SOCIAL RESEARCH NUMBER: 72/2020
PUBLICATION DATE: 04/11/20

Evaluation of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme

Report 4: Interim Evaluation Report

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

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Evaluation of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme
Report 4: Interim Evaluation Report

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government or the Arts Council of Wales.

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Table of contents

1. Introduction 5
2. Regional Arts and Education Networks 37
3. Experiencing the Arts Fund 75
4. Creative Learning Zone 103
5. Conclusions and recommendations 111
Appendix 1: More details on the Lead Creative Schools Scheme (Strand 1) 130
Appendix 2: Selection of RAEN activity/service feedback quotes 133
Appendix 3: Self-efficacy questionnaire 134

Table of tables

Table 1.1: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: All Round 2 23
Table 1.2: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: CSC region 23
Table 1.3: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: ERW region 24
Table 1.4: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: EAS region 24
Table 2.1: Participant type (CPD) 43
Table 2.2: Number of participants per academic year (CPD) 44
Table 2.3: Number of participants per Regional Arts and Education Network (CPD) 44
Table 2.4: Arts Champions, total number of sessions and teachers 70
Table 2.5: Arts Champions, number of sessions per academic year 71
Table 3.1: Number of schools in Creative Collaborations 78
Table 4.1: Most popular search terms in CLZ 106
Table 4.2: Most popular resources accessed on the CLZ 106
Table 4.3: Have you accessed the Creative Learning Zone online on Hwb? 107
Table A1: Self-efficacy of Year 3–4 learners 134
Table A2: Self-efficacy of Year 5–6 learners 135

Table of figures

Figure 1.1: Number of Lead Creative School-status schools, per academic year 11
Figure 1.2: Representativeness of Round 1, 2 and 3 Lead Creative Schools, by region 12
Figure 1.3: Representativeness of Round 1, 2 and 3 Lead Creative Schools, by primary school and secondary school 13
Figure 1.4: Percentage of schools per WIMD (2014) quartile – Lead Creative Schools and all schools in Wales 14
Figure 1.5: Feedback on management and delivery of Lead Creative Schools (teachers) .. 19
Figure 1.6: Teachers' opinion of Lead Creative Schools Scheme 21
Figure 1.7: 5 Creative Habits of Mind qualitative remarks (Round 2 Year 1) 26
Figure 1.8: 5 Creative Habits of Mind qualitative remarks (Round 2 Year 2) 27
Figure 1.9: 5 Creative Habits of Mind qualitative remarks (Round 3 Year 1) 27
Figure 1.10: Broader impact comments (evaluation forms) 28
Figure 1.11: Data quality categorisation 30
Figure 1.12: Impact on attainment 32
Figure 1.13: Impact on attainment (excluding 'Awaiting Results' and 'No Comment' categories) 32
Figure 2.1: Networking events held, per Regional Arts and Education Network 42
Figure 2.2: Awareness of the Regional Arts and Education Network 47
Figure 2.3: Awareness of specific Regional Arts and Education Network activities and services 48
Figure 3.1: Are you aware of the Experiencing the Arts Fund? (Go and See or Creative Collaborations) 77
Figure 3.2: Teacher and artist opinions on the Experiencing the Arts Fund 77
Figure 3.3: %FSM of participating schools 78
Figure 4.1: CLZ number of page views / number of unique visitors / resources viewed 105
Figure 4.2: What would help you make best use of the Creative Learning Zone on Hwb? 108

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the wide range of individuals and organisations that have contributed to this report. The evaluation would not have been possible without these contributions. Particular thanks go to all of the respondents to the surveys discussed within the report and to the schools, teachers, pupils and artists who contributed to the case studies within this report.

Glossary

CCE	Creativity, Culture and Education (international foundation promoting creativity in children)
CLZ	Creative Learning Zone
CP	Creative Partnerships (England)
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPL	Continuous Professional Learning
CSC	Central South Wales Education Consortium
EAS	South East Wales Education Consortium
ERW	Education through Regional Working (South West and Mid Wales Education Consortium)
FSM	Free School Meal
GwE	North Wales Education Consortium
INSET	In-Service Education and Training
KS 2/3/4	Key Stage 2/3/4
LA	Local Authority
LCS	Lead Creative Schools
RSA	Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce
SDP	School Development Plan
SIP	School Improvement Plan

