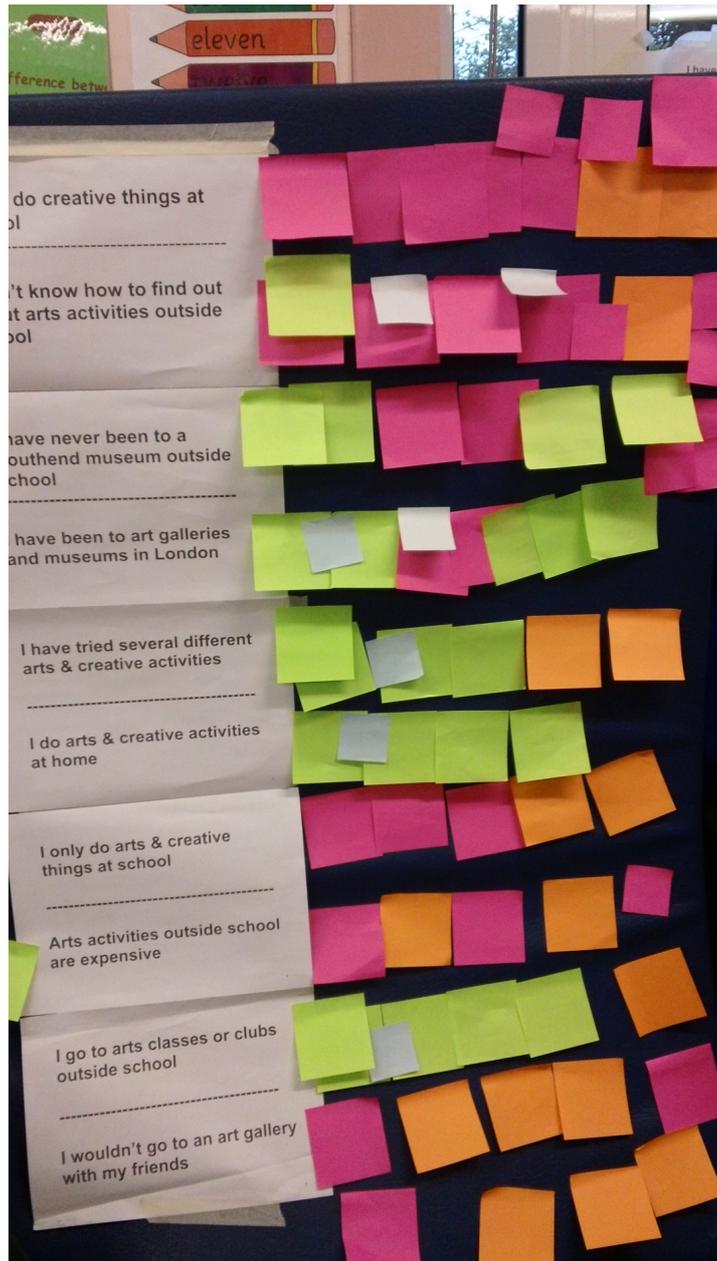


**Research into the Arts and Culture Provision in Southend Schools  
Commissioned by South Essex Teaching Schools Alliance Trust**

**Elizabeth Lynch  
Autumn 2012**



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Researcher - Elizabeth Lynch**

**1. Executive summary**

Westcliff High School for Girls is designated as a Teaching School<sup>1</sup>. The school has set up South Essex Teaching School Alliance Trust (SETSA) that currently includes 25 Southend secondary, primary and special schools and a range of other educational organisations, listed in the Appendix. The purpose of this research into the arts and cultural awareness, participation and their impact on enrichment across the network is to identify:

- what is already working well and could be developed
- where are the gaps
- barriers to progress

The outcomes of this research will inform the co-creation of a *targeted development programme* in partnership with the Royal Opera House Bridge.

The views of 50 teachers from Southend primary, special needs and secondary schools are represented in this report alongside those of 44 pupils and 5 local/regional arts and culture providers. 39 teachers took part in an online survey, 11 were interviewed in person or by phone.

**Range**

The findings indicate a good range of arts provision in these SETSA schools both within the curriculum and in the out of hours offer. The range of the out of hours offer reflects the arts curriculum with little provision for digital media and craft activities. However, there are significant variations between schools due to differences in facilities, resources, expertise, priorities and funding.

**Vision and value**

Recognition of the contribution of the arts to general well being and positive attitudes is indicated by 66% of the total number of teachers. 95% indicate that the arts are used as a learning tool across the curriculum. These findings are slightly at odds with the low awareness of vision and inclusion in school development plans amongst the interview sample, (which included 8 specialist art teachers). Whilst these teachers could articulate their views on the vision and value of their particular subjects and the arts in general, only three give an account of their school's vision and the SDP. It would be worthwhile for the Alliance to interrogate this low level of awareness, to ascertain why it is the case and how it could be enhanced. The uncertainty about overall vision could be usefully considered within the context of the EBacc<sup>2</sup>

Interviewees and organisations strongly express how the EBacc has undermined morale and affected the status of arts and cultural learning in many schools, especially secondary schools. Curriculum time for arts subjects has been decreased and the focus on academic priorities has shifted support away from the arts and culture. Advocacy and leadership by head teachers is vital if the arts are to develop and flourish.<sup>34</sup>

**Current strengths and their development**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.education.gov.uk/nationalcollege/index/support-for-schools/teachingschools.htm>

<sup>2</sup> The EBacc performance measure for schools does not include arts subjects.

<sup>3</sup>

*"The most commonly withdrawn subjects are drama and performing arts, which had been dropped in nearly a quarter of schools where a subject had been withdrawn (23%), followed by art (17%) and design technology (14%). BTECs have also seen a decline (dropped in 20% schools where subjects have been withdrawn)." The effects of the English Baccalaureate Ipsos MORI October 2012*

**Exposure to the arts** is indicated as a leading strength both in the survey (47%) and interviews with all participants. Visiting artists provide inspiration, specialist expertise and tuition, professional insights and vocational advice. Visits to arts and culture organisations support cross-curriculum delivery and pupil development. As mentioned earlier, 95% indicated that the arts are used as a learning tool across the curriculum and **creative thinking skills** are indicated as the second leading strength (45%). Strong **school resources** are indicated by 42%. The survey and the interviews highlight that where there are **collaboration between arts departments** and **active partnerships between schools**, this is valued and useful.

### **Prioritising areas for development and identifying gaps**

The analysis of survey questions and the interviews indicate the following top three priorities. Firstly bringing **artists into schools**, with time and funding being cited as the key barriers. Secondly, **communication** – professional networks, information exchange and peer to peer support are identified across the board (teachers, pupils, arts and culture organisations) as either a gap or an inadequate current offer. Communicating information to teachers and young people is a major challenge. Accessibility, look and feel, site maintenance are key issues. Finally, teachers need more **time** - to deliver their subject, to develop partnerships and collaboration to enrich the curriculum and provide high quality enhancement out of school hours. A further priority identified was the need for **equipment, materials and resources**. Whilst this would appear to contradict the response to strengths above it can be attributed to the differences between schools in terms of resources and facilities available to them.

