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Youth Performance Partnerships Evaluation

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An Unpredictable Future, Stage Directions

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Executive Summary

This is the second annual report for the pilot Youth Performance Partnerships (YPP) programme evaluation.

The YPP funding aims to support new developmental performance opportunities for children and young people (CYP) from areas of low cultural engagement and high levels of deprivation. The programme foregrounds co-creation with CYP and a partnership approach, with an ambition to deliver more impactful work by strengthening the links between cultural organisations, and between the cultural sector and the education sector. Five Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs) in Croydon, Derby, Medway and Sheppey, Plymouth, and Salford have been leading the delivery of the programme since 2019.

A large part of the programme to date coexists with the COVID-19 pandemic, which has brought huge disruptions and adaptations to planned delivery, as well as heightened pressures on the project teams, partners and schools. Nevertheless, the commitments and persistence of the lead organisations and their partners have enabled a rich programme of activity to take place in Year 2. This year of the programme, which included a mixture of in-person and online activities, engaged 3,782 CYP audience in performances and 4,779 CYP participants through other activities across 101 schools. These activities, of different artforms such as dance, graffiti, drama, spoken word, and hip-hop, were delivered in various school settings and out-of-school formats by 149 partners and 156 creative practitioners.

The YPP programme reflects Arts Council England's (ACE) increased strategic interest in strengthening its place-based approach. Given that each project's local evaluation team largely focused on exploring impacts on CYP in each area, the focus of the Year 2 national evaluation was the emerging outcomes and learnings on partnership working and on LCEPs.

Figure 1 summarises emerging findings against programme impacts in the logic model. Year 2 of the YPP saw the greatest impact on partnership working between cultural organisations and schools. The programme and resources

developed by the YPP has emerged to become a support system for schools and teachers. It provided more creative opportunities for students, promoting creative quality standards for schools (e.g. via Artsmark) and skills development opportunities for teachers. The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for artists and teachers should not be overlooked as a contributing factor to this outcome. Putting artists alongside teachers (e.g. an artist-in-residence model) was cited to be the most effective way to gain better understanding of each other's needs and new skills to work with CYP. Cultural organisations also developed new tools and approaches to co-create with less-culturally-engaged CYP and involve them in all stages of a theatre production.

The YPP experience has generated benefits and learnings to the LCEPs. There is a clear increase in the number of partners involved in Year 2 of the programme, with more examples of non-cultural sector partners compared to Year 1. These new partners created new connections for the LCEPs and made the LCEPs more aware of their local cultural ecosystems. Lead organisations increasingly see themselves as the facilitator or bridge for relationships. They have also grown in confidence and autonomy to execute strategic decisions, broker, and nurture relationships. They learned about mutuality as a factor of a successful partnership and developed ways to remedy weak partnerships.

There has also been growing evidence of CYP outcomes. In addition to being a key resource to help CYP connect to one another and prevent feelings of isolation during the pandemic, YPP activity was reported to have grown CYP's confidence and skills in areas such as teamwork, communication, and skills specific to performance or performance-making activity. Evidence also suggested that the YPP increased the aspirations and self-efficacy of CYP regarding their future progression pathways both within the sector and elsewhere. These achievements are attributed to the deepening of relationships with schools and an expansion of delivery partners of diverse creative practices and skills, and their creativity and adaptability in the face of ongoing uncertainties during the pandemic.

There is a clear ambition from the lead organisations and LCEPs to create a legacy for the programme. The place-based partnerships approach of the YPP has generated a suite of novel examples and creative practices to schools and

CYP work, as well as tested frameworks on CYP engagement. These examples and experiences, if properly captured, could provide valuable insights to future CYP work. The CPD offer for teachers and artists is another way to achieve a legacy, by bringing change to the cultural ecosystem in their local region. The emerging CPD models adopted by projects seems a strong avenue for legacy to be realised.

It is important to recognise that the YPP funding has a significant effect on the success of the programme. The funding is crucial to bringing schools to the table and attracting new and different partners. We suggest that strategic support offered to projects in the year ahead is focused on how to establish which aspects of YPP activity are having the strongest impacts and how these may be funded to continue beyond the pilot period.

Figure 1 Summary of emerging findings against programme impacts in the logic model

Intended impacts from logic model	Emerging impact strength	Progress at end of Year 2
Children and young people develop creative skills and knowledge to take ownership of their progression pathways in and around performance	Medium	Local evaluators reported strong and consistent positive outcomes for children and young people, largely relating to personal and social development, alongside performance and creative skills. Those more closely involved in project activity developed stronger creative skills and closer relationships to lead organisations and partners. This area would benefit from further research, as this finding was drawn from a relatively small cohort of the overall programme.
Partnerships between schools and cultural organisations are improved and further partnership work is catalysed (specifically via LCEPs)	High	LCEPs are developing their relationships with schools through the programme. Artists and cultural organisations are increasingly recognised as providing an essential function in pandemic recovery and resilience (for delivery and CPD). Although 'getting people round the table' is largely catalysed by the fact that this is a funded programme and that school offers are subsidised/free.
Systems change in ways of working between education, cultural and other sectors	Low	Alongside increased work with schools, there are emerging examples of partnership working between cultural organisations and adjacent sectors (e.g. community groups, social care), but these are largely opportunistic and rarely strategic (i.e., bringing other sectors into the LCEP work more directly). There is little emerging evidence of a 'systems change' across any of the five sites, although this must also be considered in light of the demands of the pandemic.
LCEPs across England and ACE can learn from this work and improve their own models of working.	Low, but with potential in Y3 and beyond.	Much of the clear progress has come from the resources made available by the programme funding (i.e., staff positions, paid freelancers, offer of paid project work for schools and partners). In all cases the programme has strengthened LCEP working, including those at already very different stages of maturity. A key area of focus for remaining Years is to explore and share what aspects are sustainable beyond the programme; including those that could be funded by ACE and other sources, and ways of working that have been established that do not require external funding. At the moment this is not clear and therefore cannot be shared further.

1. Summary of activity

1.1 Introduction

Arts Council England commissioned BOP Consulting to conduct the evaluation of the Youth Performance Partnerships programme. This Year 2 annual report, covering YPP activity for the period September 2020 to August 2021, highlights the programme's progress towards achieving the outcomes and impacts identified in the YPP logic model (see Figure 5).

YPP is a pilot programme delivered and led by five Local Cultural Education Partnerships which seeks to create developmental performance experiences for young people, enable new talent to be supported and developed, and to create more equitable access to the creative arts, particularly focusing on areas of high disadvantage and low engagement. Over the course of four academic years, each area aims to reach over 2,000 children and young people¹.

The YPP programme is comprised of five distinct projects, each with its own programme of activity. These five projects were initially developed at the application stage by the lead organisations, with input from LCEP partners, and subsequently directed by the interests and needs of the children and young people (CYP) in each location.

The evaluation aims to identify the impact of the programme, assess the extent to which the programme has met its aims and objectives, and understand how it is developing over time and across the five areas. The evaluation also aims to inform Arts Council England's future cultural programme models for young people and enable them to share relevant policy and practice with the wider sector.

Given that each project has a local evaluation team, largely focused on exploring impacts on children and young people in each area, the focus of the Year 2 national evaluation was the emerging outcomes and learnings on partnership working for LCEPs. By focusing on learnings on partnerships, the evaluation aims to share insights regarding the effectiveness of place-based cultural programme models for young people as ACE develop their next strategy.

This report is structured broadly according to the outcomes as identified in the logic model on CYP, partnerships and LCEPs. It will discuss findings in order of where the impacts are most evident: on partnerships, on LCEPs, and then on CYP, aggregating findings from each local evaluation.

Details on the evaluation methodology and logic model can be found in the Appendix of this report.

