested the proposition that children and young people can work with artists, Turner Contemporary looked to explore how that leadership might be applied to a community regeneration agenda.

A child-led ethos

This programme sits in a wider context of research and activity. This was explored with many contributions from arts and community projects at a symposium hosted by Turner Contemporary in June 2017. The experiences of Art Inspiring Change were shared at this event, and a debate opened amongst Kent organisations and arts practitioners.

The principles outlined by Marc Jans and Kurt De Backer⁵ underpin the Art Inspiring Change framework – namely, that young people will actively engage with society when presented with three specific dimensions; firstly, they must have something to challenge. Following this, they must feel they have the capacity to make a difference and finally must be able to connect with others to tackle the issue effectively. The programme was structured around these elements, building confidence and capacity, creating networks and supportive relationships. Art provided both a purpose and the means to connect.

The artists all came with an interest in participant led, co-creative working and a belief in the potential of children to work at the highest levels. Each team established a set of values and behaviors that they would be guided by. Although they differed in nuance and emphasis, they were entirely compatible with Frobelian principles of learning,⁶ which promote the rights of the child:

- The integrity of childhood in its own right

⁴ Youth Navigators worked with Ayisha De Lanerolle. The project was cited as an example of good practice by Ofsted. <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-practice-resource-raising-achievement-and-aspirations-through-high-quality-partnership-working>. Philosophical Inquiry is a pedagogical model rooted in curiosity which Turner Contemporary has been using since 2010 to empower audiences to respond to their exhibitions. The approach takes the form of structured conversations which combine hands-on exploration with a philosophical framework that supports creative questioning, improved communication and listening, and deeper thinking skills.

⁵ De Backer, Kurt and Jans, Marc (2002) Youth (-work) and Social Participation: Elements for a Practical Theory. Brussels: Flemish Youth Council.

⁶ More information about this approach can be found at www.froebel.org.uk

- The relationship of every child to family, community and to nature, culture and society.
- The uniqueness of every child's capacity and potential
- The holistic nature of the development of every child
- The role of play and creativity as central integrating elements in development and learning.
- The right of children to protection from harm or abuse and to the promotion of their overall well-being

The term 'child led' was interrogated throughout the project, but the importance of ensuring that ideas were child initiated, with decisions shared with, not led by adults united the many partners. As Hart comments, 'regrettably, projects like these, on the highest rung of the ladder of participation, are all too rare. The reason, I believe, is not the absence of a desire to be useful on the part of teenagers. It is rather the absence of caring adults attuned to the particular interests of young people'. During Art Inspiring Change, 'care' was a shared value throughout, and ensured that the YALs could thrive.

The partners

Schools

Holy Trinity & St Johns Church of England Primary School, Northdown Primary School, Palm Bay Primary School, Salmestone Primary School

Thanet District Council

Rob Kenyon, Helen Havercroft, officers, members and various teams

Delivery team

Turner Contemporary and staff, Karen Eslea (lead), Nikki Hildesley (programme coordinator), Lucy Pettet, Bob Henderson, Sue Rumsey, Lizzie Gove (Navigators), Ayisha De Lanerolle (Philosopher), Jason Pay (photographer), Adrian Smith (film-maker)

Volunteers and sponsors

Artists

Emily Motto (b.1992) is an artist based in Orpington, Kent. Materially lead, she works between sculpture, installation and drawing, creating playful and unstable forms, arenas and mazes.

Adam James. "I work across larp (live action role-play) performance, film and sculpture. I'm interested in the intersection between empathy and exclusion, which I explore through participatory performances set in fantasy worlds. My live and filmic works depict communities and creatures struggling to collaborate in the face of unfair and laughable hindrances. By unpicking the remnants, myths and belief systems of these fictional peoples I hope to discover the alibi necessary to bring future groups, forces or objects together."

Creative Enablers, WEA⁷, South Eastern, Maritime Volunteer Service, Tracey Jones, Primary Headteacher, The Art Inspiring Change youth reporters team, Broadstairs SHED, The Windmill Allotments, Ramsgate Festival, CCCU⁸ Ambassadors, The Rock Choir, The Cliftonville Community Choir, The Hartsdown Academy Choir, Margate Coastal Park Promotional Group

Sam Curtis is an artist and curator based in London. He makes art that is driven by ideas and questions that take the form of events, video, performance, text and sculpture.

Willow Mitchell. "I create art with and amongst people, working across many art forms, mediums and processes to construct immersive spaces that hold and shape moments of play and exchange, ever flexing to the curiosity of my collaborators."

Project activity

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A job description and advert was drafted by the children from the schools – ‘Can you work for a 6-year-old boss?’ Turner Contemporary managed the initial shortlist, not compromising who they worked with, but bringing people with high ambition and aspiration to work with the children. Following a process of interviewing and selection, conducted entirely by the children, two-person teams of artist and navigator⁹ worked with four primary schools in Margate. They each began with a group of 20 pupils, working for one afternoon a week over 18 months, for 46 sessions. Navigators led additional sessions to focus on Arts Award. During these sessions, each group established their own way of working together, forged relationships and developed their own distinct ‘studio practice’. In some cases, the groups had dedicated space as a studio base throughout the project, in others they led a more itinerate existence.

The YALs came together at several events throughout the 18 months. Initially, panels were formed from all four schools, and interviews were conducted in the Clore Learning Studio in January 2016. They met again in June for a joint takeover over of the gallery. Two visits to Thanet District Council Chambers followed, and each school worked with the Creative Enablers group to plan the ‘Winter Wonderland event in December. There was a gathering of all the YALs for a consultation day in the Foyle Studios. All the YALs attended for the opening of an exposition of the project in the Clore Learning Studio on the 25th of May, with Lemn Sissay as their guest.

⁷ Workers Education Association

⁸ Canterbury Christchurch University

⁹ ‘Navigators’ are members of the Turner Contemporary learning team, using ‘hands on philosophy’ approaches to support schools, community groups and families.

YALs from each school represented Turner Contemporary at events at the Houses of Parliament, Tate Modern and a visit to Phyllida Barlow's studio. Some YALs worked with the film-maker Philippa Ndisi-Herman.

Film-maker Adrian Smith worked with the schools, documenting the project, and encouraging the YALs to think about how to best capture the events of 'Artgate'.

'Artgate' was the culmination of the project, representing the joint endeavors of each group to the brief that they were given at the beginning of the programme – to re-connect the community with a neglected site through their art transformations. Activity took place throughout the day at four separate sites across Margate. The YALs, artists, navigators, teachers, families and community helpers came together in grand procession for a ceremony at the gallery. Not all the YALs joined that day, but their ideas, energy and creativity were present in the artworks and events at their chosen sites.

The artists and lead teachers spent time together over two training days in January 2016. The schools were offered Philosophy for Children training for staff and the artists had additional training and planning time at the gallery.

The Creative Enablers were recruited from the four schools in the project, but with disappointing take up, this was extended to a Ramsgate school (creating a useful base for future activity in the town). The Creative Enabler course was devised in partnership with the WEA (Workers Educational Association) and is accredited by City & Guilds at Level 1. Nine of the graduates from the first cohort extended their activity to support 'Artgate' and achieved a level 2 qualification.

The course aimed to equip parents to support and enable children to realise their creativity. It was aimed at adults who wish to extend their skills to enrich their interactions with their own children, and to offer a route into working in schools, whether as a volunteer or in employment. Over 16 weeks, Creative Enablers were provided with a range of workshops. Growing capacity within the community to enable children's creativity is an important part of the Art Inspiring Change strategy for sustainable change. All the Creative Enablers reported that the course had built their confidence, opened their thinking and prepared them to apply for employment and other opportunities working with children.

Schools activity

Although connected by a shared vision, challenge and framework, each school came with a different context. The relationships and ways of working that emerged were particular to each setting.¹⁰

¹⁰ Activity across the project can be seen at: Schools' Playlist: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc4k_vvIkNeBMtz-vqxuDGwDLzJvAWcmM

Holy Trinity & St John's Church of England Primary is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, but increasing year-on year.

