

Delivering Drama to CYP in a Socially Distanced World Summary Document

This document has been created to provide details of the main points raised and discussed during the online conversations with Curious Minds on 02/07/20 & 08/07/20.

Foreword

Since the instigation of lockdown, it seems evident that in difficult times connecting through art, culture and creativity becomes more important in people's lives. For some, the move online has resulted in a democratising effect on culture, with many experiences that would often be beyond people's reach and income being made available for free, such as the National Theatre livestreaming of shows, and world-famous museums digitally opening their doors. However, this has also starkly brought into focus the digital inequalities that exist for a large number of children and young people who don't have access to good Wi-Fi or the equipment to access these opportunities.

As we slowly move towards the reopening of the country and in particular schools, there are a number of questions with which the education and cultural/creative sectors are grappling. With Covid restrictions in place, how do we navigate our way back to delivering participatory arts? How can we support children, young people and staff who may have faced loss and isolation? How do we keep a cultural sector alive that has been financially decimated? How do we plan for what seems like endlessly changing scenarios?

With all of this in mind Curious Minds, as an Arts Council England Sector Support Organisation, convened a series of open cross-sector discussions in order to allow space for people to share their challenges and solutions, to try to get an overall understanding of what was happening in the different sectors. With so many variables and the constantly changing guidance it has been impossible to come up with a concrete plan, though there is consolation in understanding that a constant state of uncertainty appears to be the position that everyone is in. The education and cultural sectors have been incredibly creative and resilient in responding to the educational, social and sector needs that have arisen due to the pandemic.

One overarching theme that has emerged is that responses are polarised across both the education and cultural sector, and that there is no one solution or answer to any of the issues that have arisen. For every school that says they are letting creative practitioners back in the autumn term and focusing on the arts as a way of re-engaging, there is a school

that will say they have been told that there will be no visitors until January or March at the earliest. Some schools have found that moving to online has increased engagement and improved the quality of learning, whereas others have found the opposite. This means there will be no silver bullet and that schools and cultural organisations will need a much more bespoke and personalised approach to delivery. There is definitely no one-size-fits-all approach.

This document shares some of the responses that came out of the discussion and any links or resources that were shared. We are considering convening more discussion/sharing events in the autumn term, when we hope that there may be more clarity for the education and cultural sectors.

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The initial provocations for the discussions were:

- How do things look in your sector – education/culture?
- How have you been delivering Drama during lockdown and what will you keep using?
- What have you been considering/planning in order to transition from virtual/remote working to socially distanced hybrid/blended learning?
- In order to develop a Creative Recovery Curriculum what examples/suggestions do you have for using arts and culture to support Children & Young People's wellbeing and good mental health?
- In what ways can you imagine the education and the cultural sector working together over the next year?

Discussion Responses:

1. How do things look in your sector – education/culture?

- Digital poverty for some students has provided difficulties for accessibility. Some schools have been funded for more iPads etc. however, it is now too late in the Summer term.
- Some organisations are not operating at all at this time. Others still have some work, but most bookings have been cancelled as schools are unable to accept outside visitors.
- There is a lot of uncertainty in schools. Some settings are waiting to see what happens in the Autumn Term.
- Both schools and organisations/practitioners have transferred work, lessons, and sessions online.

- Theatres have been adversely affected and recognise that there will be a need to 'rebuild' with a 'blank page'.
 - Many workers have been furloughed.
 - Some organisations have experienced less engagement online than their usual face to face sessions.
 - Some teachers are concerned about loss of skills and mastery.
 - There is a general consensus of missing the experiential nature of drama.
 - Those with special needs can be affected; instances included the issue of reading emotions when others are wearing masks. Theatres specialising in working in this sector are thinking about how they change their way of working.
 - Some organisations are particularly concerned about funding.
 - Risk assessments might take a different form.
 - There have been opportunities to re-evaluate ways of working in both sectors.
 - There has been more time for teachers to access CPD online.
 - Theatres are ready to listen to what schools want but realise that there has to be a 'right time for that discussion'.
 - Some freelance professionals have used this time to upskill and start new conversations and collaborations.
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2. How have you been delivering Drama during lockdown and what will you keep using?

