

CREATIVE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP
EVALUATION REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Creative Schools Partnership (CSP) Programme has been running since 2017/2018, funded by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI), Education Authority (EA) and the Urban Villages Initiative (UV). This tripartite relationship combines sector expertise and relationships with an area-based approach.

The Urban Villages Initiative is designed to improve community relations and develop thriving places where there has been a history of poor community relations, deprivation and tension. It is a headline action within the Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) Strategy, one of the Northern Ireland Executive's key strategy objectives within the Programme for Government (PfG). UV consulted with the local community and engaged a wider group of stakeholders to create Strategic Frameworks based around the challenges and strengths of each place. These frameworks were designed to strengthen the conceptual and practical connections between delivery by central and local government and wider stakeholders in support of the TBUC Strategy's overarching priorities as well as PfG outcomes.

The five Urban Village areas are:

- Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan (North Belfast).
- Colin (West Belfast).
- Lower Part of the Newtownards Road – known as Eastside (East Belfast).
- Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas (South Belfast).
- The Bogside, Bishop Street and Fountain (Derry/ Londonderry).

Urban Villages funded CSP because schools and education were key priorities put forward by the community during its initial consultation phase, and arts and culture have been a strong theme in the community-led projects¹.

The programme goals were to:

- Improve outcomes for young people living in designated Urban Village areas.
- Support the delivery of school development priorities.
- Strengthen connection between young people, post-primary schools and the local community.

¹ <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/urban-villages-initiative-strategic-frameworks>

Every area highlighted the importance of schools: as a community resource, as a conduit to engage parents, including bringing different communities together – across schools and because of their role in ensuring young people have access to the full range of educational possibilities.

- Contribute to key aims of the Urban Villages Initiative which include fostering positive community identities and building community capacity.

CSP contributes especially to UV's objective around "Fostering positive community identities" because of the unique ability of the arts to provide uplifting, engaging and uniting experiences, and because of the programme's focus on young people, who will provide the future identity of these areas.

The funding position of UV is uncertain. The capital programme won't finish until at least 2027. The Executive Office prepared a three-year budget for UV until March 2025, with consolidation continuing beyond this. This shows an intended direction, but the political situation means this has not been signed off.

A pilot Creative Schools Partnership programme ran between January 2018 and October 2018. A three-year programme ran between September 2018 and August 2021, with eleven schools. This two-year phase two will run until August 2023. Year one of the Creative Schools Programme supported activities in 11 of the 12 eligible schools located either within a core area or wider areas of influence². A 13th school was invited to join in September 2019, at the beginning of the second year.

Evaluation reports relating to the pilot and each of the subsequent three academic years can be obtained on request from ACNI. There is also an interim report summarising findings by themes.

THE BRIEF

The requirements for the evaluation were to:

- Clearly define programme objectives and establish a logic model in consultation with key partners.
- Design ways of measuring programme outcomes that can be applied across participating schools and include all stakeholders (teachers, children, parents, artists and local community).
- Ensure learning is captured in order to improve the programme and create a sustainable legacy.
- Document processes employed and outcomes achieved at both a school and programme level, recognising key partner objectives.

▪ ² There are two defined areas within each Urban Village area: The core area provides a focal point for action and investment within each area. The concept of a wider area of influence, which is not sharply defined, acknowledges that thriving places require wider connection to both physical and social assets.

- Ensure necessary ethical and confidentiality safeguards are in place.

METHODOLOGY

My methodology consisted of:

- Review of documentation: applications, assessment systems, School Development Plans and planning documents.
- Creation, application of and analysis of observation forms.
- Interviews with head teachers, teachers and artists.

Interviews were carried out over Zoom. Interviews were often an hour long, which was more than was feasible during the previous fieldwork approach so this method has strengths as well as the weakness of not being able to interview the young people because of practical and child protection issues. We piloted and applied a wellbeing questionnaire, but felt that responses were affected by students' wider emotions around returning to school after the lockdown.

EPISTEMOLOGY

This evaluation adopts a Scientific Realist epistemology as described by Pawson and Tilley (1997)³. This suits the arts because:

- It provides an iterative structure to build up an understanding of programmes in terms of their mechanisms, elements, contexts, and outcomes. Instead of asking 'did the programme work?' it asks 'where does the programme work, in what form, for which people, and in which contexts?' This nuanced conceptual structure suits the arts because projects and engagements are not standardised and have an element of uniqueness.
- Consistent with the values of the arts, it sees participants as active agents in their own transformation, not passive subjects. Programmes are seen as "offering chances which may (or may not) be triggered into action by the subject's capacity to make choices."
- Its model of causality is rooted in context. Pawson and Tilley argue that traditional positivist approaches, which infer cause from co-variance between aggregate variables, ignore conditional and contingent factors. Quoting Guba and Lincoln (1989, p60), they suggest that: 'Experimentation tries to minimize all the differences (except one) between experimental and control groups and thus "effectively strips away the context and yields results that are valid only in other contextless situations.' (1997, p22).

There are two basic theories of causality:

³ Pawson, Ray (2006) *Evidence-based Policy. A Realist Perspective*. London: Sage.

- The Successionist Theory of Causality sees the world as inherently mutable, and conceives causality as the co-existence of two independent phenomena.
- The Generative Theory of Causality argues that mechanisms within events lead to the effect.

Scientific Realism draws from the Generative Theory of Causality where “mechanisms are the engines of explanation” (Pawson, 2006). In this evaluation I have used personal testimonies that describe mechanisms as a route to attribution. This approach has the advantages of speed; respect for the voice of the interviewee; and a link to verbatim theatre.

STRUCTURE OF THE CASE STUDIES

In the case studies below, I have:

- Reworded some of the objectives given in the application form to distinguish between means and ends.
- Carried out content analysis of interview material to identify themes and patterns.
- Used case studies to illustrate different aspects of the programme and subject rather than to compare the schools.

CONCEPTUALISATION

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is composed of four interlinked strands:

- **Thinking.** Framing, focusing, conceptualising, interpreting, synthesising.
- **People.** Motivating, training, involving, reassuring, listening, informing, influencing
- **Systems.** Planning, gathering data, entering data on a computer, analysing data, disseminating information.
- **Action.** Making recommendations, implementing recommendation.

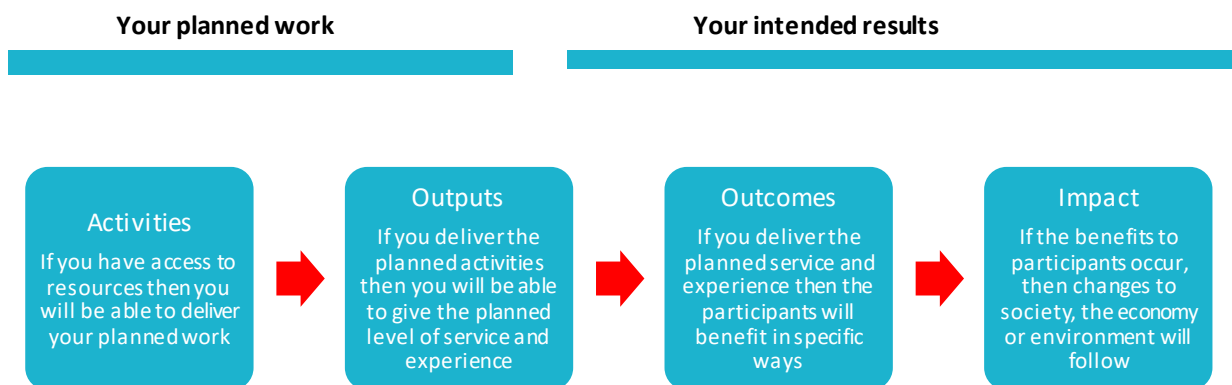
It is common for arts organisations and others to equate evaluation with Systems (methods) and not plan for the other crucial elements of the system.

Evaluative thinking has these benefits:

- **Ensuring a clear direction.** The process of creating a logic model helps to generate a group consensus about the precise intended outcomes.
- **Creating a lean evaluation system.** Being precise about intended outcomes and critical success factors helps evaluation to focus on key questions.
- **Bringing the different elements of the evaluation system together.** Articulating the theory of change helps test the implied connection between actions and expected outcomes, and results in a balanced evaluation system that covers both.
- **Testing the logic behind the programme.** The logic model session helps check that the ideas behind the programme are sound. Clear thinking strengthens not just the evaluation but also the implementation of a programme.
- **Ensuring expectations are realistic.** The logic model shows the chain of logic graphically and so illustrates the time lag between short-term outcomes, long-term outcomes and impact.
- **Customising the evaluation.** The logic model helps ensure that the evaluation captures what is special about the programme.
- **Summarising the project.** The logic model gives a concise description of the programme in a form that shows its rationale.
- **Providing a structure to capture programmatic learning.** Comparing what happens with what was expected or planned leads naturally to questions about programmatic lessons.

EXPLANATION OF LOGIC MODELS

A logic model is a visual depiction of a programme or project. Logic models were originally developed and popularised by The Kellogg Foundation in the United States. By plotting the different stages in a programme – the actions and assumed consequences (outcomes) - logic models provide a simple but powerful way of interrogating the causality assumed by a programme. Logic models are read from left to right:



LANGUAGE

This is my definition of the terms used in a logic model:

- **Resources** are financial and non-financial inputs for a project.
- **Activities** are the actions taken by the project, the key choices in delivery.
- **Outputs** are measures of effort to show that the project took place, and can be defined from the supply side (number of events), or the demand side (number of participants).
- **Outcomes** are changes in the attitudes, behaviour, skills, knowledge, motivation, feelings, or aspirations of participants; or the culture, structures, systems, or processes of organisations.
- **Impacts** are the direct and indirect effects for society, the economy and/or the environment.

LOGIC MODEL

This is a logic model for the Creative Schools Partnership programme, adjusted for phase two, which has a greater focus on community impact:

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT TERM OUTCOMES	LONGER TERM OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Workshops Trips/visits Showcases/exhibitions Teacher CPD Sharing events	Number of schools (target 10-13) Number of workshops and contact hours Number and profile of students taking part Artworks	Students enjoy the project, increase their confidence, self-esteem and motivation, develop their communication, literacy and team-working skills, increase their wellbeing, and increase their interest in learning and the arts Schools support their school development priorities e.g., strengthen their connection with the community, foster positive community identities, and learn about creative approaches to learning	Students have an increased tolerance of difference, an increased sense of belonging and higher aspiration Schools are better connected in the community, and embed creative learning in their school development plans	Contribution to increased community cohesion, wellbeing and aspiration
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>Schools in disadvantaged areas have an increased need to apply creative learning approaches.</p> <p>Artists have unique insights and processes that can support schools' development of creative learning.</p> <p>Creative learning increases the chance that schools can cater for the different learning styles, skills and aspirations of every child.</p> <p>Outcomes are higher where artistic quality is higher.</p>				

Each CSP project connects to the overall programme objectives. I have given the individual logic models below so that you can see the special features of each school that contribute to the overall vision and impact.

SCHOOL 1: BLESSED TRINITY COLLEGE

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

Blessed Trinity College has been involved in CSP from the beginning.

Post code	Belfast Bt15 4DZ		
	Pilot	Yr 1	Yr 3 (2021)
Total enrolments	1271	1239	1288
% of students who receive free school meals	60%	58%	58%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	622	659	545
Religion	96% Catholic, 1% Protestant, 3% Other	95% Catholic, 0% Protestant, 5% Other	89% Catholic, 1% Protestant, 10% Other / Unknown.
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Creative Learning Project Story-telling, film and video	Colours of the Mind- students exploring their emotional and personal relationship with colour through print making	Making Connections - using writing as a way for students to reflect and connect
Artists and partners	Fighting Words Belfast and Nerve Belfast Trips to the Titanic Belfast, Ulster American Folk Park and Newington Day Care Centre	Nerve Belfast Belfast Print Workshop Newington Day Care Centre	Bounce Culture NI Fighting Words
Timing	March to May 2018	March to June 2019	January to June 2021
Age of children	13	14	11-12
Number of children	15	15	22

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 1: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: WAYS TO WELLBEING

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (film-making, DJing, animation, dance and creative writing) on	Number of pupils (target: class of Yr 9 students: 30)	Pupils enhance their wellbeing (including confidence, emotional literacy and positive	Contribution to School Development Plan focus on positive

<p>Five Ways to Wellbeing</p> <p>Film</p> <p>Teacher CPD and sharing</p>		<p>mental health), develop skills, and raise their awareness of career options in the creative industry</p> <p>The school develops new creative approaches to learning, strengthens interdepartmental working, connections with artists (e.g., from Bounce Culture, Nerve Belfast, Fighting Words and Du Dance), feeder primary schools and the community (Urban Villages, Newington Day Centre)</p>	<p>mental health and wellbeing</p>
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: pupils’ immersion in the creative process; students feeling that they are ambassadors for creative learning and having a high profile; building on previous projects’ community links; and intergenerational working.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The project built on the school’s previous work on CPS: they continued to work with Du Dance and Bounce Culture and film-making as well as expanding and making more explicit the focus on wellbeing. Health and wellbeing are a big focus in the School Development Plan.

“We wanted to continue with filmmaking because we knew from previous years that it is empowering and gives a lot of learning along the way.” Gilah McCarroll, English teacher

In part because of the restrictions of COVID, the teachers chose a Class 9 bubble, rather than the previous process of selecting individual students who would benefit. The number of pupils involved was almost twice as many as for previous projects (28).

The project was based on Five Ways to Wellbeing⁴, with activities structured to explore each of the ways (Connect, Be Active, Take notice, Learn, Give). Film gave a continuous thread

⁴ <https://neweconomics.org/2008/10/five-ways-to-wellbeing>

through the project by capturing the process and supporting pupils' reflections on their experience.

The project consisted of:

- Workshops with Bounce Culture. There were 14 workshops with 28 participants.
- Workshops with Sheena Kelly and Sean O'Neill, dancers from Du Dance. There were four workshops with the 28 students.

The school had all the support it needed for the programme.

"Marie is a great support. She lives and breathes this project. She is always on tap to ask a question." Gilah McCarroll, English teacher

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Careful planning.** Gilah McCarroll, the English teacher, noted that: "In the Soundscape Workshop, the facilitator, Graham Ginty, from Bounce Culture, began the session by contextualising the rationale behind soundscape within the Ways to Wellbeing project, and shared his experiences as professional DJ, making music. He clearly explained what the objectives were, using visual support on screen for students, and then introduced the equipment and app to be used and familiarized students with how to use it. He clearly explained about layering in creating different genres of music. He drew on contemporary, relevant examples (Billie Eilish – using her song *Bad Guy*) to illustrate the rhythms and layering of a typical dance track."

"The soundscape workshop was a well-balanced mix of contextualising the role of music in our mood, explaining the artistic process, illustrating for the students, independent student work to acquire and develop the skill, and sharing of success. There was also the opportunity for students to become aware of the career possibility of DJing/music/sound production." Gilah McCarroll, English teacher

"All of the students produced beats and soundscapes. It was lovely to see a very shy student eager to share both her pieces. Her pride was obvious, as was a musical talent she didn't know she had." Gilah McCarroll, English teacher

"Some were more confident than others in using their bodies to express emotions but everyone engaged and the boys in this group were particularly enthusiastic, enjoying the physicality of the session. It was great to have both a male and female dancer working with them; I think it definitely encouraged the boys to have a role model." Marie O'Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **Focus on wellbeing.** Sheena Kelly, dance artist, explained that, in the Dance workshop, one of the exercises was to: “explore how the body looks and feels when it experiences different emotions, including discussing the feeling of different intensities of emotion, ranging from the sadness of leaving a great holiday to the depths of grief and depression.” In the Drama workshop, students were introduced to Forum Theatre and used this interactive format to explore social issues and build resilience.