The school worked with artist and Emily Motto and Navigator Sue Rumsey. Children were drawn from across classes and year groups, and were selected by the school against a range of criteria. Some were involved because they showed interest and promise in the arts, others to develop their confidence and social skills. Pupils wrote to the art coordinator asking to be part of the project, giving a good reason why they should be chosen. Half of the group were selected through this process. They began with an exploration of materials that characterized their group practice, and was evident in their site transformation – 'The Bloop'. The group quickly learned that art could be made from anything. Their visit to Phyllida Barlow was a big inspiration. They bonded well as a team, fostering a spirit of anarchy at times that always gravitated back to principles of fairness and respect for others. The school valued the opportunities for pupils to have new experiences, beyond the classroom and the headteacher feels that the project has strengthened the bond between the school and the community. Their choice of the area outside the job-centre for their installation of 'The Bloop' was characteristic of their strong community roots. Parents were extremely supportive and have gained a deeper understanding of the arts.

"It was really inspiring to work with a group of people so excited about making, so open to exploring different thoughts and processes, and with such vivid imaginations. The Holy Trinity YALs made me ask why not? hundreds of times each session, which I think has been a really energetic and invigorating mindset to return back to my own making with." Emily Motto

Salmestone Primary School is a larger than average size primary. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children looked after by the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is around the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The school was inspected as 'requiring improvement' soon after the programme began.

The YALs formed an early interest in playful debate and concept, happy to abandon concrete making activity at mid stages to pursue new lines of thought. They placed a high value on

experience over the manufacture of permanent artworks. Their choice of site was inspired by a spirit of discovery, and concern for the people who used the woods (rough sleepers, dog walkers for example), as well as the people that didn't (children, families). The local nature of the project was highly valued by the school. The school were particularly impressed by the team working, and how they have supported each other across year groups. Their resilience was tested when the site was vandalised before and after the installation of their work. This proved to be a moment of triumph for the YALs, their families and the school, who rallied together to create positive action out of a potentially distressing situation. The school report that parents have been supportive, with all the YAL families attending all the events. The programme has connected families to the gallery for the first time.

"I moved to Margate early in Feb 2016. Before I left London I was developing a project that sought to give a different account of my local neighborhood and the people that made its fabric. Living and working within 5 minutes' walk of Salmestone and Turner for the last 18 months has done exactly that. Seeing the world through children's eyes, hands and ears reminds you than everything can be unlearned and that impermanence is great. Living with these amazing children as my neighbours provides ongoing proof that art can and does empower. As a PhD student researching live progressive play as artist practice, this project has added rocket fuel to my argument that collective play is transformative." Adam James

12 **Palm Bay** is a larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average.

All the YALs were drawn from years one and two. The project started with artist Bethany Mitchell, but she left to pursue an exciting opportunity in Sweden. She stayed in touch with the YALS and her twin sister (also an artist) started work with 'Team PB. Their work was very much based in making – it led the thinking. The choice of site was an important one for the children, being in direct view of the school, where they could observe people taking part in and enjoying their transformation of the clifftop Pavilion. The school provided a base for 'Team PB' which was identified by the whole school as their studio space. The YALs and their work had a high profile in the school and enjoyed the support of the whole school community - the majority of Creative Enablers were drawn from Palm Bay. The school have taken the project forward as a 'green light' for work that they were already keen to do. Philosophy for Children is being rolled out across the curriculum for the whole school and a group of children from across the school are part of their own Art leaders scheme and are working towards Explore. A 'room 13'¹¹ has been set aside and is well used by children of all ages.

¹¹ Room 13 is a network of studios and a global movement for young artists. Find out more at <http://room13international.org>

"Art Inspiring Change enabled me to work with Team PB, twenty prolific, socially engaged and ambitious artists. In our time together we shared many philosophies- 'Art is pieces of ideas' (Ashton), interaction is like play-dough, so like play that you can shape. (Oscar), 'anything is possible and everyone is welcome' (Thay) and perhaps most importantly 'less talking, more arting!' (Holly). These ideas became a manifesto for making and as we go our separate ways this will continue to motivate my practice." Willow Mitchell

Northdown Primary School is a larger than average primary. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a higher than average proportion of other ethnic groups represented in the school. English is not the first language of more than a quarter of all pupils. The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are all above the national average. The majority of these have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is also above the national average. During the programme there were a number of changes to the senior leadership team with two interim headteachers.

The changes in staff and a number of pressures made it difficult for the school to fully engage. The group did not have a permanent base. YALs were drawn from across year groups, the majority chosen to address particular needs, with a proportion identified as gifted and talented in the arts. Their takeover creation, 'Breadland' was a highlight for the group. It showcased their openness to diverse, offbeat thinking and gave them a sense of pride in their ideas. Fewer parents at this school engaged with the programme, or seemed to have any real insight about it. Where they did, they moved a considerable distance in their interest and confidence. The school particularly valued the opportunity for the YALs to engage with civic leaders and gain insight into council procedures. The power of the project for them lay in learning how they might engage with authority to make change.

"Something that has been really interesting for me in working with the YAL's on this project was their ability to question the world around them, particularly in a bottom-to-top way, challenging hierarchies and structures of power. Feeling motivated by their questions, I have been able to apply this enthusiasm and experience to my role as curator at Bethlem Gallery. Working with service users in a psychiatric hospital, my work there involves seeking out the voices of people who too often do not get heard. Since working with the YAL's I have reconnected with materials and the pleasure in just making. Playing and experimenting with new materials alongside the YAL's has freed me up in some ways and I hope this feeds into my practice in the future. The project as a whole has reaffirmed my belief and advocacy for long-term collaborations between artists and communities or groups of people, the trust that is needed takes time, the changes we seek take time and people deserve time to experiment, collaborate, ask questions and reflect." Sam Curtis

Methodology

The focus of this evaluation has been on the following question: 'Can the creativity and enthusiasm of children engage and connect their community more deeply to the arts and to their gallery?' A theory of change based on this question was developed with the participants during the first training day, and the different stakeholder interests mapped. Over a period of 18 months, the programme was observed in a number of ways – through interviews, behavior logs, activity capture and participant surveys. All key events, workshops and training sessions were observed and comments from interviewees recorded at each. Each school was visited on four or more occasions, when sessions with the artists were observed and survey information gathered from the YALs.

Members of Turner Contemporary staff, parents, members of the community and adult participants were interviewed individually, using a combination of long form semi structured interviews and shorter 'vox pop' encounters.

Observation material was gathered at three key points during the period for each 'stakeholder' group. For the purposes of this report, 'participant' refers to the artists, navigators, school staff and YAL teams.

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Adult participants were interviewed at the beginning of the programme, after the Takeover day in July 2016 and at the end of the programme. The Creative Enablers also completed an attitudes survey towards the end of the course. (table iii, appendix 1)

For the YALs, group discussions were held at the beginning and end of the project, and conversations were recorded with individuals throughout the project. Survey information was collected in the following way:

- A graphic template to record how positive they felt about their feelings, talk, listening, friendships (in the group), ideas, teamwork and art skills.
- A questionnaire based on Hart's Ladder¹²
- A log for Speaking and Listening Spoken language observations

YAL surveys used a 3 point 'traffic light scale, and each survey was discussed with the children afterwards to gauge levels of understanding and interpretation.

Parents and carers were surveyed at the beginning and end, with a small number providing feedback at both points. Interviews were carried out at the end of the programme

Community and attendees at events (who were often also parents and carers of the YALs) were interviewed and surveyed at the two events in the gallery, and across the four 'Artgate' sites. Adults' surveys used a seven-point Likert scale, with space for open ended responses.

¹² Hart, 1992, Children's Participation: from Tokenism to Citizenship, Innocenti Essay No4, Unicef, Florence

All conclusions drawn in the report are a distillation of 'creative observation' – a process of consulting, discussing, reflecting and reviewing. Where possible, triangulation has been applied, testing ideas from various sources. The evaluation has been an iterative, formative process, with learning from four interim reports prepared for Turner Contemporary prior to this final summary of the project.

Limitations of this evaluation.