¹ Note that ACE has recently confirmed the extension of the programme from 2019 – 2022 to 2019 – 2023. This extension of the programme has been applied on a project-by-project basis, with With Flying Colours (Plymouth),

C3 (Croydon) and Reimagine (Derby) having been extended, and Theatre 31 (Medway and Sheppey) and Stage Directions (Salford) ending in 2022 as originally planned.

Figure 2 Projects in the YPP programme

Project	Location	Lead organisation	Year 2 CYP activity highlights
Croydon Creative Collective (C3)	Croydon	Croydon Music and Arts (CMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of resources on Seesaw Home Learning app² • Continued engagement with the C3 Youth Collective³ • Commissioning of a film co-produced by the C3 Youth Collective to promote the Borough of Culture in Croydon • Online Zoom sessions focusing on different artforms and artistic skills. • Activities in schools which were targeted under the Youth Endowment Fund⁴.
Reimagine	Derby	University of Derby Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expansion of the Future Creatives group through targeted recruitment of young people. The now 24 Future Creatives members received mentorship, and received training to develop the performance of <i>Home Girl</i> for the main stage of Derby Theatre in July 2021 (cancelled due to COVID-19). • All five hubs continued to deliver activities during autumn 2020 and through the second lockdown from Christmas through to Summer 2021. The creative theme for all these activities was provided by the Alex Wheatle's novel for young adults <i>Home Girl</i>. Some activities 'reimagined' scenes, characters or aspects of the plot, while others created art that might accompany performances of the story.
Theatre 31 (T31)	Medway and Sheppey	Icon Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground Theatre: this project was specifically created for 'coming out of COVID', engaged 1,900 young people safely and outdoors in their school playgrounds. • Young Artist Collective: an ongoing youth-led panel meets regularly to discuss Theatre31 and their own creative projects. Connections have been made to Medway City of Culture 2025 young panel and ART31 to extend their experiences. • Sheppey Shanties: Bring together four Sheppey based schools in partnership and engaging over 100 young people in this sustained activity, especially after COVID-19 lockdown restrictions where Sheppey had been one of the worst hit areas in the UK.

² CMA uses the SeeSaw app as a communication platform to liaise directly with young people outside session times while meeting Croydon Council GDPR compliance and Safeguarding policies. Young artists can upload their work, receive feedback from CMA staff and its cultural partners, and create a digital portfolio to evidence their development. More information can be found [here](#).

³ The C3 Youth Collective is a group of young creatives and advocates. Youth Collective members produce and programme their own arts events for young people in Croydon including the Youth Takeover at Fairfield Halls. They also play a crucial role in decision making about the C3 programme and culture in Croydon. More information can be found [here](#).

⁴ The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) was established in March 2019 by children's charity Impetus, with a £200m endowment and ten year mandate from the Home Office, and enables CMA to target working with high risk young people. In Year 2, CMA were able to deliver YPP activity with groups in school settings targeted through YEF

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools tour 2020: Despite the lockdown situation, touring an outdoor theatrical production to seven local primary schools, as well as delivering one of the tour dates in Sheppey –despite the island being closed.
With Flying Colours (WFC)	Plymouth	Royal Theatre Plymouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissions to facilitate co-created plays in 10 schools Commissions for four professional pop-up performances informed by children and young people's ideas that toured to schools with an associated workshop (22 performances in total across nine of the schools) Initiation of a professional performance commission for the following year CPD for artists and teachers
Stage Directions	Salford	The Lowry Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onstage activities at Pendleton College, Buile Hill Academy, St George's Primary, St Paul's Cross Lane Primary, The Albion Academy, Lark Hill Primary and St Paul's Peel Primary Creative Camp Intensive Community Onstage at Ordsall (at Oasis Academy) Community Onstage at Eccles (at St Patricks High School) Community Onstage at Walkden (at Coop Academy Walkden) (Offstage) Community Weekend Camps (Walk the Plank) Community Offstage (Technical) at The Lowry/Pendleton College

1.2 Year 2 activities

The programme delivered a significant amount of activity in Year 2 despite the ongoing pandemic and the resulting deviation from original delivery plans. The richness of the activity was a result of the persistence and commitment of lead organisations and partners amid intense workloads, brought about by furlough and absence of staff, team changes and frequent contingency planning. This section summarises the features of the activities in Year 2.

1.2.1 Digital content

The main adaptation to COVID-19 across the five projects was the pivot to digital, whether in the form of online performances or other types of interactive sessions, which look to meaningfully engage with CYP.

The unexpected addition of digital activity became an integral offer in Year 2, notwithstanding a few obvious challenges of engaging children and young people online. Lead organisations and partners became more sophisticated in the use of online tools in producing digital content and in evaluation. These digital resources were frequently observed as being highly engaging, and the quality of the digital content, mostly co-produced with young people, was high.

Examples of activity

Theatre 31 commissioned work Morpheus was a term-long digital theatre programme conducted in Will Adams Centre in Medway, a local alternative provision school. Curated by local arts organisation Ideas Test, who teamed up with acclaimed theatre makers Dante or Die, this project engaged young people and staff at the school to co-create a digital theatre. Through weekly sessions held completely online in a specially devised virtual creative space, young artists built characters and narratives that made up the dream-like world of Morpheus. Audiences were taken on an online journey through an interactive map along with visual and aural soundscapes, spoken word, and film.

As part of the Theatre 31 evaluation, two online 'creative cafés' for young people and artists involved in the project were held. Creative cafés served as informal and safe spaces for participants to reflect on their experience of the

project. An illustrator was also brought in to capture key insights from the conversation.

In Derby, Deda [one of the five Reimagine hubs] continued their previous practice from Year 1 of making YouTube videos focussing on emotional resilience and exercise. They also conducted more targeted work to support schools' online home learning with 30 minutes of videos focussed on creative writing and movement each week in the spring term. Sinfonia Viva [another Reimagine hub] supported schools to engage online, delivering to a number of groups multiple times a week in several schools.

1.2.2 Commissioned productions and theatre-making activities

Commissioned productions and performances were the main methods for YPP to reach a large number of CYP and schools. Different commissioning approaches and commissioned contents were developed in response to the needs and interests of the CYP and schools locally.

In-depth engagement with CYP was achieved through artist facilitated or supported theatre-making sessions. These sessions happened in a variety of settings e.g. schools, after school clubs, community centres. These activities had a strong co-creation element, supported by bespoke co-creation tools. These activities typically targeted a smaller group of CYP over a longer period of time to develop their technical and transferrable skills.

Examples of activity

Year 2 CYP-focused activity by With Flying Colours included playwriting and playmaking work in 10 schools, planned to lead towards a school play and pop-up performances in an end of year festival. An artist-in-residence model was tested where arts companies/ artists were commissioned to lead on the relationship with the school and deliver activity in that school. However, COVID-19 impacted greatly on planned delivery timescales, methods and outputs, with only one company being able to work throughout on an 'in room' basis leading to a performance.

The Snow Queen's Magnificent Message, a co-production with Circo Rum Ba Ba, was commissioned by Theatre 31 for Key Stage 2 (years 4, 5 and 6). This tour was a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic – where the 'School's Trip' budget was adapted to bring live theatrical experiences to schools, in an outdoor setting. The production toured to seven local schools, including one in Sheppey despite the island being completely closed due to COVID-19.

Year 2 of Reimagine's central artistic theme was *Home Girl*, a novel for young adults by Alex Wheatle which documents the experiences of a young girl in the care system. The book explores themes of race, sexuality and identity, love and family life, mental health and bullying. During Reimagine Year 1, a weekly online book club and reading sessions, including the attendance by the author, were used to stimulate creative responses from young people, and they chose the book as the central creative theme for 2021. This group evolved to become 'the Future Creatives'. The central activity for 2021 commenced with a commission, issued by the Future Creatives, to recruit professional writers and a young person to create a stage adaptation of the book. The young people chose the professional and youth writer. The commission was targeted in particular at people from under-represented backgrounds, including those with experience of the care system.