1. Introduction

Background

1.1 In March 2014, the Welsh Government issued a response to Professor Dai Smith's report on the review of Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales (2013), agreeing with all of the recommendations made. Furthermore, the response pledged to develop a plan which would formally assert the central role that the report envisaged for arts education in schools in Wales, while also delivering the commitment within the Programme for Government at that time to maximising participation in the arts and working with the Arts Council of Wales in developing an action plan for the arts and young people. In a subsequent report, i.e. Successful Futures (2015), which followed an independent review of curricular and assessment arrangements in Wales, Professor Graham Donaldson also reaffirmed the importance of creativity in the development of our children and young people.[1]

1.2 The response was the publication of Creative Learning Through the Arts – an action plan for Wales 2015–2020. Launched in March 2015, the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme is a partnership between the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government and managed by a team within the Arts Council of Wales under the direction of the Director of Engagement and Participation. It is supported by equal investments of Arts Council of Wales Lottery funding and Welsh Government (Education Directorate) funding, totalling £20m over a period of five years. Click on the image on the right-hand side to watch a brief video introducing the programme.[2]

1.3 The programme consists of two innovative strands of educational activities. Strand 1, i.e. the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, is focused on improving attainment through creativity. It is an intensive intervention that involves pupils, teachers, Creative Agents and Creative Practitioners working together in order to deliver a creative approach to learning. This scheme has already engaged with over one third of the schools in Wales.

[1] Welsh Government Successful Futures

[2] If the link to the right does not work, please click on the following link or cut and paste the URL into your browser: Creative Learning Through the Arts video.

1.4 In 2018 a new strand was introduced to the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. This development strand offers further funding to a smaller number of schools, which have benefitted from the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, to work with and support new schools in developing and delivering a project. The aim of the development strand is to support school-to-school sharing of practices, pedagogies and experiences with teachers and schools that have not benefitted from the original Lead Creative Schools Scheme. It provides an opportunity to test new approaches to delivering the scheme in line with professional development approaches being developed across Wales. The new schools engage with professional development rooted in the same principles and practices as those schools that have already benefitted from the scheme. Moreover, these development strand schools experience creative learning projects in their own schools. Although the development strand is shorter in duration than that of the LCS, participants are still considered to be beneficiaries of the scheme through structured knowledge sharing and skills development through the use of a peer-to-peer model.

1.5 Strand 2, i.e. the All-Wales Arts and Education Offer, includes a range of different activities designed to increase and improve opportunities for teachers, learners, artists and arts/cultural/heritage organisations to work together:

a) The establishment of four *Regional Arts and Education Networks*, with a remit to (amongst other things) provide opportunities for teachers and artists to develop and share their knowledge and skills
b) *Local Arts Champions*, managed by the Regional Arts and Education Networks, whose role it is to promote best practices and support others in adopting similar approaches
c) The *Experiencing the Arts Fund*, which offers grants to schools and arts organisations to provide children and young people with opportunities to engage in new creative, cultural and arts experiences
d) The *Creative Learning Zone*, which is designed to be a source of online information and a collaboration hub for teachers, learners, Creative Practitioners, organisations, and practitioners.

Purpose of the evaluation, method and approach

1.6 The evaluation is being undertaken by the social and economic research company Wavehill and the RSA (Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce). Broadly, its purpose is to examine the design and delivery of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. It will examine the process of delivering the programme and the impact of the intervention upon schools, teachers, learners, and the wider education policy community.

1.7 During its lifetime, the evaluation not only will assess the effectiveness of the programme in relation to its original aims and objectives, but also will relate the findings to literature describing the effects of the arts and creativity in schools. By these means, it will contribute to the evidence base for learning and development in relation to creative education and help to inform future debate — both nationally and internationally — surrounding practices and policies.

1.8 This fourth interim report does not cover all of those elements, with the focus being on assessing and reporting progress made to date and beginning to explore the evidence on emerging outcomes. It follows the first interim evaluation report (published in July 2017), the second interim report (published in March 2018), and the third interim report (published in April 2019). The first report explored the rationale for the programme and used a theory of change[3] to explore the changes (or outcomes) anticipated for the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme and how they could be measured.[4] The second and third reports began to identify and assess progress made towards the objectives and the emerging outcomes.[5]

1.9 The report will not seek to evaluate activities against the final outcomes; rather, as with previous reports, it will provide details regarding the progress being made within Strand 1 and Strand 2. The report will focus specifically upon data gaps, and areas of activity in which the impact cannot yet be evidenced. Some of these gaps were identified in previous reports, such as the lack of evidence relating to the impact on learner attainment, while in other instances, this will be the first attempt to source data in those areas (such as for the development strand).