In addition developing **local resources** and **vocational awareness and advice** were other key priorities for survey respondents (46% and 43%), the latter was also cited as a need by pupils. Local organisations expressed a desire to work more with secondary schools and that bureaucracy around risk and the pressure on curriculum time were key barriers.

### **Children and teenagers as audiences and participants – in school and in their own time**

The younger age group have a greater exposure to arts and culture venues and activities in Southend (and in London) because they go on visits with their school and their parents take them to events and some classes. For teenagers London galleries and theatre are more popular than local ones for school visits. This age group operates more independently, taking fewer trips with parents. The younger teenage group are more engaged in activity than the older ones, partly due to parental support and take up of 'teenager' targeted classes and activities. Teenagers and children want better, more centralised sources of information both online and in public spaces.

Analysis of pupil responses demonstrates that as they grow older, the breadth of participation as audiences/consumers/spectators declines. Within the limits of this research, this is attributed to the following: independent choice, less money to spend, a focusing of creative interests as they mature, lack of awareness of what is available for older teenagers and a limited offer to this age group.

### **Action**

The findings raise the following questions and recommendations. How can existing resources and research into arts and cultural learning inform the existing practice and support advocacy? How can SETSA and ROH Bridge work together to on 'messaging' the integral role of arts and cultural learning as part of academic success?

ROH Bridge could support SETSA by brokering

- strategic local, regional and national partnerships that could release or generate resources and create opportunities for fund-raising and sponsorship.
- a meeting with the providers of existing arts, culture and information websites to explore how they can collectively offer a more effective and integrated service that meets their objectives and the demand articulated so strongly in this research.
- initiatives that develop or illuminate better communications and strategic working

Together ROH Bridge and SETSA could explore how to address the uneven landscape of resources for music, art and drama through new collaborations and partnerships between

schools. SETSA could explore how to work strategically with the Music Hub to promote, support, influence and advise. SETSA could invite all local interested arts and culture organisations, via Southend Theatres' Education Forum to be part of the Alliance. What would be the focus for an objective that could be shared with these potential partners?

If arts and culture are valued and are perceived part of a whole education, how can SETSA support leadership to ensure that schools can integrate them into their vision for academic success 2013-15? How can the knowledge, experiences and interest of allies, i.e. arts and culture organisations, pupils and parents be harnessed effectively?

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## 2. Methodology

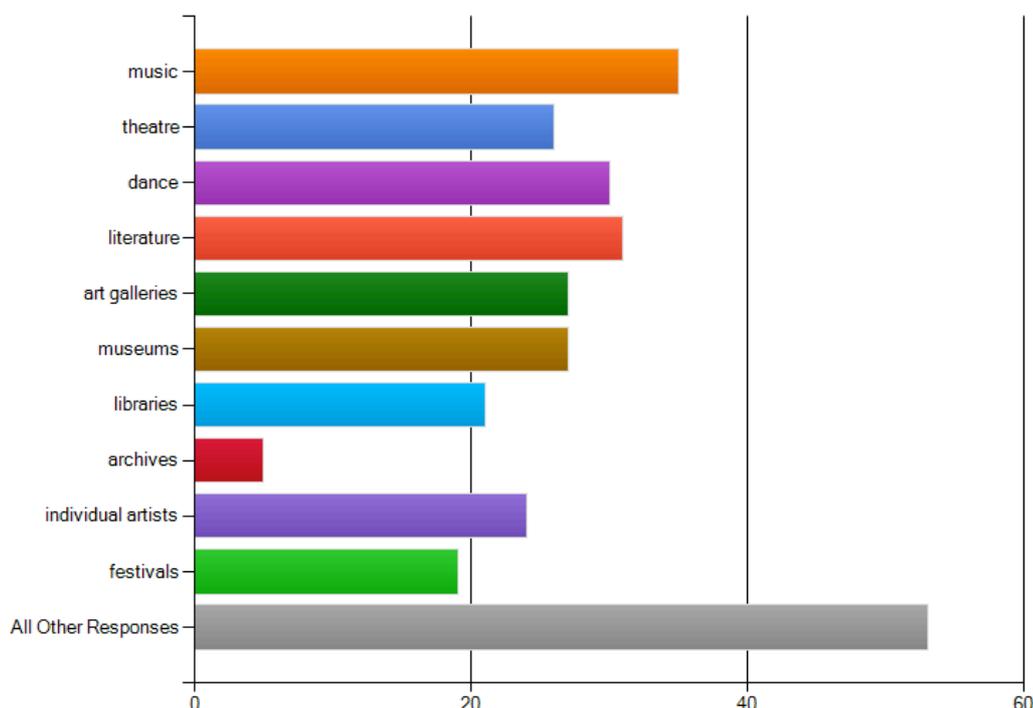
The views of 50 teachers from Southend primary, special needs and secondary schools are represented in this report. 39 completed an online survey and 11 teachers were interviewed face to face or by phone. A breakdown of roles and schools and questions is contained in Appendix 1. Quotations highlighted in blue throughout are by teaching staff unless otherwise indicated.

## 3. Research findings

### 3.1 The arts and cultural offer in schools: range and strengths

The survey asked two questions to identify what is already taking place and where the strengths lie in school. The first chart in this section identifies the survey's findings for Q6 and the table ranks the strengths identified in Q7. Interviews with teachers asked what is working well in order to draw out context and detail to illuminate the findings.

**Are pupils at your school learning about a broad range of arts practices from a range of places, practices and perspectives? Please tick all those that apply:**



### Range of the offer

The survey response indicates arts and cultural learning through a **range** of art forms and experiences with music (90%), literature (79%), dance (77%), visits to art galleries and museums (69% each) scoring most highly, followed by theatre (66%), working with individual artists (56%), with other schools (56%) and libraries (53%). Music and literature are part of the national curriculum and music is the most programmed out of school hours activity indicated by 89% elsewhere in the survey. Singing is third at 75%.

### Dance and drama

The survey question did not differentiate between participating in dancing and theatre and experiencing it as an audience. However dance and drama is jointly the second most programmed out of hours activity, at 83% each.<sup>5</sup> The conversations with children and teenagers describe theatre visits in Southend or London to see popular dance and musicals with parents and their school. Very few young people interviewed had been to see plays in a theatre.

### Museums and galleries

Visits to museums are evenly spread between secondary and primary/special schools. However interviews with the pupils and teachers indicate that most (or most memorable perhaps?) secondary school visits are to London museums<sup>6</sup>. The Southend Museum Education Manager backs up this imbalance in attendance and engagement, despite a concerted effort to promote their resources and invite dialogue with secondary teachers. Similarly, whilst primary school children described some visits to two local galleries<sup>7</sup> and the sixth form group had visited artists' studios as part of the Leigh-on-Sea Art trail, all the age groups had visited leading London galleries with their schools.

### Opportunities for arts and culture in schools

31% identified the quality and range of arts activity in their school as an opportunity, attributed variously to the skills of the teachers, specialist teaching in music and art (in primaries) the cultural diversity of the pupils and working on the Arts Award with Focal Point Gallery.