Sample sizes with parents and carers are small – getting access to this group proved difficult. Likewise, staffing and other difficulties made it difficult to obtain assessment data from schools. Whilst the observations of performance in literacy have been made by an experienced school professional, they are not validated by either teacher assessment or national key stage assessment.

What have been the outcomes of Art Inspiring Change?



Photo: Sam Scales

Individuals - empowering Young Arts Leaders

At a very fundamental level, Art Inspiring Change has invested in 70 young people, with a depth of engagement that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. These children are change-makers, who have the tools to enrich their own and other lives now and into the future.

They have taken a lead role in all aspects of this programme, beginning with the selection of the artists. Their leadership, communication and wider literacy skills have shown a marked increase. Their confidence and aspirations for the future are greatly enhanced. This has been evident in surveys of their changed attitudes and observed behaviour.

Children who have taken part in this project are able to:

- Engage confidently with adults, express their views, debate ideas, present solutions.
- Challenge assumptions, interrogate their own ideas.

- Recognise the value of the individual within the team & their own contribution to a shared goal
- Work with empathy, care and kindness.
- Communicate cogently in writing, verbally and in their artwork.
- Discuss complex ideas, illustrate their patterns of reasoning.
- Identify themselves as artists with a sophisticated insight into what art can be.
- Share ambitious ideas for the future.
- Understand their own power to influence others, create change, make a tangible contribution to their community
- Know that they can cross any threshold and be a valued member of society
- Understand and engage with the process of taking an idea for a public space through to permission for use and realisation.

These skills, attributes and behaviours have been observed to different degree across each group and for children of all ages in the project.

Leadership

The artists were selected by the children. They devised the advert, the job description and interview format. A panel drawn from across the four schools conducted the interviews and made the final selection.

It is clear that children have led this work. Comments from teachers, parents, carers and community members show that the site transformations and takeover events were initiated and executed by the children. Most importantly, the children themselves report high levels of satisfaction at their pivotal role in the programme.

The YALs confidence to take the lead (and be supported to do so) grew rapidly as the project progressed. At the end of the all but one of the children rated their participation at the highest level. This compares with just a third who felt they were fully in the lead during the early stages.

All children felt that they were actively involved in the decision-making process. 100% agreed with the statement 'I make decisions with the YALs' and "my ideas are part of the group decision". 75% disagreed with the statement 'The grown-ups decide what we do'.

In end of programme surveys about their level of participation:

100% agreed with the statement "I make decisions with the YALs" and "my ideas are part of the group decision".

97% of YALs agreed with the statement, "we decide what will happen for this project and if we don't, nothing will happen".

92% agreed that "the grown-ups and the children work together in an equal way",

89% disagreed with the statement "the grownups tell us what to do all of the time"

In end of programme surveys about their attitudes and levels of confidence.

Confidence in skills rose from 36% to 93%

Confidence in ideas rose from 48% to 96%

Positive reports about happiness were

Confidence and well being

At the beginning of the programme, the children reported the most confidence about their leadership and their feelings.

Communicating well, ideas and skills were lowest rated. Skills confidence was lowest at 36%, followed by ideas and leadership at 48%. Confidence was highest when thinking about friendships.

The things that changed most rapidly were confidence in skills (69% from 36% by the middle of the programme). Positive reports for all areas rose to over 92% by the end of the programme.

Communication and Literacy

The project has provided rich scope to develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing, by providing engaging experiences. The children have used journals to record their experiences, ideas, discussions and plans. It can be expected that this ongoing written reflection will have contributed to their attainment in Writing, particularly in relation to composition, articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing.

However, Art Inspiring Change was not designed to meet the detailed statutory requirements of the national curriculum. It would have skewed the overall aims of the programme to focus on Reading and Writing. There was little scope to develop skills for transcription or grammar and punctuation. Likewise, there were no naturally occurring activities where reading was an integral activity.

There is no evidence that the schools integrated the stimulus offered by Art Inspiring Change into their wider curriculum. Consequently, it is not possible to attribute achievement against the attainment targets for Reading and Writing to the effect of taking part in Art Inspiring Change.

100% at the end of the project.

92% felt positive and confident in all areas.

Of Parents surveyed:

100% of parents have seen a positive improvement in their child, with 90% expressing a strong opinion about this

Comments from partners and others:

"We have created a band of 'stealth artists'" Artist

*"We have got all of these little agents for change - little **artists** for change" Artist*

"I wouldn't have chosen this site for the Bloop if I'd known they were going to put those there (plastic barriers around the trees) it ruins the art" YAL

"(this is about) Getting children involved in the future of Margate." Artgate audience member

"It involves children and makes them feel positive about themselves and their achievements." Artgate audience member

"Very successful method of helping children to see the potential of their surroundings." Artgate audience member

"The biggest change in me is my confidence. Yayyyyyy!!!" YAL

"It has been an amazing experience for Chloe to take part in. She always looks forward to Fridays and comes home with lots of exciting news and stories. Her confidence has really grown and she is not afraid to try new things. She loves art and her bedroom is filled with creations. Chloe has a wonderful imagination and it has even helped her in other areas of

More appropriate is to look to the requirements for **Speaking and Listening**, which span the whole primary curriculum for English and align very well with Art Inspiring Change activity.

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing throughout KS1 and 2. The application of Hands on Philosophy and the discursive, dialogic approach has been provided very effective facilitating activity to develop high level spoken language skills.

Although the schools had not provided information about attainment in **Speaking and Listening**, observation¹³ indicates that the YALs have developed comprehensive skills through the programme. (appendix 1).

Significant progress was observed from the first observations at the beginning of the programme, where only 24% were observed demonstrating these skills.

Greatest progress was made against 'consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others' rising from a baseline of 13% to 82% pupils demonstrating this skill. 'Using relevant strategies to build vocabulary' saw an equal rise of 69% points.

Pupils of all ages are asking relevant questions, maintaining discussions. They are using spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesizing, imagining and exploring ideas (a rise of 63 % points).

86% of pupils across all schools were observed demonstrating mastery across the 11 criteria for Speaking and Listening. When one school is taken out of account, that rises to 98%. Mastery across the criteria was by no means limited to the older pupils. Set against the DFE's 'challenging aspiration

learning and we are all certainly more inspired as a family too." Parent

"I really don't want his project to end. It's been transformational for my son and he looks forward to Fridays so much. I am concerned about the impact the project ending will have on him I have suggested that there is continuation of some form of weekly session for 'high functioning autistic spectrum children as this has been a lifeline for us all and our son has blossomed and found his true self. I hope it can happen and soon after the end of his project. Thank you!!!" Parent

"I can talk like an adult now. Better than some actually." YAL

"I've made a difference to my community. That is really important to me" YAL

"I feel Awepiculous about being a YAL because I've learnt lots of new things and got to take part in a giant artwork" YAL

"The artist let him be a grown up, to be free in his work. He took my son seriously, would ask him his opinion, put him on the same level, gave him respect" Parent

"It has been about learning about myself and what I'm capable of" YAL

"It is about taking over - the world!" YAL

In observations of behaviours:

86% demonstrated skills across the Speaking and listening criteria, a rise of 62% from the beginning of the programme.

58 children achieved Arts Award Explore

¹³ Observations made as part of independent evaluation. The evaluator is an experienced School improvement professional and former local authority education adviser.

that 85% of children should achieve the new expected standard by the end of primary school', this is impressive, given that pupils range in age from Yr. 2 to yr6.

These observations merit further investigation, with more detailed investigation of individual pupil progress and teacher assessments.

Arts Award provided a formal recognition of the YALs achievements. It is being taken forward by two of the schools.

Organisational change & an arts connected community

Turner Contemporary have been working to review their future direction. Participant led programmes, particularly Art Inspiring Change have been highly influential in shaping a refined vision and mission.

Turner Contemporary's vision and mission is underpinned by *Art Inspiring Change*. A revised set of values support their strategic planning and decision making.