“During the session the students had an opportunity to discuss their own health, the impact of COVID and what they had done to keep well. They were asked: “What activities can you do to stay active and physically healthy? Sean, one of the dancers had studied biomedical science at university and had worked in that field until recently and was able to explain the biochemistry of dance, such as the release of dopamine, serotonin and endorphins, which create happiness and energy.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“At each session, the facilitators stopped and spoke about the link between dance and mood and mental wellbeing. They broke into small groups to explore their moods at the start of the session; they then revisited these at the end of the sessions. When asked at the end of the session, the students commented on the impact that dance workshops had on their mood and self-esteem.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **High aspirations.** Marie thought that the facilitators in the dance workshop: “allowed students to see that practicing the steps led them towards comfort and mastery.”
- **Connection to the curriculum.** An example from the dance workshop is that: “They also drew upon students’ knowledge of science to explain more challenging dance moves, like lifts. They explained the lever process of using the bodies of the dancers for these, illustrating that learning the correct movements, not strength, could facilitate this more complex dance movement.”
- **Sustainability.** Bounce Culture deliberately used equipment and software that students might be able to access at home so that they could continue learning in their own time. Reacting to pupil interest, the teachers gave out notebooks in which pupils could record their writing. This was private – not to be seen by the teacher or marked.

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Timing.** The start of the project was delayed because the need to catch up curriculum time, including the desire to avoid changing timetables that had already been much disrupted during the pandemic. Some sessions were rescheduled because of illness in the team. On the positive side, the process of the project was more relaxed than for the previous year, with less social distancing.
- **Collaboration.** Planned work with Fighting Words didn't happen. Rescheduling of sessions meant that the artists did not work together as closely as had been intended.

- **Community links.** Contact with Newington Day Centre and local primary schools was not possible.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

I have five observations: three from the Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue, one from Gilah Mc Carroll, the English teacher, and one from Sheena Kelly, the dance artist.

DATE	9 March 2022	March 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022
ARTFORM	Dance	Dance	Dance	Soundscape Workshop	Film-making
YEAR GROUP	Year 9	Year 9	Year 9	Year 9	Year 9
LENGTH OF SESSION	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	2 hours	3 hours
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	12	12	10	10	4

The impacts are:

- **Confidence.** In the Dance workshop, students created their own piece and performed it in front of their peers and the camera. Students also commented that: “working with professional artists gave them the belief and confidence to try dance.”

“I think the emphasis on learning how to control their bodies, to stand straight, to hold their head high gave them confidence and an understanding of how important body language is in terms of self-esteem.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“Students like when the learning involves working with their own ideas and opinions and this has definitely increased their self-esteem. They talked particularly about how good they felt after they had performed their piece to camera. They had a sense of achievement and two of the students are interested in pursuing drama after year 10.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“Some of the most disengaged pupils have been the most involved in the project. They tried everything and succeeded at everything and have visibly increased in self-belief.” Gilah McCarroll, English teacher

- **Team-working.** In the Dance workshop, students worked individually, in pairs, in groups of four and then in two groups of eight. Marie commented that: “students had to work collaboratively, respect each other’s ideas, follow a sequence, but also work decisively to come up with a finished piece.”

- **Communication skills.** Marie, observed that students: “were learning how to communicate with their bodies. They had to listen to each other and work out how they could communicate their story whether it was about bullying, self-harm, domestic abuse etc. through body movement. They were using their bodies to tell their stories and also facial expressions to add to the mood of their particular piece.”

“During the filming process, students really had to understand and experiment how to project their voices and speak slowly and clearly to the camera. They also learnt how important facial expressions are on camera and how many takes are needed in order to get the right effect. Even the importance of how a smile can transform a face was a revelation!” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“The whole session is about communication. We show them content and talk about how that works from a practical and creative perspective. We discuss different ways to tell the story; what kinds of shorts we need, how to make the result aesthetically pleasing.” Graham Ginty, artist, Bounce Culture”

“Some of the pupils were shy or unconfident in speaking. The project developed their communication skills in many ways: through thinking about how to do a voice over; through recording messages in the diary room or helping and encouraging others to express themselves; from thinking about how to communicate with audiences, for example, using imagery of a photo covered with pebbles and petals to symbolise Take Notice. The project empowered everyone to have a role. It was a whole process.” Gilah McCarroll, English teacher

- **Critical-thinking skills.** The May filmmaking session asked the students to reflect on the previous sessions, to explore and explain (to camera) the session they had found most meaningful.
- **Wellbeing.** Marie emphasised that: “This programme continues to create a safe space where issues such as loneliness, self-image, bullying, and suicide can be discussed and addressed.”

“Sharing their thoughts and feelings allowed the students empathy and space for managing emotions, and consideration of the factors that can impact our emotions.” Gilah McCarroll, English teacher

- **Engagement in learning.** Mags Byrne, Du Dance, argues that: “One of the really important things that dance does is enable a young person to stand still. Within a world where we are hyper-stimulated, students don't necessarily have this skill. And it is a precondition for learning. If you can't still your body, you can't still your mind; you can't listen, you can't learn.”
- **Learning about career pathways.** Gilah McCarroll, English teacher, thought that particularly noticeable this year was the way artists talked about how they got into the arts and the impact on the students in terms of realising that working in the creative industries could be a viable option for them. One of the dancers had studied biomedical

science at university and only decided to pursue dance full-time relatively recently, which showed that creative careers could be accessed at different time in life.

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Space.** Graham Ginty ran a session with students to create ambient soundscapes. The result will be deployed in a wellbeing room the teachers are planning. Students will be able to choose the tracks they want to listen to.
- **Raised profile for the school.** The project was presented at an Education Authority conference in June 2022. The film was posted on the school's website. It was also shared in a September launch of wellbeing at the school and during Community Relations Week. The teachers will also approach the local health service to see if they would be interested in using the film.
- **CPD.** Gilah and Eoin shared their knowledge with the History and English Departments, and plan to broaden out to talk to other departments in the next year. The project included staff training on film-making and animation in August 2022.
- **Lower burden of application.** The teachers thought the application process for CSP was easier this year because it was earlier and covered two years, although they expect to revise their plans to reflect learning from this year.
- **Reinforcement of learning development.** The programme connects to the Trinity Principles. Eoin Fitzpatrick, English and History lead for the project said that: "We saw the Trinity Principles embodied in an artistic process – the artist was planning, scaffolding and modelling the learning."

"CSP has given us the confidence to try things that are more left field. The dance workshops were so much more successful than I could have anticipated that they make us think that our students can do anything as long as it is modelled planned and scaffolded well." Eoin Fitzpatrick, English and History teacher

- **Job satisfaction.** The project has been an enjoyable and nourishing activity for teachers.

"Seeing the pupils succeed week in week out, and knowing at the end they will have something to record their achievement. That positive impact is one of the main reasons you go into teaching." Eoin Fitzpatrick, English and History teacher

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Philip Magee, the UV Coordinator linked Blessed Trinity (and St Vincent's) with an allotments group in the Colin area of the city to further develop their wellbeing garden. The garden brought positive publicity to the area, for example, in October 2022, Newsline featured it in interviews with young people talking about CSP.

The health and wellbeing video that students created through CSP has also been featured on Newsline as well as on social media.

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Du Dance is concerned that Dance has slipped through the school system. In theory, dance can be included in Physical Education but, in practice, Physical Education teachers tend to have neither the skills nor confidence to teach it. CSP provides an important chance to address myths about dance (e.g., that boys don't engage) and demonstrate the benefit of dance for young people's wellbeing.

"I genuinely believe that dance is the best artform to deliver physical, emotional and cognitively connected work. The benefit of dance is that we can bypass fixed ways of thinking and connect on a different level. There is an emerging mental health crisis. It is important to communicate that talking therapies are great but, without a physical component, it can't go anywhere." Mags Byrne, Du Dance

CSP was important to Du Dance because it kept them connected to a school during COVID, when most schools went silent. This helped them understand what schools were dealing with and how thinking was evolving.

"Having a long-term relationship with one school makes the work easier and more satisfying." Mags Byrne, Du Dance

SCHOOL 2: ST. CECILIA'S COLLEGE

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

St Cecilia's College has been involved in CSP from the beginning.

Post code	Derry BT48 9PJ		
	Pilot	Yr 1	Yr 3
Total enrolments	797	806	828
% of students who receive free school meals	63%	61%	57%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	154	189	206
Religion	99% Catholic	99% Catholic	99% Catholic
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Creative workshops and films about mental health	Let's Talk, Conversation 2 – writing and film making	City Smarts
Artists and partners	Bounce Culture NI	Bounce Culture NI	Bounce Culture NI
Timing	March to June 2018	May to June 2019	March to September 2021
Age of children	11	13-14	11-12
Number of children	24	19	Around 150

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 2: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: R AND R – RECOVERY AND REIGNITION POST COVID-19

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (podcast production, film and music production, journalism) Teacher CPD	Number of pupils (target 50 KS3)	Pupils develop their confidence, oral and written literacy and project management skills and curiosity, enhance their wellbeing (e.g., sense of control) and strengthen their engagement with learning The school continues work to embed creative learning across teaching	Contribution to School Development Plan priorities around Teaching and learning to support skills development and mental health for the entire school community

		strengthens its community links (e.g., Urban Villages, Bounce Culture)	
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: embedding creative learning across the school, using CSP as a model and inspiration; employing artists with a high profile; broadcasting the podcasts through the school's YouTube channel, which has an international following; having students lead the projects, including choosing the topics; and mixing weekly sessions and longer sessions for more immersive learning.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The project built on previous years of CSP by keeping the relationship with Bounce Culture and deepening the focus on wellbeing. The school selected on Year 8 class of 22 pupils taught by the teacher, Tanya Wakely.

The project consisted of:

- Workshops with Bounce Culture on podcast production, film-making and music production. 20 workshops were delivered with 22 students.
- A teacher training workshops with two teachers.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Strong curation.** This year, and for previous projects, the final editing for films has been carried out by Bounce Culture. As Graham Ginty explains, the students are still involved in the editing process because they are taught to think about the editing from the start, to think about how shots tell the story and fit together: "We don't factor in time to talk about editing, sitting in front of a computer. Thinking about editing is embedded in the storyboard. That is a better use of time."
- **Independent facilitation.** Tanya records in one of her observations that: "Outside facilitators seem to get pupils to open up more easily and be more honest about their mental health and their lockdown experiences."
- **Sustained engagement.** The teachers collapsed the timetable to give four half days.
- **Non-judgemental style.** Tanya Wakely observed that: "At no stage did the students feel a sense of failure even if they didn't know how to use the equipment. There was always a sense of positivity in the room. It was a joyous experience for me, very light-hearted, even though we were dealing with very contentious issues."

- **Focus on wellbeing.** Sessions led pupils through a process of reflecting on strategies they had used to manage their mental health during lockdown. Brainstorming, using mental maps, and discussing experiences was a cathartic and empowering experience as students realised the commonality of feeling challenged by the pandemic and the strengths many had shown in self-care, often without consciously identifying these as such.

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Timing.** Some sessions were rescheduled because of illness.
- **Impact on teachers.** Some teachers got used to more traditional methods during COVID and have less energy to try something new.

“Creative learning will be a harder sell after COVID.” Principal, Martine Mulhern

- **Impact on students.** Attendance is at an all-time low – 84-85% compared to 91%.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

I have two observations forms from the teacher, Tanya Wakely and one from Marie.

DATE	4 April 2022	January 2022	June 2022
ARTFORM	Podcasting and DJing	Film and DJs	Podcasting, film and DJing
YEAR GROUP	Year 8	Year 8	Year 8
LENGTH OF SESSION	4 hours	1 hour 40 minutes	1 hour 40 minutes
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	18	24	24

The impacts on the students are:

- **Confidence.** CSP allows different pupils to shine. As the Principal, Martine Mulhern, explains: “Sometimes the children who take the lead in creative learning projects are those who struggle with traditional forms of learning. You can see the boost to their confidence from being the smart one for a change. CSP gave them a better understanding of their value, made them realise they had skills they hadn’t seen before.”

“COVID meant that so much of young people’s lives was outside of their control. You can see the Creative Schools Partnership projects giving ownership back to them. The pandemic

made the projects even more important as a way of helping to restore their confidence.”

Kwa Daniels, artist

- **Control over learning.** Tanya Wakely, English teacher explained that: “Children develop their emotional intelligence from a more relaxed environment where they choose their own groups and dictate the focus of their learning.”
- **Communication skills.** In an observation, Marie recorded that: “At the beginning they tended to speak too quickly, listening to the playback of the recording they were able to identify what they needed to do. Often, they recognised that they needed to slow down and to articulate more clearly their speech. They also learnt the importance of keeping the momentum going while the conversation was being recorded and to spend the time later focusing on the editing process and learning how to manipulate their work.”
- **Team-working skills.** Tanya Wakely, English teacher, observed that pupils progressed at different rates and the open structure and collegiate style meant that those who were ahead spent time teaching the others.

“The students were working within small teams and each of them had a role for a particular task. They were mature in their attitude and respectful towards each other. They worked collaboratively, taking turns, sharing opinions and cooperating with each other. The students spoke about how much they loved working in groups with their friends. Some of them commented that, when they worked collaboratively, they were willing to take more risks and the experience helped them to develop their confidence.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **Technical skills.** Tanya Wakely, English teacher, thought that: “Fantastic technical skills were developed and shared with peers, which was much more obvious than in traditional settings with a more rigorous curriculum expectation.”
- **Mental health.** Tanya reflected that: “Outside facilitators seem to get pupils to open up more easily and be more honest about their mental health and their lockdown experiences.”

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Creative learning.** The Principal, Martine Mulhern, is a strong believer in creative learning and, before COVID, each department was entrusted with the task of coming up with a plan for it. CSP helped her because it gave practical experiences, which were manifestly a success, which participating teachers could share with others. However, Martine is leaving this year, so progress in embedding creative learning will depend on the views of her successor.

“There is a notion that, after COVID, we need to get back to basics. In my opinion, creative learning should be back to basics. More than ever, it should be considered part and parcel

of what we do. If we don't embrace creative learning, then we are not being fair on those children who learn more naturally through these means; we are disregarding their skills, which might be creative thinking, problem-solving, leading; which are often the skills most used in the work place. If we don't provide a curriculum that shows the value of these young people and the value of these skills, then we are failing our young people. The system needs to change to understand the importance of creative learning in the curriculum and not see it as an add-on." Martine Mulhern, Principal

- **Purchase of equipment.** The pupils have decided the school needs more DJ equipment and are having cake and ice-cream sales to raise the money. When they have the equipment, they want to have an after-school class and go into nearby primary schools and perhaps a nearby care home to run music therapy sessions. Tanya Wakely, English teacher, comments that: "The pupils are really focused on making this happen."
- **Artwork.** The project will create a podcast, film and music.
- **CPD.** Tanya said: "I got a sense of achievement from the project. I developed my skills. I have never DJed before; in the sessions I learnt to use Launchpad."
- **Reflection.** Tanya said: "I got a lot out of the project myself as I was able to reflect on my experience of lockdown and show students that talking about how we manage our mental health is not a taboo subject."

IMPACTS ON THE COMMUNITY

The CSP videos on mental health have been shared widely across the community.

The UV Local Coordinator for Derry/Londonderry, Maureen Fox, has worked with St Cecilia's, St Joseph's and Lisneal College. She visits each school six times a year in a formal capacity and perhaps three more to attend showcases or workshops. She has also helped to bring Ministers to the schools.

CSP gave Maureen and UV a direct link with each of the three schools which she would not have had otherwise because her focus is on the community. That strong relationship has enabled Urban Villages to connect local organisations to the schools. For example, the Destined Disability Centre has been able to have sensitive conversations around issues like flags within its Buddy Up project, and its newly refurbished centre offers a safe, neutral space for all communities, including participants from the CSP projects.

The relationship with CSP schools that UV already had through CSP meant that community organisations were better able to connect with and support families in need during the pandemic. This in turn had an effect on the education and life chances of the young people. For example, the community organisations were able to identify families who didn't have enough iPads to engage with lessons when they went online during the lockdown and to provide solutions.

UV has involved schools in important capital projects such as the Gasyard, Meenan Square, Newgate and the Realm. In each case, UV gained a channel to incorporate the views of young people, with the strong expectation that valuing young people will increase their ownership of the local space and projects, and reduce any risk of antisocial behaviour. For example, in the Gasyard project, Urban Villages has liaised with St Cecilia's and St Josephs to help choose a name for a new planned heritage museum.

"We need a multitiered approach, different routes for young people to express their opinions, so we can find where their voice is strongest." Maureen Fox, UV Coordinator

Maureen has observed that CSP has improved young people's attendance at school, which has helped their families at home, it has given young people a sense of their own value which has increased their commitment and sense of achievement.