1.2.3 Multi-partnered, artforms and settings

The YPP leverages LCEPs to steer the local delivery of activity, with LCEP partners generally playing a strategic role in shaping the programme. On some occasions, LCEP partners are also involved in delivery, although the model tends to be that lead organisations work to bring in different delivery partners from outside of the LCEP (i.e. cultural and non-cultural organisations, artists and creative practitioners). LCEPs are the key relationship holders of YPPs strategic and delivery networks, and the multi-partnered model enables the sharing of diverse expertise in relation to a wide range of activities in different artforms and settings.

Examples of activity

C3 features three different performance companies led by delivery partner organisations, including a Dance company led by Birdgang Collective, a Theatre company led by Zoo Co and a Performance Poetry company by Well Versed Ink. Year 2 of C3 activity focused heavily on regular online Zoom sessions for CYP to try out different art forms e.g. visual arts, drama, and dance. These sessions had a high attendance throughout the delivery year.

Reimagine is organised around five hubs, four of them spatial and one cross-city which works with children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Each hub is led by a single LCEP partner organisation, though often partners will lead one hub and deliver activities in several others. Each hub has a range of organisations, partners and others, delivering activities. Some projects within the programme involve multiple hubs, while others are discrete to that hub. Activities involve taster and developmental sessions as well as projects which culminate in sharing performances within the hub and at city-wide events. In addition to the hubs, the programme envisages the establishment of a series of production companies. These will act as artistic steering groups as well as vehicles for young people engaged through the programme to gain a more in-depth understanding of creative production and to develop core skills.

In Year 2, Stage Directions began working with partners including CHOL and Gail Gang, both of whom are described by the lead organisation as being 'instrumental' to project delivery, despite not having been named in the initial project bid. The programme has acted as 'a great testing ground' for bringing organisations such as these into Salford and connecting them with schools. Further to this, the Stage Directions lead organisation described having been able to invest more in partnerships, resulting in 'less transactional relationships' with delivery partners this year, as engaged artists become partners.

1.2.4 CPD for teachers and artists

Engagements with schools and activities in schools were challenging given school closures and pressures on teachers during the pandemic. All projects adapted their school offers in Year 2. Offers for schools included free sessions

and creative opportunities for their students which could be tailored to their needs, Artsmark and Arts Award resources, as well as CPD resources for teachers.

YPP projects stressed the importance of creating CPD opportunities for the teachers and artists involved, particularly equipping teachers with the confidence and skills to embed creativity in their curriculum. YPP produced teacher resources and facilitated connections and interactions between artists and teachers. Across the five locations, these offers ranged from artist-teacher meetings to online teaching packs.

Examples of activity

Stage Directions' CPD offer featured a two-day residential for artists, teachers and trainees with sessions from CommonWealth, The Wardrobe Ensemble, TalkOut & Action Transport Theatre. In addition, Stage Directions provided 10 trainee placements for early career artists with a passion for participatory work and delivering high quality engagement work in Salford. Creative training sessions delivered by CHOL were available to LCEP partners, exploring unique approaches and methodologies for use in classrooms and drama sessions.

With Flying Colours invited all artists and teachers to attend a two-day inception and CPD programme at the start of the year, with support cover offered for schools, although attendance was variable. The programme included workshops from a wide variety of companies and artists from beyond Plymouth to provide the opportunity to learn about different approaches to, and models of, co-creation.

Reimagine offered Teachers Academy, a professional development programme for teachers interested in developing their performance-making skills in Primary, Secondary and SEND settings.

1.3 Year 2 programme outputs

The indicators designed to capture programme outputs were developed pre-COVID-19 based on the YPP logic model. We recommend that for Year 3 these indicators be adapted to allow for data capture to differentiate between in-person and digital activities.

Figure 3 Programme outputs

	C3 (Croydon)	Reimagine (Derby)	Theatre 31 (Medway and Sheppey)	With Flying Colours (Plymouth)	Stage Directions (Salford)	Total
Number of performances	10	24	26	27	9 ⁵	96
Number of performance venues / sites	2	17	59	9	8	95
No. of audiences engaged (CYP)	0	553	2,276 ⁶	683	270	3,782
No. of audiences engaged (adults)	165	154	1,979 ⁶	181	170	2,649
No. of artists and creative practitioners employed	8	41	50	31	26	156
No. of schools engaged	10	17	44 ⁷	12	18	101
No. of partners involved	4	36 ⁸	67	11	31	149
No. of new partnerships established	0	7	30	11	9	57
Non-performance activities						
Total no. of hours of sessions	117	266	260	270	440	1,353
Total no. of engagements (attendances)	1,438	1,099	3,967 ⁹	4,796	3,562	14,862
Total no. of unique participants	139	533	1,906 ¹⁰	963	1,238	4,779

Source: Collated by BOP Consulting, data sourced from project teams and evaluators

⁵ In addition to these performances, Stage Directions organised 2 theatre trips for young people and their parents

⁶ This figure was reported as 3,979 'general' audience members engaged, which includes young people and adults. This is due to online activity not allowing for the identification of audiences. We took the assumption that a CYP viewer was accompanied by an adult viewer, and split this figure across CYP and adults, with 2,000 participants listed as CYP, and 1,979 as adults.

⁷ Reported as number of schools and youth groups engaged

⁸ Note that as this figure was summed across partner responses this may include double counting of partners

⁹ 460 adults also reported

¹⁰ 141 adults also reported

2. Assessments on partnership working

This section reflects on the programme's achievements to-date on the outcome: Schools and cultural organisations improve their abilities to engage broad and diverse participants and audiences' through the lens of partnership working.

Year 2 has seen the emergence of a support system for schools and teachers which offers more creative opportunities for students, raises the creative quality standard of the school (e.g. via Artsmark), and develops skills and confidence among teachers, enabling them to teach with more creativity. That being said, the depth of impact resulting from this engagement is, to an extent, dictated by the resource and capacity of teachers and schools to engage and is not consistently reported across the programme.

Projects were also seen to test and develop a framework for engaging CYP through different stages of performance productions by iterating their approaches with partners.

2.1 An emerging support system for schools and teachers

A survey with teachers in Year 2 suggested that¹¹:

- Net 80% agreed they have learned how to co-create more effectively with young people in performance making¹²
- Net 80% felt more confident in working with cultural practitioners to deliver a programme of activities

- Net 70% agreed that young people have engaged in the performing arts who would not have otherwise
- Net 60% agreed they have developed new skills regarding the teaching of performing arts.

The multi-partner model of YPP allowed schools and their students to benefit from a range of creative practices, expertise and resources offered by an extensive network of delivery partners. Teachers and artists recognised that these approaches were different from what they experienced before. They were also able to articulate how the approach led to better outcomes for the students and themselves.

“ [The YPP project] has changed [the children's] viewpoints of what dance actually is and could be. (Teacher, With Flying Colours)

The value of the YPP was made more important against the backdrop of a decreasing priority in arts and creativity in the curriculum and an under-investment in arts education. Lead organisations saw the potential of leveraging the YPP resource to develop a support system for schools and teachers that would enable them to secure more creative opportunities for their students, raise the creative quality standard of the school (e.g. via Artsmark) and develop their own ability to teach with more creativity.

“ [I am now] thinking more creatively when planning across the curriculum for next academic year. Looking at building on the skills [the children] have learnt in this project and how we can use and develop these further. (Teacher, With Flying Colours)

The free YPP activity and resources allowed schools and teachers to bring in creative approaches in various school settings and to different student groups, including students with SEND or students from Pupil Referral Units. With a

¹¹ Data based on 10 teachers' survey responses from Medway and Sheppey (4) and Plymouth (6).