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'Questioning – our philosophy is one of investigation: being astute to audiences' needs, unlocking understanding, provoking debate and asking tough questions – especially of ourselves

Welcoming – we're friendly, warm and fun – empathy is key to how we think – whilst always maintaining high levels of professionalism

Enterprising – we create value for ourselves, our community and our partners by being responsive to new opportunities; we encourage collaboration, creativity and initiative from our people' Turner Contemporary Draft Vision statement, Sept 17

The project has reached all corners of the organisation. The gallery is always full of children and families, visiting exhibitions and taking part in learning studio activities. Art Inspiring Change caused a real shift however, as the children were occupying all areas of the building on entirely different terms. They moved from being visitors to associates, modeling audience led practice for all to observe.

Local audience numbers have risen, this was seen particularly during Art Inspiring Change events at the gallery.

Turner Contemporary as an organisation has:

- Made the whole gallery an enabling environment for children.
- Involved staff from all areas in the project
- Shared learning from the project across the organisation and beyond.
- Gained support across the organisation for a 'child -led' ethos.
- Agreed a vision and mission that is directly influenced by this and other participant led work.
- Designed training and support for adults to support the creative development of children and young people.

'Creative Enablers' was written and accredited in partnership with the WEA. CCCU have developed a degree course in Arts Education, independently of the programme, which may provide a progression route for Creative Enablers.

Parents, carers and members of the community have reported positively about their hopes for the town and the role that children and young people can play in regeneration. They feel more deeply connected to Turner Contemporary and the arts because of Art Inspiring Change.

Art Inspiring Change had a major influence on the summer exhibitions programme. The link between Phyllida Barlow, Michael Armitage and the Young Arts Leaders was made explicit with an Art Inspiring Change Exposition the Clore Learning Studio, a YALs visit to Phyllida Barlow in her studio and a consultation day with the YALs that informed the learning programme for the season.

Staff from all departments supported YAL activities. The communications department joined forces with a team of local teenagers to document and report on 'Artgate', producing a magazine of the event and making a major contribution to this evaluation.

Staff from across the organisation have talked enthusiastically about the change that this project has made to the way that they work, and the positive effects of bringing

'Creative Enablers' recruited 40 parents and carers from four different schools, achieving City & Guilds level 1, and a further 9 took the pilot forward to achieve at level 2.

33% of parents and carers surveyed did not previously visit the gallery often before Art Inspiring Change, with the majority saying 'never'.

90% of parents and carers have increased their interest in the gallery since their child has been part of the programme.

88% of those attending 'Artgate' think this will change the way that people see Turner Contemporary - none said it won't

94% are feeling positive about the gallery. 78% feeling more so than before 'Artgate'.

The Marketing manager plans to integrate youth led activity into the organisation's comms strategy.

"We are very keen to develop the relationship with Turner Contemporary. The children see it as their space. We would like to work in the gallery much more" Headteacher

children leading activity and influencing programming in the gallery.

"I think that before parents and children from the school felt that the Turner was for the elite and that you really had to understand art - that it was somewhere where they wouldn't be welcome. This has completely broken down all of those barriers" Headteacher

Community - transforming spaces and regenerating thinking

The project has reached diverse groups and individuals living and working in Margate and beyond. This includes schools, local council members and officers, families and friends of the YALs, local businesses, community groups and local artists. Through direct engagement in supporting the YALs and by visiting and taking part in YAL led activity, they have felt the positive benefits of this project.

This is evident in the many comments and reported shifts in attitudes recorded in surveys and interviews with members of the public as well as those directly involved with the programme.

People who have connected with this project have:

- Changed their relationship with 'art'.
- Improved connections with their school community
- Experienced personal growth and confidence
- Felt pride in their children, their achievements and potential
- Enjoyed visiting revitalised spaces
- Seen the potential for growth in those spaces
- Confidence and interest to engage with what Turner Contemporary can offer them and their town.

The Young Arts Leaders have had a positive influence on their community. They have changed thinking about sites in their town, about the arts, the potential of children and about Turner Contemporary.

71% of those attending 'Artgate' recognise that these were the **art and ideas** of the children. Although none associated the generation of this work with Thanet District Council, Turner Contemporary was assumed to be instrumental.

A consultation session was held with headteachers to plan for future YAL projects.

Turner Contemporary led a symposium on 28th June 2017 drawing an audience from across the arts and cultural sector to explore child led community change.

Thanet District Council's Director of Communities and Head of Growth and Development worked with Art Inspiring

A smaller number - 52% recognise that the **site** was chosen by children. The Council is recognised, along with Turner Contemporary, teachers and artists. The (incorrect) assumption is that this aspect is one that adults are likely to be leading.

Of parents and carers, almost a third said that the arts do not have a big part in their family life with the majority saying not at all. A high percentage had an increased interest in the gallery because of the project.

Perhaps against expectation 45% of parents at Palm Bay (a wealthier catchment area) say that the arts are not a big part of their life compared to 25% of the Holy Trinity parents - an area with high levels of deprivation and challenge. This underlines the benefit of this work to all areas of the community, and challenges the idea that the arts are automatically more embedded amongst the more affluent areas of the town.

No surveys were returned from Salmestone 'YAL' parents, although a group of 11 parents of non-participating pupils responded to a parallel survey. They reported similar levels of interest and involvement in the arts (36% not involved) and about the positive potential of public arts (74%). However, those parents were far less positive about their interest in Turner Contemporary and the arts in general. 75% of those parents said that they would be much more interested in the gallery if their children were involved in work with the organisation.

The future impact of this level of connection remains to be seen. Support for the 'Artgate' installations saw increased resources, time and policy being directed into this child led initiative. This was a big step forward, and represented a change in thinking, but was a modest investment of time and budget. Senior council officers have spoken warmly about their desire to take this work forward.

Change, officers and members engaged with the YALs to consider their site proposals.

Thanet District Council gave permission to use four requested sites, directing resources to planning and site preparation.

Creative Enablers supported the gallery Christmas event and the Artgate town takeover on the 8th July 2017.

Responses from the public to Artgate:

Across 3 sites, 97% of those surveyed felt that the sites had been transformed.

Across all 4 sites:

52% recognised that the site has been chosen by children.

71% recognised that this was the work and will of the children.

86% believe that the site transformations will change how people see this part of Margate

76% think it will change how people see the town,

96% think that this will change how people view what children are capable of.

94% think that this will change how people feel about art in public spaces

Of Parents and carers:

84% have increased their interest in the arts.

100% of those who reported low interest in the arts prior to AIC, are now more interested in the arts.

80% want to see children's art in public spaces

The schools have all made changes at some level to curriculum and whole school development as a direct result of Art Inspiring Change. All of them intend to continue to work with Turner Contemporary in the future and make better use of the general learning programme.

The Creative Enablers are actively seeking opportunities to develop their work in the community.

Other parents from three of the schools have offered their skills and connections for future projects that Turner Contemporary develop.

Turner Contemporary are leading the forthcoming Pioneering Places, funded by the Great Place Scheme at Ramsgate Royal Harbour. Building on Art Inspiring Change, the scope and scale of this work is a major development for the area.

100% think that art in public spaces makes people behave better

What people have said about 'Artgate':

"Allowing communities to empower themselves by way of collective artistic effort"

"Making art more accessible to children and the local community"

"Enabling children to express themselves and have a say in art locally"

"Involving local children to involve the community in their surroundings and to improve the area."

"children finding their voices and being given space and time to express their opinions through art"

"It's about connecting with the community and involving all -including animals! Absolutely amazing - thank you!"

Conditions for success, barriers, challenges



Photo: Sam Scales

Many factors contributed to the success of Art Inspiring Change. This was a complex, experimental project that connected many people from diverse backgrounds and settings. Everybody involved was required to work beyond their comfort zones, but a willingness to learn, and tireless support from the project manager ensured that the programme achieved its goals.

Several limiting factors were encountered over the course of the work that did create barriers. These were largely overcome; all partners worked with absolute commitment and brought a wide range of expertise to support and uplift the Young Arts Leaders.

Central vision and belief, trust, values

At the heart of Art Inspiring Change is a shared belief in the power of children to make change. The project strived to create enabling environments that recognised children as equal stakeholders where they could function as leaders.