Maureen feels strongly that the work of CSP is not finished. Developing relationships with and across the community takes time. In the early years of CSP, teachers from the different schools in CSP came together to share good practice and build cross community links and this needs to be revived.

"CSP is a catalyst for change. Nothing happens overnight in communities. CSP creates ideas, experiences and relationships that have wide ramifications." Maureen Fox, UV Coordinator

Maureen thinks that CSP is value for money for Urban Villages because it is bridging a gap between and within education, the community, young people and the arts sector. Having the freedom to create locally-determined and creative approaches between the three sectors has greater impact than a more institutional approach.

Maureen thinks that Marie is critical to the CSP because she brings the creative energy to coordinate the whole thing, which Urban Villages does not have the time or expertise for.

"Everything about Marie is creative and she understands the school language, so she is able to help teachers understand what they need to do, which is a great skill." Maureen Fox, UV Coordinator

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Kwa explains that CSP has helped Bounce Culture strengthen its internal processes, especially its communication.

"We have got better at ensuring the team is all on the same page. Few questions come up later." Kwa Daniels, artist

"CSP has been really good for Bounce Culture because we have been able to tailor our own creative processes without diluting anything. We have developed our ability to explain our thought processes." Kwa Daniels, artist

CSP is special because of the two-year timeline for projects.

“We don't have any other two-year projects in schools. This commitment allows pupils to breathe in their normal structure, to develop. There is time for activities, but also to build relationships, for pupils and teachers to learn, for us to deliver CPD, for the process to develop organically.” Kwa Daniels, artist

SCHOOL 3: MALONE INTEGRATED COLLEGE

Malone College has been involved in CSP from the beginning.

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

Post code	Belfast BT100JB		
	Pilot	Yr 1	Yr 3
Total enrolments	485	508	628
% of students who receive free school meals	69%	66%	54%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	196	136	159
Religion	51% Protestant, 27% Catholic, 22% Other	48% Protestant, 28% Catholic, 24% Other	44% Protestant, 29% Catholic, 27% Other / unknown
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Creating a large-scale artwork for the entrance hall of the school celebrating diversity	Mental Health Affects Us All: Race Colour Creed – using practical workshops to address mental health	We are all Equal – print-making
Artists and partners	Trevor Woods, ceramic artist Brendan McKinley, sculptor Nerve Belfast	Claudia Greene, Graphic Designer Nerve Centre Bill Penney, Associate Lecturer in fine art print, UU Belfast Campus Belfast South Community Resource	Anushiya Sundaralingam, visual artist
Timing	April to June 2018	April to June 2019	February to June 2021
Age of children	13	13	11-14
Number of children			66

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 3: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: TRANSITION AND DIVERSITY

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (visual arts, writing)	Number of pupils (target: 18 Yr 9)	Pupils raise their confidence, develop their creative thinking	Contribution to School Development Plan priorities to Improve

performance, Music, MIA)		and literacy skills, and increase their interest in taking arts subjects at GCSE	student's literacy, thinking skills, communication skills and mental health.
Showcase			
Teacher CPD		The school strengthens its community links (e.g., Urban Villages, Young at Art, Lyric, Ulster Museum, Donegal Pass Community Centre, BCRC)	
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: having a mixed ability group; taking an experimental approach, where students can drive the direction of the project; documenting the project and telling a wider audience about it; involving parents; employing an artist who has already worked with the school; having the artists talk about their cultural backgrounds; and having time for students to experiment with different media.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The project explored pupils' experiences of the pandemic and their transition from Primary to Secondary school. Previous CSP projects gave the school the confidence to adopt a more experimental, open approach this time, with the direction set by the young people themselves.

The project consisted of:

- An introductory workshop with both the artists together. Altogether the school organised 11 planning meetings.
- Attendance at a dance performance about bullying, called *Do as I Say*, at the Lyric Theatre
- Workshops with Ro Owens, a drama artist. There were eight half day workshops with 20 students.
- Workshops with Anushiya Sundarlingam, a visual artist who has been involved in previous projects. There were four full day and one half-day workshops with 20 students.
- Teacher professional development workshops. There were three workshops with two or three teachers at each.
- Two workshops with Young at Art with 16 students attending.

- A sharing workshop on 24th June.

Year 9s were chosen because this group was particularly affected by the pandemic; and also, because Lynsay Mercer teaches most of them.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Clear objectives.** A typical comment on the observation forms is: “Artists gave clear instructions at each stage of the workshop. The pupils knew what was expected of them.”
- **Child-centred approach.** The students decided that they wanted to create a fictional character, Sam, to tell their story; and they wanted to use masks to present their story.

“Every workshop led to something unexpected that informed the planning for the next workshops. As it was loose at the start.” Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher

- **Connection to wellbeing.** Artist Ro Owens has a focus on mental health in her own practice and this was reflected in her process. For example, she integrated mindfulness exercises into drama warm ups. Young at Art ran two workshops with the group. Marie observed that an exploration of wellbeing was evident from the first sessions: “The word transition is being used as a stimulus to get the students thinking about fluidity and how nothing stays the same. They were given time to reflect and to think in pairs of what transition means to them. Some of them spoke about their transition through COVID and of their return back to school, this evolved in to a good discussion about the impact it had on them. They were thinking creatively and made connections to the stills from the films that they had seen. The students were very vocal about how they had been feeling during COVID and how important sounds and associations with certain places made them feel safe such as wind chimes, the sea, the beach. They also talked about sounds and images that had the opposite effect.” The show that the students attended at the Lyric was about bullying and had links to resource packs on the subject.

“They were all very happy to hear they should expect to get messy! Two boys commented ‘this is the best thing we have done all year’ whilst dunking his hands into a huge bowl of wall paper paste.” Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher

“The workshop themes, and the skill of the artists, allowed the pupils to open up about difficult experiences during the pandemic. We were talking about characters and emotions constantly.” Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher

- **Engagement of the whole group.** Anu designed the sessions to be sensitive to the feelings of the young people. For example, students were initially scared of being part of a live performance so Anu suggested that the work be filmed and then screened. Artist Ro Owens explains: “I work with movement and gesture. Nothing is too scary. Expansion

and contraction movement. Explored gesture work. I am quite physical work. I like using a stimulus we have created together rather than going in with a text.” Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher, observed that in an art workshop: “Giving each person a responsibility at certain points was a good way of keeping them on task and ensuring that everyone felt they had contributed to the production.”

“Everyone in the group contributed something special to the story.” Lynsay Mercer, Art Teacher

- **Curricular links.** The teachers followed themes that arose in the sessions. For example, they learnt about tea ceremonies in lessons after the students expressed an interest in Ro Owen’s Japanese masks.
- **Attention to individual needs and personalities.** Lynsay observed that: “As Anu had spent considerable time with the group before this session and built a good rapport, she pitched her activities at a very good level for the whole class. In terms of SEN, social, emotional and behavioural, Anu had a natural way with the pupils and provided support where needed. She was full of other ideas for pupils who had completed the tasks early. We celebrated their individuality and highlighted each of their strengths so they all felt equally important and valued. As an integrated school this reflects our ethos and this was highlighted to the group. They were invited to be their unique selves without any judgement.”
- **Non-judgemental style.** Marie observed that: “Ro used praise and encouragement. From the beginning of the session, she outlined the importance of discovery and exploration and created a very effective and inclusive environment so that pupils were aware that the activities were rooted in play, therefore there was no “right” or “wrong” approach. Ro was also eager to point out things that didn’t go to plan in a casual manner and used herself as a model to help with self-esteem.”
- **Message of creativity as an ongoing process.** Anu’s approach often includes reworking and reassembling work, which gives a dynamic and empowering sense of creativity where judgement is applied to allow artwork to evolve.

“I had 50 pieces of collage. If you just show them one at a time, it doesn't have an impact. So, I arranged the pieces colour-wise, dark to light, or cut to the same size. How you edit and arrange the work creates the quality, while also honouring all the work that the students have done. I am using the same skills I use to curate my own shows.” Anushiya Sundarlingam, artist

- **Budget for equipment and materials.** Anu pointed out that school projects often lack this support, which affects the quality of the process and product.
- **Celebration event.** Lynsay observed that: “It is important to let the pupils play, have fun and just be kids. It is nice for the staff to do this too. As a group we all enjoyed the party and had a laugh. The boys who wouldn’t have dreamt of wearing party hats and blowing bubbles were the keenest to do so. The whole group were very thankful. They gave the two artists a gift and card each thanking them for their hard work and time spent with

them. It was actually quite emotional saying goodbye to them for the summer after spending so much time with them.”

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Timing.** The start was delayed from February to April. Four sessions were rescheduled because of sickness.
- **Community links.** Planned collaboration with community centre was not possible.

After the success of the performance, the group was invited to meet the Lord Mayor. However, industrial action meant this was not possible.

Another challenge was in coordinating the work of different artists. Marie noted that: “This has been a collaboration with two artists and I think that this is an area that could be discussed in some sort of a forum as a number of schools are doing this. The challenges and the benefits of working collaboratively.”

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

I have four observation forms from Marie and five from the teacher.

DATE	4 th March 2022	1 April 2022	19 May 2022	20 May 2022 am	20 May 2022 pm	20 May 2022 pm	27 May 2022	20 June 2022	24 June 2022
ARTFORM	Dance	Visual art, Drama , perfor mance	Drama	Visual art, Drama , perfor mance	Visual art, Drama , perfor mance	Visual art, Drama , perfor mance	Visual art	Art and Drama	Art and Drama
YEAR GROUP	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
LENGTH OF SESSION	1	3	2	2	2.5	2.5	4	2	4.5
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	11	18	16	16	16	16	12	16	16

The impacts on the students are:

- Confidence.** The drama artist, Ro Owens explains that: “Drama is amazing for confidence. They created a character, Sam. The warm up games seem overwhelming at first but the young people change when they realise these are fun. Using puppets was game-changing because the students were developing their expertise, seeing their peers learning together. Drama brings young people out of their shell. It allows them to explore things through performance, movement, sound and set.”

“The pupils were nervous to begin with about performing. The wearing of the masks and black clothes behind the semi-transparent fabric instilled them with confidence. We played their choice of music loud on the speakers which seemed to motivate them and even give the very shy ones some confidence to speak out and engage more.” Lynsay Mercer, Art Teacher

- Team-working skills.** In the May 20th workshop with Young At Art, Marie reflected that: “The group had to think about themselves and their peers during the games. The games were designed to get the pupils to be self-aware and also find out more about their peers, their teacher and the artist. They were asked to think about empathy and kindness. Where in their lives had they experienced this? Have they shown empathy and kindness to others? How can they do this if they feel they haven’t already? Are there things they have done that could be perceived as the opposite of empathy and kindness.”
- Experience of an arts venue.** In March, the group attended a performance of *Do As I Say* at the Lyric Theatre, which was, for many, the first time they had seen live theatre. The experience also broadened pupils’ cultural horizons as the dance company, Bobbi Lo Produktion, were from Sweden.
- Engagement in learning.** Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher, observed that: “The students feel empowered knowing that they are taking part in an approach that puts students in the lead. It is evident that their sense of control over the direction of the project is helping fuel their enthusiasm and high levels of engagement.” Pupils who Marie spoke to during the 27 May workshop said: “They have also really enjoyed working in small teams where they have been encouraged to interact with each other and to learn from each other. They said that this has given them confidence and that they have enjoyed the learning much more than when they have to sit quietly.”

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- Raised profile for the school.** The artwork from last year’s project has been curated into an exhibition which is planned to be displayed at the City Hall.
- Interdepartmental working.** The project was planned as a collaboration between Art, Drama and English. As it evolved, Music also became involved. These relationships will continue in, but also beyond, CSP. For example, next year, English and Art are going to work together on exercises around poetry and illustration.

“Even though our school promotes the arts, it still needs CSP to create a buzz across the school. I will be pushing for collaborative projects for the rest of my career. Working with artists and other departments was something I was always interested in, but didn't think was possible. We all learned from each other.” Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher

- **Teacher development.** The art teachers have taken techniques from last year's CSP project and applied them with the A level groups. Lynsay has used the mask-making techniques with her art club and is planning to include them in art lessons with first years every year. She also valued the way the Young At Art facilitator stimulated discussion about mental health by using agree/disagree statements e.g., “I am happy all the time” “If I am unhappy, I find it easy to talk about it”.

“I ran teacher training last year. When I went back to the school, I noticed that the students had used the same photographic and printing techniques and have produced excellent work. They are also using the same techniques for an after-school club.” Anushiya Sundarlingam, artist

- **Testing of creative approaches to learning.** In her observation of the May session, Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher, commented on the strengths of a “The creative freedom the class had during this session and throughout, is different from the style pupils are used to. It feels riskier especially for me as teacher with the unknown outcomes. I've been used to teaching schemes that have been tried and tested. Bringing in an artist to work with them is so different from the regular school day. The pupils understand that they were being exposed to a new way of teaching and learning, to improve their overall experience of the subjects and their education.” She concluded that: “Teaching in a more relaxed and fluid environment is a catalyst for unique creative outcomes and builds pupils self-esteem.”

“This was like one big long art club. We were able to have fun. Class is more regimented and you don't take as many creative risks. I have learnt you get a stronger impact by taking creative risks.” Lynsay Mercer, Art teacher

- **Relationships with pupils.** Lynsay pointed out that the more relaxed environment in creative workshops, and the way staff and artists share personal experiences alongside students, softens the barriers, and makes pupils more open and willing to accept teachers' guidance.
- **Staff morale.** Lynsay explains that: “Teaching can become quite lonely. CSP has built relationships between teachers. It was good to feel we are a united front in terms of the creative arts.”

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Lynsay was not able to involve parents this year, but is planning to do so next year.

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Ro Owens said that the project developed her practice. She doesn't usually work with this age group or for an extended period of time.

“There have been many benefits for my practice. CSP has given me more drive to get back into theatre. A lot of my work is repetitive and high energy: I have a short amount of time to get the key points across. A lot of times when I do drama people want a play produced and that isn't what the kids want to do. Working in a bigger project has been a gentler and more organic process. It showed I can slow down with more ebb and flowing. It is an exploratory process, more similar to how I work myself, where I am looking for stimulus. We had time to reflect and bring in new stimulus, which was like development time in my own projects.” Ro Owens, Artist

There was also time for the artists to learn from each other. Ro decided to adopt some of Anu's exercises. Anu learnt about video editing from Ro, which will help to inform her wider practice. This learning structure could be more strongly embodied in CSP. For example, the lead artists, who have worked on the programme for years could have a more explicit role in training other artists who are developing their participative practice.

“It is nice when artists are collaborative rather than competitive.” Anushiya Sundarlingam, artist

Anu finds the CSP project satisfying and helpful in terms of cash flow. She has cut back other strands of work, but continued to work on CSP. However, she points out ACNI's fee rates for artists haven't changed in 15 years.

SCHOOL 4: ST. VINCENT'S CENTRE

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

St Vincent's Centre has been involved in CSP from the beginning. St Vincent's is part of St Joseph's School, with the role of supporting pupils, not in mainstream school due to social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Post code	BT6 8HN		
	Pilot	Yr 1	Yr 3
Total enrolments	658: overall college (30)	676: overall college (30)	791: overall college (30)
% of students who receive free school meals	100%	100%	100%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	185: overall college (30)	207: overall college (30)	165: overall college (30)
Religion	78% Catholic, 3% Protestant: overall college	76% Catholic, 4% Protestant: overall college	70% Catholic, 7% Protestant, 24% other/Unknown: overall college
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Artist's residency	A Day in the Life of St Vincent's/A Day in Our shoes -	Emotions in Art – ceramics, music and drama
Artists and partners	Annmarie Robinson, ceramic artist	Annmarie Robinson, ceramic artist Kwame Daniels, Julien Raux, Bounce Culture NI	Annmarie Robinson, ceramic artist Kwame Daniels, Graeme Ginty Bounce Culture NI Rob Crawford, Bruiser Theatre Company
Timing	March to July 2018	March to September 2019	April to September 2021
Age of children	11-14	11-16	11-16
Number of children	10-18	15	18

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 4: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: EXPLORING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH THE ARTS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
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Creative workshops (clay, drama)	Number of pupils (target 28)	Pupils develop their confidence, social skills and wellbeing	Contribution to the School Development Plan priority around meeting the needs of individual students
Teacher CPD	Murals on the school building	School develops its sense of, and visual record of community, strengthens its community links (e.g., Bruiser Theatre Company, Urban Villages,	
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: engaging students in artistic representations of the familiar, the diverse and the success stories of local people; employing the artist who has been involved in the programme from the beginning and has a strong trust relationship with students; and exploring issues around sectarianism, homophobia and racism.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The project built on the experience of previous years by retaining the same artists, who have developed a relationship with the pupils, by creating another mural to enhance the school environment and by expanding teacher CPD. This third mural is on the wall near the main office, where pupils sit when they have time out.