- Delivering remote/weekly YouTube sessions, using Purple Mash, and working on Microsoft Teams with students has worked well during this time.
- A number of performances have been turned into radio plays.
- Some organisations have created online festivals for young people.
- Introducing 'Loom' videos on PowerPoint and videos has increased young person engagement. 'Loom' includes good safeguarding facilities and is accessible.
- Both the education and creative sectors have been delivering to young people via Zoom and will continue this after lockdown. Zoom has been particularly useful for SEN and students on the autistic spectrum who work better and more effectively with distance learning. It will also continue to be useful for people who will still be shielding post lockdown.
- Recordings of lessons have been made available and some students have reported that they find it useful to watch recordings of lessons at any time. This has reportedly reduced stress.
- Zoom has been more efficient for team meetings, which will be something some schools will continue to use.
- Some of the quieter 'invisible' students benefitted from online drama work. These young people have 'found their voice' and have been eager to try new tasks. Beforehand they may have been overwhelmed in a classroom or unwilling to participate.

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- Zoom has provided routine for participants – some have been more regular and involved attenders because they've been able to do so from their living room.
 - In theatre, the team can come from all over England – lockdown has shown that they don't always need to travel, they can be at a rehearsal without being physically present.
 - Online programme for EYFS through Facebook – felt that's where the audience was. Older young people have used Zoom. Those older than 16 have really struggled to engage with Zoom – and it hasn't been as much about drama as just having contact.
 - Pre-recorded masterclasses and a reshaping of YouTube channels.
 - Where ACE had always been pushing for a digital strategy and this had been difficult to produce, it has now emerged through necessity. This will continue to see if online participation can be sustained after lockdown.
 - Instant feedback - some parents have said their children have found they look forward to their online drama sessions every week. Practitioners have tried to keep a variety/rotation of activities.
 - Some settings and organisations have been delivering Arts Award remotely and will continue to do so. Arts Award has given children focus, purpose and they receive a qualification and certificate when they have achieved their award.
 - Some youth settings have been reading through scripts online, which has worked well. They will continue to use Zoom for read-throughs.
 - Some organisations have set Facebook challenges for their young people.
 - Some students have been writing monologues during lockdown for performance by professional actors.
 - Some schools have studied Shakespeare texts at this time. One group of students looked at Romeo & Juliet with their teachers and reimagined the play in the context of the plague and quarantine.
 - Some settings have now had the opportunity to explore their subject area more broadly i.e. for those drama students who didn't like being on the stage it has given them an opportunity to look at stage lighting, costume etc. that they wouldn't get in normal circumstances. This is now going to be an ongoing offer and included in planning going forward.
 - Lockdown has given some teachers the opportunity to allow students to engage with texts in a more deep and meaningful way.
 - Adapting the working space used for drama to ensure distancing.
 - There has been continuation of preparation for students taking LAMDA.
 - Some practitioners have been adapting approaches to Forum Theatre through the use of film.
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3. What have you been considering/planning in order to transition from virtual/remote working to socially distanced hybrid/blended learning?

- In some school settings staff have found it beneficial to record sessions and upload it to a forum. This will be used post lockdown for devised work for reflection and improvement.
 - Google Classrooms – some schools will continue to use this for drama lessons as a devising model and for assignments.
 - Frog Play is useful as a quiz based platform for KS3 – for homework, in particular.
 - Settings are looking at how their buildings can be adapted and ‘workable’ coming out of lockdown.
 - Use of work done during lockdown to create exhibitions/screenings in various settings – schools/community centres/studios etc.
 - Drama/Performing/Visual arts Celebration event planned on ‘How We Survived’ during lockdown.
 - Some practitioners will deliver to much smaller group sizes.
 - GCSE Drama practical will work as individuals on monologues or duologues/trio working across a distance.
 - Looking at different practitioners to support ‘isolated’ works such as Brecht etc.
 - Devised group performances can be pieced together using different techniques and staging.
 - Physical Theatre/Outdoor Theatre and Promenade performances to be explored more in professional and Community Theatre settings.
 - Online delivery has increased the engagement of CYP for some organisations/settings, so they will continue to use online delivery in some format moving forwards.
 - Safeguarding/Health and Safety is a concern going forwards. Some organisations have stressed the importance of further Safeguarding training.
 - Organisations having to deliver in a hybrid fashion - digital is a different territory. Not all practitioners are film makers and it costs more to develop and deliver - is this viable?
 - Accessing the expertise of Frantic Assembly which enabled a focus upon how ‘being distant can enable people to teach in a different way’; explore thinking about how the ‘memory of touching when one cannot do so’ provokes thoughts and feelings’; discussing with one another how one feels when watching a drama ‘where two lovers’ cannot physically kiss or embrace. (Look online and use Scott Graham and Frantic Assembly as links to this resource).
 - Accessing the thoughts of playwrights Mark Wheeler and Finn Kennedy.
 - Considering how to teach Physical Theatre when socially distancing.
 - This is a great opportunity to really listen to young people about their needs. Up until now, the adults have been making the decisions about curriculum etc. More consideration of youth voice will be taken into account.
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4. In order to develop a Creative Recovery Curriculum what examples/suggestions do you have for using arts and culture to support Children & Young People's wellbeing and good mental health?

