

A green brushstroke in the top left corner with two red question marks and a small red circle.

Louise Farrington Inclusive Theatre in Education Bankview School





WORKING FOR INCLUSION-
WHEN AN INCLUSIVE
CULTURAL ORGANISATION
WORKS WITH SPECIALIST SEN
SCHOOLS AND PUPILS



THE CONTEXT



Bank View School moved to its current site in September 2015. It is a purpose built secondary school for 174 pupils with complex learning difficulties. All our students have an education, health and care plan. The majority of our students have a moderate learning difficulty plus an additional need, for example ASD or ADHD.

In January 2017 we opened Bank View@ Croxteth Primary School to provide 8 primary assessment places. We were excited to welcome our first two primary classes. One based at Bank View and the other at Croxteth.



CULTURAL PARTNERS:

LIVERPOOL'S
ROYAL
COURT





WHO WE ARE:

- Liverpool's Royal Court Theatre is the city's most popular producing Theatre. We are committed to ensuring that our work reflects the diversity of the Liverpool Community and engages non-traditional theatre audiences.
- We run an extensive Community Outreach Programme which includes a free youth theatre which is open to all young people in the Merseyside area.



WHY WE BECAME A PARTNER ORGANISATION:

We believe that all young people should have access to quality arts provision. To make this possible, the Royal Court Youth Theatre is:

- FREE FOR ALL
- THERE IS NO AUDITION PROCESS
- THERE IS NO WAITING LIST

THE PROJECT

Work was split in to 3 strands

Work with primary schools

Options group

After school performing arts group





EXTENDING OUR REACH:

Some of our young people have been diagnosed with ASD and were finding some of the sessions challenging.

In order to provide a bespoke youth theatre which successfully engages ALL young people, we decided to work with Bank View School in order to:

- 1. Increase our knowledge and understanding of how to work effectively with young people with SEN**
- 2. To help to support a SLICE fellow to enable her to champion the arts within a school setting and help to signpost young people to appropriate arts organisations in the city.**



CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES:

Regular arts sessions were embedded into the school curriculum, to ensure that all young people at Bank View school received access to a range of cultural activities.

We supported the SLICE fellow by offering:

- training and shadowing opportunities
- networking opportunities
- Sharing resources and staff
- Identifying gaps in knowledge and supporting Louise to learn new skills.

WORK WITH PRIMARY PUPILS

- ▶ Complex and severe learning difficulties.
- ▶ Princes at Smithdown primary
- ▶ Croxteth and Bank View





OPTIONS

- Pupils in the Performing Arts Key Stage 4 and 5 Options Group were lucky enough to have practitioners from the community education theatre team deliver performance and physical theatre workshops, this includes a professional actor who is appearing in a play as we speak, a director and an actress of stage and screen.



AFTER SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS GROUP

Pupils were given the opportunity to take part in performing arts after school every week from November to end of June. The after school club was open to all pupils from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 5. Only stipulations were:

Have fun

Participate fully

And due to restricted school budgets I requested that young people were collected by a parent/carer after sessions as I couldn't fund transport to get them home.

Due to transport difficulties (as majority travel to and from school on Local Authority transport) I wasn't sure what response I would get. However, I was thrilled that I got a huge 25 pupils sign up for the club.



- Group were lucky enough to have practitioners from the community education theatre team deliver performance and physical theatre workshops, this includes a professional actor who is appearing in a play as we speak, a director and an actress of stage and screen.



IMPACT AND OUTCOMES:

1. Becoming a SLICE cultural partner has strengthened our relationship with schools and enabled us to provide bespoke drama sessions for young people with SED.
2. Our staff have all received training in disability awareness and safeguarding vulnerable young people.
3. We conducted a disability audit with young people from Bank View to ensure that our building is as welcoming, inclusive and accessible as possible.
4. We have helped to train and support a SLICE fellow to ensure that three SEN schools in Liverpool have an improved understanding of and experience of – Liverpool's Cultural Offer.
5. This will ensure that more young people enjoy equality of access and opportunity to a range of different art forms. **EVERYONE has the right to access high quality culture.**