The project consisted of:

- A visit to the Lyric Theatre to see *Do As I Say*.
- Weekly Drama sessions with Rob on a Tuesday. There were 14 workshops in all, with 42 students attending.
- Weekly Ceramics sessions with Annmarie on a Friday. There were 11 workshops in all, 33 students attending.
- Workshops by Action for Mental Health for Years 10 and 11.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Ownership by the young people.** Marie recorded that the school had envisaged the mural as including words to represent the school's values. However, discussion with the pupils showed that the suggested words were not particularly meaningful to them, in part because of the generational differences in use of language.

“During the initial planning stage, a list of words had been collected but before embarking on any inclusion of these, Annmarie decided to discuss them with the students. It soon became apparent that the students had little connection with the words and actually what ensued was a wonderful learning curve for everyone on how much the actual language that young people are using has changed. Annmarie reassessed the situation and spent a lot of time discussing and listening to the students in order to let them use their own language and carefully choose the words that wanted to create.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **Progression.** The previous project was designed to develop students’ skills in drama. This project built on this foundation by using drama to explore social issues and build resilience.
- **Time to practice.** Annmarie Robinson, ceramic artist, explains that the main factor in creating quality is giving the pupils time to practice: to observe her process and see her work, to learn from students who have talent in ceramics, and to develop their own skills.
- **Longer sessions.** Rob Crawford, actor, appreciated that the school responded to his request for longer sessions. Two hours might seem a lot for students to concentrate, but the drama is so engaging and has different stages, from warm ups to a set of exercises, so longer sessions are more efficient. Rob thinks it would be particularly useful to have a longer session at the start of a project so that the actor can illustrate the style of work in improvisation and Forum Theatre. It would be useful to have two facilitators for the first two sessions to help embed the learning.
- **A safe space.** Teachers were integrated into the session and were proactive if they saw students needed additional support or a break. The Forum Theatre covered heavy subjects such as gender and sexual identity. The actor, Rob Crawford, had a buzzer which students could use if they wanted to stop the conversation (although no-one used it).

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Impact on students.** Pupils have been adversely affected by the increased financial and spatial pressure on their families, and some suffered bereavements. On the positive side, some students seemed to value school more because they appreciated the stimulating and supportive environment.
- **Timing.** Staff, student and artist illness meant some sessions had to be rearranged.
- **Community links.** The students were not able to meet the residents from Mullan Mews.
- **Technical issues.** Having the windows and doors open to improve ventilation lowered the temperature and might have made the clay more difficult to manipulate.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

I have six observations from the Programme Manager, Marie O'Donoghue.

DATE	1 March 2022	March 2022	10 th May 2022	13 th May 2022	May 2022	May 2022
ARTFORM	Drama	Drama	Drama	Ceramics	Ceramics	Ceramics
YEAR GROUP	8	KS3	10	10	8	8, 9, 10
LENGTH OF SESSION	40 minutes	2 hours	1 hours	1 hour	1 hour	3 hours
NUMBER OF STUDENTS		16	5	3	5	10

The impacts on students are:

- Critical-thinking skills.** Rob Crawford, actor, used Forum Theatre to help students to experience and challenge biased or discriminatory language, while also understanding the history and context for these ways of thinking and communicating. Drama is a powerful way of developing critical thinking skills because students learn an alternative narrative, confidence and sense of ownership rather than simply being told that some language is wrong.

“Using Forum Theatre, participants observed and challenged biased or discriminatory thinking, and drew on the wisdom of the group to find more sensitive ways of more communicating. We explored where some of the offensive views came from and gave students an alternative narrative, rather than simply saying that this language was wrong. Forum Theatre gives a safety net, a chance to experiment, because participants can ask for a reset. This gives a rehearsal for real life where participants can speak out but the stakes are imaginary.” Rob Crawford, actor

“In the visit to the Lyric Theatre, we were taken on an emotional and thought-provoking journey hearing stories of individuals who had been bullied and what had happened them. it was during the feedback with the actors that you could really witness how their thinking had been challenged and the degree to which the interaction had made them think. These students are often too shy to engage with new people with whom they have no relationship. The actors all of whom were Swedish or Danish took tremendous time to engage with the students. They asked them about their experience, what had they gained from it and what understanding they took from it. The students too questioned them, which was a remarkable turn up for the books. They asked focused questions and were very obviously engaged with the piece as it was connecting to what they knew and were familiar with; social media, the impact it can have and how to deal with bullying.” Marie O'Donoghue, Programme Manager

“Drama is the perfect platform to talk about sectarianism, racism and homophobia. Rob’s sessions allowed students to voice the prejudices they hear at home, playing a character and then have proper open discussions about the impact those words have on other people. Clay is such a relaxing activity, and Annemarie has such a strong relationship with students, that sessions allowed open discussions about what is happening at home. Sometimes students told Annemarie things they hadn’t told us. These kinds of relationships are essential. Without trust, students won’t engage with the learning.” Brona Donegan, Head

“All contributions are met with reinforcement, that was funny or a great idea, even if we don’t use it. This is especially important for this group because participation varies and we need to everyone to be respectful and ensure those who haven’t attended as much aren’t left behind.” Rob Crawford, artist

“It has been such a valuable journey to be on. One of things I have seen happen is the unbelievable ability of drama to deal with very difficult issues. Forum Theatre gives the students the ability to speak and have a voice, but do so in character, so they can express and explore attitudes without fear of a punitive response. This then leads into a discussion about what is fair and it has been amazing what students have come back with.” Mark Short, Teacher

- **Wellbeing.** From observing many ceramics sessions, Marie was able to see the therapeutic effect of the clay: “The power of interacting with the clay as a medium encourages many of them to relax and, if they are tense, they can often work their frustrations out through the various techniques that Annemarie encourages them to use, such as working on the potter’s wheel and the various methods of manipulating the clay whether it is moulding, cutting, or twisting. They absolutely love when Annemarie returns their work that has been fired and they can see their piece transformed. This always gives them a real sense of achievement.” In another ceramics session, Marie recorded that: “This was one of the most uplifting and positive experiences that I have seen in St. Vincent’s. All of the students were completely enthralled with their task and working independently. They didn’t want to leave the room and asked could they stay longer.”
- **Teamwork skills.** The artists model collaborative ways of working. Marie reflected from one the ceramics sessions: “Annemarie has nurtured a very caring attitude amongst this community, the students are helping one another and you can physically see the benefits when you are working with the young people.” For another ceramics session, Marie recorded: “I have visited this class a number of times and can see their confidence growing. They listen, take the advice Annemarie offers and act on it. They are also more comfortable and relaxed when talking to each other, complementing each other’s work, encouraging, and sharing tips on techniques.”
- **Concentration.** In the CSP project, students show more focus than they might have in other sessions. Marie observed of a ceramics session: “The relaxed atmosphere within created by Annemarie’s sessions reminds you of an industrious ceramic studio. There is a feeling of fun and everyone is focused and involved in their work.” Then, in a Drama session, Marie noted that: “Their concentration span had definitely improved, they were

listening to one another, encouraging each other and determined to have a finished piece. Trust between each other was evident as they were taking part in an approach that was very open-ended, they had no script; they were improvising and making their own decisions as to when they would engage and what they would say. They also had to pay close attention to each other to be able to keep the whole performance moving.”

- **Confidence.** Mark Short comments that the students love to see the productivity of the clay, they hate to see their time is being wasted. As Rob explained: “All contributions are met with reinforcement, that was funny or a great idea, even if we don't use it.”

“One student commented that the skills that they were learning through drama helped them in English and gave them confidence in other classes: “In Math’s class I act like I am a genius.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **Progression.** Actor, Rob Crawford, has observed skill development in the group: “Engagement has deepened. We couldn't really do improvisation for the first two weeks and now we can spend 40 minutes improvising.” One student who is transgender, has sought out and started attending outside drama class and St Vincent’s has made arrangements for them to attend LAMDA workshops run by one of the other artists in CSP.
- **Literacy.** Through choosing word and creating letters for the mural pupils improved their spelling abilities.

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Embedding of creative learning.** The school used creative learning as part of its strategy to re-engage students with learning, knowing that drama and clay were lessons that they particularly enjoyed, that would entice them back to school. Last August, the Year 8 induction included taster sessions with Annemarie (for students and their parents) and this will be repeated in 2022. All nine teachers in the school, and many of the teaching assistants, have been involved in CSP sessions. As a result of this experience, and consistent with the School Development Plan’s priorities to developing emotional intelligence, teachers have increased their use of creative approaches in class. Before CSP, St Vincent’s did not have, and would never have considered, Drama lessons and now students have them twice a week. Increased commitment is shown by the space for workshops. In the first year, the clay sessions took place in different classrooms. This year, Annemarie has taught in the same classroom each time, with space already set up for working with the clay. This means the pupils can easily find their work from previous sessions and take less time to settle.

“CSP played a huge part in our recovery timetable. We collapsed the timetable and programmed creative sessions because we know they would allow that soothing and calm environment that would bring the students back.” Mark Short, teacher

- **Increased confidence in trying new things.** UV facilitated a connection to visit a local allotment group. The school acquired a polytunnel and is developing horticulture activities at the school. Brona Donegan, Head, explains that: “Learning from CSP has encouraged us to be braver, has shown we can collapse the timetable to create longer working sessions. Teachers have also seen the true abilities of the students, which has encouraged them to be more ambitious.”

“CSP gave us the confidence of knowing these creative approaches work. Staff needed no persuading to be involved.” Brona Donegan Head

- **Equipment.** Ceramic artist, Annmarie Robinson discovered a new potter’s wheel and kiln in the school that had lain untouched for 20 years. The wheel adds a new dimension to the work as Annmarie explains because: “Working with the wheel is tactile, even more tactile than a ball of clay, because it is warm and wet. There is an immediate stimulus from it. It makes weird noises and can fly off and hit someone. When people start on a wheel, their first reaction is to laugh, because the wheel is going so fast, and they wonder how anyone can control the process.”
- **Improved behaviour** Teachers have seen a marked improvement in students’ behaviour, which they attribute to: students’ greater ability to self-regulate, their greater sensitivity to language and their stronger relationship with teachers from having worked together in creative sessions. Teachers have also been able to use Drama techniques in conversations about bad behaviour. For example, Mark Short used role-play and has found it has greatly reduced the chances of escalation. This improvement in behaviour has not been quantified, but measurement will be explored next year.

“When things get tetchy in class, I have asked the students to imagine us as actors, and think about how you would react to what you say. And straightaway you are having a discussion not as teacher pupil, and the conflict has been dissipated.” Mark Short, teacher

Mark Short emphasises that the CSP is very good value for money: “Without the funding, we couldn't have the artists coming into schools. And you couldn't have a greater effect with that amount of money.”

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

As mentioned above, Philip Magee, UV Coordinator linked St Vincent’s (and Blessed Trinity) with an allotments group in the Colin area of the city.

The whole project is aimed at supporting students to be better citizens. As Mark Short explains: “This work will ensure students go out into the community with more understanding, empathy and caring, especially of groups of people who have already had a tough time.” Mark is using Urban Villages to make contact with community groups that will allow the students to meet people with experiences of disadvantage.

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

The actor, Rob Crawford, said that he appreciated the special structure of CSP. School projects tend to be oriented around a specific outcome such as an exam or performance, but this is not what many students want, so the artist is left “shepherding the attention of the group”. CSP is particularly satisfying because it is youth-centric and less results oriented.

“This project has been a nice way to remind myself of my skills and drama vocabulary.” Rob Crawford, artist

Ceramic artist, Annmarie Robinson said the project has supported her artistic development. “I have a way of getting on using the same materials. Working with St Vincent’s has expanded my horizons. I have some ceramic coins that sit on plinths. I have never particularly liked the plinths so I decided to mosaic the plinths, inspired by the process we are applying for the murals.”

The pandemic has had devastating effect on Annemarie’s practice because people aren’t buying ceramics and seem to have lost the habit of dropping into her studio.

SCHOOL 5: ASHFIELD GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

Ashfield Girls High School has been involved in CSP from the beginning.

Post code	Belfast BT4 2LY		
	Pilot	Yr 1	Yr 3
Total enrolments	691	699	727
% of students who receive free school meals	45%	44%	44%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	267	285	158
Religion	67% Protestant, 5% Catholic, 27% Other	67% Protestant, 6% Catholic, 27% Other	65% Protestant, 5% Catholic, 24% Other /Unknown
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Self Esteem Succeeds -creation of music video	Mind Readers – creative journaling and exploring the science of screen time	Building Confidence Through Communication
Artists and partners	Accidental Theatre Company	Residential at Kilcronaghan Visit to MED-Lab Sheena Wilkinson, Author Emer Maguire, Science Communicator	Sheena Wilkinson, Author Emer Maguire, Science Communicator
Timing	May to July 2018	May to June 2019	February to June 2021
Age of children	11	12	13
Number of children	18	24 (also 3 reading buddies from the 6 th form, who also helped with cooking on the residential)	24

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 5: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: BELONGING

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (music, drama)	Number of pupils (target 24 Yr 8s)	Pupils express themselves creatively, enhance their mental	Strengthening of pupil engagement and integration after

<p>Research (interviews with members of the local community about the history of East Belfast)</p> <p>Showcase</p>		<p>health and wellbeing (including resilience and confidence) and strengthen their critical-thinking and interpersonal skills (including empathy, communication and teamwork)</p> <p>The school models connected learning across the curriculum and develops community links (e.g., Urban Villages, EastSide Learning, EastSide Visitors Centre, the Strand Arts Centre, Engage with Age and Dementia Friendly East Belfast, feeder primary schools)</p>	<p>lockdown, reinforcement of literacy development, and encouragement of positive choices (contribution to School Development Plan Priority Area 3A: Removing barriers to learning; 3B: Improving learning)</p> <p>Increase in collaboration across staff, the school and the wider community (contribution to School Development Plan Priority Area 5: Teacher professional learning)</p>
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: working with the same class as for previous projects; values affirmation and exercises to strengthen social belonging and connection; offering pupils a range of media; and employing artists with whom students already have a strong trust relationship.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

Sam Fitzpatrick, English teacher, thought that the application process was definitely easier this time. The questions and word limits made the task for manageable and having a two-year time frame is very helpful.

The project was framed around belonging, with the aim of helping the first years to feel at home in the school. The class was chosen because Sam teaches them. Creative workshops started in March and continued until the end of term in June. 26 students took part.

The activity consisted of:

- 13 planning meetings including writing the application, briefing the artists, meeting Out Generation Project and attending an Urban Villages Circle Exchange on 10th November 2022.

- Visit to the theatre to see *The Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* in March 2022.
- Eight creative workshops with Christina Nelson, including rehearsals.
- Four creative workshops with Emer, who was also involved in the rehearsals and performance.
- Seven creative workshops with Sheena Wilkinson.
- A performance to open the EastSide Awards, attended by roughly 300 people.
- A Young At Art workshop on mental health. Sam Fitzpatrick met Young At Art at the Urban Villages Circle Exchange.
- A team building activity day at Cranagh Watersports Centre, Coleraine with girls from Oakgrove Integrated School, Londonderry, funded by Cooperation Ireland, after an introduction from Urban Villages.

26 students took part in the project.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Coordination with class time.** Before the class went to see a play at the theatre, the teacher read through the text with the pupils, which Marie thought deepened the experience: “This was a good call as the piece was multi-layered and the students had an understanding of the basic plot, which in many ways allowed them the freedom to enjoy the many other techniques that were employed in the production.”
- **Careful selection of artists.** The actor, Christina Nelson, was impressed that the school had looked at her previous work to ensure they found the perfect facilitator for the job. Christina herself was reassured that they had “hunted her out”.
- **Skilful structuring of learning.** The actor, Christina Nelson, led the students through a series of exercises, progressing smoothly from looking at the self and how we portray ourselves, to social media and how other people portray us, to the school and the wider community and celebrating what we have.