### Strengths

The chart below ranks the strengths from the survey findings and indicates a small variation in SMT views:

Strengths	Total rank	SMT rank (13/39)	Response Count	Total response %
exposure to arts and culture	1	1	27	69%
creative thinking skills	2	2	25	64%
school resources	3	3	20	51%
Creative technical skills	4	3	14	38%
professional development	5	4	15	36%
local resources	6	4	10	25%
vocational awareness/opportunities	7	5	8	20%

**The individual interviews** with eleven teachers describe more specifically how they think the arts and culture offer is working well in their schools. They gave varied responses to this question, which can be classified as follows:

Four talked about **high visibility** for the arts (good visual displays/performances/awards) giving the subjects **profile and status**, contribute to look and feel of school. Giving a platform to pupils' creative work supports well-being and confidence and for some less academic pupils, an opportunity for achievement, including those with special needs including

<sup>5</sup> See Section 3.12 Out of school hours learning: teachers' perspective

<sup>6</sup> Science, Natural History, British Museums

<sup>7</sup> Beecroft and Focal Point galleries

behavioural problems. One teacher felt that academic progression to Further and Higher Education for arts subject students supported the subject's status.

**Visits from external arts practitioners** were valued by 8/11 (72%) teachers and this supports the survey's findings. The survey yielded a list of named artists and organisations who have already worked with local schools (known to these teachers). The artists include poets, musicians, dancers, small scale and national theatre companies, a ceramicist, sculptor, opera singer, photographer and a graphic designer. The organisations listed are a local, regional and national.

**Using the arts as a creative approach** or tool was described by five teachers, e.g. to deliver of other subjects; develop literacy and numeracy; to explore issues such as messages bullying and cultural diversity. For pupils with emotional/behavioural difficulties, the arts are a catalyst for the expression of emotions and ideas in both special and mainstream schools. One primary school head talked about their experience as a Royal Opera House Creative Partnerships Change School and how now the arts are embedded across curriculum, in the SDP and creative teaching and learning is seen as the key to the school's improved SATS results.

*Arts and culture are right in the heart of our curriculum. We feel strongly that all children need this entitlement and we will stick to our approach despite what Mr Gove says.*

Two teachers talked about **collaboration between arts departments** working well, e.g. on school productions. Two described ongoing partnership working with arts organisations as productive and curriculum enhancing e.g. a Shakespeare festival, an annual art competition/exhibition. One secondary art department head has fostered **partnerships with local primary and special needs schools** and one of the primaries mentioned the vital access to ICT facilities this gives. The purpose of the partnerships is to support the teaching of art in the primary schools and raise overall standards. There is great discrepancy amongst the Year 7 intake, with many pupils have very little exposure to art practices. Sometimes art has been subsumed into other subjects when there is no specialist arts expertise/interest in a primary school.

#### Questions<sup>8</sup>:

- Are schools satisfied with the range and depth of what is working well? How is the importance of technology reflected or embedded in arts and cultural learning?
- Could existing resources and research inform and inspire the current offer?

### 3.2 Arts and culture provision: gaps and areas for development

In the interviews, the question asked was more open than the survey question which listed the choices below. It asked: where are the gaps, what would you like to see more of, developed, in addition?

The chart below shows some differences in ranking between subject teachers/department heads and SMT on areas for development:

Areas for development	Total rank	SMT rank (13/39)	Response Count	Total response %
local resources	1	1	18	46%
vocational awareness/opportunities	2	3	17	43%
creative technical skills	3	1	16	41%
school resources	4	2	15	38%
professional development	5	5	12	31%
creative thinking skills	6	3	9	23%
exposure to arts and culture	7	4	8	20%

<sup>8</sup> Questions raised by the findings are included throughout the report along with recommendations. These are also listed in Section 4

### **Gaps in provision:**

The interviews yielded opinions on gaps in provision in addition to areas for development and offered some further views and insights.

**Peer to peer support opportunities/systems** - Collaboration and sharing best practice and experience with other arts teacher/dept head colleagues in other schools, (articulated by 5/11 teachers). As well as teachers, this could benefit pupils, e.g. encouraging high aspiration in arts subjects across transition; sharing good practice developed by special needs teachers to support children with emotional and behavioural difficulties in mainstream schools.

**Curriculum** – Two primary teachers cited **drama** expertise as a gap - for its intrinsic benefits, its instrumental use for developing literacy and oracy and for teaching other subjects. One secondary music teacher felt that to progress **singing for all pupils**, it needed to be part of the curriculum, not only an extra-curricula activity. One primary school teacher cited music tuition as a gap.

### **Areas for development:**

*One of the school's ambitions is to create more links and give a wider experience of the arts to pupils but without the ability to fund more creative practitioners coming into the school this won't be addressed.*

**Visits from arts professionals**, - companies, individual artists, industry professionals. 6/11 teachers described this as a gap or area for development. Time and resources are limited and so visits are planned less often or not at all. Three teachers specifically mentioned a need for regular (i.e. weekly) input from visiting artists to work with special needs pupils (in both mainstream and special schools). This would bring more benefit than a short term residency. One interviewee wants a more strategic approach to partnerships with arts institutions such as ROH, in order to support and enhance pupils mobility through music, e.g. from rock to classical orchestral, a contemporary and classical repertoire for choral singing.

**Inadequate spaces** for arts and culture curriculum delivery and development was cited by 5/11 teachers.

*Drama facilities very poor in comparison to other grammar schools in area.*

*We need accommodation- practice rooms, recording studios, instrument storage, soundproofed spaces, ICT and music technology. We have professional quality ambition for music.*

*Space for 3D art work, and to leave work to dry, not have to pack away Library space (in our primary school), not in a corridor*

**The status of arts subjects and limited (or decreased) curriculum time** was described as inter-related problems by 4/11 in response to the question. Secondary teachers in particular are feeling squeezed in terms of the time they have to teach their specialist subjects, which narrows the offer for their pupils.

*Difficult to find time in the curriculum to do more creative/expressive work.*

*There is a lot of (academic) pressure on our girls and the creative arts falls by wayside. The arts are most definitely under threat, we are fighting back, the Head is supportive, pushing for art to have better profile in the school. We want to be a beacon school for studying art in the area.*

*The proposed EBacc has already had a massive impact, many primary schools have scrapped dance. It's already coming out of secondary schools. Dance Digital.*

**Arts and culture interaction between schools** (3/11), e.g. Performances by secondary pupils in primary schools; performing alongside other schools at celebrations, festivals,

community events. This either doesn't happen or isn't developed because teachers don't have the time or the encouragement from SMT to devote to developing partnerships.

The **cost of music tuition** is cited as a gap by 2/11 secondary teachers. Motivated low income pupils, not eligible for FSM are missing out. Both express the view that they would like greater trust in teachers' professional judgment regarding fees for music tuition. - Guidelines around access for FSM pupils and Gifted and Talented can exclude children 'in the middle.'