Participation

45 students involved in SLICE programme

25% of the school involved in SLICE



	Key stage 2		Key stage 3		Key stage 4		Key stage 5	
	Number		Number		Number		Number	
Slice	13	33%	10	26%	10	26%	6	15%
Whole school	21	11%	76	42%	53	30%	29	17%

	Number of students	ASD	Pupil premium	Male
Slice	39	54%	69%	59%
Whole school	179	59%	63%	64%



OBSTACLES AND ISSUES:

Working as a SLICE cultural partner has enabled us to make progress in ensuring that ALL YOUNG PEOPLE receive equal access to high quality culture. However, there are still barriers which need to be overcome:

1. Transport is still a barrier for young people with disabilities.
2. In supporting a SLICE fellow – it is essential that the whole school understands the importance of training cultural education specialists in schools – and supports them on their learning journey.
3. We need to change attitudes to leaders with a disability. We need more diverse leaders in cultural organisations. As Darren Henley, Chief Executive of the Arts Council says:

A diverse leadership in the sector is crucial in driving change at the top to break down barriers to inclusion.

LEARNING CURVE

- ▶ Juggling full time role in school
- ▶ Working with different working hours of organisation
- ▶ Different culture
- ▶ Didn't expect it to be so difficult to recruit schools to work with us.
- ▶ Working with a huge range of ages in the after school club in the one group
- ▶ Working with pupils who more severe and complex difficulties than I've worked with for a while.
- ▶ Introducing pupils to practitioners they don't know and who aren't necessarily trained in working with young people with additional learning needs.

RESPONSES FROM PUPILS

Primary Pupil BVS – 'I was scared to be in the show but I am glad I was in it. I loved dressing up as the big brown bear.'



Primary Pupil BVS 2- speaking in front of an audience was really scary but I felt great when I'd done it!



AFTER SCHOOL GROUP

Pupil 1 1 – I found it difficult to settle at first as I don't find it easy to work with staff I don't know and I was a bit disruptive. But when I knew they believed in me and weren't going to reject me then I felt more settled and joined in more.

Pupil 2 - I didn't like feeling like I'd been challenged by an adult who I didn't know and wasn't a teacher. However, by the end of the year I was glad I was being challenged as I became a better performer





DIVERSE LEADERSHIP:

During our first year as a SLICE cultural partner, we worked with the SLICE fellow to stage a one day arts festival at the school called BANKFEST.

We supported Louise to stage the festival and provided practitioners and also created bespoke plays and stories in collaboration with the young people themselves.



SLICE FELLOW PERSPECTIVE

- ▶ Learn from each other
- ▶ Kids are kids
- ▶ Have high expectations of all children
- ▶ Young people can and do rise to the challenge.
- ▶ There are organisations out there who are willing to make changes in order to make their surrounding and offer to schools accessible.

NEW SKILLS

- ▶ SLiCE – commissioning, multiagency working,
- ▶ Work with younger pupils
- ▶ Work with pupils with more complex learning needs, background is in working with pupils with complex learning needs not severe learning difficulties.





JAN SYME – WRITER AND DIRECTOR

Jan wrote a short drama which the young people performed as part of BANKFEST.

Jan will discuss how she worked with the young people in her group and tailored the piece to ensure that every young person was included and challenged appropriately.