“Ultimately the purpose of the sessions was to celebrate the community.”

- **Inclusion.** The group was diverse especially in terms of ethnicity. Sessions were designed to ensure all participants could take part. As Christina explains: “No matter what needs you have, you can still take part in drama. You can use any part of your body to perform. You can use masks to communicate your meaning in a way that feels comfortable.”
- **Time for development.** The project gave time for research, preparation and development and the artists met the students before the sessions started. All these steps allowed the artists to tailor the process to the needs of each individual and to respond to interests as they arose.

- **Strong engagement.** As Sheena Wilkinson, writer, explains: “Different exercises work for different people so I tend to have a wide range of exercises.” For example, one of the short activities that Sheena ran was for students to write as many lines as possible in a fixed time, saying things about trees, where each statement was a lie. This stimulates the imagination, embodies the non-judgemental sense as it is difficult to get it wrong, and is a little transgressive, all of which are freeing.

“A couple didn't want to use their voices so we ensured they were physically present in their movements. Gestures, everything symbolised something. Nothing was a move for the sake of a move. Everything represented an idea. We valued all of their ideas.” Christina Nelson, actor

“The writing sessions encouraged pupils to think of writing not as transactional but as something that would bring them pleasure and help them to explore their thoughts.”
Sheena Wilkinson, Writer

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Impact on teachers.** As with other schools, creative learning was not possible during the pandemic. Social distancing meant that pupils were not allowed to work in groups. Teachers were not allowed to walk around the room. Teaching tended to be traditional chalk and talk.
- **Impact on the school.** Louise Hanvey, Principal, said that the pandemic highlighted the need for creative learning: “Not being able to physically have creative and practical lessons showed the absolute need for them.”

The intensity of the creative workshops meant there was no time for Sam to debrief with the students, to get them to reflect on their learning. In the next year, Sam will be their form teacher and will build this in.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

The Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue, has observed three sessions:

DATE	11 March 2022	28 April 2022	29 th April
ARTFORM	Drama: theatre visit	Drama, Music, Performance	Drama, Music
YEAR GROUP	8	8	8
LENGTH OF SESSION	5	3	4

NUMBER OF STUDENTS	24	18	14
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The impacts on the students are:

- **Experience of theatre.** Marie went with the group to a production of *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* by Garcia Marquez. This was the first time the class has attended a live theatre performance.
- **Critical-thinking skills.** Marie saw evidence of critical thinking in the opinions the young people expressed: “This whole experience, the watching of the play and the great discussion afterwards with the students back in the classroom gave them the opportunity to think creatively and critically. They watched the play and as the characters developed, they made their own judgements and at times felt real empathy for the various characters.”
- **Confidence.** Marie thought that at the play visit: “The students talked about feeling special because they are part of CSP. They were beautifully turned out in their uniforms and knew that they were representing their school, there was a real sense of pride as they lined up to get on the bus. Their excitement at going to the theatre was palpable.” Overall, Marie recorded that: “I saw a great change in how these students have developed over the past few sessions; they have become more confident and aware of each other. These students have had a lot of isolation due to COVID over a challenging period transitioning from primary school through to post primary. Through these experiences, you could sense a real feeling of strength, joy and camaraderie as they were learning how to perform together.” Marie observed the Awards Ceremony and saw many elements of confidence building in the careful preparation, status of being on the stage, and reaction from the audience: “They sang their song and delivered their individual pieces about themselves to rapturous applause from the audience who all sang along with the chorus. The students got a standing ovation and they were so overcome with the excitement, buzz and joy that when they exited the hall, many of them said that they had loved the experience, and one student said that was the best thing she had ever done in her life so far.” The subject matter was itself strongly validating: “The whole experience of creating and developing a song called belonging and incorporating within that the opportunity for each student to deliver a few lines about themselves, who they were, where they came from, and what they loved gave these students a very tangible feeling of being valued.”
- **Communication skills.** Marie observed a rehearsal for the Awards Ceremony celebration and noted that: “This session was focusing on all aspects of their communication skills; they were using their faces, their bodies and their voices in their performance. With the encouragement of Christina, the actor, they were learning about the importance of using their bodies and their faces to come alive and to enjoy the performance. She spoke to them about the importance of smiling and using their eyes to connect with each other and their audience. A lot of emphasis was placed on how they were using their voices and their pronunciation of certain phrases and words. They were encouraged to slow down the language, to listen and to become more aware of the sounds and the

importance of articulating clearly and finishing the ends of their words. There was a lot of active listening as they were learning how to use their own voices and how to communicate with one another and together as a choir.” The awards ceremony itself included many elements of skill development in communication, learning about voice projection, positioning on the stage and engagement with the audience. Marie explains that: “Another element of communication that these students benefited from was their interaction with various guests on the night of their performance. They talked confidently to members of their board of Governors, to local politicians and to other prominent members of their community about their work and their experience of being part of the Creative Schools Partnership programme. They were able to articulate clearly about the process they had been involved in and the type of experiences that they had benefitted from.”

- **Teambuilding skills.** The whole project was collaborative and mutually supportive, with a high point at the Awards Ceremony. Marie gives her impressions: “Pupils were working as part of a team, they had to take responsibility for their own actions and performance, The students were respectful and caring of each other. They had learnt and remembered their moves and encouraged each other. When they were getting ready before the performance, they were kind to one another as they practiced their pieces and listened to each other. After the performance their spirits were high, they hugged each other and were very complimentary about each other’s performance.”

There is evidence the impacts of CSP are sustained over time. An English teacher who teaches the previous group for GCSE noted that: “CSP created a culture of participation. Our girls are willing to engage to make mistakes, to be open with each other and the teacher.”

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Embedding of creative learning.** Louise is relatively new in post, and has created a Teacher Learning and Assessment Team with three principles: pupil knowledge, pupil skills and pupil experience. All of these, but particularly the last one, could relate to creative learning. Louise suggests that: “Teachers are generally very creative. Systems have knocked the creativity out of them. My job is to remove the barriers to allow teachers to get back to what they enjoy and brought them into teaching in the first place. Schools are very content heavy.” CSP is helping embed creative learning because it gives a strong and positive example, from which good practices can be shared.
- **Raised profile in the community.** The original intention had been to work towards creating a podcast and performance over the two-year project. However, the opportunity came up to perform at an Awards Ceremony for East Belfast businesses and organisations at the Hastings Stormont Hotel, and the teachers and artist felt the students had progressed fast enough to take part. “Performing at the EastSide Awards Ceremony was a chance for the students to represent themselves and their community.

If we invest in the artistic object and words and movement, we are breathing life into the community and the world.” Christina Nelson, artist

- **Strengthened interdepartmental relationships.** The project brought together the English and Maths departments. Work for the awards ceremony involved writing, creating a set (including a map of the school area), writing a song, creating costumes and face painting.
- **Connection with professional artists.** Christina Nelson will perform in the *Snow Queen* musical at the Lyric in the winter and has invited the students to come back stage.

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The impacts on the local community are:

- **Parental involvement.** Most of the students’ brought parents or carers to the Awards Ceremony. The parents arrived early and joined in the drama warm up exercises.
- **Relationships.** The teachers are planning with Action for Mental Health to organise workshops for other groups across the school. Sam Fitzpatrick, teacher, attended a showcase of St Colm’s, another CSP school, which she thought was “incredible and moving.”

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Sheena Wilkinson, writer, believes that CSP has raised her profile because ACNI has been diligent in promoting the programme. CSP has also been important in giving her a renewed enthusiasm for working in schools after a couple of years with limited contact.

“I have never had a schools’ project that lasted years before. CSP gives more of a sense of involvement. I feel less pressured. This year, we decided not to have a product, to focus on process and this was right for the students because of what they have experienced during COVID. We wanted them to get into a habit of expressing themselves. Then – because of the two-year funding - the project will start again in the autumn, leaving less of a gap than with the annual funding.” Sheena Wilkinson, writer

The actor, Christina Nelson, said that she felt supported and valued by the school all the time. She really appreciated the length of the project: “Being there every week doesn't happen, I tend to fly in and about. I feel the school is investing in me as much as the young people.” Christina has never had a school project that allowed her to work with a school for two years.

Christina appreciated having Marie at the sessions since this showed the commitment of the funders to the programme. Funders are not usually this visible.

SCHOOL 6: ST. COLM'S HIGH SCHOOL

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

St Colm's High School has been involved in CSP from the beginning.

Post code	Belfast BT170BT		
	Pilot	Yr 1	Yr 3
Total enrolments	366	430	536
% of students who receive free school meals	72%	72%	72%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	359	363	307
Religion	99% Catholic; 1% Other /Unknown	99% Catholic; 1% Other /Unknown	99% Catholic; 1% Other /Unknown
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Production of an online cookbook	Ceramic Exterior Wall Mural/Development of Literature Through Poetry	Development of literacy through the arts with a focus on mental health
Artists and partners	Dolan Heaney, chef Colin McGuiver, Sheena Kelly Wheel Works	Annmarie Robinson, ceramic artist Gina McDonald, Caoimhe McGrath, CNP	Aaron Dickson, Photographer Danni Carragher, Bounce Culture NI
Timing	April to June 2018	March to June 2019	May to June 2021
Age of children	13-14	11-12	13-14
Number of children	10	100	22

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 6: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT:

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (music – drumming – drama) Teacher CPD Showcase	Number of pupils (target 28 Yr 9)	Pupils develop their self-confidence and self-esteem, enhance their mental wellbeing and resilience, strengthen their literacy and raise their aspirations The school deepens interdepartmental working and	Contribution to School Development Plan priorities around improved levels of literacy, self-esteem and mental wellbeing

		strengthens community links (e.g., Urban Villages, Our Generation Project, Action Mental Health, Ionad na Faiseoige, Footprints Women’s Centre, Colin Community Allotments, Bounce Culture)	
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: involving parents; continuing with an artform that previous participants loved – African drumming; and involving parents and grandparents in the creative workshops.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The project started in January and completed in June 2022. A full class of 28 Yr 9 students took part in creative workshops in African drumming and the bodhran.

Ursula Mackel, lead teacher from the English Department, explains that the project built on the legacy of the previous CSP work with an increasing focus on self-esteem and mental health and a progression from poetry to music and song lyrics. As she says: “We took what we learnt and we ran with it so we are really delighted with the result.”

The school felt supported throughout the programme: “Marie has been there at every junction for us. She attended a performance with us. She is background and foreground. She is always there when we need her.” The teachers also had all the support they needed in the school including organising cover and rearranging the timetable to fit in the sessions.

The school already has a strong commitment to creative learning, consistent with the Magenta Principles.

The Principal, Adrian Walsh, said that CSP contributes to all the objectives of the School Development Plan (Foster high self-esteem, Raise standards of literacy, numeracy and ICT, Enable pupils to their full potential, and Improve attendance and punctuality).

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Careful planning.** The Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue, observed that, in the Music session: “DJ equipment was already in place and bodhran drums provided by the tutor.” “The Drama session was well timed, with the live theatre experience approximately 1 hour followed up with the question-and-answer session.”
- **Strong engagement.** Marie concluded that the music session was: “Pitched at the perfect level to ensure enthusiastic pupil participation. Although a few students were at first reluctant due to anxiety, all members of the group did participate.” Sessions were specifically designed to engage every pupil.

“One clever piece was towards the end when everyone had to blow up a balloon and during one of the bullying incidents throw their balloon on to the floor when they felt the action that they were watching had gone too far.” Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue

“We offer activities with more than one entry point. Music production: they can be compiling a playlist or learning the techniques. Podcasting: they can be front of mike, holding a mike, production or artistic director. We were able to tailor the work to the stage of the group or the individual. It can be entry level intermediate or advanced. Even beginning level, you can break that down. This allows everyone pupil to engage and progress.” Kwa Daniels, artist, Bounce Culture

- **Self-directed learning.** Marie noted that, in the music session, “Pupils were engaged in the selection and sequencing of their own play lists which required independent thought and research.”
- **Peer support.** Year 11 students who had taken part in the previous CSP project acted as mentors to the new group of Year 9 students.
- **Constant evaluation.** Kwa Daniels, artist, explains that Bounce Culture’s style always includes reflection time so that pupils can feedback anything they didn't understand or where they would like to spend more time reworking or producing a product.
- **Wider boundaries.** Marie noted that: “Taking the students out of their community and into a new setting is a positive experience. Many of these students tend not to venture too far from what they know, yet here they were mixing with a different year group from their own school and then spending time interacting with the group of Swedish and Danish actors.”
- **High aspirations.** Marie observed that in the drumming workshop: “Initially a lot of the learning at the beginning was through observation and imitation, but gradually as they played on their own, you could see them beginning to gather confidence in their own ability and as the workshop progressed, they became more secure in their relationship with their instrument.”

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Timing.** The project start was pushed back by two months because of illness among the staff and artists.
- **Impact on students.** The school’s attendance was around 90% before the pandemic, with a target of 95%. However, this year attendance has been only just above 80%.

“The pandemic has been a disaster for us. We are a creative school. That is our ethos. Any opportunity, we seize it. We had made such good headway, but we have been in the trenches since the pandemic. We have been constrained.” Adrian Walsh, Principal

Planning was slightly more complicated because participants were from different classes and some had behavioural issues.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

The Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue, has observed three sessions:

DATE	23 March	March	March
ARTFORM	Music: Bodhran drum session DJ Skills	Drama workshop	Drumming workshop
YEAR GROUP	Year 9	Year 9 and year 11	Year 9
LENGTH OF SESSION	2	2 hours	1.5 hours
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	25	35	22

The impacts evidenced are:

- **Communication skills.** In the drama workshop the students worked creatively in groups shaping and performing a piece of live theatre. Marie observed that students: “were learning how to communicate in a non-verbal way, using their bodies and facial expressions to react to some of the scenarios that they were being presented with.” Students also needed to listen hard since they were sometimes given a series of continuous instructions: “There was a sense of fun too but you had to concentrate very hard to keep up!” In the drumming workshop, participants were necessarily collaborating in their sense of the music and had to listen carefully to instructions: “The students had to watch and listen very intently to keep up as Thomas would often change the rhythm or speed up or slow down. It was as if they were speaking through their drums.”

“This was a group participating and working together as one unit so they were collaborating and depending on one another.” Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue

- **Confidence.** Marie commented on the skilful way the artists developed the participants' technique: "Initially a lot of the learning at the beginning was through observation and imitation but gradually as they played on their own, you could see them beginning to gather confidence in their own ability and as the workshop progressed, they became more secure in their relationship with their instrument."

"This group were very proud to be part of the programme. I spoke to a number of them afterwards and they were very keen on the drumming and the DJing that they have been doing. They felt special because they are learning a new skill. The students said that the drumming in particular has made them feel more confident and given them confidence in other areas of learning." Marie O'Donoghue, Programme Manager

"These are pupils who would walk around with hands covering their front, who they couldn't speak to anyone except their peers. They would be afraid to try new things in case they fail. Now they are trying new things and are delighted. They are standing taller." Ursula Mackel, English teacher

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Raised profile.** The previous project produced a poetry anthology, *The Times that Shape Us* which was launched at a high-profile event that included parents, local politicians and the media. More than 100 people attended. Since this event, the school has been featured in three stories at the BBC and two for Sky Arts. Some of this was the result of increased interest in how young people experienced the pandemic. In addition, at the request of UV, students gave a performance of African and traditional drumming at an awards ceremony for School of Sanctuary in September 2022, with other performance planned for November 2022, when Urban Villages celebrates the regeneration of a local park.

"The community has gained an insight into the wonderful work in the school and the wonderful girls. It was the first event of this kind after the pandemic and it was wonderful to have that cohesion together." Ursula Mackel, English teacher

"The poetry anthology launch was the biggest and most successful launch we had ever had." Adrian Walsh, Principal

- **Equipment.** The positive experience of the Music workshop led to the Head of Music ordering in a full set of bodhrans and updated software packages to develop DJ skills.
- **Stronger music department.** In part because of the buzz created through the CSP project about 100 pupils have expressed interest in private music lessons, which the school is organising for free.