This commitment to a child-led process was not based on absolute consensus about what 'child-led' might mean. Throughout the project the term was debated, interrogated, pulled apart.

All the adults involved had a keen interest in working together to build enabling environments for children. Despite differences in approach and interpretation, this remained the guiding principle and ensured that the project maintained integrity and authenticity to the end.

The adults never became complacent. The questions 'What is leadership?', 'What is child-led?', 'What is my role?' were kept alive by Ayisha De Lanerolle, working across the project, Karen Eslea, leading within the organisation, and by an iterative evaluation process with built in feedback loops.

As the project gathered momentum, the tendency to talk about it in superlative terms grew. Beneath this was a desire to praise and encourage the children who were leading the work as well as genuine enthusiasm and excitement about what was being achieved. Positive PR is of course an essential part of a good communications strategy and brought much needed support and resource to the project.

However, across such wide-ranging work, the positive experiences and outcomes of the project were not universally shared by all, at that level. This has the potential to breed suspicion and opposition to the whole project for certain groups and individuals and should be carefully considered.

"Children aren't just adults in waiting" Ayisha De Lanerolle

"I feel more than ever that children are little people...I want to work with them completely equally, to value them - their complete weirdness" Artist

"Her (the project coordinator) expectations for the children are off the planet! She has a knack of confidence building and then anything is possible. Creative Enabler

"Giving children fresh creative opportunities to think about and make and ultimately BE the change they want to see in the world" - Parent

"It was all about overcoming assumptions" Artist

"A different way of being at school, in school, with absolute permission to create" Navigator

Opening up minds, together. About what art can do, who can make it, where it might be" Artist

"The child led dynamic was genuine. It was tricky for us as teachers - letting children lead really is difficult for adults. But it happened, and it has changed our mindset" - Headteacher

At the beginning of the project I think I had quite a naive take on the concept of 'child led' assuming children would take control immediately and fly with it. In reality and understandably the process needed time and nurturing and developing leadership skills began with small steps...There is a big difference between just giving children 'what they want' and calling it 'child led' and actually giving them the confidence to make informed decisions and act upon them..." Navigator

"Working with 20 leaders isn't easy. Child led

Equally, expectations were high amongst the YALs and the artists about what could be achieved and the voluntary support that would be provided. When some of that support did not transpire, the scope and ambition of the installations was at risk. The energy and time given by key individuals was crucial to the success of this work.

is a spectrum, we experimented with different levels from asking for opinions to developing and taking responsibility” Artist

Relationships - friendship, goodwill, respect

Before they began work with the YALs, the artists and navigators drew up a set of guiding principles or values. (appendix 1). Creating a level field, inverting hierarchies, being playful, listening, supporting and being honest were some of their aspirations. Through these values they fostered democratic spaces, working as companies of artists, equal in status and voice. Genuine friendship across age groups flourished.

“rather than focus heavily on inverting societal norms and creating a setting in which the YALs dictated what the adults should do, we avoided a fundamentalist perception of child-led. Adults remained comfortable to offer guidance, challenge, question, share mastery in artistic processes and of course, maintain a duty of care for the young people sharing the space. However, the YALs matched these inputs- challenging, questioning, negotiating, decision making, and offering support and guidance to adults and peers alike. “Artist “

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Through this project the artists and navigators have built strong relationships with the communities where they worked. For some, the project has made a difference to their daily lives, bringing them closer to the communities in which they live.

I live near the school, I see people every day that I didn't know before, I'm more one of them than I ever was before” Navigator

The power of being part of something bigger, working together was referenced many times. Being part of a 'team' with a job to do was important to adults and children alike

“as someone who went to school locally and grew up here, installing pride in the children's hometown has been really important. I've grown up with all my friends and people I know saying how depressing and rubbish Thanet is and it's something I have never agreed with.” Navigator

In building those teams though, there wasn't always clarity for the artists and navigators about their role and the resource and support they would receive. On occasions, the artists felt that they experienced a lack of courtesy and respect for their experience, time and needs.

“It has allowed me to connect to the town in a way that is unique and special. I had just moved to Margate and this let me see a different side, to connect to people that I wouldn't get the chance to” Artist

Due to pressure on time, scheduled opportunities to share knowledge and learning across the team were often spent on operational matters. Forums were suggested - online spaces, reporting tools, action learning approaches - but ultimately time and

“At a really basic level it has helped us develop relationships with parents - it's a really good excuse to have a positive conversation! Lead teacher

resource were insufficient.

The navigator's unique position, bridging the community, gallery and artistic input wasn't fully utilised. They had more to offer than assistance in school sessions, but didn't feel that they had sufficient license or time to do so. Their experience could certainly be used in future projects.

"It changed me when Adam and Lucy came"
YAL

Robust programme design

Art Inspiring Change was built around key elements:

- Developing thinking skills through 'Hands On Philosophy'.
- Creating the conditions in which children can have agency, influence and voice.
- Exploring change through making, thinking and talking about art.

"In my previous experiences with art galleries, they tend to be one offs...the special thing about Art Inspiring Change is the length of the project, the duration over a year and a half" Headteacher

"This is a highly deprived area. We want to give our kids opportunities to get out and do, to touch and feel and experience the world. The opportunities, the people, the places that they have been have blown me away" Headteacher

This was done by:

- Embedding artists and navigators into schools to build strong relationships over time supported by a 'hands on' Philosopher.
- Empowering members of the wider school communities to enable children's creativity.
- Providing challenge and platforms for the children to present their ideas, exert influence and make change.

"We have seen higher order, deeper thinking skills, and a resilience in our children that is astonishing. And this is because of the site they chose and the way they were equipped to deal with the horrible events that followed". Lead teacher

"This has changed the children's thinking about their community, who is part of it, and how they can an impact. They aren't powerless or passive" Lead teacher

"The best thing for has been that my perspective on life has changed. My mind is more open. I can now talk like an adult, call myself a yYoung Arts Leader and an artist" YAL

Although the programme grew, with additional events, opportunities and challenges, the basic elements and underlying philosophy remained consistent. Everything that was done came back to these foundation elements.

Gaps in knowledge about how schools operate did lead to some difficult moments,

"On that first interview day, I think everyone involved felt like rabbits caught in headlights for a time and perhaps it was a missed opportunity that the children were not given any leadership skills/toolkit before the day" Navigator

that the delivery team had to work hard to overcome. There was agreement that it would have been useful to spend more time exploring the core concepts with the schools before the artists went into the schools.

Pragmatism and Flexible thinking

Turner Contemporary has led debate about innovative ways to engaging with children and young people. They express great faith in the potential of children to lead divergent thinking.

Throughout the programme, all partners have reported on the impact of working with the children on their own thoughts and approaches.

This extends to the project team, and their willingness to embrace opportunities to expand. However, as the original plan was expanded to fit the transformational aspirations, multiplying the benefits for the children, this was, at times exhilarating, at others, stressful for the adults.

The ambition of Art Inspiring Change was always high. As the project unfolded, some areas proved to be more complex and demanding than anticipated. All the adults working on the project brought very distinct, high level skills and experience. This was a learning experience for everybody. Resource to fill 'skills' gaps' and support individuals was difficult to put in place in a timely way.

Training and support was provided, and was appreciated, but would have been more effective if in place from the beginning.

Lack of time for planning and review in school teams was an ongoing challenge

"What would I use a paperclip for? Make a chain with a million other paperclips, to make something amazing and lumpy" YAL¹⁴

"We embraced the YALs ability to take a task and subvert it - this is where the divergent thinking happens" Navigator

"They've got me thinking differently - and I'm 71" Broadstairs Shed volunteer

"They have made us, at the Council look at things from a different angle. It can be as simple as changing the order of jobs on a list that means things can happen" Helen Havercroft, Thanet District Council

"There is something about how accessible Turner Contemporary is that appeals. We wouldn't necessarily work with any other contemporary arts organisation. Turner Contemporary have a very intelligent approach to corporate relationships." Mark Anderson, Southeastern

"Every Friday we would have 60 different ideas thrown at us - and we had to do something about it! It was really productive for me, it challenged my assumptions about my own making!" Artist

"really superb sessions that would have been helpful at the beginning of the project but they were scheduled right at the end of the journey when time was really tight anyway." Navigator

"The phrase I came to dread was 'can you just...' it put so much pressure on those two-hour sessions". Navigator

¹⁴ J.P. Guilford in 1967, the Alternative Uses Test

Threshold crossing – breaking bounds

One unexpected opportunity was a visit by the YALs to the Houses of Parliament to launch Turner Contemporary's Social Value report alongside the Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield. This was a key event, for the YALs who attended, and was a marker of their status. Their attendance was not tokenistic, they joined a gathering of politicians, academics and the cultural elite as equals, and were accepted as such.