*There is a very strong ethos of involving pupils in arts via inclusion in my school, but this doesn't match up with Gifted & Talented strategy.*

### 3.3 Priorities for resources to provide pupils with a better cultural offer

The survey asked an open question about **the barriers** for arts and culture in schools, to which 90% (35/39) responded. The findings show that **time, funding and specialist expertise** are the top three barriers and these are inter-related. **Time** is cited by 34% (12) as a key barrier and **funding** by 29% (10). The need for funding to bring in artists, teachers and outside agencies is specifically linked to curriculum delivery and enhancement, specialist tuition and after-school/out of hours activity. 11% (4) specifically cite lack of specialist expertise, 9% (3) lack of facilities, 6% (2) the perception of the arts as not valuable by some parents and teachers.

*Funding for quality CPD through working alongside visiting arts and media providers would help us achieve our academic ambitions and pastoral needs of our (primary) pupils. However we are not a school with huge deprivation index, we are in middle. Funding is a problem.*

This analysis of barriers is substantiated up by the more detailed information gathered in the interviews about priorities and listed below. However, across these interviews and those with pupils and with arts and culture organisations, an additional priority was identified: there is a critical need for effective **networking and communication tools** in order for all stakeholders to both share and discover information.

The teachers were asked for **three top priorities** to improve the offer to pupils. These have been classified and ranked in order of frequency:

- 1) **Visiting artists and companies** to directly work with pupils
- 2) **Information exchange** e.g. an effective website and/or weekly e-digest newsletter<sup>9</sup>; local peer to peer and **professional networks**, both face to face and via social media
- 3) **Time** to invest in **partnerships/collaboration/after-school activities** jointly with and **equipment, materials, resources**
- 4) Space – for additional facilities and different types of activity
- 5) The use of **drama and music** to deliver other curriculum subjects
- 6) Additional ideas include the suggestion for a national base line **assessment tool for Y7 music**<sup>10</sup>; using the **Artsmark** to raise the profile of the arts in school<sup>11</sup>; addressing the barrier to off-site visits presented by risk assessment procedures<sup>12</sup>.

#### Recommendations:

- ROH Bridge supports SETSA by brokering strategic local, regional and national partnerships that could release or generate resources and create opportunities for fund-raising and sponsorship. For example with E15 Acting School, University of Essex, Theatre Is, Dance Digital. What mutual needs could be met through collaboration at low or no cost?

<sup>9</sup> e.g. Artsadmin's <http://www.artsadmin.co.uk/resources/e-digest>

<sup>10</sup> See Section 3.9 on the Music Hub

<sup>11</sup> See Section 3.11 on the Arts Award

<sup>12</sup> See Section 3.10 on Visits to arts, culture and heritage sites

- ROH Bridge and SETSA explore how to address the uneven landscape of resources for music, art and drama through new collaborations and partnerships between schools.
- SETSA promotes and encourages other local arts organisations and schools to share recommendations from their pools of local and regionally based artists.

### 3.4 Vision and School Development Plan

The eleven individual interviewees were asked about the vision for the arts and cultural learning in their school and how it was built in to the SDP. Only three could articulate the vision – one head, a head of dept and a subject teacher. Six were either unsure or were only aware of their department's vision.

*If the vision was articulated it would give the work status and recognition, hand in hand with Artsmark status.*

If we can assume this is representative sample, this incidence of either low awareness is a problem, especially when curriculum time for the arts is under pressure and many experience challenges with the status of their subject. Even if there is a clear vision and this is embedded in the SDP, creative arts teachers and all staff need to understand and advocate its importance. Because there are (a few) primary schools where there are either gaps in expertise and/or enthusiasm for the arts, one teacher feels children are already missing out:

*If a child at KS2 has a teacher who isn't into art, art is flipped into other subject and so they have no art tuition for a whole year. There is such uneven provision at primary level. Children's confidence is often shot when they arrive at secondary. Some of our primary schools are letting down our future artists and creative entrepreneurs.*

The strong sense of the professional pride and confidence in the quality of what they are offering to pupils of all abilities is undermined by insecurity about the status of their subject in some schools due to the proposal for the EBacc which excludes arts subjects. Where the head offers clear support and leadership regarding arts and culture this is appreciated but the overall picture for the arts is uncertain and demoralising. Will their subject cease to be offered at a higher level? Will the most academic pupils be discouraged from studying their subject? Will art and music be consigned to the same fate as drama and dance in the curriculum in most schools, i.e. optional.

*Unless priority and profile is given by central government, the value of arts in teaching and learning won't be recognised.*

### 3.5 How can an enriched arts and cultural offer help your school to achieve its ambitions 2013-15?

*It could – it needs linking directly to academic and vocational outcomes.*

Concerns about the nature of the proposed EBacc and its impact on teaching and learning through a wide range of art activities in both secondary and primary education continue to be expressed in responses to this question. When prompted to consider how an enriched arts and cultural offer might contribute to academic success (i.e. defined by results for SATS and public exams in non- arts and vocational subjects), teachers describe using the arts as learning tool for other subjects and to develop critical and creative thinking.

*The recognition of pupils going to study art at HE and FE levels could support the academic ambitions of the school. I am worried that the EBacc is a death knell for arts - we'll prop up results for non-academic pupils.*

*My school is keen on improving pupils' oracy and articulation. We don't get Oxbridge success and want to address this. The girls are bright and intelligent but not so good at thinking*

*outside the box – they need to be original thinkers and independent learners. Working with artists and doing arts projects can develop this, open their minds, and give them the edge.*

**Recommendations:**

- SETSA supports schools to articulate effectively the value of arts and culture as part of a whole education that will influence, support and enhance academic achievement
- SETSA works with SMT and teachers, artists and other partners to consider how they can effectively demonstrate the impact of arts and culture on in terms of academic measures.

**3.6 Are the arts used as a learning tool across the curriculum?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	46.2%	18
no	5.1%	2
sometimes	48.7%	19
<b>answered question</b>		<b>39</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>4</b>

Given the low awareness of overall vision articulated above it is interesting to analyse the responses to this question. 12/18 responding yes are primary teachers and 13/19 responding *sometimes* are secondary teachers. It would be interesting to explore what tools are used, how they are classified and in which curriculum areas they are applied most frequently and effectively.

**3.7 Is there recognition that the arts contribute to general well-being and positive attitudes?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5 strongly agree	25.6%	10
4	33.3%	13
3	33.3%	13
2	5.1%	2
1 disagree	2.6%	1

The survey findings are reflected in the views of those interviewed. The table, although it identifies overall agreement, varies in the ranking. 59% (23/39) indicate 5/4. However the 100% (11/11) 'yes' response by the interviewees is qualified by their comments elsewhere during the research about the academic status of their subject, particularly at secondary level and the decrease in curriculum time.

They said that although this was not formally measured or recorded, (or required to be), the value of the arts was evidenced by the presentation of children's work to parents and sometimes the wider community in visual displays in the school, performances and school productions. Two mentioned the arts being commended as outstanding by OFSTED. Several teachers said that staff shared anecdotal but unrecorded observation of creative thinking development and the social/behavioural benefits to individual pupils.