“The CSP has resulted in teachers being trained on new instruments and being able to buy instruments. We have a very vibrant Music Department, but we would never have thought of these things.” Brid Smyth, Music teacher

- **Teacher development.** The drumming artist, Thomas, ran a session in a staff day in April 2022, which was widely attended and appreciated. All staff would have some knowledge of CSP as Ursula gives updates on the process and achievements at each inset day.
- **Delivery to a wider group of students.** Brid Smyth, Lead Teacher from the Music Department, received training in African drums from the artist, Thomas, and has since run sessions with 300 KS3 pupils. She also received training in the bodhrans and plans to use this in class with the cohort of KS3 pupils.
- **Strengthening interdepartmental working.** Adrian Walsh suggested that CSP has helped to bring back collaboration and collegiality, which had been undermined by other systemic changes.
- **Helping make the case for a new school building.** The relationship with Urban Villages means that the school’s need for a new building is visible.

The teachers are strongly committed to continuing with CSP.

“The programme should be rolled out to more children. The money should be there without us having to go through an onerous application process. It should be available to every child of this demographic.” Ursula Mackel, English teacher

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The impacts on the local community are:

- **Community contacts.** UV Coordinator, Philip Magee, has been involved in the planning of the project as well as attending three workshops. The school has developed relationships with community organisations and intends to maintain them, especially through taking students to visit community venues.
- **Positive identity for the community.** The three events which raised the profile of the school, described above, also provided a form of celebration for the local community. In addition, the lead teacher, Ursula Mackel has visited local groups with the UV coordinator and given presentations about the CSP. UV Coordinator, Philip Magee, and CSP Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue, spoke at St Colm’s Prize Day in September 2022, at which the school had introduced a new award for CSP, which went to the class members who produced the poetry anthology.
- **Infrastructure for creative collaboration.** Adrian Walsh observes that CSP has created the skills and knowledge to enable teachers and pupils to take advantage of the substantial opportunities from the UV’s development of Colm. Hoardings outside a new park, which the school was given to decorate, have since been donated to the school,

and have been sited in its playground, which enhances the environment for pupils and teachers.

- **Knowledge of creative learning.** The anthology launch, described above, was attended by local schools with an interest in CSP. St Colm's attended one of Urban Villages bimonthly reference group meetings with local community organisations and presented the CSP programme.

"Creative Schools Partnership has allowed us to promote projects such as mental health projects to students and their parents. We can make links rapidly because of the relationships with St Colm's."

- **Connection between community centres and students and their families.** UV helped connect St Colm's to the Our Generation project, which is delivering support for mental health. Teachers from St Colm's School (and also Ashfield Girls and St Vincent's) attended circle events organised as part of the Our Generation programme and spoke about the positive impact of CSP for young people and local communities. St Colm's has been working with Ionad na Fuisioige who offered their building to the school for events.

The Programme Manager, Marie O'Donoghue, presented CSP on Our Generation's online "Making Change" event, which was attended by community representatives from Northern Ireland and the Republic.

SCHOOL 7: LISNEAL COLLEGE

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

Lisneal College joined CSP in year 2.

	Yr 3
Total enrolments	894
% of students who receive free school meals	40%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	315
Religion	81% Protestant; 4% Catholic; 15% Other /Unknown
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Inter-generational Stories
Artists and partners	Jonathan Burgess, Director
Timing	December 2020-ongoing
Age of children	11-14
Number of children	16

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 7: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: OUR WORLD IN DRAMA

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops Scripts Plays Theatre visits Teaching CPD (directing, production)	Number of pupils (target: 40-60 KS3) Number of plays created (target: 4)	Pupils develop empathy, strengthen their Drama skills, and increase their understanding of the theatre The school develops teachers' skills and confidence in Drama, and strengthens community links (e.g., with Urban Villages, North West Cultural Partnership, The Millennium Forum Youth Theatre)	Contribution to the School Development Plan.

ASSUMPTIONS:

That impact is strengthened by: creating plays on social/community issues chosen by the students as relevant to them; and students – and teachers - working with a professional theatre practitioner.

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

Michelle Lake, Drama teacher, decided to continue the success of the previous year's project by focusing on building the Drama Department. Before her appointment, the school had not offered GCSE Drama, only KS3 taught by non-specialists.

The project consisted of two devised plays: on intergenerational issues and intercultural issues. These subjects were chosen by the young people themselves, in conversation with Michelle Lake. Michelle put out a general call for interest to KS3 and 30 pupils replied. 20 were selected to take part in the class. Most were academic achievers.

The project consisted of 30 Drama workshops, four production workshops and two shows: in a Drama room in the school and at The Fountain Primary School.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Supporting wellbeing.** In the drama sessions, students were able to explore their emotions one step removed by adopting characters. Andrew Tinney, actor/director, explained that: "Young people tend to think of a show as a recital, where their role is to say specific lines. I told them to think of themselves as a character, rather than themselves saying some lines."
- **Connecting to young people's lives.** Andrew Tinney, actor/director, explained: "I incorporated physical theatre, where movements were exaggerated, where they weren't speaking but were using their bodies as emojis."
- **Having high aspirations.** Marie reported that the role of the Polish father was played by a local professional actor and this helped to make the students feel excited and important.
- **Allowing time for development.** Each of the actor/directors were given 30 hours to work on the project.
- **Using interaction to ensure engagement.** Marie noted that: "Codie, the director kept them focused and engaged, doing the run through and taking time out to look more closely at certain aspects of the script. She used a lot of questioning techniques to encourage them to think more about their characters and how they would react."

- **Sustainability.** Codie Morrison, actor/director, gave the students links to the social media for the education programmes at local theatres.

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Timing.** The start date was delayed from October to March. This meant activity had to be squeezed into a relatively short period of time, although this intensity proved to be positive. Less positively, other activities, especially sports activities, were also fighting for time in the compressed period. One of Codie's sessions, only had four students for the first 40 minutes because a sports day had been rescheduled at that time.
- **Impact on artists.** When the project was given the go ahead, Michelle felt she was in a queue for artists because many had taken other kinds of work to support themselves during the pandemic.
- **Connection with other schools.** The compressed timetable meant that the school was unable to connect with St Cecilia's as had been planned.
- **Impact on teachers.** Michelle describes this year as the toughest to be a teacher. The level of antisocial behaviour in class has increased and parents have also been more demanding, presumably because the former had lost their routine of school attendance and the latter were unable to cope. Teacher absence has increased, which has made it more difficult to get cover teachers.
- **Impact on students.** More widely, COVID has widened the group of pupils who are interested in creative subjects. Pupils who would be uncomfortable participating in class were more comfortable being creative at home. The school has celebrated this work with a wall called Beautiful Work, designed to counter the negative narrative of young people losing time during the pandemic.

The timing of the project meant that the school hall was taken by examinations and couldn't be used for the show. Having a two-year span will allow the team to programme the work more easily next time.

The school chose to schedule the creative workshops for different days of the week so students were not always missing the same subject in class. For one of the artists, a consistent day and time would have been more convenient.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

I have two observation forms, one from Marie and one from the teacher:

DATE	4 th May 2022	8 th May 2022
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ARTFORM	Drama	Drama
YEAR GROUP	KS3	Year 8,9,10
LENGTH OF SESSION	2 hours	4 hours
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	12	12-14

The impacts on the students are:

- Behaviour.** None of the antisocial behaviour seen elsewhere happened in the Drama class. On the contrary, two students who had had poor attendance because of mental health issues attended every session of the project.
- Confidence.** Marie reported that: “The students I spoke to said they loved working with Codie, one student told me “She makes you feel really comfortable within yourself and gives you the confidence to do your work.” Codie Morrison, actor/director was impressed with the standard of performance at the show: “The pupils had learnt so much. Their focus off stage. They were holding themselves like a professional touring company. I was blown over by it.”
- Wellbeing.** Michelle observed that students thrived in the creative sessions. The devised approach gave a large amount of freedom and also made the students feel valued because the script came from them. Pupils also benefitted from the active nature of Drama classes, with many unable to sit still for period of time.
- Communication skills.** In her observation, Marie said that: “Codie spent a good part of the session reading parts of the script with them and carefully questioning them about certain aspects of it. The students talked about the development of the character they were playing and how they could best present them through movement and facial expression. As they read through the script together and when they were on the floor doing their walk-through they were having to listen actively and also observe and react to each other. They were experimenting with their voices and using facial expressions and body language to emphasise certain aspects of the characters they were playing.”
- Intercultural understanding.** In her observation, Marie commented that: “When Sam, one of the characters delivered her monologue of hatred, Codie questioned the students on how did they think Teya (the monologue was about her) would feel? They immediately reacted, had empathy for the character, and said that she would feel sad and unwanted. They said that they would feel like telling Sam to stop but would probably be afraid to do that as Sam was supposed to be their friend.”

Excerpt from the script:

“Teya: But we don’t fit in. The people don’t want us.

Dad: Some of the people. Not all of them. Don’t let one or two people spoil it for you. We have to learn how to be in this place and people have to learn that we are here and that we are going to be of benefit to this place. I am sorry, I should have prepared you better, but what I want for you is to be able to fit in and become part of this place.

Dariusz: Does that mean we have to give up everything about ourselves?

Dad: Don't be silly.

Dariusz: So, what am I now? Am I still Polish? Or am I Northern Irish?

Dad: You are you. Be the best one of those that you can be."

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impact on the school is:

- **Embedding of creative learning.** This year, the school used CSP to be more proactive in supporting Drama teaching: not just including students who have chosen GCSE Drama but now prioritising earlier years. Michael Allen, the Principal, has a higher priority to creative learning. When he talks to PGCE students, he talks about the teacher as a performer. CSP has given the school the impetus to make plans for creative learning into a reality. It has also demonstrated the value of having outside expertise.

"If we didn't use creative approaches, we would be in serious trouble because we have such a wide range of ability. The majority of children are in the average to lower band. The way you get them involved in quite dull curriculum is to make it interesting, using creative methods. It is in the DNA of the school. Direct instruction wouldn't work here so we have no choice." Michael Allen, Principal

"We are known as a cricket school and a pastoral school. I want us to be known as a Drama school." Michael Allen, Principal

- **CPD.** Michelle Lake, Drama teacher said that watching professional actors/directors developed her skills and made her more ambitious in what she would teach to the students. She is considering having a devised play as the next school production rather than the usual musical. Next year, Michelle would like the CSP to be "bigger and better."

"There was a lot of putting in the building blocks, explaining what it is to be an actor, which I tend to overlook. In the conversations about character, the children were using GCSE and A Level Drama language. This was very impressive and made me revise my schemes of work. The pupils were more than capable of having those discussions. I realised I don't need to fear the terminology."

- **Status of the Drama department.** The Principal has decided to employ another Drama teacher, who will start in the new academic year.

"My school needs CSP very much: to promote the arts and let the parents see the benefits of the arts. The PU community is beginning to see the benefits." Michael Allen, Principal

- **Interest in Drama.** Partly, but not entirely because of the CSP project, the number of students studying Drama at GCSE has doubled in the last year, from nine in 2022 to 18 in 2023. The number of students expressing interest in the school play has also increased, from 18 in 2021 to 45 (so far) for 2022. Much of the enthusiasm for Drama is coming from CSP participants who have told their friends about the project.
- **Interdepartmental working.** The project strengthened links between Drama and English and Learning for Life and Work.
- **Film.** The school filmed the final show and disseminated it on social media.

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The impacts on the community are:

- **Community links.** The pupils met with local people at a community centre, the Fountain. This connection was made through Urban Villages, which is involved in a development of the Fountain area.
- **Connections between schools.** One of the performances took place in The Fountain Primary School. The success of the show has triggered interest from other youth clubs and community organisations, with whom Michelle will connect in the second year.
- **Involvement of parents.** Most of the participants' parents attended the show and many brought family members. Communication suggests that the parents are starting to see the value of Drama, which can be a barrier to students studying it.
- **Audience development.** UV's New Gate project will include creation of a theatre and the company that is supporting this, Blue Eagle Productions, has been working with Lisneal College, which provides a route for students to gain future experience and employment in the arts. This is of benefit to the school and Urban Villages.

Michelle approached a local intercultural group to invite them to be part of the project. They asked to be paid so she involved the parents of participants instead.

Also see impacts for Derry described above, in the St Cecilia's case study.

“Many of the young people in CSP are challenging at school because they don't know where they fit. CSP gives them somewhere to fit and this creates behaviour change because they see their life is important.” Maureen Fox, UV Coordinator

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Andrew Tinney, actor/director, has been recommended to another school, with the prospect of further work.

Codie Morrison, actor/director, gained from having to do the tech for the shows, since each new type of space presents different challenges and learning.

SCHOOL 8: MERCY COLLEGE

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

Mercy College missed years 2 and 3.

Post code	Belfast BT14 7QR	
	Pilot	Yr 1
Total enrolments	450	556
% of students who receive free school meals	70%	68%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	222	263
Religion	98% Catholic	94% Catholic, 3% Protestant
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	D'Ya get me - using drama to explore issues affecting traumatised communities past and present, watching and creating drama	Putting on a Face – using drama, poetry, music and visual art to explore identity and mental and physical wellbeing.
Artists and partners	Patricia Meir, retired Drama teacher Syd Trotter, Tutor Ulster University Dr Rosemary Moreland, Senior Lecturer in Youth and Community Studies, Ulster University	Patricia Meir, retired Drama teacher Maebh Meir, visual artist Fleur Mellor, dancer, Duncairn Centre, Theatre trip to the Grand Opera House, career trip to the Lyric Theatre
Timing	March to May 2018	March to June 2019
Age of children	14	11
Number of children	20	18

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 8: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: MERCY MOMENTS

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (writing, drama, media)	Number of pupils (target:24 Yr 8)	Pupils increase their confidence, enhance their wellbeing and raise their aspiration	Contribution to School Development Plan priorities of raising attainment at GCSE 5+ A*-C
Showcase or film		The school strengthens links between departments and develops community links (e.g.,	Contribution to School Development Plan priorities to support
Teacher CPD (film-making)			

Visits e.g., to Ulster Museum, Cultra		Nerve Centre, Urban Villages)	mental health and wellbeing
ASSUMPTIONS:			
That impact is strengthened by: researching the history and impact of Mercy College in interviews in order to strengthen identity and belonging; connecting learning to life; involving parents and grandparents; a student-centred experience where students decide on the themes to explore; and employing KS4 and 5 students as mentors for the participants.			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The lead teacher, Andrea Fryers, is a Drama teacher. She wanted to expand into media and film-making this year because the school does not teach media, and she wanted to nurture her own skills in the subject. Film-making also suited the limitations of the school, which is squeezed for space (the stage is being used for storage) and lacks film-making equipment; and reduced the risks of disruption in the case of another lockdown. Making a DVD about the history of the school compensated for the limitations on celebrating the 60th anniversary of the school, which happened two years ago, during the pandemic.

The project consisted of:

- A visit to the Ulster Museum.
- Workshops with Karen Kingham, film-maker.

24 students took part.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Careful design.** The Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue, observed that the March session was: “Extremely well structured and planned giving children time to explore and investigate. The artist’s planning was superb. Detailed research and professional knowledge were very evident.” The second March session included an introduction to the museum, a presentation on three paintings in the Art Zone (learning space) that picked up learning about visual communication and storytelling from previous sessions in the school, a tour of the museum and a practical workshop.

“The three works that were selected were figurative and full of rich material on which to draw. John Kindnesses work was a frieze that he had painted based on his childhood in North Belfast in the 1960’s. The students are creating a film based on their school and community, which opened in 1960 so immediately their ears pricked up when they heard that it was the 1960’s. They listened, focused, and commented on the clothing of the

characters in the frieze. Colleen explained the context to the students and, as she took them through the series of images, she carefully questioned them about what they could see.”

Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **High aspirations.** The first March session gave an introduction to film, including the technical language to describe camera use. Marie recorded that: “At the beginning I felt that the language might be too technical for the students and the content too academic. However, I was wrong and the artist had pitched the session at exactly the level that the students were comfortable and knowledgeable with.”
- **Strong engagement.** Marie also noted that: “Everyone participated and, much to the delight of the teacher concerned, a number of reticent students were animated and highly engaged.”

“From the first session, I am introducing film language. I want the theory to jump off the page. The presentation is very interactive. I have quizzes and hangman to test learning.”

Karen Kingham, film-maker

- **Student empowerment.** Marie reflected that: “There was a lot of focus on the children’s voice and the result was that the pace was enthusiastic because the children were thinking quickly, making connection for themselves and relating what they were responding to with their own experiences.”