- Summer activities are being promoted to improve C&YP mental wellbeing.
- Some Youth Theatres will host 'bigger bubbles' practical sessions and online workshops. Schools will also be able to access these.
- At this time, some schools have confirmed there are few confirmed plans in terms of a Recovery Curriculum.
- Some settings will use questionnaires with their students, as part of a school-wide resilience project to create a safe space for students to talk. Wellbeing will be a strong focus in autumn and some schools will use SMSC in all subjects.
- Some organisations in collaboration with schools will provide young people led and mental health and wellbeing work.
- Drama curriculum = skills vs content. Ofsted have been interested in content and subject knowledge. Now is a chance to use that content for stories, themes and issues that relate to the lockdown/pandemic experience and help students work through their feelings.
- Post-traumatic stress – children have anxiety about seeing their friends again, layered upon anxiety about loved ones and the virus, and layered on other anxieties. Whilst some schools are planning a Recovery Curriculum for the first 6 weeks back at school, it is important to consider that PTSD might not emerge for months – teachers need to understand the signs and symptoms.
- Some settings have commented that the Recovery Curriculum in school is in two parts. Exam boards catch up, and wellbeing.
- Some schools have expressed the term 'catching up' is not helpful, so this should be taken in to consideration when CYP come back to school in the Autumn Term.
- Some schools are planning for possible different scenarios. They are creating different schemes of work for each scenario that are adaptable, and are hoping to incorporate a drama festival into their Recovery Curriculum. This could also incorporate cross-curriculum opportunities.
- With young people having spent so much time away from their friends, the Arts can be a useful tool to help young people reconnect with each other and building friendships.
- There have been some suggestions for the Cultural sector to explicitly communicate how they can support schools with wellbeing and curriculum.
- There was a shared recognition that drama has a value in enabling young people to 'build trust...reflect upon their fears...' and this will be important given that they will be coming out of a period of isolation. They are like to be 'wary' and there will be issues connected with motivation. None of this will be 'easy'.
- The use of story led resilience therapy.

5. In what ways can you imagine the education and the cultural sector working together over the next year?

- Some settings hope that online streaming of arts provision will still be accessible in the future e.g. NT Live at Home/RSC live etc.
- In the absence of Christmas shows at theatres some settings are putting in place a support package for schools around a live stream event.
- Cultural Practitioners working in settings to support the development of 'Cultural Capital'.
- Some schools have arts budgets for resource packs/buying practitioners in/buying instruments.
- Schools with little or no arts budget will offer 'virtual' theatre trips.
- Some schools are planning to hold collaborative fundraising events with local organisations, which will fund work with CYP.
- Arts organisations are asking schools to lobby their SLT to stress the importance of the Arts in the curriculum and beyond.
- Sign up to 'The Culture Hub.'
- Some schools that may not be able to invite practitioners into school in the Autumn Term, would be interested in practitioners providing digital lessons.
- Some schools and organisations have suggested cluster schools collaborating with practitioners on funding bids to provide CYP creative projects.
- There is interest from both sectors to have a further joint online conversation in September.
- Some schools have discussed potential partnerships with organisations around developing projects focusing on CYP mental health and wellbeing - especially schools that have minimal or no student support services.
- Utilising after school clubs to partner with practitioners and organisations.
- Every school is different - there is no one size fits all. Heads have received over 80 pieces of guidance over lockdown and many are contradictory. Local authorities are leaving decisions with Heads and Governors, though academy trusts are tending to make decisions centrally.
- There are established programmes of activity that are likely to continue, in some changed form. The interest in programmes such as Shakespeare in Schools, continues.
- LCEP's can play a part in bringing the sectors together.