¹² Net agreement indicates the total proportion who agreed or strongly agreed with a statement minus those who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

growing understanding of the needs of a particular school, artists of YPP were able to design activities that could support and be delivered within the curriculum, and others that helped to explore themes outside of the curriculum such as cultural identity and race.

“ For us to offer schools creative worth in curriculum time and also other performance opportunities meant schools didn’t have to think about prioritising the catch-up curriculum – because we were providing something responsive and in curriculum.
(Partner/Artist, Stage Directions)

Teachers and artists commented that a sustained engagement with YPP had made material differences to CYP and teacher development, when compared with one-off activity. Regular sessions allowed CYP to build on the things they learned and develop relationships and ideas. Teachers reported developing new skills and inspiration via YPP being delivered to their pupils. Stage Directions trialled an ‘in residence’ model where the ensemble leaders or artists were available to teachers on the ground, developing a day-to-day relationship with them. In this way, they were able to respond more dynamically to the needs of individual schools and teachers. Confidence and know-how in working with artists have also grown for teachers in schools, to the extent that in Year 3 they will be commissioning and contracting artists directly using funding supplied by Stage Directions.

“ We’re not a regularly funded organisation. We make a lot of work with young people having a participatory role, but we’ve never had six months like that... I think that collaboration with the teacher was so key! We were able to not only get feedback from her but to really build on the amazing relationship that she already had with those young people and that would’ve taken us a long time to build up... She also brought stuff to the project... a lot of the ideas in Morpheus were [her] ideas that we could then incorporate... What an interesting model it was to work with a

PRU and maybe in other education sectors as well. (Artist, Theatre 31)

Sustaining these impacts on schools will be hugely affected by individual school’s capacity and resources. Lead organisations of YPP unanimously cited engaging schools to be a challenge this year, given the pressures schools were under in responding to the pandemic. At the moment, YPP being a free programme is a major appeal. The promotion of Artsmark and Arts Award as part of the YPP offer also helped attract schools’ interests. It remains to be seen how schools’ demand would change if fees were introduced for participation. Lead organisations and partners of YPP have already started discussions regarding ways to create a legacy of the programme, mainly through exploring other funding opportunities.

2.2 Partnerships between cultural organisations and schools provide opportunities to engage CYP through different stages of performance productions

Cultural organisations and practitioners delivering the YPP were able to test frameworks of CYP engagement that would progress CYP along the cultural participation ladder. Partnerships with schools have opened up opportunities to engage CYP through different stages of performance productions, and feedback from teachers has helped cultural organisations to improve their activities. Although specific activities differed across the five locations, they broadly fell under the categories of:

- Exposure opportunities. These are light-touch, low-commitment opportunities for CYP to experience performance, different artforms or creative roles.
- Skills development opportunities. These take the form of regular sessions facilitated by artists with a focus on developing artistic and transferrable skills.

- Progression opportunities such as Reimagine Derby Future Creatives, Arts Awards etc.

Various co-creation practices were applied and shared across the programme. Stage Directions led a national discussion with the other YPP projects to understand the principles of co-creation in the context of working with people under the age of 18 on theatre activities. Five artists were brought in to contribute to this exercise. This work resulted in a set of principles which will be tested through activities over the next year of YPP programming. Stage Directions aims to share the next iteration of these principles with the sector in 2022/23.

The programme demonstrated various ways of involving different groups of CYP in different stages of a production from recruitment to performance. Partnerships with the non-cultural sector allowed the programme to deviate from recruitment models based on level of skills or experience, which tend to attract young people who already show a strong interest in the arts or have prior cultural experiences. Reimagine went through a targeted recruitment aimed at young people aged between 14-25 who were entitled to free school meals, pupil premium, were care experienced, disabled or had English as a Second Language. Reimagine partners and their schools' networks distributed the call and referred young people interested in performance but also the range of technical skills and roles that surround the performing arts.

All locations of YPP engaged CYP in different on-stage and off-stage roles of performance. These CYP were trained by professional artists to help them gain the necessary skills for the role. The Future Creatives at Reimagine Derby is a strong example where 24 young people, including 14 performers, one writer, two stage managers, a sound designer, a lighting designer, a marketing officer, a producer, a set designer, a costume designer and a production manager, were mentored by industry professionals to work together to develop a theatre performance. Although the final performance of *Home Girl* did not happen due to COVID-19, strong impact on the CYP was being reported with clear progression of the Future Creatives, including going into Derby Theatre Ambassadors scheme, youth theatre groups and front-of-house theatre staff.

3. Impact on Local Cultural Education Partnerships

This section reflects on the programme's achievements to-date on the outcome: LCEPs gain better understanding about cross sector partnership and working is significantly extended.

There was a clear increase in the number of partners involved in Year 2 of the programme. The YPP created new connections for the LCEP, making the LCEP more aware of their local cultural ecosystem. Lead organisations have grown their confidence and autonomy to execute strategic decisions, broker, and nurture relationships. Increased partnership working has numerous associated benefits, including the sharing of knowledge and expertise, increasing capacity, and enabling the development of new skills and artistic practices, as well as the ability to engage with new groups of CYP.

Funded programmes which are developed within and across LCEPs seem to be valuable for strengthening LCEP operations, as well as enabling partners to best meet the needs of children and young people. However, this varies depending on the maturity of the LCEP and the resilience of its partners in the face of changes in the external environment.

3.1 Extension of partnerships

The YPP saw a clear growth in partnerships across the five locations in the second year of the programme. It included partnerships that were planned and those that organically developed as the programme evolved. 149 partners were involved in this year of the programme, of which 57 were new partners.

YPP has gone through a steep learning curve on partnership working. Rich reflections and learnings were shared by lead organisations about the day-to-

day management of partnerships and adjustment to improve partnership working.

3.1.1 Mutuality

Lead organisations and partner organisations deemed a partnership to be the most rewarding when there is a mutuality: mutual respect, mutual values and mutual understanding of the objectives and purposes of the collaboration. They did not presume such mutuality to be in place in the first instance and recognised that significant time and efforts were required by all parties to arrive at this equilibrium.

It is interesting to note the different points of view from artists and partners on their perceived YPP experience. A few artists and partners being interviewed mentioned they compromised on their approaches to delivering activities when working with another cultural organisation or practitioner, while others felt inspired by the collaborations with other artists to build upon their own practice. Recognising partnership working in the LCEP model is still a relatively new approach within the cultural sector, and these mixed viewpoints should still be treated as a positive stride towards establishing new ways of working. One of the local evaluators suggested a 'give and gain' approach: *Promoting an understanding of a 'give and gain' approach within the partnership can support [better partnerships]. In other words, [LCEP] members have much to contribute to the project as well as take learning from it back into their own practice or organisation – and 'the whole is greater than the sum of the parts' in what is an opportunity to take a collective and city-wide approach to cultural education. (With Flying Colours Year 2 Evaluation Report)*

“ Working with [the other two artists] in this way was great for our organisation and for me to see different artists who I know in different capacities, work in a really brilliant way. It strengthened that relationship for us. (Artist, Theatre31)

“ Co-creation, especially with young people, requires in-depth planning and robust budgets to support the process. It is often costly (time and resources) and partner work, whether this is through co-commissioning or co-production opportunities often strengthens the work by maximising reach, peer learning, expertise, and resources (financial and in-kind)...Curating the right people in the room to 'listen' – and as producers, planning the right amount of time for 'listening' to happen is paramount. (Lead organisation, Theatre 31)

The added value of partnership working included the development of new artistic practices through working with other organisations and artists, increased capacity and expertise on the whole to deliver a production, as well as the development of skills through working with groups of CYP the partner has not worked with before.