In the third observation, Marie noted that: “Two production crews were set up in separate locations to rehearse questioning and filming techniques with key interviewees. The students were acting as production crew and were already familiar with both filming interviewing terms.

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Impact on the local community.** The Principal, Martin Moreland, explains that the community is struggling because of Brexit, the pandemic and the cost-of- living crisis. The last two years have had single years School Development Plans that have been more focused on responding to these crises than on creative learning. The school has restructured to strengthen its management, including adding two Assistant Principals, which means that Martin is less involved in CSP than for the earlier years. Embedding creative learning is still important but Martin suggests: “It is early days. We probably lost two years because of the pandemic.”
- **Impact on the school.** Trips were more difficult to organise because of the increased risk assessment for COVID.
- **Community links.** Coffee mornings with parents were cancelled.
- **Timing.** The project started two months late. Two filming sessions were cancelled because of COVID. The project had not finished at the time of the June interview.

Andrea Fryers teacher thought the CSP application process was quite challenging because it was asking for details about the activities and cost of what is proposed, when the reality is that these change, and should change, as the project evolves in response to the needs of the pupils and new opportunities arise. The pandemic also reduced the ability of the school to plan ahead.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

The Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue, has observed three sessions:

DATE	March 2022	March 2022	6 th May 2022
ARTFORM	Film	Film making/Day at the Ulster Museum	Film Making /Performance
YEAR GROUP	Year 8	Year 8	Year 8
LENGTH OF SESSION	2-3 hours	Full day	2 ½ hours
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	20	20	20

The impacts are:

- Communication and critical-thinking skills.** For the first March session, Marie observed that: “The session was designed specifically to improve the students’ communication skills through questioning, answering, looking, interacting with one another. They were challenged visually and technically in the area of filmmaking that they will be working in.” In addition: “The whole session focused on getting the children to think for themselves. This was particularly evident in the group work when they discussed and analysed and evaluated a number of stills and short clips.”

“Karen (the artist) encouraged the students to consider the types of questions they wanted to ask. During questioning, she allowed time for them to reflect on the answers they were given and use the answers to inform deeper questions. This was hugely successful because the students showed that they had the ability to move quickly from surface questions to more enquiring questions.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“Students are developing their skills in creating narrative and documentary. We have a structure – a tree – which is called the documentree – which explains how the story has a backbone or trunk – and then jumping off points, offshoots that follow up angles in the interviews. With documentary you are following a journey, there is an element of the great unknown because each interview is a mystery. You can’t plan as much as if you are crafting a fictional story.” Karen Kingham, film-maker

- Reinforcement existing skills.** Marie observed that participants were: “being taught how to read images. It was revelatory to see how fluent the students already were with their

ability to read images and make the connection between image and emotion, event, character and atmosphere.”

- **Concentration.** Andrea Fryers explained that: “Year 8s were especially strongly affected by the pandemic. Many children started the year quite unable to keep quiet in class. However, in the film-making, they felt important and absorbed. When we say “crew-ready” and use the clapper board, there is not a noise in the room. You wouldn't think it is the same class.”
- **Engagement in learning.** Each student gained what they needed from the project. Being given responsibility and praise meant that some reduced their anxiety, others became more articulate, or improved their behaviour (in this project and other classes) because they wanted to be allowed to attend.

“There needs to be creativity in schools, especially after COVID. We need to use creative skills to support mental health.” Andrea Fryers, Drama teacher

- **Teambuilding.** Andrea noticed that, at the beginning, the class didn't have a sense of togetherness. Now she sees them behaving as a group, for example, looking after each other
- **Links to the community.** Marie noted that: “The very fact that these children are going to make their own film about themselves, their school and their community has already instilled a sense of pride and a curiosity to know more.”

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Commemoration of the role of the school in the community.** The Principal planned different events to bring together former teachers and students, but these were not possible during the pandemic. The project has enabled the school to celebrate its history and importance in the community in a positive tone that uses key interviews to focus on the personalities and characters in the school. When it is finished, the film will be launched in events in the school. In addition, Karen is intending to enter the film for film festivals.
- **Interdepartmental working.** The project involved Drama, History, English and Religious Education. Art was also involved from September 2022.
- **Staff development.** Andrea Fryers learnt how to film and edit. “Things I have wanted to know and never had the opportunity.” The school has since bought ten iPads and Andrea is planning to integrate media into her schemes of work.

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The impacts on the community are:

- **Record of local history.** The DVD is not completed yet but, when it is, the plan is to share it with the community. Urban Villages is facilitating this.

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Karen Kingham, film-maker has found the project an energising experience after the pandemic. She has never done a two-year film project in a school. Next year, the students will have time to learn about post production. One of the students is a rapper and there is time to incorporate their skills and interests.

“This project has been unique because of the timing post COVID and the stresses and anxieties unique to this age group. I have impressed by students’ abilities to come back from that, it has inspired me artistically. The subject matter and teachers inspired, make me hopeful and make me want to do more of this kind of work. I had been thinking of stepping back.”

SCHOOL 9: BELFAST MODEL FOR BOYS

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

Belfast Model for Boys joined CSP after the pilot.

	Yr 1	Yr 3
Total enrolments	1047	1093
% of students who receive free school meals	60%	59%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	483	410
Religion	90% Protestant, 1% Catholic, 9% Other	86% Protestant, 1% Catholic, 13% Other /Unknown
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Postcards from Cavehill – photographic exhibitions	New Opportunities – media technologies CPD
Artists and partners	Melvyn Smith, Community Engagement Manager, Belfast Exposed Grainne McKenna, The Learning Curve	Nerve Belfast
Timing	April to June 2019	June 2021
Age of children	13-14 and 16-17	13-14
Number of children	30	9

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 9: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: HEROES IN OUR COMMUNITY

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (researching, interviewing, photographing, documenting and communicating) Magazine (with features on mental	Number of pupils (target: 20 KS3)	Pupils develop creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, analytical and creative learning skills (in Photoshop, InDesign, script-writing, presenting and photography), and wellbeing (including	Contribution to School Development Plan priority to ensure quality outcomes for learners

<p>health and societal/local issues)</p> <p>Podcasts</p> <p>Blog</p> <p>Teacher CPD and sharing</p>		<p>knowledge of mental health subjects)</p> <p>The school develops teachers' skills, strengthens creative learning, and enhances connections to the community (e.g., Nerve Belfast, Urban Villages, Greater Shankill Partnership, Shankill Mirror)</p>	
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: giving students specific 'industry' roles in small groups; giving students life experiences that generate new thinking; connecting learning to the community/real world; working with Nerve Belfast, with whom the school already has a strong relationship; working with prestigious artists (journalist and broadcaster Mark Davenport, and street artists Glenn Molloy) who act as role models; having a theme/values around aspiration; and having students learn and then communicate their learning.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The project consisted of:

- Planning meetings including talking to the artists and printers to create a structure and timetable for the project.
- Six workshops with Mark Devenport of the BBC on interviewing skills and story writing.
- Six workshops with Nerve Belfast on Photoshop and InDesign. The two sessions were virtual before the lockdown relaxed.
- A workshop with Glenn Molloy on Street Art.
- Weekly classroom time to write articles and design the pages.
- Three meetings with Joan Totten of Alternatives Community Group to discuss the history of the area and plan interviews with local residents.
- Attendance at the Waterways Festival Creative Writing Competition.

26 students took part.

The teachers emphasised that: “A major strength of the programme has to be the role of Marie. She is always there with anything we need and turns up in person to see how we are getting on.”

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- **Experience of the professional artists.** In the December creative writing workshops, Marie noted that: “I think too here we were witnessing the value of bringing in a professional from industry. The experience of this person cannot be replicated, yes certain techniques perhaps, but the value of having someone of this calibre working alongside the teachers is invaluable.”
- **Step-by-step development.** In the December workshop on Photoshop, Marie observed that the expert from Nerve Belfast: “took the students through the basics slowly, illustrating each step and then they had the opportunity to practice on their own and explore their own ideas.”

“Sarah is very skilled. She patiently and clearly took them through the basics but gave them enough information so that they could experiment and set themselves their own challenges. Some of them were very confident, some slightly hesitant but everyone succeeded in creating their own image with lettering.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **Equipment.** In the December workshop on Photoshop, all students had their own workspace and computer.
- **Engagement of the whole group.** In the December workshop on Photoshop, the facilitator initially worked with the whole class and then supported those who needed more attention to gain confidence and skills.
- **Sustained engagement.** The Vice Principal, Dawn Farquhar, explains that: “The beauty of CSP is that it embeds creative learning in a meaningful way rather than in little engagements. It enables students to understand the benefit and transferability of these higher order skills.”

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Difficulty finding substitute teachers.** Even though CSP provided the funding, the school could still not find cover. In the June observation form, Conor McManus noted that: “The school realises that it would be better to have visits by the artists on a more regular basis throughout the year. This has been problematic because of the lack of availability of substitute teachers.” Dates were partly forced on the teachers as being times when fewer students were in the school so enabling teacher participation.
- **Delivery online.** The first two workshops with Nerve Belfast had to be delivered virtually.

- **Locating the mural.** Implementation of the mural was delayed because of challenges in identifying who owns the wall adjacent to the school which the teachers chose for the mural. This process was facilitated by Urban Villages, who helped trace the ownership and suggested alternative sites.

Working with three artists was relatively complicated, although communication was streamlined by creating a Google Classroom across the team.

Another challenge is that the classroom structure changed. The 20 students were selected because they were all in one Yr 9 class. The restructuring means that the 20 were spread across different classes. The teachers responded to this by tweaking the selection to focus on students with a particular interest in English or Art. Seven students from this year have gone forward to the next year of CSP.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

I have two observations from the Programme Manager, Marie O’Donoghue and one observation from the teacher:

DATE	December 2021	December 15 th 2021	23 rd & 24 th June 2022
ARTFORM	Digital art	Creative writing	Digital artwork/Photography
YEAR GROUP	Year 9	Year 9	Year 9
LENGTH OF SESSION	2 hours	4 hours	12 hours over 2 days
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	20	20	20

The impacts on students are:

- **Technical skills.** Students learnt how to use Photoshop and InDesign. Marie emphasised that: “The professional brings up-to-date knowledge about the industry and advice on how to forge a path within it. They are also giving students a sound foundation in learning how to use an accessible software package that can be transferred to all subjects across the curriculum and in the workplace.”
- **Communication skills.** In the December Photoshop workshop, Marie observed that: “Students were thinking about how to create an effective composition and how to make it more appealing to their audience. They were learning about the power of the visual image and how it can be a persuasive tool to capture an audience.” In the creative writing workshops, Mark Devenport, talked to students about the narrative structure of a newspaper, how to think about the needs of the intended audience, how to focus

articles, the need to carry out research before an interview and how to frame interview questions. He used interactive exercises for the students to practice each of these skills.

“Students shared examples from their own experience on how powerful imagery can be sometimes misleading and the need for all of us to question and think for ourselves.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“The journalist explained to the students about the various type of reports that are in a newspaper e.g., headline stories, secondary stories and fillers. He then led an interactive exercise where he gave students a wide variety of newspaper cuttings that he had cut out from current newspapers. Each group had to sort and categorise them into the relevant categories and then during feedback justify why they had decided on their choices.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“The students had to write a short paragraph on a potential subject that they could submit for their magazine. They had to think of a topical piece that would engage the readers. Mark spoke to them about the importance of reporting factually and having first hand sources.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

“The final part of the session concentrated on the pupils becoming young reporters/interviewers where together they had to think of certain questions to ask Mark about his life and work. Then one pupil from each group put the question to him, standing up in front of the camera.” Marie O’Donoghue, Programme Manager

- **Personal skills.** In the December Photoshop workshop, Marie saw both concentration and team skills: “Overcoming technical issues, the students had to persevere and transfer what they had learnt by watching Sarah when it came to their own work. Some were able to retain the knowledge and confidently apply the new skills exploring further independently. Others slightly struggled and at times asked their peers for assistance, they were learning from each other and not afraid when they had to persevere to get the right effect.”
- **Increased confidence.** The facilitators supported and praised the students. For example, in the December creative writing workshop, Marie said that: “Time then was given for each student to read aloud to the rest of the class, one boy was slightly reticent to read aloud so Mark read it out commenting that it had great potential.”
- **Insight into careers in the creative industries.** In the December creative writing workshop, the students interviewed Mark about his career path and so gained knowledge about how people can get into and work in the creative industries: “Mark was able to talk about possible career opportunities and told wonderful stories about his own career, the difficulties and successes. He told a wonderful story about interviewing the former President Clinton in the States and there was a power cut just as he began the interview. He kept us all enthralled as he recounted how they had a 20-minute informal chat about their lives, families and travelling.” Conor pointed out that meeting arts professionals can help raise student aspiration. Without these real-world

experiences, students might default towards seeking employment in the sectors where their parents worked, which doesn't necessarily create aspiration.

“We are a careers-focused school. It can be difficult to get people to speak to schools about the opportunities in the creative industries. CSP helps peoples understand the wealth of careers in the creative industries.” Dawn Farquhar, Vice Principal

The teachers emphasised that the CSP skills are applicable beyond the project, for example in other subjects but also in applying to university.

“When they are applying to university, students can have difficulty writing about themselves, which puts them at a disadvantage compared to students from more affluent backgrounds, who are more confident that they are of interest to other people. The skills from CSP will help the students tell their own story in applications to university and for jobs, which will help them stand out. Our boys are often doing the same things as students from other schools, but would otherwise struggle to vocalise their achievements.” Dawn Farquhar, Vice Principal

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Interdepartmental working.** The project involved Art, Media Studies and English teachers. Marie pointed out that the subjects chosen by the students also connected with History, Careers, Geography, Media and Sport.
- **Creation of a mural.** The project has included creating an overall design and checklist of features for a mural (e.g., school logo, images of local landmarks, images of aspirational people, participating pupils' names).
- **Creation of a magazine.** By the end of the project, the group will have a 36-40 page magazine profiling inspirational and aspirational local people, including former pupils. Each of the 20 students participating is producing a profile for the magazine.
- **Skill development.** Teachers deepened their skills in Photoshop, which they intend to use with other students, including examination classes.
- **Support to teaching of creative subjects.** Engagement in Media Studies was falling and the Vice Principal thinks that CSP has helped halt that decline. The teacher who has led on CSP, Connor McManus, has a lead role in supporting pedagogy across the school,
- **Connection with other CSP schools.** The project was partly inspired by the work of St Colm's and St Cecilia's so the teachers spoke to their counterparts to understand the logistics of a project like this.

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The impacts on the local community are:

- **Platform to tell young people their stories.** Conor McManus noted that: “During the year, the teachers involved in the project have had meetings with local community groups to establish links involving visits to the school when the pupils will learn more about the history of their community. These visits are planned for Year 2 of the project.” For example, The Alternatives Group connected the teachers to other local groups and is organising for them to speak to the boys and contribute to the discussion about what should go into the magazine.
- **Positive narrative about the local community.** The Vice Principal, Dawn Farquhar, explains that the community is very important to the students, an important part of their identity, so if the school embraces and celebrates that identity, it is better able to engage and motivate students.

“We often see the negative sides of the community, the trauma. We don't have so many opportunities to see the positives. It is important our school shows that it understands the community. The strength of the CSP is that it allows the students to express their connection to the community in a way that includes the school, and that can make them perform better in school. Boys are often more motivated to perform for you and the community than for themselves.” Dawn Farquhar, Vice Principal

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Nerve Belfast had had a long-standing relationship with the school, which was part of its Partnership programme. The facilitator, Sarah Lawrence, has delivered many sessions on Photoshop and is continually learning, as with this project, how to break the knowledge down into tasks and use exercises to help consolidate learning.

SCHOOL 10: ST JOSEPH'S BOYS SCHOOL

PREVIOUS PROJECTS

St Joseph's Boys School has been involved in CSP from the beginning.