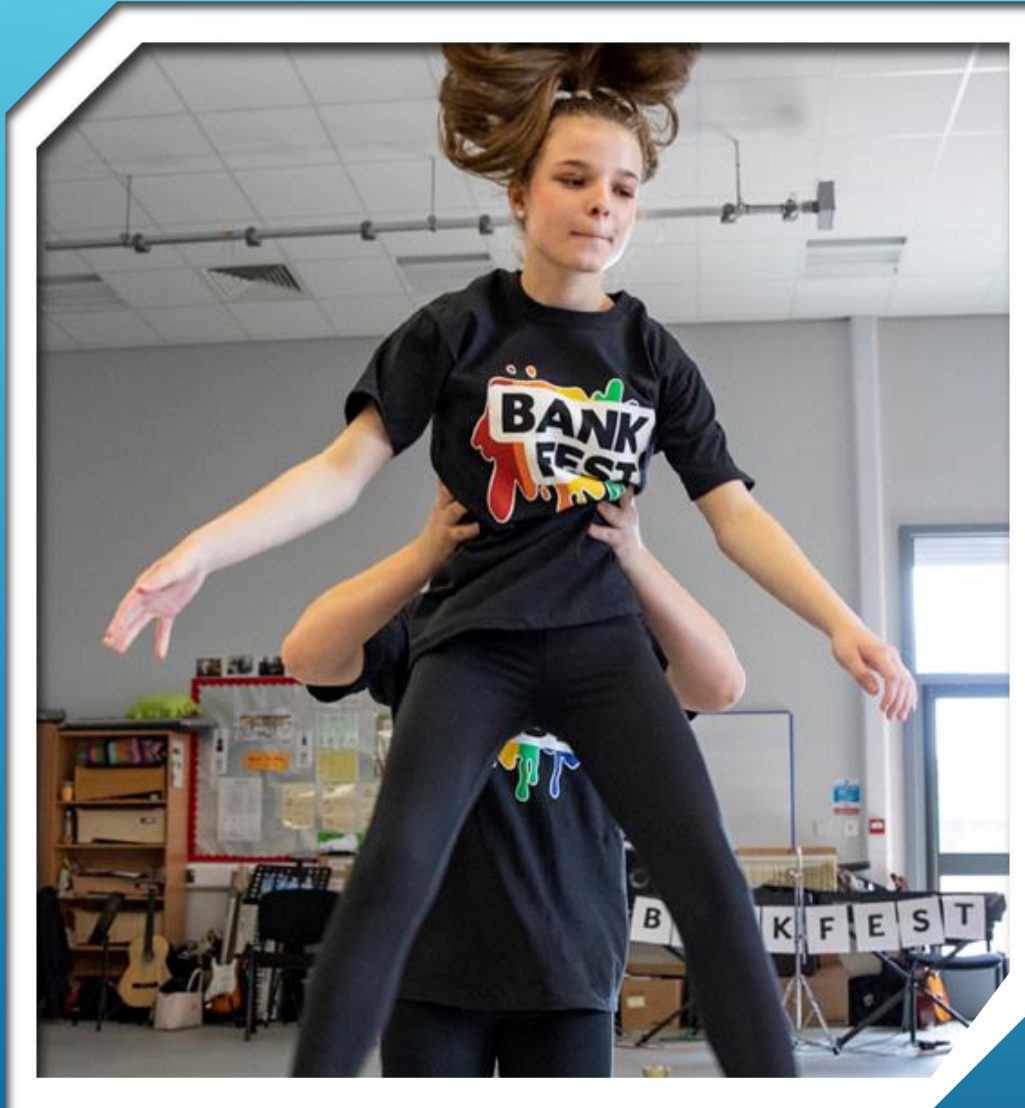
- Actors performing 'WORDS'





CONTINUING OUR PARTNERSHIP:

We aim to continue and develop our partnership for a further year on the SLICE programme to ensure that young people in Liverpool are given every opportunity to engage with and participate in high quality Arts and Culture.



HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

- ▶ Partnership to develop with the Royal Court
- ▶ Develop after school provision to include young people from different schools and youth provision.
- ▶ Continue to work with the Royal Court to train front of house staff and community education department to become as equipped as possible to be able to be as inclusive and accessible to all customers who come and watch a show at the theatre and all young people and adults that may access the activities that the community education department offer at the theatre and through outreach programmes.



- ▶ Increase the number of theatre practitioners with disabilities and additional needs delivering and facilitation workshops and sessions in school.
- ▶ Getting pupils out of school to the theatre, and other arts and cultural organisations and places.



- ▶ Young leaders – giving the young people in school and other schools through Champions project the skills and opportunities to facilitate performing arts workshops for younger pupils and peers.
- ▶ Work with mainstream schools and other SEN schools to create more opportunities for inclusive creative and expressive experiences for all students regardless of ability and to encourage mainstream and specialist provision to work together.