“ We've been working with young people for 15 years but [Stage Directions has given us] the opportunity to experiment with what we offer...the way we were working with [the writer] and the way she was working with the students was a big eye opener for us...Having developed this subject matter, this is the area we want to carry forward into that collaboration...we'd look to have young people in the roles of stage manager or designer so the sense of it being owned by young people would be more in the subject matter. (Artist, Stage Directions)

3.1.2 New relationships through YPP improved LCEP understanding of their local ecosystem

In the early stages of the programme and evaluation, partners were commonly understood to be partners of LCEPs. There was a clear expansion on the understanding of what constitutes a 'partner' in Year 2, as this expanded to also include delivery partners, the majority of whom were from the local area. These delivery partners were not required to have come through from the LCEP

initially, but could eventually be linked up with the LCEP via YPP. This has enabled LCEPs to become more familiar with the cultural ecosystem of the local area.

“ Because it was such a wide and ambitious programme, I don't think it could have been put together by one organisation. As a steering group, we got to put in ideas...you got a wider network there. (Steering Group Member, Stage Directions)

Due to furlough and staff changes, workloads for all project staff were heavier in Year 2 of the programme. To maintain the delivery of activities and manage contingencies, there was a stronger focus on delivery partners than strategic partners. In some cases where there was a significant overlap between strategic and delivery partners, operational overflowed into strategy meeting. In other cases, LCEP partners felt they were 'outsiders' to the YPP project, indicating a distant understanding of the project.

3.1.3 Clearer understanding of lead organisations' role

Lead organisations increasingly see themselves as the facilitator or bridge for relationships. They have also grown in confidence and autonomy to execute strategic decisions, broker and nurture relationships. Lead organisations have learned to offer greater autonomy to delivery partners, as long as they fulfil specific core themes or principles of the project. The lead organisation remained available to troubleshoot and fill gaps in resource or expertise when needed.

“ The learning for us is there's no one-size-fit-all [in partnership working]. The idea should really come from the local community, meaning that they [the partner] should tell us what they need, rather than us telling them what to do. (Lead organisation, Reimagine)

“ By running the TeachMeet event and having artists and creatives attend as well as those in education, we have not only

impacted the cultural exchange locally between schools and the industry. We have been able to position us as an 'agency' to enable 'conversation' between local peers and professionals. (Lead organisation, Theatre 31)

As the number of partners grew, lead organisations learned the importance of clear communication to ensure all delivery and strategic partners had a good understanding of the vision, value, and approach of their projects. They brought in various initiatives in Year 2 that aimed to create a stronger 'inception' process. This included enhanced provision of project information in the form of handbooks for artists and teachers, a more structured inception process, provision of Equality Diversity and Inclusion training, and training of co-creation methods for YPP delivery partners and other artists and teachers.

3.2 Positioning the LCEP as a strategic and delivery body

YPP has had an influence on LCEP structures in the five YPP locations, making these LCEPs more robust as a delivery entity. Although the five LCEPs were at different stages of maturity at the beginning of the programme, each LCEP has either reviewed or designed a structure that would allow the LCEP to perform its strategic function of establishing cross-sector partnerships and the delivery of the YPP at the same time. The YPP steering committee or a subgroup within the LCEP is a common approach taken to creating some delineation between the LCEP and the project. Plymouth Cultural Education Partnerships (PCEP) underwent considerable development process in Year 2. This was prompted by a mix of factors, including people's experiences and views of With Flying Colours, wider sector issues particularly in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, and interest in reviewing the structure and workings of PCEP. While the structural proposals at first dominated discussion about PCEP's future, the focus then turned to exploring what people wanted to achieve through PCEP and consequently a 'form follows function' approach was taken. There was also an ambition to have the education sector be much better represented in discussions and developments of the PCEP.

Through their work together on Theatre 31, the Medway LCEP is aware that the Sheppey LCEP is experiencing a challenging time, due to personnel changes and capacities. The two LCEPs have planned to come together as a collective in a peer learning format to best navigate the way forward as partners. While the YPP pilot serves as valuable experience for LCEPs to deliver funded projects, it has also prompted LCEPs to work strategically to create a legacy from the programme.

Despite the positive progress on the growth and understanding of partnership working, it is worth pointing out that these lessons were still very much drawn from partnerships within the cultural sector, with the exception of Stage Directions, which demonstrated how cross-sector relationships support the strategic objectives of the LCEP and the delivery of the YPP.

Case Study of Partnership Development – Stage Directions

Extract taken directly from Stage Directions Evaluation Report Year 2

The Salford Cultural Education Partnership was 'born' at the same time as the application for the YPP programme. The steering groups for the two programmes have been running in 'parallel' against a backdrop of strong commitment to widening the access to culture in Salford through the Culture and Place Partnership in the city. The LCEP assisted Stage Directions to seek buy-in at a more strategic level within the council. The interim chair of the LCEP, who is also head of the Culture and Place Partnership, has been appointed this year with the aim of enabling greater integration of the goals of Stage Directions with wider policy in the area. The main partners for Stage Directions also sit within the Culture and Place Partnership. This strong integration means that all the learning that is happening through the YPP pilot is being fed straight back to the Partnership.

The LCEP has been key in providing Stage Directions access to Salford City Council departments, most notably council education leadership teams such as the Schools Improvement Team.

The partnerships between Stage Directions and schools have been heavily facilitated through regular, on-the-ground communication between

the salaried staff on the Stage Directions core team and education professionals working within the schools. The Salford City Council Schools Improvement Team plays a significant role in this process, easing the path to productive communication and positive decision making in the interest of both the Stage Directions programme and the individual schools. Early communication with schools ahead of activity means that school staff with experience or attitudes that have an affinity with the aims of the programme can be identified and/or this understanding can be developed with staff.

“ One of the Year 2 schools, have shared that they are currently experiencing capacity issues around staffing and that personnel have changed within the Performing Arts department. So felt at this point they wouldn't be able to commit to Year 2. The core team have spoken with the Schools Improvement Team, with a recommendation we extend the engagement to two years for one of the secondary schools, so we can measure the impact and journey for both the young people and school in more depth. (Stage Directions Interim Report, April 2020)

Artists and Ensemble Leaders working in schools have found that having an advocate within the school, usually a teacher or member of the leadership team, who understands and agrees with the aims of the programme is key to smoothing the path to the positive engagement of CYP with the activities. Solutions to avoid a drop in engagement due to school staff changes may include conversations with a broader range of staff through the onboarding process or, as Stage Directions is developing, sharing material such as the documentary video with new staff who may become involved.

4. Outcomes for children and young people

This section of the report reflects on the programme's achievements in Year 2 in relation to the following outcome areas:

- More children, families and schools from deprived and lower-engaged areas are experiencing and appreciating quality performances
- Young people develop self-expression, agency and self-efficacy through artistic development and performance
- Young people improve their transferable, performance and performance making skills
- Communities (i.e. schools, families and broad publics) and young people feel better connected to their locality through high quality performance experiences

COVID-19 remained a challenge for projects engaging with children and young people in Year 2. That being said, schools played a critical role in enabling projects to reach CYP, particularly those from deprived and lower-engaged areas. Participation in project activities during the pandemic has enabled CYP to remain connected to one another and has helped to support their wellbeing and prevent feelings of isolation.

Through their participation in project activities, CYP are reported to have grown in confidence, developing skills in areas such as teamwork and communication, in addition to technical skills specific to performance or performance-making activity. This has enabled CYP to increase their aspirations and belief in their potential and gain a greater awareness of future progression pathways and opportunities both within the sector and elsewhere.