In one primary school an informal and effective record of progress is implemented. As with numeracy and literacy, the children choose their best work each term, which is put into an art portfolio creating a continuous record of their best work. This enables a personal review of progression over several years and celebration of their wider talents by teachers and parents on progress evenings.

**Recommendation:**

The model of creating a continuous record of best work, selected by pupils is shared amongst Alliance schools.

**3.8 Do visiting adults other than teachers enrich the arts and cultural offer to pupils?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Artists/creative practitioners	82.1%	32
other arts professionals	41.0%	16

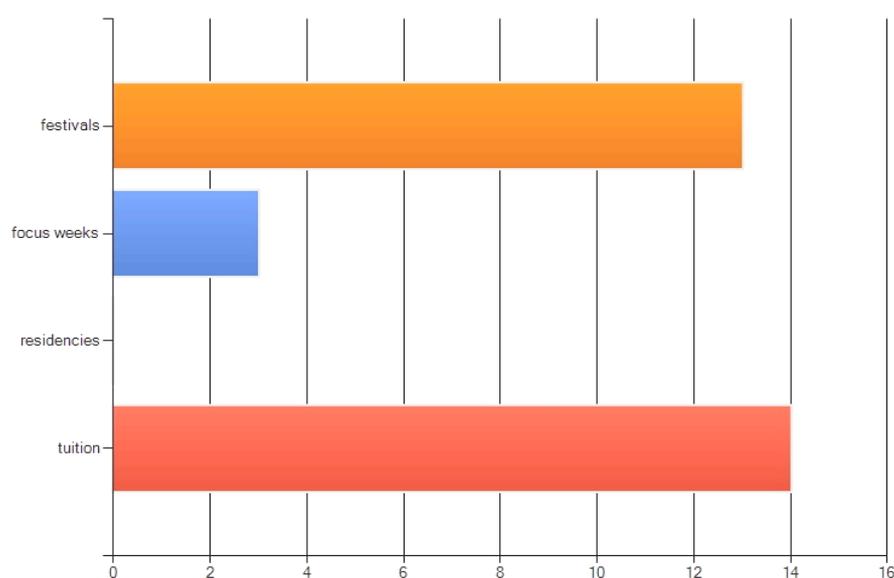
The gaps in provision and areas for development indicated in Section 3 qualify this finding<sup>13</sup>. Visits do happen in most schools but not enough or its development is hampered by lack of time and funds. (If teachers' response to this question reflects their opinion rather than the actual incidence of visits, then this is a very positive endorsement.)

The interviewees were asked how visits from arts and culture professionals are planned into the curriculum. Two said that didn't take place and decisions about this were at SMT level, two acknowledged weekly input from an artist and the remainder (7) qualified their answers. The overall impression given (substantiated by the interviews with arts organisations) is that visits are not planned strategically, they are chiefly due to the initiative of the individual teacher and the support of SMT/Head teacher. Two would like more advice to help identify quality and cultural diversity when selecting artists. In two schools visiting artists are seen as an opportunity for cross-curriculum work and for CPD but this is limited by lack of funds. One teacher said it never happens in his department because there is no budget.

**3.9 Does your school work closely with the local Music Hub?**

48% (19) teachers responded. Nine primary and five secondary take part in music festivals. The 14 indications of music tuition via the Hub are evenly split between primary and secondary.

Does your school work closely with their local music hub? If 'yes' indicate all that apply, otherwise go to next question



The interview with the Director, who has been in post for less than a year, puts the Hub's impact in perspective in terms of planning, penetration and capacity. The priorities have been to ensure that primary schools access the funding for one term's whole class instrumental

<sup>13</sup> See Sections 3, 4 and 5

tuition; exploring how to improve the Y6/7 transition experience; the setting up of progression routes in and out of schools for children and teenagers through ensembles (brass, woodwind etc.) and a Youth Orchestra; to work in partnership with Southend Youth Choirs to create a Beginners' Choir. An inspiring vision was articulated for improving access to and sustaining an interest in playing classical music. It was acknowledged that existing funding is weighted towards primary schools and that fund-raising will need to address this. A significant challenge perceived by the Director is getting schools to work with each other, a view shared by her colleagues in Thurrock and Essex music services.

*There is a tension between an isolationist and a community position adopted by many schools, Children live in the community not in school. Some schools have fantastic facilities and others not, which is where we come in, to bring some equality.*

*The Music Hub does not take account of rock music, and for many young musicians that could be a route into appreciation of and exposure to orchestral music.*

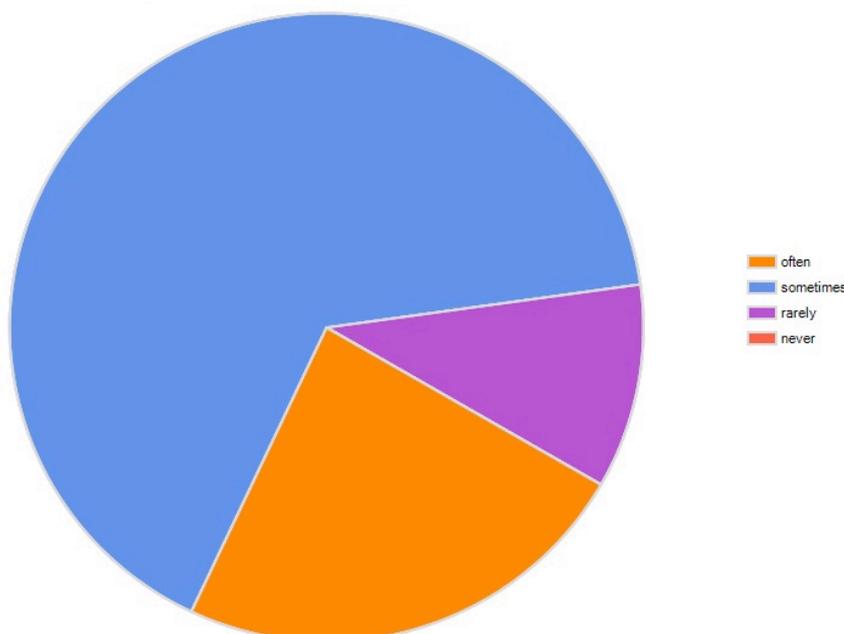
**Recommendation:**

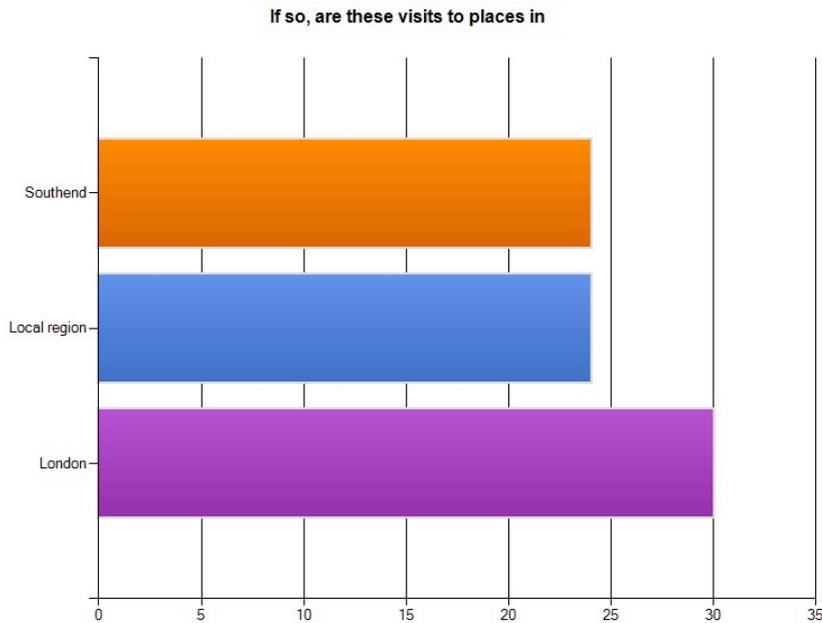
SETSA explores how to work strategically with the Music Hub to promote, support, influence and advise.