Post code	Derry BT48 9NX		
	Pilot	Yr 1	Yr 3
Total enrolments	720	677	582
% of students who receive free school meals	66%	66%	64%
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs	316	345	268
Religion	99% Catholic	99% Catholic	Not available
Creative Schools Partnerships Project	Teenage Kicks – developing literacy through creating and producing own magazine	Becoming Joe – film and e-book on the life of year 8s	Joe Goes Digital
Artists and partners	Leona O'Neill, writer and journalist Jim McCafferty, photographer	Fionnuala Deane, John McDaid, Dog Ears John Peto, Sharon Tosh, Nerve Centre	Nerve Centre
Timing	February to June 2018	April to June 2019	March to April 2021
Age of children	12	11	Mixed
Number of children	22	28 Year 8s and 5 Year 13s and 14s	12

LOGIC MODEL

This is my conceptualisation of the project using the information in the application form.

FIGURE 10: LOGIC MODEL FOR THE PROJECT: JOE'S MUSICAL MAESTROS

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Creative workshops (music) Teacher CPD Showcase	Number of pupils (target 30)	Pupils develop their thinking skills, enhance wellbeing (including sense of belonging), increase their love of music and increase their understanding of other communities	Contribution to School Development Plan priorities KS3 Thinking skills and personal capabilities; Raising standards' Pastoral care/SEN/Catholic ethos; PR and marketing

		The school strengthens its community links and profile (e.g., with St Columb's School of Music, Urban Villages, Streets Alive-High Hopes Choir, Newgate Arts and Culture Centre, Nerve Belfast)	
<p>ASSUMPTIONS:</p> <p>That impact is strengthened by: giving students a full experience from writing music, to programming, marketing and promoting it; bringing students together as a collective ensemble; involving other choirs and arts projects in performing at the concerts; and holding the concerts in a Catholic and a Protestant place of worship.</p>			

PROCESS

DESCRIPTION

The project consisted of four full day workshops with Eimear Tracey, Dr Sean Doherty and Dan Ferguson on traditional Irish music and song-writing.

The project involved a full class of Yr 9s – 25 students, with 18 Yr 11s acting as mentors.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY

Interviews and observation forms evidenced these facets of quality:

- Focus on the school's priorities.** The teacher, Fiona Harrigan, pointed out that one of the determinants of quality in CSP is the ability, in the application and planning process, to design the project around the specific needs of the school and its pupils.
- Length of the sessions, including full day workshops.** "The duration worked well to ensure maximum engagement, enough repetition of learning and also enough time for students to work together, give them a break and experiment what they had learned on their own.
- Variation in the teaching style.** In the June observation form, the teacher reflected that the sessions were relatedly long but engagement was sustained because there were different facilitators, who had quite different personalities and teaching techniques."
- Tailoring of content to individual interests.** In the June observation form, Marie observed that: "The facilitators tried to understand the students on a personal level, getting to know about them, their interests and their dislikes and adapted the work accordingly. For example, initially, song-writing might sound boring, but when you allow

a football fan to compose their own song for their football team, they will suddenly become much more enthusiastic to the project and the facilitator.”

- **Recapping of previous sessions**, which was necessary because engagement was less continuous than planned. As the teacher explains: “Each session would start and end with a recap of what had been discussed and taught. This helped the students who may have been absent in previous a session an opportunity to catch up (or at least know what they had missed so that they could ask.”
- **Rapid output**. The teachers thought that the sessions were highly motivating for students because the facilitators took a step-by-step approach which produced a tangible product by the end of the session. For example, in a workshop on music composition students progressed from having little knowledge of the subject to hearing a short piece they had written, which was very motivating for them.

CHALLENGES

COVID affected the project in these ways:

- **Staff illness**. Workshops were cancelled because of staff catching COVID or having other health issues. These problems also meant a new teacher joined the team, which gave additional work in briefing them about CSP.
- **Variation in student attendance**. In the June observation form, the teacher noted that: “A clear plan was outlined before each session by the facilitators. However, due to reasons outside of our control, objectives were changed and facilitators had to adapt to the numbers that were present on the day of the sessions. In many cases, this helped the facilitators deliver a more personal approach and more of an individual learning experience for the participants.”
- **Inability to hold sessions outside the school**. Marie noted that: “initially it was thought that the students would be out of the school attending the sessions at the school of music but instead the community of songwriters and musicians came to the school and created a very positive and worthwhile experience for the boys.”
- **Compression of the delivery period**. Marie recorded that: “Circumstances have been such that the activity has really had to be condensed and delivered in a short period, hopefully in the second year they will have the benefit of prolonging the activity over a longer period which will be much more beneficial for everyone.”

In addition, the school had challenges because of low resourcing. The school has ukuleles, but not other instruments, not even tin whistles. It has guitars, but hasn't had the money for strings. The music department doesn't have a Mac, which would allow students to experiment with Garage Band.

IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

Both Marie and the teachers recorded observations for a session in June.

DATE	15th June	15th June	15th June
ARTFORM	Music	Music	Music
YEAR GROUP	Year 9	Year 9	Year 9
LENGTH OF SESSION	Full day	Full day	Full day
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	14	14	14

The impacts on students are:

- Communication skills.** Both Marie and the teacher observed the value of the project for developing listening skills. The teacher: “All of the activities focused on repetition and recall. The students needed to watch, listen and learn, before repeating various rhythms and styles.” Marie: “At various stages of the composition the students had to really listen and work out when they had to come in.”
- Teamworking skills.** The teacher noted that each session started with group work and then broke into smaller groups for practice, and that the smaller groups included a mix of abilities that encouraged peer support: “When playing together in a large group, they all had a responsibility to each other and so their focus would be stronger during these group tasks. In some instances when the facilitator’s steps were too difficult for some of the students, in the smaller groups, more competent students came up with easier solutions to attain the same results, thinking in a creative way to explain the same steps, but in a way that they knew their peers would understand.”
- Confidence.** The teacher thought that students increased in confidence because of the level of responsibility and self-determination in the sessions: “The students felt that they were creating their own music with their own ideas and their own thoughts. They felt empowered and that this was their own project, not a project which they were instructed to do and spoon-fed into every decision. Although many of the chords and lyrical ideas may have already been planned by the facilitators, the project was designed in such a way that the students felt that all of these ideas were their original thoughts.”
- Aspiration.** The teacher emphasised that: “When they knew that the work they would be doing in these sessions would eventually be performed in various venues, and even the Guildhall in the city, the students felt more pressure into putting in good work, which helped them remain focused and work together as a team.”
- Mental health.** The school chose music because a survey by the local diocese of 2,000 young people, which asked about what brings their faith alive, received many answers around music.

IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL

The impacts on the school are:

- **Use of the nurture room.** The 2021 CSP project involved the design and construction of a nurture unit, for which a strong impact is now evident. Students are referred to the unit, with a maximum of six at any one time. Students get between one and six sessions depending on their level of trauma. All teachers have been trained in the principles of nurture which are: understand children's learning developmentally, offer a safe space, develop self-esteem, see the role of language in communication, understand that all behaviour is communication, and understand the significance of transitions. The school has seen that having the nurture room has increased attendance. Students who have felt ill or uncomfortable during the day have been able to stay in school and address their issues rather than disengaging. None of the students who have accessed the nurture room have been suspended. There are students who might have had four suspensions in a month who have had none. Having the nurture room enabled the school to better understand the special needs of its pupils and it has responded by creating additional units for meet these needs, for example, to create a classroom especially for students on the autism spectrum. Having the nurture room has also led to the school connecting to community organisations that provide specific services around mental health. For example, Maureen of Urban Villages connected the school to Hopes Choir.
- **Teacher CPD.** The Music teacher, Shauna Cassidy, said she learnt specific techniques that she has already started applying in the classroom. For example, explaining chords and the process of composition step-by-step, recording students in the classroom so they can hear how much they have improved and getting students to write their own pop song. Shauna would also bring her flute in and play for the students, which she has never done before except in after-school clubs.

"The CSP project makes me enthusiastic about going in and making the lessons meaningful, enhancing students' experience so that they really care about music. As a teacher, you never get to see other people's teaching. Doing so gives a whole level of learning."

- **Teacher morale.** Enthusiasm for the project was manifest among everyone involved. In addition, a key member of staff died last year and the CSP project has included creation of a song about him, which gives an important route to celebrate a teacher's contribution.

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The impacts on the local community are:

- **Community cohesion.** The plan was to perform concerts in both Protestant and Catholic churches, which didn't happen this year but is planned for the next. Catholic students have never performed at St Colm's Cathedral before.

Also see impacts for Derry described above in the St Cecilia's case study.

IMPACTS ON THE ARTISTS

Nicky Morton and Louis Field have only recently formed a music school. The project raised their profile in the local community, although few of the pupils are likely to be able to afford lessons without subsidy. The school already has a bursary scheme and the CSP project helps them make the case to expand it.

The musicians developed their ability to teach a mixed-ability group. They had assumed that students would be at a similar standard, but this was not the case. They soon saw ways to structure the groups so that students could receive the individual instruction and support they needed.

The musicians learnt about the conditions in schools outside the usual group of private and grammar schools. They had assumed the school would have fiddles and other instruments and were surprised to see the group in St Joseph's only had one bodhran between 20. The musicians responded by using clapping and body percussion in the session. Next time, they would ask in advance about the instruments a school has.

"The project helped us improvise and adapt. Before we went in, we didn't know how many students who attend. We quickly learnt that you need a plan, but also a plan B and C."

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Creative Schools Partnership is special and important because of:

- **The partnership.** The collaboration between Urban Villages, the Arts Council and the Education Authority gave skills and connections which supported all sides of the projects and magnified their impact.
- **The targeting on schools in disadvantaged areas.** Choosing schools in Urban Village areas, and then focusing on students who were either disengaged from learning or otherwise not reaching their potential, increased the added value from Creative School Partnership. One of the most frequently mentioned phrases in interviews was that the projects gave opportunities that these students would not otherwise have had, whether to visit arts venues, work in small groups, have a voice, or feel good about themselves.
- **The sustained engagement with the schools.** Seven of the 11 schools have taken part in all years of the Programme since the pilot in 2017/2018, five years of funding. Comparing this evaluation with previous reports shows a clear line of improvement, whereby this year, even with the hangover from the pandemic, schools were more ambitious in their projects, including being inspired by other CSP projects, and more able to design projects to maximise individual and organisational benefit.
- **The calibre of the artists/facilitators.** We have 40 detailed observation forms, all of which record and evidence that the objectives for the session was clear, the session was well structured, the session was pitched at the right level, and the pace was right for the students.
- **The ability to engage students.** Data from the observation forms is that, in almost all sessions, all members of the group participated and the participants were on task during the session.
- **The role of the Programme Manager.** Engaging primary schools in arts projects is relatively easy because teachers are generalists and most employ some level of creativity in their lessons. Engaging secondary schools in arts projects is much more difficult because of the less flexible curriculum and pressure of examinations. The success of the programme is in no small measure due to the skills, connections and encouragement of the Programme Manager who has had a practical role in helping schools resolve any problems that occurred during the projects. Without this support, schools might have been forced, however, unwillingly, to give up the projects because of the other pressures on their time.

The need for Creative Schools Partnership increased because of the impact of the pandemic on:

- **Students.** Especially in deprived communities, the pandemic exasperated levels of anxiety and depression in young people because of: isolation, increased exposure to

difficult family circumstances, family bereavements, poverty and pressure around exams. Attendance dropped after the pandemic because some students, and their families, had lost the habit of going to schools regularly. Schools also reported that students returned with lower confidence and oracy skills.

- **Schools.** Although schools were very well aware of the mental health issues of students and the impact on attendance, they were pulled in two directions, with strong pressure to ensure success in exams.
- **Teachers.** Although not often reported, the pressure on teachers during the pandemic were every bit as serious as that for students. Teachers were faced with having to: develop new tools for virtual or blended teaching, master new platforms, experience and/or cover for staff sickness, adapted teaching for bubble formats, administer examinations, and provide additional emotional support to students. Several interviewees described teacher morale as the lowest in their memory.
- **Artists.** Schools were either closed or not allowing external visitors during the pandemic, so many artists lost contact with this sector. The damaging financial impact of the pandemic on artists and other freelancers has been well-documented, including by us. CSP was an especially attractive commission for artists because of the number of days involved, which gave financial stability as well as a greater sense of achievement. It also allowed artists to understand the journey schools were on, and so to better engage with them.

Despite the pressures of the pandemic, eight of the ten schools reached the same number of students (or very slightly fewer than) they set as targets in their application forms. Overall, this year of CSP reached 279 young people.

Reviewing the statements in the application forms, we can see that schools have developed a strong appreciation of quality in creative projects and designed for these in delivery. These elements are evident across the schools:

- **Student-centred approach.** Having young people drive the direction of the project - including deciding on the themes to explore, connecting to local stories, having time to experiment with different media and organising tasks in the group – increases their sense of ownership and investment in their learning as well as strengthening their team-working skills as some step into leadership or support roles.
- **Full-cycle experience.** Giving young people experience of designing, planning, programming, marketing and presenting their work develops their critical-thinking skills, as well as communicating the relevance of the learning and its connection to the world outside school.
- **Celebration of achievement.** Having performances, exhibitions, presentations and/or publications develops students' communication skills, confidence and sense of having a place in the wider community.

- **Facilitation by artists and creative professionals.** Creative professionals have skills and experiences that inspire young people and increase their understanding of different career routes into the creative industries.
- **Continual engagement.** Giving the schools the freedom to choose to work with the same artists, students and ideas over time allows them to create a depth experience rather than the temptation of spreading a (shallow) experience across all students.

The benefits of CSP for **Urban Villages** and the community are:

- Stronger relationships between schools and the community through direct involvement in delivering creative projects. This is an important element, although somewhat diminished in the year of this evaluation because of the legacy of the pandemic.
- Contribution to building good relations - as it relates to sectarianism, racism and homophobia - by increasing understanding, empathy and a sense of shared experiences.
- Spin-off relationships between the schools and local individuals and organisations arising from UV's referrals or connections made by teachers or pupils during or after the CSP work.
- Direct involvement in Urban Villages' projects, especially in capital projects, where CSP has provided a route for consultation and participation so that young people can make contribute to the design of projects and increase their feeling of ownership over the local realm.
- Impact on the skills, confidence, educational engagement and achievements of young people participating in the projects, who have also formed role models across the school, youth clubs and beyond.
- A more central, but intangible role in symbolising the core messages of Urban Villages around aspiration, cross-community connection, inclusion and hope – all part of creating a positive identity.

The benefits of CSP for the **EA** are:

- Engagement of underperforming students.
- CPD for teachers.
- Improved morale of teachers.
- Increased uptake of creative subjects at KS4 by pupils in some of the schools.
- Visible and vivid case studies that raise expectations that teaching can engage every child in the school.
- Successful model of how to use the flexibility of the KS3 curriculum, including adopting a cross curricular approach that connects learning.
- Demonstration of the relevance of the school to the local community, which leads to a greater connection with, and pride in, the school.

The benefits of CSP for **ACNI** are:

- Delivery of high-quality creative projects of a scale that is otherwise difficult to fund.
- Support from the EA, especially the expertise and energy of the Programme Manager in engaging and retaining secondary schools.
- Raised profile of, and status to, the arts in schools and understanding of their central role in pedagogy because of the power of creativity.
- New audience development. Research shows unequivocally that engagement with arts at a young age determines future attendance.
- Increased interest in, and knowledge, of creative careers among young people who might not otherwise access opportunities in the creative sector.
- Sustained employment for artists and other creative professionals.

These multiple benefits mean that CSP is strong value for money to each individual partner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CSP should be retained and expanded. Stopping the programme would have a cost to students, teachers, schools and communities.

CSP should retain its model of:

- Keeping the focus on secondary schools, specifically KS3.
- Having a Programme Manager with a role beyond administration into delivery
- Allowing schools to choose artists and retain the same people over time.
- Employing high level artists and creative professionals.
- Including teacher CPD and other work to spread the learning across the school.
- Bringing schools together to learn from each other.
- Embedding evaluation, including the use of observation forms.

The programme should be extended to include:

- More schools.
- More formats to bring CSP schools together.
- More focus on disseminating learning from the programme.
- Additional staff.

The partners should reflect on the central lessons of CSP, that:

- Schools are core elements in the local social fabric and so are vital partners in regeneration and renewal.
- Arts subjects and creative learning provide unique ways to engage young people and so are essential elements in an education system that embraces the talents of each pupil.
- Secondary schools provide a window in which young people can learn about and aspire to jobs in the arts and creative industries and so are an important part of arts education.