[3] Theory of Change can be described as a roadmap that outlines the things (intermediary outcomes) that need to happen in order to achieve the final outcome.

[4] A copy of the first report of the evaluation has been published on the Welsh Government website: Welsh Government Creative Learning Through the Arts Evaluation First Interim Report.

[5] A copy of the second report has been published on the Welsh Government website: Welsh Government Creative Learning Through the Arts Evaluation Second Interim Report.

1.10 The focus of the report will be upon the emerging data collected from fieldwork activities undertaken during the 2018–2019 academic year. The report will use this new data, as well as data from our earlier work on this evaluation, to examine the progress being made within both strands. Furthermore, the report will consider the nature of the data itself and the degree to which such data will allow for robust evidencing of outcomes in the future.

1.11 This current report has a particular focus on considering the impact of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme upon the attainment of learners; the impact of Regional Arts and Education Networks (RAENs) upon teachers and schools; a more detailed qualitative and quantitative exploration of the Creative Collaborations programme; a more detailed exploration of quantitative data relating to the Go and See grant; and a more detailed exploration of the impact of both strands of activity upon artists and arts organisations in Wales.

Data

1.12 The research undertaken during this phase of the evaluation included:

- Surveys of teachers (n=124) involved in the programme, primarily via the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. The findings discussed below should therefore be considered in this context: the majority of school-based respondents are Lead Creative Schools Coordinators or teachers working within a school engaging in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme and, therefore, should possess a greater awareness of Creative Learning Through the Arts and its aims and objectives.
- A survey of artists and arts organisations (n=119) involved in the programme, also primarily via the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, who, consequently, should be expected to possess an awareness of the broader aims and objectives of the programme.
- Evaluation forms for every school or project involved in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, development strand, and have completed Creative Collaborations grants.
- Three case studies also being developed to provide more in-depth qualitative data on the Creative Collaborations grant. One was conducted with a focus on the school/PRU only, one with a focus on the arts organisation, and one exploring the relationship between both. The projects, organisations and schools involved were:

    - Canolfan y Gors PRU, Carmarthenshire
    - Ysgol Pendalar & Cwmni'r Fran Wen, Gwynedd
    - Venue Cymru, Conwy
- Semi-structured interviews being conducted with Welsh Government officials who have strategic oversight or responsibility in respect of the delivery of the programme but are not intimately involved with the day-to-day management. These are referred to in the report as 'strategic management staff', while the Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Government management staff more closely involved with the day-to-day management and delivery of the strands are referred to as 'management staff'.
- In total, eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with various elements of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme's management team, including Welsh Government officials, Arts Council of Wales staff, and individuals involved in the delivery of different elements of the programme.
- Four semi-structured interviews were conducted with personnel at the Regional Education Consortia.
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with RAEN Coordinators and staff (n=4).
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Arts Champions (n=7).
- Monitoring data for the Creative Learning Zone, the Regional Arts and Education Networks and the Experiencing the Arts Fund was provided by the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government and subsequently analysed.
- Data from the 5 Creative Habits of Mind tool was available from Round 1 (Year 2), Round 2 (Years 1 and 2), and Round 3 (Year 1). This tool was designed specifically to evaluate the impact of creative teaching upon the creative skills of pupils participating in Lead Creative Schools activities.
- Data from the (self-)efficacy tool (n=664) was also available to the evaluation team. This tool was designed to evaluate the impact of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme upon the efficacy of pupils and their attitudes towards school and learning.

Lead Creative Schools Scheme (Strand 1)

Progress to Date

Introduction

1.13 The Lead Creative Schools Scheme is focused on improving attainment through creativity. Moreover, it seeks to develop creative skills in young people and develop pedagogy amongst teachers. It is an intensive intervention that involves pupils, teachers, Creative Agents and Creative Practitioners working together in order to deliver a creative approach to learning. All Local Authority-maintained and voluntary-aided primary and secondary schools, including special schools, in Wales are eligible to apply to be Lead Creative Schools, including specialist teaching facilities within schools.