**3.10 Visits to arts, culture and heritage sites as part of the curriculum.**

In response to the question below, 15 primary teachers and 7 secondary indicated 'sometimes'. In the workshops with pupils (and their teachers) and the interviews with local and regional arts and culture organisations, information context and detail illuminates the meaning of 'often' and 'sometimes' and the location of the visits.

Do you visit arts, cultural and heritage sites as part of the curriculum?





Primary school teachers make more local region (13:8) and Southend (12:9) visits in comparison to secondary; the proportion is equal for those to London (15:16). The special needs school make as many as they can but indoor options are limited because of their pupils' needs and requirements. Analysis of the survey responses by school indicates variation in perspective amongst its teachers, bearing out evidence from the arts and culture providers that their engagement is with individual teachers rather than schools.

Primary teachers visit a wide range of Southend arts and cultural venues and make use of its urban and natural resources. For the secondary teachers, local arts and cultural visits are not perceived as interesting/suitable/attractive as visits to London galleries, museums and theatres. Some secondary teachers visit local art galleries and Southend Theatres. Three teachers mentioned that parents were asked to fund London trips and that this was affordable for their cohort's families.

Two teachers talked about successful art and performing arts **visits abroad** which no longer happen for two key reasons: aversion to risk and limits on length of trips during curriculum time. Taking pupils on a cultural visit is a bureaucratic nightmare in one school! This view was reinforced by the arts and culture venue interviews.

*The main challenge for teachers who want to engage with us is that they are not allowed out in curriculum time or the risk assessment (RA) process is too cumbersome. Teachers who have the support of the Head or SMT find the RA process easier because the educational value of the visit is understood. Southend Theatres*

The response to the survey question about levels of personal confidence in teaching and facilitating arts learning outside the classroom indicates a split between a desirable confidence of 48% (19/38) and average/low confidence (47%).

**Questions:**

- Is the issue of confidence something that SETSA could address through sharing best practice and schemes of work across schools?
- Could the ROH Bridge support SETSA schools through promoting existing resources for creative teaching outside the classroom?
- Could ROH Bridge support SETSA schools by promoting and sharing the cross-curricula educational evidence for the benefits of visits and trips?
- Could SETSA encourage school leadership to take a more robust and positive approach to risk assessment or is risk aversion an institutional excuse to avoid making cultural visits?

### 3.11 Arts Award and Artsmark

58% (23/39) of the survey respondents are not in schools with Artsmark status. Of these just over 50% are considering applying. Just over 50% (21/39) would like more information about the Arts Awards

There is awareness of Artsmark and Arts Award amongst 6/11 interviewees, the others expressed interest or some reservations. Two schools have Arts Mark status, one used to have it. One secondary teacher recently trained as an Arts Award advisor. The special needs teachers were not sure the awards were appropriate for most of their pupils but interested in Artsmark to help raise the status of arts in their school. One head teacher with a great deal of arts activity in school felt that the work involved to achieve the Artsmark was too time-consuming. One secondary art teacher had found out by accident about the Arts Awards, the department head had not shared the information.

#### *We don't have enough time to achieve the Gold Artsmark*

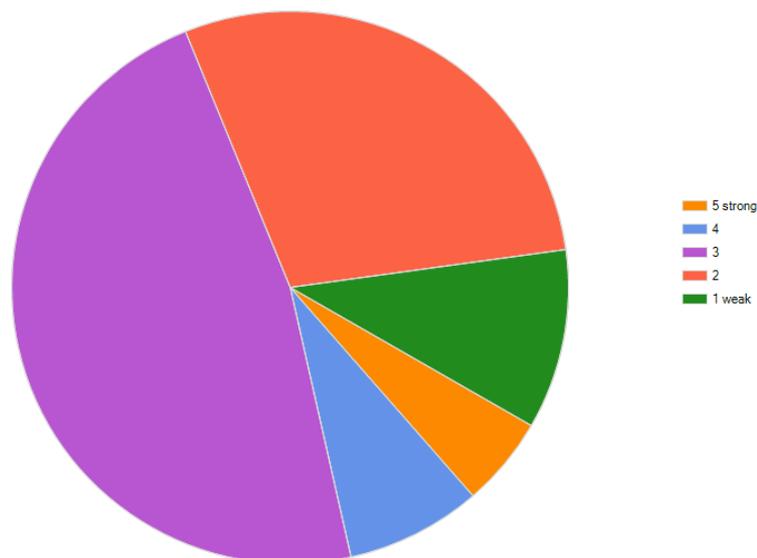
The overall finding from the survey and the interviews is that primary schools have no awareness of the new Discover and Explore Awards but are interested in finding out more. Only 15% of teachers answered the question (6/38) with this handful offering Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Secondary schools are more cautious about taking on the Awards as they and their pupils already have a heavy work load/less curriculum time.

### 3.12 Out of school hours learning: teachers' perspective

The survey yielded a strongly positive response (38/39) to the question about their encouragement of pupils to engage with creativity in their own time. 47% said 'often', 52% 'sometimes', with only 2% saying rarely. The survey did not interrogate whether this encouragement focussed on out of school hours activity programmed at their school or with organisations in the community.