The 'takeover' events brought families and friends of the 70 YALs into the gallery, and public spaces that had not been the site of art interventions before. These experiences and conversations presented challenging ideas about art and what it can be. Assumptions were overturned, interest and confidence to engage with contemporary art and Turner Contemporary were nurtured.

The YALs found themselves in all kinds of unexpected places. They devised ambitious art interventions in public spaces that they did not themselves usually occupy. They established themselves in the gallery as programmers, curators, exhibitors and informed visitors. They became part of the art glitterati as special guests of the Tate Modern. They joined politicians and government officers on their territory and led decision making processes. Their opinions were sought by the Children's Commissioner and published as part of a national campaign. They exerted influence, felt powerful, became empowered.

The ambition and growing success of the project attracted many unexpected opportunities. These, brought great benefits to the children, as well as positive press and connections for Turner Contemporary and other partners.

These unplanned activities, whilst of immense value to the greater enterprise often required participants to prioritize what

I will never forget coming here (Houses of Parliament). I'm going to come back one day. Maybe as prime minister" YAL

"They have met with artists, philosophers, politicians, writers, poets...it has presented them with a whole world that they'd never experienced before." Headteacher

"the input from other professionals- technicians, community members, historians, policy makers, designers, teaching assistants and royalty, only enriched and extended our working. It did not seek to steer or undermine, but rather elevate, make relevant and meaningful our conversation." Artist

"Would you like to be the first person to put your name to our declaration? It says that we are going to take over the world. You can sign here" YALs

"The YALs were learning how to break rules in a constructive way" Artist

they felt to be additional workload.

The budget did not have a large contingency to cover these additional activities; frequently resource was drawn from the core budget.

Hands on Philosophy and ‘arting’

Ayisha De Lanerolle worked across the project. Her role was to encourage the teams to develop a sense of reason to inform thinking and action. This was a key element in building a sense of agency amongst the YALs.

The YALs and adults developed shared habits of inquiry throughout the programme. This created a common structure at the heart of their communication that facilitated conversation and created a safe space for different views

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The creation of ‘space’ has been fundamental to the project and has been referenced many times by those involved. This is both about finding time and place to make art, and creating spaces of mind where original thought can flourish.

“We are children who art. And think” YAL

“having a space that was ours, that we could do the work that we needed - the planning and resourcing, reflecting and critically evaluating, the ‘arting’ was so important” Navigator

“It was intriguing to explore beyond the school - the site visits, the beach, the gallery - the confines of the school make it hard to make a child led space” Artist

“It was observed very early on that the team’s thinking came through doing (‘Less talking, more arting’). The chance encounter of object meeting object, meeting YAL, meeting space, led to countless moments of activation, connection and reaction.” Artist

“I’m more arty now, and have upgraded my imagination from 5.0 to 8.0” YAL

The curiosity of artists

The experimental nature of the programme allowed the artists and navigators to work in a way that was reflective and responsive to the setting in which they were working.

Each artist brought their own practice and interests to their group, and explored the concept of ‘child led’ through that lens. The work that they made together reflected this. They planned carefully in response to what happened in the sessions, documenting each stage, noting outcomes, they then worked

“We have been building the aircraft whilst flying it! Artist

“everyone on this journey has been attempting firsts, from the children to the teachers to the artists and Navs. Promoting change, inspiring change and coping with change too.” Navigator

“For me, rather than a great or forced distinction between the roles or status of the adults and children sharing the space, the

closely with the navigators to develop a bespoke approach.

Each group had a distinct character and way of working. However, each artist reported a shift or expansion of their own practice, fed by their working relationship with the Young Arts Leaders. The practice they developed together created a vocabulary for the change that they wanted to see, and a means by which to provoke it.

The fact that the children had interviewed and selected their artist was the starting point for trusting, professional relationships. The children entered the project as equal partners, working with an artist whose practice attracted and intrigued them.

Live brief and authentic challenge

The drive towards an end production 'transforming the town' created tensions and, at times, put the child led ethos under serious pressure. It also generated an excitement and sense of purpose that drove the project. The real challenge gave credibility to the claims to enable children to make change in their community.

The transformation of the sites, along with high profile, high stakes events provided a structure and motivation for the work in schools. These events provided the children with testing grounds for their ideas and spaces of influence.

The gallery takeover, Christmas event, 'Artgate' and the transformation of sites were authentic, live briefs. The adults worked hard to honour the integrity of the children's ideas, input and management of the whole process.

The project coordinator has a background in film production and brought these skills to bear with great effect. The challenge of managing a complex, multi-partner, multi-site, long term project with many strands was

term child-led instead came to embody a working methodology that, as members of a team, we first crafted and then committed to. It was observed very early on that the team's thinking came through doing ('Less talking, more arting'). The chance encounter of object meeting object, meeting YAL, meeting space, led to countless moments of activation, connection and reaction. "Artist

"It was the bit in the job advert that got me. A six year- old boss? Yes!!" Artist

"She is our artist. We chose her. We made the right choice." YAL

"Most important to me has been working together, achieving the amazing things, one step at a time. Conquering unimaginable things" YAL

"I got an idea through this of how children might feel quite often. It moved me out of my comfort zone. I often feel socially awkward, but this has given me huge confidence" Creative Enabler

"We were, like, 'can we, do it? Will we, do it?' and then 'we are doing it' and then 'we have done it! We are amazing'" YAL

"Nikki has been fantastic. We would not have made this connection without her" Rob Kenyon, Director of Community Services

"She has always supported us, even when asking for the impossible" Artist

"Her energy and commitment have been phenomenal" Headteacher

"Brilliant leadership"

considerable. Gaining support and buy in from individuals and organisations in Margate and beyond was crucial to the success of the overall programme.

Organising the scheduling and resources for what were essentially long-term artists' residencies across four centres is a significant task. Add to this a radical change agenda, an ambitious events programme, town 'takeover' and development of a brand-new qualification for 'Creative Enablers'.

None of this would have been possible without the energy, inter-personal and organisational skills of the project coordinator.

Any organisation that brings participant led cultural experiences to an audience treads a line between staging a successful 'production' (be that performance, exhibition, or event) and the learning and growth that are the primary intention. It is a tension that is intrinsic to this work.

The dynamic management of the coordinator and the skills that she brought from a production background kept the project on course and tapped into a rich network from across the community. However, at times the pressure to produce high profile, successful showcase events sat uneasily with the principle of risk and experimentation that the artists, navigators and YALs wished to defend. In addition, the recruitment and co-ordination of such a diverse voluntary workforce was a huge task, that the project did not have resource to deliver.

Supportive school environments

Each of the schools committed staff time, space and released children from the timetable for five academic terms. In the current climate, assessment driven and subject to budget pressures, this is no small investment. Where they had the capacity,

"She isn't fazed by anything"

"Genuinely interested in what makes us us"

"An amazing listener" Creative Enablers

"The process is being agreed as we go along - it feels quite ad-hoc, but it gives us freedom to be creative". Creative Enabler

"Unfortunately, the parents and the YALs were led to believe that there would be a permanent artwork that their grandchildren would be able to see." Artist

"It just felt like a race, all of the time, and yes, it did compromise what we were trying to do" Artist

"I'd rather that less had been promised and expected. Then we could have taken some risks" Navigator

"It is a real investment of time and staff - we were leaning on people's good will and support, but it wasn't a hard sell, their support was genuine" Headteacher

and will to do so, schools were able to adapt to changes to plan and accommodate. Short notice requests.