Links to resources or organisations that may be of interest:

Drama Specific:

Open Drama: A Platform for Teachers, Theatre Practitioners, and industry Experts to improve advance and benefit children and young people through Drama:

<https://opendramauk.org>

Guide to Socially distanced Drama:

<https://opendramauk.org/portfolio/sociallydistanceddrama/>

Developing a Representative Drama Curriculum:

<https://opendramauk.org/portfolio/representativecurriculum/>

National Association for the Teaching of Drama: <https://www.natd.eu/>

Drama and Theatre Education Alliance: <https://www.facebook.com/DTEAlliance>

Collective Encounters: <http://collective-encounters.org.uk/resources/>

<http://collective-encounters.org.uk/centre-for-excellence/library/social-distancing/>

Summary of the findings from four sector development sessions hosted by the Centre for Excellence in Participatory Theatre, attended by over 300 participatory theatre makers. Highlighting challenges, opportunities, needs and resources. Collective Encounters, 2020.

<http://collective-encounters.org.uk/library-resource/delivering-participatory-theatre-during-social-distancing-whats-working/?portfolioCats=62>

Punchdrunk Resources: <https://www.punchdrunk.org.uk/resources/>

Paper Birds CPD course: <https://www.thepaperbirds.com/cpd/>

Getting Ready for KS4 Drama Creative Pack Resource:

<https://d2htb95zppc7kr.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Getting-Ready-for-KS4-GCSE-Drama.pdf>

Gecko Resources: <https://www.geckotheatre.com/resources>

M6 Theatre: <https://m6theatre.co.uk/latest/coronastories/>

Awakennyn Productions: <https://www.awakennyn.co.uk/>

Collective Encounters Socially Distanced Resources: <http://collective-encounters.org.uk/centre-for-excellence/library/social-distancing/>

Frantic Assembly Resources: <https://www.franticassembly.co.uk/resources>

Covid Guidance:

DFE – Guidance for full opening of schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Cultural Learning Alliance - Synopsis Government Guidance for the arts

<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/reopening-schools-and-out-of-school-settings-what-government-guidance-says-about-the-arts/>

ACE COVID Guidance

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid-19/covid-19-government-reopening-guidance>

Curious Minds:

Curious Minds - Arts Council England (ACE) Sector Support Bridge Organisation for the North West Region – dedicated to improving the lives of children and young people through great art and culture – supporting education and the cultural sector.

<https://curiousminds.org.uk/>

The Culture Hub – Curious Minds Online portal for schools and cultural organisations schools and cultural organisation or practitioners can create a profile for free.

<https://www.theculturehub.online/>

Curious Minds Padlet- curated training opportunities and information from across the region and nationally: <https://padlet.com/curiousminds1/hv0urlj87c86yz9>

Artsmark – Arts Council England schools quality mark for arts and cultural education. Curious Minds delivers this training and support for the North West region which will be online until April 2021.

<https://www.artsmark.org.uk/>

Artsmark Partnership Programme – for cultural organisations and freelance practitioners. Curious Minds delivers this training and support for the North West region which will be online until April 2021.

<https://www.artsmark.org.uk/artsmark-partnership-programme>

Arts Award - Arts Award is a national qualification delivered by Trinity College London. It inspires young people to grow their arts and leadership talents children a young people's qualification for ages 5 – 25. Teachers and creative practitioners can train to become an advisor training is now online.

<https://www.artsaward.org.uk/>

Recovery Curriculum and Wellbeing:

Recovery Curriculum – Evidence for Learning - this is where the term originates from, but schools are approaching it in many different ways.