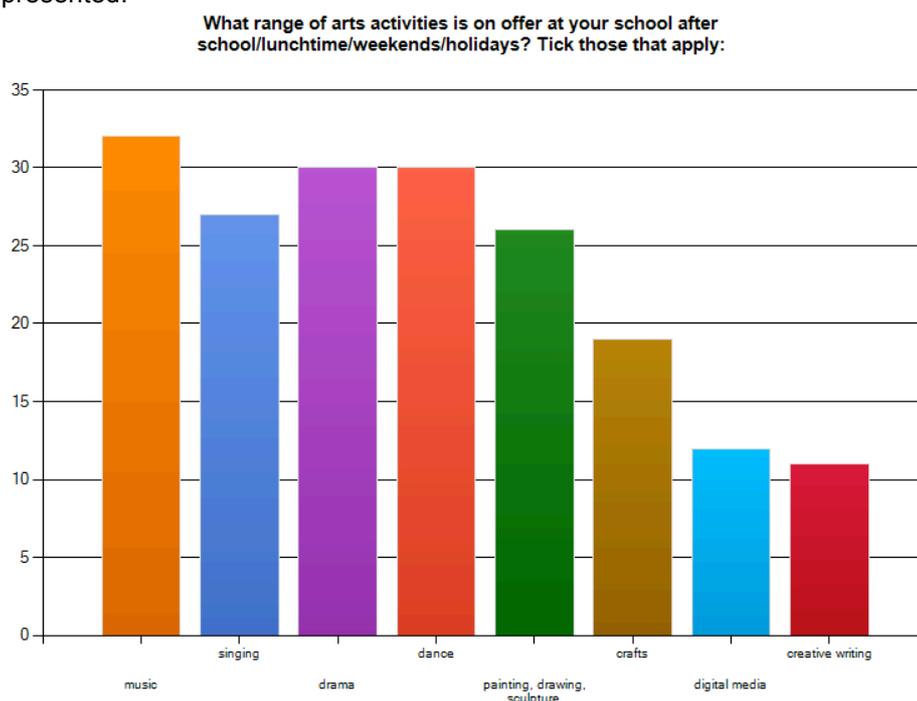
Another question response reinforced the data<sup>14</sup> about low awareness/knowledge about activity amongst their pupils, with 86% (33/38) of teachers selecting the average/below average rating.

Do children have a working knowledge of cultural opportunities in Southend? Please rate between 5 -1



<sup>14</sup> See Section 3.13

The survey (36/39 responses) indicated a substantial out of hours offer across the schools represented:



The survey did not identify the frequency of this offer or diversity within art forms. Across all the research strands both teachers and young people indicate that further provision was desirable/needed. In terms of progression routes 27% (11/38) indicated a formal accreditation for activities, and the remainder cited in equal measure: in-house, progression levels or no particular route, approx 33% each. As music tuition features highly, could we assume that grade exams feature as part of the formal accreditation?

### **3.13 The creative experience of pupils in school and out of school hours and in the community.**

#### **Methodology**

Four one-hour workshops with 44 children and teenagers were conducted at two primaries and one secondary school. One primary group consisted of 10 children 7-11 years old from each year group. The other consisted of 14 x 7-11 year olds who are year reps for their School Council. One secondary group of 10 pupils represented YR7-11 (12-16 years old) and the other was a L7 Level 3 BTEC group of 10.

The participants were asked to undertake three activities that elicited information and opinions about participation in the arts and culture as students, creators and as audiences. This generated conversation during the exercises and the session finished with a group discussion about what they do already and what they'd like to do, but don't know about or have access to.

The activities looked at arts and culture in Southend: places to visit; opportunities to participate and learn; independent creative activity at home/in the community; awareness of activity/provision; cost of classes and tickets; attractiveness of cultural offer; general benefits of arts education; access to vocational advice.

For charts detailing some of the findings see the Appendix.

#### **Summary and insights**

The younger age group have a greater exposure to arts and culture venues and activities in Southend (and in London) because they attend places and activities with their school and their parents take them to events and some classes. This happens less with secondary school pupils because there are fewer trips to local places, (London is more popular for

galleries and theatre) and they operate more independently, taking fewer trips with parents. The younger teenage group are more engaged than the older ones, partly due to parental support and take up of 'teenager' targeted classes and activities.

Most pupils engaged in some kind of creative activity at home, followed by venues such as churches, the library and private classes. The most commonly cited were playing a musical instrument, making things, painting and drawing, writing songs/poetry, singing.

In terms of consuming arts and culture as audiences/spectators/visitors/readers, across all the categories offered there were 356 indications of participation, 49 of which were once only occurrences. There were 93 indications of never having tried one of the categories.

It is clear from the figures that as the age range increases the breadth of participation as audiences/consumers etc. declines. In terms of this research this seems to be for the following reasons: independent choice, less money to spend, focusing of creative interests as they mature, lack of awareness of what is available for older teenagers, limited offer to this age group.

(In terms of music, dance and drama one local drama teacher described a wide local offer in terms of private classes and clubs for children and teenagers for those able to pay.)

The workshops yielded the following information and views:

#### **Teenagers 12-17 years old:**

The 16/17 year olds would like more places to visit/activities to go that appeal to their age range. They are too young for licensed venues, e.g. music clubs and too old for children and 'teen' activities.

They have enjoyed studio visits and meeting artists with their school – e.g. the Leigh on Sea Art Trail. In their own time they like to visit cultural venues and heritage sites (e.g. Southend Pier) with people they know. Both group of teenagers said they would like to do interactive activities in galleries and museums. However, they describe heritage buildings and galleries as '*full of old people or children*' and don't feel they have a place there. This perception is partially backed up by the Museum Education Officer who acknowledges that community education and participation is targeted at families with children and adults. They have limited capacity and funding and engagement with teenagers and young adults is not a priority, especially when there is already little engagement with secondary schools.

*The Planetarium is not very exciting it needs to be a faster more interactive experience. Pupil*

Both groups talked about the difficulties of finding out independently what is going on in Southend and any wider opportunities such as competitions that can offer a platform for their work. They would like a good website where everything could be found or signposted. Both groups wanted more advice on further study, careers and apprenticeships, one suggested a careers fair.

The younger group of teenagers liked the space for teenagers at the library and would like to be able to find out about creative opportunities there as well as 'having a teacher who knows about activities outside school'. One suggested partnerships with schools 'so you could exchange resources' He said his siblings attended other schools with facilities they don't have in his secondary. This reflects teacher views<sup>15</sup>. Some of the group wanted more places and spaces to exhibit their artwork.

#### **Children 7-11 years old**

They talked enthusiastically about their schools' visits to the Tate and National Galleries and Cliff Pavilions. They are keen to try different art forms such as graffiti arts, junk sculpture, drama, various dance styles, choir from an earlier age bit in school time (not wait until Y5 & 6!) and in after-school clubs. One child suggested inter-disciplinary arts activities in galleries

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<sup>15</sup> See Sections 4 on Gaps in provision and Section 11 on the Music Hub

and museums: *You could make dance inspired by paintings. This would make the visits very interesting. Pupil*

Like the teenagers (and the teachers) children want better, more centralised sources of information both online and in public spaces:

*There's lot's going on in Southend but it's hard sometimes to find out about it. Pupil*

### **3.14 Perspectives from arts and culture organisations**

#### **Methodology**

Five professionals from organisations with a local and regional remit were interviewed, one of whom is a small business. The dance, theatre, music and museum interviews are specialist community and education staff. A list questions is in the Appendix. The organisations are: White Bus Company (Film & animation), Dancedigital, Southend Theatres, Southend Music Hub, Southend Museums.

The key findings have been grouped under the following headings: communications, capacity and funding, curriculum support and Professional Development.

#### **Communications**

All these organisations make substantial efforts to initiate and build contacts within schools - four over many years, one just beginning. All talked about the challenges of: finding the right individual in the school; personal and digital communications; engaging schools/individuals beyond 'the usual suspects'; the barriers to visits faced by secondary schools. They described their strategies in detail, - painstaking effort with relatively low return.