4.1 Schools play an important role in enabling CYPs from deprived and lower-engaged areas to access and enjoy YPP activities

Schools continued to play a critical role for projects as a means to accessing and engaging CYP and communities in more deprived and lower engaged areas. All the schools Stage Directions have engaged with over the last year report higher levels of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium and free school meals than the average in Salford. In Year 2, With Flying Colours used socio-economic indicators in conjunction with the government's Taking Part Survey to include additional schools in deprived and lower-engaged areas of Plymouth.

Like other projects, C3 are able to target their activity toward specific groups of children and young people through partnering with schools which serve communities from deprived and lower-engaged areas, with schools then nominating young people with specific development needs. Despite seeing relatively low levels of engagement due to being limited by lockdown, C3 saw strong levels of enjoyment from those young people they did engage. A survey of young people in three schools participating in Youth Endowment Fund activity reported:

- An average score of 3.6¹³ when asked if they enjoyed taking part
- An average score of 3.6 when asked if they want to keep taking part in the arts

Through their enjoyment of project activities, CYP who may not have ordinarily had access to such opportunities became increasingly engaged and interested in the arts. In Summer 2021, Theatre 31 ran the Sheppey Shanties Project, engaging 174 CYP from areas of high deprivation across four primary schools. The project saw pupils engage in activities including puppet-making, illustration, and research into local myths and legends, to co-write a Sea Shanty, engaging with the maritime heritage of the local area in the process. At the conclusion of the project, 88% of surveyed young people agreed or strongly

¹³ On a scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot)

agreed that they appreciated the performing arts more. This increase in engagement and interest in the arts through project activity was further reflected in the responses of surveyed teachers:

- At the beginning of the project, 25% of teachers reported that their pupils were 'highly engaged' in the performing arts. This rose to 100% by the end of the project.
- 100% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that children and young people had engaged in the arts who would not have otherwise engaged through the Theatre 31 programme.

Monitoring data on CYP engaged in Year 2 of the YPP can be found in the Appendix.

4.2 CYP have grown in confidence, empathy and become increasingly assured of their own voice, which benefits their broader wellbeing

Through their participation in YPP project activity, children and young people are reported to have grown significantly in their confidence, enabling their development in relation to other skills, such as collaboration, communication, and teamwork. Critical to this development was the creation of a 'safe space', which practitioners of Stage Directions' Creative Camp Intensive consider as allowing CYP greater opportunities to express themselves more comfortably.

“ From observation, some of the key ingredients of this were...the adults making the activities seem like play...fostering a consensus that mistakes and failures are learning opportunities rather than something to feel ashamed about, and strong relationships and trust between the young people, and between the young people and adults. (Stage Directions, Evaluation Report)

“ I've learned that if you do something wrong it's fine, you can do it again and not give up. I didn't know how to be confident. (Young Person, Stage Directions)

The confidence gained by young people is demonstrated as having translated outside of project activities, with a number of projects reporting parents and teachers as having also highlighted this shift:

- 100% of parents agreed that their children had grown in confidence (Stage Directions)
- 'Parents of children involved in the Abbey Ward production workshops reported that their children had become noticeably more confident' (Reimagine)
- 100% of teachers strongly agreed that they witnessed increased confidence from the young people (With Flying Colours)

Evidence suggests that CYP involvement in project activities enabled them to foster skills and confidence in areas such as creativity and self-expression, which sees them become increasingly assured of their own voice:

- 100% of teachers strongly agree or agree that they have witnessed increased creativity from the young people (With Flying Colours)
- 100% of teachers strongly agree or agree that their pupils are better able to express themselves or make informed decisions (With Flying Colours)
- 93% of artists strongly agree or agree that young people have improved their confidence and self-efficacy (With Flying Colours)
- 87% of artists strongly agree or agree that young people have improved their creative self-expression through artistic development and performance (With Flying Colours)
- 86% of young people surveyed agreed that they were good at coming up with new ideas (Stage Directions)

- 95% of young people felt that they are good at sharing their ideas and listening to other people's ideas (Stage Directions)

Similarly, C3's survey of young people across three schools demonstrates some strong evidence in relation to this outcome area, reporting average scores (out of 4) of 3.5 for self-expression, 3.0 for agency and self-efficacy, and 3.5 for pride in artistic development and performance.

Through developing their confidence and playing a role in the co-creation of artistic works, young people are shown to feel empowered, taking ownership of project outputs and, in some cases, describing their intentions to use these skills in the production of future performances.

“ It's hard to describe really. We've learnt imagination skills. We've learnt how to be more confident. How to stand up for ourselves. How to put ourselves out there when we didn't think we could. Seeing how our stuff has grown through being planned from beginning to end. Now we can plan projects a lot easier and perform our work a lot easier with all that we've learned and done through the Morpheus project. (Young Person, Theatre 31)

As a result of their participation in activity and contributing towards an output, children and young people increasingly take pride in their voice and work. Collaborating with professional artists and creative practitioners, who are seen to acknowledge and value CYP contributions, is seen to grow the young people's confidence and creativity. The development of confidence in having a voice within a supported environment such as this instils in young people a greater understanding of their own potential and abilities, which they are then able to take forward into future opportunities.

“ This might sound weird, but a new skill is to be proud of my voice and also make beats. (Young Person, C3)

“ One of the biggest developments I have observed amongst the children who took part in the project is the fact that they feel valued. Every idea, throughout, every design shared with [the artists] was incorporated in the final piece in some way. The children constantly felt heard and as though they have a voice. In turn, this grew their confidence and creativity. (Teacher, With Flying Colours)

Alongside gaining confidence in their own voice, through working collaboratively and as a team young people learned to listen to each other, valuing the input of others:

- 79% of responding members of the Young Artist Collectives strongly agreed or agreed that they can relate better to other people because of Theatre 31
- 86% of young people surveyed feel they understand other people more (Stage Directions)

The ability of young people to increasingly recognise, understand and value the experiences of others was further emphasised in the case of Reimagine, where performance was identified by the young people as being 'means of sharing experiences...and challenging inequalities and perceptions'.

“ I think I'm going to be more open-minded towards people, know about people's journeys and their lives and be more accepting and kind towards other people because you never know what they're going through in their lives. (Young Person, Reimagine)

During a challenging year, many of the YPP projects sought to act as a welcome distraction for young people from the stresses and unknowns of the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects provided an opportunity to connect with other young people, to develop new skills, and to feel supported, whilst also having fun. COVID-19 and its associated lockdowns are recognised to have had a significant impact on young people and feelings of isolation. Reimagine

responded to this by pivoting some of their activities to have a 'more explicit focus on wellbeing'.

“ I improved on my skill of self-confidence, something I used to struggle with a lot. Really being in that space with so many supportive people and being around others who wanted to act too really just gave me such a positive mindset and made me feel so good about what I do. (Young Person, Reimagine)

4.3 CYP aspirations and awareness of future opportunities increase through the development of transferable and performance-related skills

Through project activities, children and young people have been able to develop a variety of transferable performance, and technical performance-making skills. This has been reported across the projects, with many providing quantitative survey data as evidence of this:

Of 16 artists and creative practitioners¹⁴ responding to Theatre 31's evaluation questionnaire, investigating the impacts of the programme on participating young people:

- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that young people have improved their performance and performance making skills
- 80% strongly agreed that young people have improved their transferable skills

Surveys with artists and teachers engaged in the With Flying Colours project demonstrate similarly high levels of agreement, with:

- 83% of teachers agree or strongly agree that pupils' skills in relation to teamwork and communication have improved

- 81% of artists agree or strongly agree that young people have improved their transferable skills
- 87% of artists agree or strongly agree that young people have improved their performance and performance making skills

CYP skills development in relation to transferable areas such as teamwork and communication were highlighted by all projects. Stage Directions Ensemble Leads noted the strength of discipline and persistence behaviours in participants, and that this, in conjunction with their broader skills development, meant that 'their levels of professionalism also sky-rocketed'.