<https://www.evidenceforlearning.net/recoverycurriculum/>

A Recovery Curriculum for Schools: A PowerPoint from Elaine Rees, Liverpool Learning Partnership, outlining how we can best support our pupils returning to school in Liverpool:

<https://www.liverpoollearningpartnership.com/resources-to-help-during-social-distancing-and-self-isolation/>

The Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs>

British Red Cross Teaching Resources: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/teaching-resources/smsc>

Culture and Wellbeing Alliance: <https://www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/>

The Social Prescribing Network: <https://www.socialprescribingnetwork.com/>

Creative Care Kit: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/3020/creative-care-kit-young-people.pdf>

Resilience Framework Blackpool: <https://www.boingboing.org.uk/resilience-revolution-blackpool-headstart/>

BoingBoing Resilience Framework: <https://www.boingboing.org.uk/resilience/resilient-therapy-resilience-framework/>

5 Creative Habits of Mind:

https://www.thomastallisschool.com/uploads/2/2/8/7/2287089/the_creative_habits_of_mind_assessment_wheel_final_june_2013_colour.pdf

Into Film Wellbeing Article: <https://www.intofilm.org/news-and-views/articles/wellbeing-returning-to-school>

A New Direction – 7 Ways to Teach a Recovery Curriculum:

<https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/blog/7-creative-ways-to-teach-a-recovery-curriculum>

Policy:

Cultural Learning Alliance - June Policy and Practice Round Up

<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/policy-and-practice-round-up-june-2020/>

Cultural Learning Alliance – The Summer Landscape 2020:

<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/the-cultural-learning-landscape-summer-2020/>

Ofsted's Autumn 2020 plans: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsteds-autumn-2020-plans>

Articles:

Schools using Cultural Venues to boost space:

<https://www.tes.com/news/coronavirus-national-plan-needed-more-school-space-say-teachers>

<https://www.tes.com/news/coronavirus-dont-use-community-halls-boost-space-schools-told>

<https://www.thestage.co.uk/opinion/arts-can-help-reopen-schools-working-across-the-curriculum>

Stage Presence: How drama schools adapted to the age of social distancing:

<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2020/apr/17/stage-presence-how-drama-schools-adapted-to-the-age-of-social-distancing>

Observer manifesto for change:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/20/the-observer-view-on-a-manifesto-for-change-as-a-generation-of-britains-children-faces-crisis>

The Guardian:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jul/05/our-school-systems-are-broken-lets-grab-this-chance-to-remake-them>

Advocacy / Campaigning:

Big Education is about a big ambition. To bring together the energy and spirit of our schools, teachers, and communities to deliver a bigger and bolder vision of what education can be about - you need the Arts and the Arts need you. This is the time not to ditch the arts but to put them at the centre of a Recovery Curriculum: <https://bigeducation.org/lfl-content/you-need-the-arts-and-the-arts-need-you/>

The Arts Index is a snapshot report of the health of England's arts and culture provision.

<https://forthearts.org.uk/publications/arts-index-2007-2018/>

SHAPE - Social Sciences, Humanities for the Arts for People and the Economy:

<https://thisisshape.org.uk/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/jun/21/university-and-arts-council-in-drive-to-re-brand-soft-academic-subjects>

Platforms:

Bandlab: <https://www.bandlab.com/>

Cakewalk: <http://www.cakewalk.com/>

SeeSaw app: <https://web.seesaw.me/>

Flipgrid app: <https://info.flipgrid.com/>

Google Jamboard : <https://jamboard.google.com>

Padlet: <https://en-gb.padlet.com/>

Waklet: <https://wakelet.com/>

Zoom: <https://www.zoom.co.uk>

Nearpod: <https://nearpod.com/>

Canvas: <https://www.instructure.com/canvas/>

Scratch Junior: <https://www.scratchjr.org/>

Dojo: <https://www.classdojo.com/>

Singup: <https://www.singup.org/singupathome>

Discord Application: <https://discord.com/new>

Loom: <https://www.loom.com/>

Miscellaneous

Camden Cultural Commissioning Model:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/572b07492b8dde0c526a8c85/t/5746efb2f850826c48f9d8c5/1464266675699/Camden+Spark+Annual+Report+2015.pdf>

Proud Trust Manchester Safeguarding Resources: <https://www.theproudtrust.org/digital-youth-work-hub/>

Daresbury Laboratory Interactive Zoom: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bxRI9MnuNI

PRSP Wirral Unplugged Project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmVTiL5K9yc>

Arts Award Blog by Formby High School – Supporting Children of Key Workers to stay Creative: <https://blog.artsaward.org.uk/supporting-the-children-of-key-workers-to-stay-creative>

Arts Council – Let's Create: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate>

Expansive Education Network: <http://www.expansiveeducation.net/default.aspx>