When a school could provide a dedicated space, the YALs were able to shortcut some of the team building and move very quickly to focused planning. This site transformation for this school featured large-scale constructions that had been worked on at full scale in the weeks prior to installation. Those schools that had no fixed space or space to store large work responded quite differently.

Supportive staff, who shared the project values and contributed to the school sessions were also key to the pace of progress made by the YALs.

Where the senior management team also shared the project values, the work was shared with the whole school. Practical issues were resolved more quickly and the artists and navigators were made to feel welcome and valued. In those schools, the project has influenced plans for teaching and learning across the curriculum. Although the schools agreed to join the project when the proposal was written, by the time the project began there had been significant changes to senior management, staff and circumstances in each school. The terms of engagement, desired outcomes, capacity and needs of the schools needed to be revisited.

None of the schools had worked with an artist in this way before, or hosted any kind of residency. There was little understanding of the artist's role and opportunities for the work to have wider impact across schools were not recognised until the project was well underway

Meetings were sometimes difficult to arrange with teachers and senior staff, especially when they were requested at short notice and were not a priority in the busy school day. A schedule for meetings to plan, review and evaluate was not part of any contractual agreement with the schools.

"There are massive benefits, not just for the children but for the staff wellbeing."

"We recognise what an enormous resource Turner Contemporary have put into our school. For our part we have brought space, time, staff, supervision - and faith"
Headteacher

"We started out thinking this would be a nice art project for our pupils to be honest. Of course, it was so much more, it took us a while to recognise what was possible" Lead teacher

"There wasn't a lot of understanding about the realities of working with a school. It is really difficult to turn things around at short notice, it requires a lot of people to be informed, to organise things that might seem quite minor to an arts organisation"
Headteacher

"The school viewed us with suspicion, it felt as though we were quite frankly, a nuisance at the beginning. I expected the school to have a better idea of what it meant to have an artist. I was expected to be a teacher - it was a basic misunderstanding of my role"
Artist

"We don't feel as if we know what is going on really - the art pass that the children have been given for example. When can they use it? Can we go with them? Turner Contemporary should talk to us, we want to be involved". Parent

"(we)missed a trick with the Creative Enablers to be honest. The timing was just out. We had all these parents recruited, then it all went quiet, and interest just dissolved"
Headteacher

Whilst the Takeover days brought families into the gallery, there were many more opportunities for parents and carers to be more deeply involved in the project and to build positive relationships with the schools. In some cases, the schools did not exploit the opportunities and didn't share detail about the project. Even where families of the YALs were involved, wider connections with the community were not made by some schools until the end of the project.

Good will and 'discretionary effort'

With the benefit of hindsight, parts of the programme would have been organised and resourced differently. Work of this nature - experimental, radical, wide in scope - always depends on a degree of 'discretionary effort' from some or all of those involved.

The full extent of what will be required in a ground-breaking project can't be predicted. Creative activity embraces the unknown, and creative participation requires a certain flexibility and generosity.

Art Inspiring Change required time and energy that went well beyond contractual agreement for all involved. For some it did stretch the bounds of what is sustainable. The achievement of a shared, cherished goal is the 'pay-off'

The motivation went beyond shared values, professionalism or team loyalty. The driver for this excessive discretionary effort was quite simply a sense of responsibility and duty of care for the 70 children who were at the heart of the project. The final, pinnacle event, 'Artgate' attracted volunteers from across the communities of Margate, largely due to the energies and networking skills of the project manager.

The brand of Turner Contemporary is associated with excellence. The organisation faces a difficult question about how far it can

"Skills can be exchanged where money can't. Lots of us are ready and willing to help make things happen for Thanet families" Artgate volunteer

"It took many, many more hours of my life than I could ever have imagined." Artist

"In the end we are responsible, we have to make it happen. For our children. Letting them down is not an option" Lead teacher

"We were expecting to have lots of support from volunteers that just didn't materialise." Artist

'outsource' elements of community events and artworks that carry the Turner Contemporary name. There is a very real tension between the amount of quality control that the organisation can exert and the freedom of participants to create and determine their own standards

Play - Child-led, Child- friendly

Together the YALs, artists, navigators and teachers created joyful, adventurous spaces filled with creative activity. The weekly sessions were a time and space for experimentation with materials, fermentation of ideas, risk - and a little chaos. The constraints of curriculum and assessment were suspended. New rules of engagement, determined by the YALs, allowed children and adults to behave differently most of all, the characteristic that all shared was a respect for **play** and the wonderful things that can happen when we take it seriously

*"This is the most fun I've ever had at work"
Thanet Council member*

"The YALs can teach artists how to step back into themselves, to step back to free play and break down the things we have learned as adults! Artist

*"It was about allowing the YALs to experiment through art and seeing where they would take it - like marbling the forks not the paper, or stamping the sugar cubes to make powder instead of construction"
Navigator*

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Here are some of the most useful things that were learned during the Art Inspiring Change process.

Michele Gregson September 2017

Strive for enabling environments

An enabling environment is a place where anyone can achieve their potential. Whoever you are, or how old. It is a place where everyone feels safe and confident to speak and act. It is a place where people work for each other's best interests. It is a place where you can get the things that you need to develop your ideas and make things happen. It is a place where you have the space to be heard, to hear others and to hear yourself. It is a place where you can change your mind. An enabling environment can be an empty room, or a place that exists whenever and wherever you get together.

Nondiscrimination means every voice matters, all ideas are heard and considered, all individuals are treated with respect - regardless of age or experience. Find ways to listen to each other. Because the very small children and the smallest voices have fantastic ideas. What older people and artists say is important too.

Always act in the best interests of the child - don't do anything that isn't going to be good or useful for them. This might mean letting some opportunities go, it might mean being flexible to allow them to happen.

Create enabling legislation - find your shared values and agree how the group will behave to protect them. This could be games and ways of working, it could be an agreed 'charter'. But make sure everyone understands it, and supports it. In Art Inspiring Change, these behaviors to build trust translated into good 'Ground rules':

Ensure that the budget is weighted in favour of achieving the children's ideas, that you spend it wisely, together. Some of their ideas are big and expensive! Don't be afraid to offer advice about realistic costing, but take care to understand the essence of what they want so that you can help them find alternatives.

Work together as a team to ensure that the children can take the lead and develop their own ideas. That means making time to review what you are doing, what the children are doing, and what they need. It doesn't mean leaving them to it. It doesn't mean anything goes, it is about being thoughtful, and supportive. Bring your skills and experience to the group as a gift, step back when needed - but step up when they need you.

Exercise your mind - create a thoughts gymnasium

The combination of thinking and making through philosophizing and 'arting' work well because they flow into each other. Philosophy opens up the ground/sky/horizon by questioning what is held as certain. The project teams used 'Hands On Philosophy' to help set up their enabling environments.

The principles of Philosophical Inquiry are a good guide:

Participants are equal – whereas ideas are not

Human beings are fallible – we all make mistakes

Ideas are in the middle – we are agreeing and disagreeing with the ideas **not** the individual

There is a real external world to inquire into together

Keep open questioning and dialogue at the heart of what you do. Bring skilled facilitators in to develop thinking and conversation skills. Turner Contemporary Navigators led inquiries skillfully, and the teams had sessions with the Art Inspiring Change Philosopher.

Cross thresholds and do it in style

We all have thresholds that we have never crossed and may be reluctant to do so. What holds us back, and does it matter? For children, being limited at an early stage to certain environments reinforces the idea that they don't belong in certain places. A lot of the families of the YALs didn't think that they belonged in an art gallery at the beginning of the project - an idea that was overturned for most by the end. Feeling that we belong makes us confident and is empowering. Lead children across as many new thresholds as possible, until they feel confident to cross alone. That way they can make change and have influence wherever they wish.