Through learning to work as a team and what Theatre 31's evaluation report describes as developing 'enhanced communication through collaborative working', CYP were increasingly able to support and encourage their fellow participants. Through this, projects note that young people further developed their social skills and ability to empathise with others.

“ Over the course of the project the group really began to develop important skills such as listening, empathy, teamwork and focus which was noticeable during the cohort's final performance, during which the group really began to support and encourage one another. (Artist, With Flying Colours)

Stage Directions' evaluation report highlights that there is a sense that young people's participation and skills development are raising their aspirations and giving them a greater understanding of 'the range of career pathways available to them in the theatre and performance sectors'. Through their involvement, young people are gaining an awareness of where to obtain the skills required to pursue a creative job, with 79% of young people surveyed agreeing with this statement. This was less the case for parents, with only 43% of those surveyed agreeing that they knew where else to connect their children with creative opportunities. The addition of a Careers event by the LCEP in Year 3 seeks to

¹⁴ Respondents were comprised of 14 individual artists and two partner arts organisations

address this, through creating an opportunity for parents and guardians of CYP to hear more about this directly.

Similarly, Reimagine's activities seek to demonstrate potential progression pathways into the sector for young people who may otherwise not have been aware of such opportunities. This is achieved through engaging both young people and professional artists and creatives in programme elements such as Future Creatives, which is focused on developing young people's skills and awareness of potential careers.

“ All activities had engaged young people with professional artists, helping to showcase creative careers and offer meaningful interactions with effective creative role models. (Reimagine)

Further to demonstrating the progression pathways and opportunities available to young people in the arts, projects are instilling in young people a sense of self-worth and confidence that encourages them to consider their next steps more broadly. This was reflected by a participant of Theatre 31 who described their involvement in the programme as 'lifechanging' and encouraging them to consider what's next.

“ It has been lifechanging. Lady Unchained has helped get my life changed, I've started to look for opportunities on the outside, and see that there is life after prison. I'm coming up with plans for when I get out, I want to be a youth worker. (Young Artist, Theatre 31)

As noted in other areas of this evaluation report, COVID-19 remained a challenge for projects throughout Year 2. That being said, Reimagine's Year 2 report noted that the sudden transition to digital delivery had 'the unanticipated benefit of developing a range of new skills for both artists and young people in online engagement and delivery'. This was seen to spur 'new forms of creativity

and in some cases [provide] a much-needed distraction from and mitigation for isolation, helping to support resilience among participants'.

4.4 Projects have found ways to strengthen local identity and pride in young people, despite the ongoing limitations of COVID-19

COVID-19 has continued to present a significant challenge for all projects' ability to work towards enabling communities and young people to feel better connected to their local area.

With Flying Colours' evaluation report described this outcome area as having been 'significantly compromised' by the pandemic. Restrictions imposed limitations on where activity could take place, and the extent to which audiences could be engaged. That being said, those delivering activity found new ways to build connections with the local area, with one artist describing having used the locality as a source of inspiration in the works created.

“ [COVID-19] impacted the opportunity to explore in a more meaningful way the young people's relationship with their local area and instead locality became an inspiration for fictional work. (Artist, With Flying Colours)

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, some projects were still able to indicate emerging evidence of a greater sense of community being developed through project activities. Stage Directions reported that 100% of parents surveyed agreed that the activity was good at bringing the community together, with 87% strongly agreeing. In Spring 2021, Theatre 31's Tropical Tours project activity engaged with six primary schools and 437 children and young people, described as having 'little access to and/or low engagement in arts and cultural activity'. Of the eight teachers who completed evaluation questionnaires:

- 100% strongly agreed that it's great to have things like this happening in their local area

- 88% agreed or strongly agreed that the performance was different to things they had seen before
- 75% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt inspired and connected by what they had experienced via Theatre 31

Activities undertaken by Reimagine enhanced and sustained community spaces and infrastructure, leading to positive outcomes for the local community. Examples of this include activity delivered by Baby People in Sinfín, which utilised graffiti and performance activities to 'reimagine' the area in which they were presented. This involved the creation of a large-scale permanent public artwork, resulting in the improvement of the public realm. Alongside this, a performance involving music and dance was staged at the underpass site to contribute towards the temporary reimagining of the space.

Figure 4 Public artwork in Sinfín created by young people



Source: Reimagine Year 2 Report

5. Conclusion

The second year of the pilot YPP programme was a year of fruitful learnings. There was a growing richness to the programme, reflected in the variety of artforms, activity settings and participation levels compared to Year 1. This resulted in 3,782 CYP audience members engaged through performances and 4,779 CYP participants engaged through other activities, as well as evidence of broader developmental outcomes being achieved with a smaller number of core participants. These achievements are attributed to an expansion of delivery partners of diverse creative practice and skill, and their creativity and adaptability in the face of ongoing uncertainties during the pandemic.

The place-based partnerships approach of the YPP has generated a suite of novel examples and creative practices to schools and CYP work, ranging from pop-up performances to co-creation and co-commissioning to artists mentoring and in residence. At the same time, common features started to emerge across the five programme locations, including a holistic framework of engagement consisting of opportunities for exposure, skills development and progression, as well as methods to include CYP in various stages of a performance production. All these presented the possibility of an alternative to delivering CYP work locally that is backed with a growing body of evidence that the YPP is offering a different experience to CYP, teachers and artists. These examples and experiences, if properly captured, could provide valuable insights to future CYP work.

It is however worth noting that the initial cost of adopting partnership working was high, as it relied heavily on building the relationships first before achieving impacts for CYP. A significant amount of time, resources and care have been invested by lead organisations to nurture relationships with existing and new partners, and by artists and creative practitioners to develop relationships with the schools and young people they worked with. Lead organisations have a greater clarity about their role as the facilitator of relationships as well as the champion of the programme within and outside of the cultural sector. They also learned to avoid weak partnerships: where partnerships stalled was often due to a lack of a clear understanding about the purpose and values of the

programme, or roles and responsibilities across all parties. A partnership could be put at risk when there is a change in the relationship holders (e.g. a YPP team change, or key contacts from a school leaving their post), suggesting that more work needs to be done around embedding these partnerships within the organisation so that they are not dependent on a single person. Much of this work around relationship and network building and maintenance is essential to programme success, but often difficult to monitor, measure and represent in programme evaluation.

Considering the high initial cost of partnership work, which could result in a delayed impact on CYP, lead organisations of the programme have taken a long view by focusing part of the programme on CPD for teachers and artists. In addition to tailored resources such as trainings, talks, resource packs, etc., the actual interactions between teachers and artists over a sustained period has been particularly instrumental to the CPD of both groups. There is a clear ambition from the lead organisations and LCEPs to create a legacy of the programme. The emerging CPD models adopted by projects seems a strong avenue for legacy to be realised, through the strengthening of creative skills among schools and teachers, contacts with cultural organisations and understanding of the value of arts in schools.

At the end of Year 2, the programme has seen direct outcomes for CYP, the cultural and education workforce, and organisations/schools through the funded activities and outputs. The greatest impact has been on partnership working between cultural organisations and schools. Additionally, local evaluators reported strong and consistent positive outcomes for children and young people, largely relating to personal and social development, alongside performance and creative skills. Though this evidence is caveated by a relatively small cohort of sample. The progress in impacting systems change in ways of working between education, cultural and other sectors, as well as LCEP's models working has been slower. It is also likely to be more difficult to create wider impact and systems change without ongoing funding. The funding is crucial to bringing schools to the table and attracting new and different partners. We suggest that strategic support offered to projects in the year ahead is focused on how to establish which aspects of YPP activity are having the

strongest impacts and how these may be funded to continue beyond the pilot period.