*Information needs to be found as well as received. Education Manager*

In addition to maintaining existing relationships it was felt that the 'one-stop shop solution', which could be a website, needs further consideration and attention. Three websites currently offer some information about events and arts education opportunities:

- Area 13 set up by Metal <http://idea13.org/events/>
- SALT set up by Southend Education Trust [www.salt-learning.co.uk](http://www.salt-learning.co.uk)
- Southend on Sea Borough Council also has listings on <http://www.southend.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=100009>

However awareness of them is very low and they are not very youth friendly.

The priorities are

- Communicating what organisations do and can do – online and face to face
- A two-way process for information so that organisations, teachers, pupils and parents can access information about programmes, activities, training, courses, etc.

#### **Capacity and funding**

Organisations with funded education posts are operating at capacity and would require further funding or collaboration/partnerships to be able to extend their reach. Those with no external funding or limited funds have capacity but need to charge for their teaching and resources. (The prices quoted to run activities in schools e.g. film and dance workshops were reasonable/realistic.) Two organisations mentioned accessing the pupil premium - for arts provision<sup>16</sup> to provide activity for schools with high numbers of FSM.

Some organisations are already working collaboratively and all expressed interest in professional networking, perhaps an arts and culture forum hosted by Southend Theatres? This would improve communications with schools, support strategic working, enable forums for best practice/CPD.

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<sup>16</sup> For information <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/a0076063/pp>

*We share audiences, how can we share and work more effectively, pool resources? For example the festival 'Village Green' organised by Metal, is a good example. Education Manager*

### **Curriculum support and Professional Development**

All the organisations have resources available for primary through to secondary, albeit under-exploited by secondary schools. Most can negotiate an offer that is art-form or curriculum subject specific, cross-curricula plans, vocational insights/advice and professional development. The offer is tailored for the needs of both general classroom teachers and arts specialists.

Dance Digital are in the process of contacting dance teachers in all Southend schools to set up a network that links them with each other and this dance development organisation. Each county in region, except Essex, has a dance teachers network. As a specialist dance initiative they work on CPD and are writing and lobbying hard for dance in education in the light of the impact of the EBacc.

### **Recommendations:**

- SETSA invites Southend arts and culture organisations (these five and others), coordinated by Southend Theatres' Education Forum to be part of the Alliance. What would be an initial shared objective with these potential partners?
- ROH Bridge plays a brokering role with arts organisations to develop or illuminate better communications and strategic working.
- SETSA in collaboration with ROH Bridge brokers/a meeting with the providers of existing arts, culture and information websites to explore how they can collectively offer a more effective and integrated service that meets their objectives and the demand articulated so strongly in this research.

## **4. Summary of Questions and Recommendations**

### **Questions:**

- 1) Are schools satisfied with the range and depth of what is working well? How is the importance of technology reflected or embedded in arts and cultural learning?
- 2) Could existing resources and research inform and inspire the current offer?
- 3) Could the ROH Bridge support schools through promoting existing resources for creative teaching outside the classroom?
- 4) Is the issue of confidence something that SETSA could address through sharing best practice and schemes of work across schools?
- 5) Could the ROH Bridge support schools through promoting existing resources for creative teaching outside the classroom?
- 6) Could ROH Bridge support schools by promoting and sharing the cross-curricula educational evidence for the benefits of visits and trips?
- 7) Could SETSA encourage school leadership to take a more robust and positive approach to risk assessment or is risk aversion an institutional excuse to avoid making cultural visits?

### **Recommendations:**

- 1) ROH Bridge supports SETSA by brokering strategic local, regional and national partnerships that could release or generate resources and create opportunities for

fund-raising and sponsorship. For example with E15 Acting School University of Essex, Theatre Is, Dance Digital. What mutual needs could be met through collaboration at low or no cost?

- 2) ROH Bridge and SETSA explore how to address the uneven landscape of resources for music, art and drama through new collaborations and partnerships between schools.
- 3) SETSA explores how to work strategically with the Music Hub to promote, support, influence and advise.
- 4) SETSA promotes and encourages other local arts organisations and schools to share recommendations from their pools of local and regionally based artists.
- 5) SETSA supports schools to articulate effectively the value of arts and culture as part of a whole education that will influence, support and enhance academic achievement
- 6) SETSA works with SMT and teachers, artists and other partners to consider how they can effectively demonstrate the impact of arts and culture on in terms of academic measures.
- 7) The model of creating a continuous record of best work, selected by pupils is shared amongst Alliance schools.
- 8) SETSA invites Southend arts and culture organisations (these five and others), coordinated by Southend Theatres' Education Forum to be part of the Alliance. What would be an initial shared objective with these potential partners?
- 9) ROH Bridge plays a brokering role with arts organisations to develop or illuminate better communications and strategic working.
- 10) SETSA in collaboration with ROH Bridge brokers/a meeting with the providers of existing arts, culture and information websites to explore how they can collectively offer a more effective and integrated service that meets their objectives and the demand articulated so strongly in this research.

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## **5. Acknowledgements**

Thank you to all the teaching staff and arts education staff who contributed to this research.

A special thank you is due to pupils at Chase High School, Thorpe Greenways Primary and St Mary's Prittlewell Church of England Primary who kindly took part in four consultation workshops and gave the exercises thoughtful attention and articulated their views with enthusiasm.

Thank you to White Bus company, Southend Theatres, Southend Music hub, Southend Museum and Dancedigital

## Appendix One: Schools and roles

**Schools:** A total of 18/25 Alliance schools took part, 17 in the survey and one further secondary school in the interviews.

*Number of teachers who completed the survey in brackets*

### Secondary schools :

1. Chase High (2) + 1 interview
2. Southend High for Girls (6) + 1 interview
3. Westcliff High for Girls (4) + 1 interview
4. Westcliff High for Boys (1)
5. The Deanes School (2) + 1 interview
6. St Thomas More (4)
7. The St Christopher Special School (2) + 2 interviews
8. Belfairs Academy 1 interview only

### Primary

9. Darlington (2)
10. St Mary's Prittlewell Cof E (1)
11. Temple Sutton (3)
12. Thorpe Greenways (4) + 2 interviews
13. West Leigh (1)
14. Earls Hall (1) + 1 interview
15. Blenheim (1)
16. Prince Avenue (1)
17. Chalkwell (1)
18. St Mary's Prittlewell (1) + 1 interview

Other respondent: Southend Education Trust (1)

### Roles: Survey

#### Arts & Cultural Learning Survey Autumn 2012

What is your role within the school?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
subject teacher	29.9%	9
classroom teacher	6.9%	3
department head	23.2%	10
senior management team	30.2%	13
arts curriculum lead teacher	76.9%	3
deputy head/head	9.3%	4
Other (please specify)		
	<b>answered question</b>	<b>43</b>
	<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

Four people did not complete the survey including two head teachers.

### Roles: Interviews

The 11 interviews were conducted with 6 arts department heads (music, art, drama, media studies), 4 classroom teachers (1 infant, 1 junior and 2 special needs) and 1 primary head teacher.

**A total of 50 teachers took part in the survey and interviews.**