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These are some of the unfamiliar thresholds that the YALs crossed:

Thanet District Council Chambers

Turner Contemporary Galleries, Clore Learning studio, Foyle rooms

The Houses of Parliament

Tate Modern

South Eastern trains - private carriage

Phyllida Barlow's studio

Tivoli Woods, Windmill Allotments, the Job Centre plaza, Palm Bay beach shelter

These are all spaces generally occupied and controlled by adults (there are very few places that aren't). They didn't just visit, they went with purpose - to work, join discussions, make presentations, create change.

More off-site visits would have been even better.

Planning a child-led, schools based change project

Before you begin:

- Aim for a ratio of 1:4 active planning phase to delivery timescale
- Preparation and a critical approach at planning stage will anticipate a lot of the challenges faced in a complex change makers project. Art Inspiring Change was carefully planned, but would have gained from a critical review and risk assessment before delivery began. Partners needs should be well understood from the beginning and plans made to fill 'skills gaps'.
- When recruiting schools and artists, articulate the benefits in language that is meaningful to them (it won't be the same).
- Have an extended, formal set up phase for the project - at least one term
- Take partners seriously. Draft detailed contracts. Treat everybody with respect. Agree principles for engagement with each setting. Work with the strengths of individuals whilst ensuring that they are well supported to lead in areas where they have less knowledge. Pairing a 'producer' coordinator with an educational professional worked well but it would have been more effective if set up to work on the planning.
- Ensure that each partner is fully prepared for what they must do - how to work with an artist, how to work with a school, what child-led means, how to create enabling environments. Where this preparation happened at early stages, it had a real impact; where it happened later, less so.
- In each school, identify a link governor for the Arts, embed the project into the School Development Plan, use the work as the basis for Artsmark recognition.
- Invest in organisational growth by giving staff a formal career related role - make the most of the opportunity to develop your staff by making this a CPD opportunity.
- Take the learning seriously, ask the schools to engage in assessment and observation tasks throughout the project, and make that a formal part of their role.
- Hold a project initiation document (PID) session before you begin. This gives all partners the chance to check understanding and amend the plan if needed. This avoids misunderstanding further down the line.
- Once you have a clear PID, write a communications strategy, and make all partners aware of it. Give them chance to input their ideas.

Steer the project, pull the threads together

Make appointment of the artists the responsibility of the Young Arts Leaders. They should determine the format of the interview process and criteria for selection. They should write the job description. They should make the decision. Ensure that alongside this however there is a set of descriptors that cover all are the things that the artist will be expected to do under the terms of their contract. Where there is a 'skills gap', ensure that the selected artists are given support and training.

- Have a child inclusive steering group to monitor the project.
- Build parental engagement opportunities into the programme - put together interesting sessions in community spaces that are not threatening.
- Establish a way of providing support for the artists and navigators that allows them to share and learn from each other. Action learning was a model that the Art Inspiring Teams found helpful, but it needed to be established formally, early in the project to make a real difference.
- Let the artists visit and contribute to each other's teams throughout the project.
- Be clear about stakeholder needs. Conduct gap analysis and risk assessment. Monitor this as you go.
- Plan times when the YALs from different schools can get together to share ideas and see what the others are up to.
- Build their activity into the programming for the organisation - look for links and ways to amplify what is developing. The links made between Art Inspiring Change and Phyllida Barlow were a powerful element of the summer exhibition that opened new possibilities for both.
- Plan for the surprises...

What did the YALs advise?

- If there's anyone you don't like, stay away from them (unless you have to work together)
- Be polite with everyone
- Help people who are struggling
- Help people who are younger or older than you
- Adults are good at carrying things for you
- Being brave helps, leaders sometimes have to talk to large groups
- Don't mind changing your opinion - like when we make decisions and all have to vote on something, if someone says something or makes a good argument, I won't mind changing my mind for a better decision.
- Throw in your own thoughts. Listen to everyone, Share, communicate and be yourself
- Make everyone happy with what you want to do most importantly everyone needs to be happy
- Working together as a group can be hard, especially if it's not with your friend. If it is your friend, try not to be distracted from your work
- If the person in your group is not your friend because you did something bad, try saying sorry, if it doesn't work, don't shout at them or ignore them
- Adults can be really helpful, but when it gets to shouting, it's not easy to run... So, working with adults can be dealt with if you let children be the bosses of their own creativity.
- Leadership is hard with one leader! So why one? All the others have to do all the work, so, have the group have more than one
- Just don't fight. Fighting is so common, so careful... At least have 1 adult with you!
- Always work together and don't leave anyone out
- Don't let the grown-ups do most of it - Let the kids have a turn
- Think each time you take a step further
- Every group needs a leader to lead them somewhere/show them where they are going

And most importantly of all...have fun...

What could the YALs do next?

The YALS, artists, navigators, philosopher, coordinator, parents and teachers have all suggested next steps for the YALs:

- Develop their 'stealth' potential - where else might art go where could they take it
- Invite them to mentor future YALs in school based programmes.
- They should work with the council to identify more areas to transform, with more permanent works as well as events and experiences.
- Run art clubs in their schools and at Turner Contemporary.
- Lead philosophical inquiry in the community.
- Visit parliament again to find out what politicians are doing for the arts
- Bring them back to Turner Contemporary to make presentations, be consultants, special advisers for the gallery.
- Follow them up and make a film next year, in five years, ten years.

Art Inspiring Change has produced 70 empowered young artists equipped to lead change. They are connected with the gallery and many have already shown themselves to be regular independent visitors, bringing their families and friends with them. Turner Contemporary can continue to develop this relationship and tap into a unique, magnificent resource to realise their vision:

'Art and creativity at the heart of a vibrant, healthy and equal society.'



Photo: Joel Knight

Appendices

1. Speaking and Listening observation

Spoken Language observations	% pupils demonstrating each criteria									
National Curriculum, Speaking and Listening statutory criteria for primary pupils	Palm Bay		Salmestone		Holy Trinity		Northdown		Total	
listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers	73%	100%	37%	100%	66%	100%	14%	90%	47%	97%
ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge	21%	95%	25%	100%	50%	100%	21%	46%	29%	85%
use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary	10%	90%	12%	100%	33%	100%	14%	53%	17%	86%
articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions	10%	95%	12%	100%	16%	100%	7%	23%	17%	79%
give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings	15%	100%	18%	86%	16%	100%	0	23%	24%	77%
maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments	21%	90%	25%	100%	16%	100%	0	23%	15%	78%
use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas	10%	100%	6%	93%	16%	100%	0	38%	20%	83%
speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English	21%	100%	50%	100%	27%	100%	21%	38%	30%	85%
participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)	47%	100%	19%	100%	16%	100%	21%	31%	26%	83%
consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others	10%	90%	12%	100%	16%	100%	14%	38%	13%	82%
select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.	21%	100%	31%	100%	22%	100%	20%	100%	3%	100%

The white column denotes percentage of children observed demonstrating mastery during the first observed session, the blue column denotes percentage of children demonstrating mastery by the end of the programme.

Observations of performance over the duration of the programme were above 77% for each of the criteria, with 9 of those at 80% or higher.

2. Outcomes and goals – funder’s targets

Target Outcomes agreed with Paul Hamlyn Foundation

For Individuals

Targets for the end of year one:

1. Children begin to take a lead
2. A child led artists interview panel is established in each school

Targets for the end of the programme:

1. Increased confidence
2. Improved Communication skills
3. Aspirations broaden
4. Pupils achieve at or beyond expectation for Reading and Writing
5. 90% of YALs achieve Arts Award

Organisation

Targets for the end of year one:

1. Turner Contemporary creates methods to roll out to other areas
2. An accredited course will be researched, written and accredited in partnership with CCCU.

Targets for the end of the programme:

1. Turner Contemporary has stronger connections with the local community
2. Local audience grows from 5% to 15%

Community

Targets for the end of year one:

1. Teachers, staff, local decision makers and politicians connect and come together to explore how children can have a more powerful voice in Margate.
2. Five key actions will be agreed and built into the project.

Targets for the end of the programme:

1. The benefits of cultural regeneration are more widely spread throughout the community.
3. 40 members of the community are engaged to help transform neglected sites.