6. Appendix

6.1 Methodology

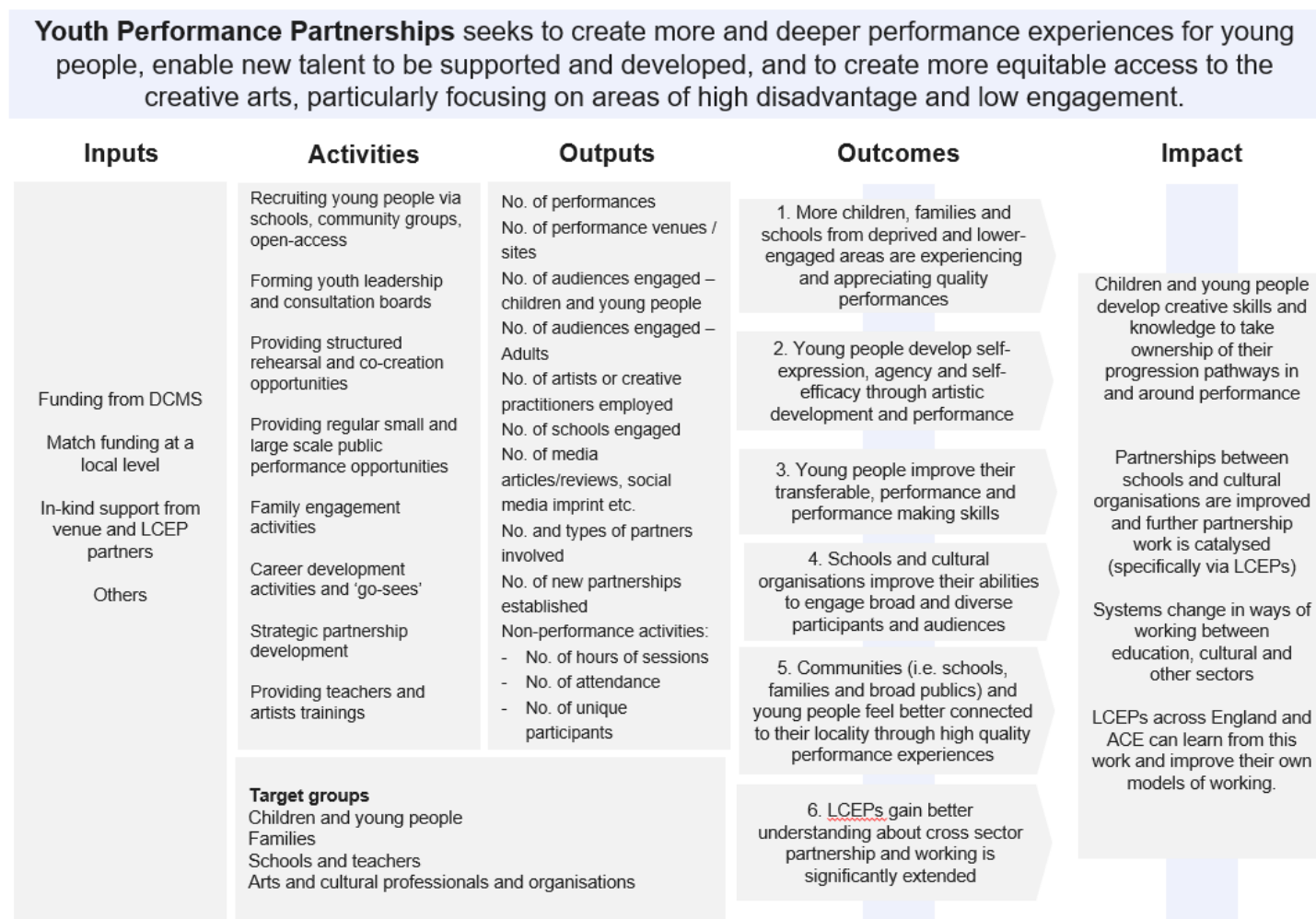
The YPP evaluation methodology consists of three stages:

- **Stage 1 – Project set-up (April 2019 – February 2020).** This initial stage set up the programme level evaluation. This included an inception meeting with ACE and the five projects, and the development of the logic model (see Figure 4) and data collection tools.
- **Stage 2 – Data collection and peer learning session facilitation (September 2019 – 2022).** The second stage includes regular coordination with projects and local evaluators to troubleshoot and manage the flow of data, facilitation of peer learning to capture emerging learning and findings, and annual reporting. At the beginning of Year 2, BOP updated the data collection tools and data reporting template based on projects and evaluators' feedback.
- **Stage 3 – Synthesis of findings and reporting (August 2023).** At the culmination of the fourth year, BOP will collate and analyse insights and learnings gathered across the four years and will report back to ACE.

The evaluation approach went through two rounds of changes in Year 2. BOP simplified the data collection tools in the beginning of Year 2 to ease the data collection requirements at the project level, having received feedback from projects and their evaluators regarding the general challenges in getting young people to respond to extensive questionnaires as well as accessing teachers and parents or guardians. In June 2022, as part of an overall review on the evaluation objectives, timeline and methodology in relation to the extension of the programme, further changes were agreed between BOP, YPP lead organisations and their local evaluators and ACE.

- Metrics and data collection tools in relation to the CYP outcomes would be reported based on the indicators and tools specific to each project, rather than the standardised tools and metrics developed for the YPP evaluation in the beginning of the evaluation process. Projects were encouraged to use their own tools or adapt existing tools to their needs.
- To capture stronger insights concerning partnership working, additional interviews were conducted by BOP with the lead organisations and nominated partners and artists to complement data from the partners and artists surveys.

Figure 5 YPP Logic Model



Source: BOP Consulting (2021)

6.2 Profile of children and young people participating in YPP

Figure 6 Profile data of children and young people in Year 2¹⁵

	C3 (Croydon) ¹⁶	Theatre 31 (Medway and Sheppey)	With Flying Colours (Plymouth) ¹⁷	Stage Directions (Salford)
Age	61% KS2 27% KS3 12% KS4/5	67% aged 8-11 31% aged 12-14 1% aged 15-16 1% aged 17-18	11% aged 7-8 16% aged 8-9 and 9-10 49% aged 9-10 17% aged 10-11 7% aged 12-13	76% aged 8 – 11 3% aged 12-16 2% aged 16-18 19% aged 8-14 ¹⁸
Gender	Gender was not collected for in school activity	54% Female 42% Male 1% Prefer to self-describe 3% No response / Prefer not to say	56% Female 44% Male 1% Other	59% Female 36% Male
Disability	Disability was not collected for in school activity	3% self-reported to have a disability	4 groups (out of seven schools)	7% self-reported to have a disability
Demographics across equality and diversity indicators	Pupils for in school activity were selected by schools. Criteria that CYP showed development needs through a specific issue in their lives or through their reaction to systemic disadvantage from their race, having a special educational need or social deprivation or a combination.	Proportion living in the most deprived 20% postcode according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD): 59% ¹⁹	Proportion of participants eligible for free school meals: 40%	Average proportion of students eligible for Pupil Premium in schools engaged: 54%, free school meals: 41% ²⁰

¹⁵ Reimagine Derby's data was not available at the time of reporting

¹⁶ In-school activity data only

¹⁷ This data is aggregated across seven of the 10 schools (70%) with children and young people participating in the playmaking element which provided the data requested. Project staff did not request data for those participating in the workshops associated with the development of the pop-ups.

¹⁸ This refers to the participants in the Summer Creative Camps which included young people from a wider range of ages than expected.

¹⁹ Statistics based on the 432 valid home postcode collected through CYP survey.

²⁰ The average for Salford schools is 38.5% on Pupil Premium and 22.3% on free school meals

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