1.14 An overview of both the application and the implementation process for the Lead Creative Schools Scheme can be found in Appendix 1. To summarise here, however, schools apply through a competitive process to become part of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. Thereafter, supported schools work with a Creative Agent in developing a project that will address the schools' identified priorities. The first term of the school year (autumn term) is spent planning the project for the spring term. Classroom creative learning activities between the pupils, teachers and Creative Practitioner take place in the spring term, and internal reflective evaluation of the activities is undertaken in the summer term. Schools are supported for two years, with the second-year structure being the same as the first-year structure and with priorities and activities informed by year-one learning. There have been some delays in practice, with a number of schools moving to the timescales of later rounds, but (for evaluation purposes) they remain in their original round unless otherwise stated.

1.15 The Lead Creative Schools Scheme is being delivered over three rounds, with supported schools participating for two years:

- Round 1: academic years 2015–2016 and 2016–2017
- Round 2: academic years 2016–2017 and 2017–2018
- Round 3: academic years 2017–2018 and 2018–2019

1.16 These rounds overlap; therefore, from September 2016, Round 1 Year 2 Lead Creative Schools ran in parallel with Round 2 Year 1 Lead Creative Schools. This has

continued in such a way that from September 2017, Round 2 Year 2 Lead Creative Schools will be running in parallel with Round 3 Year 1 Lead Creative Schools.

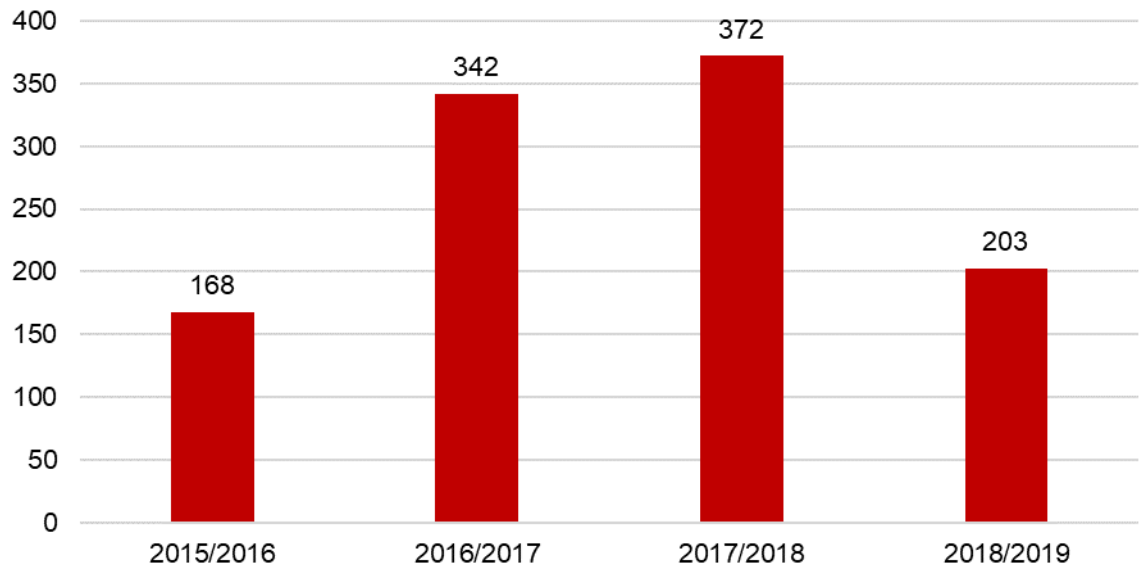
Number of schools engaged

1.17 Upon inception of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme in 2015, it was anticipated that the Lead Creative Schools Scheme would support one third of schools in Wales (provision for both Welsh and English media) during its five-year lifetime. In 2015, there were 1,582 eligible schools in Wales; thus, the aim was to engage 522 schools.

1.18 Overall, 533[6] unique schools have participated and completed the full two years of the Lead Creative Schools intervention, representing 102% of the target.

1.19 Figure 1.1 shows the number of Lead Creative School-status schools per academic year. The administrative burden (the number of schools to support, monitor, etc.) on the programme team is likely to have been highest during the 2017–2018 academic year. However, 72 schools participated also in development strand activities in 2018–2019, which included 33 Round 3 Year 2 schools (existing Lead Creative Schools beneficiaries) and 39 other schools.

Figure 1.1: Number of Lead Creative School-status schools, per academic year

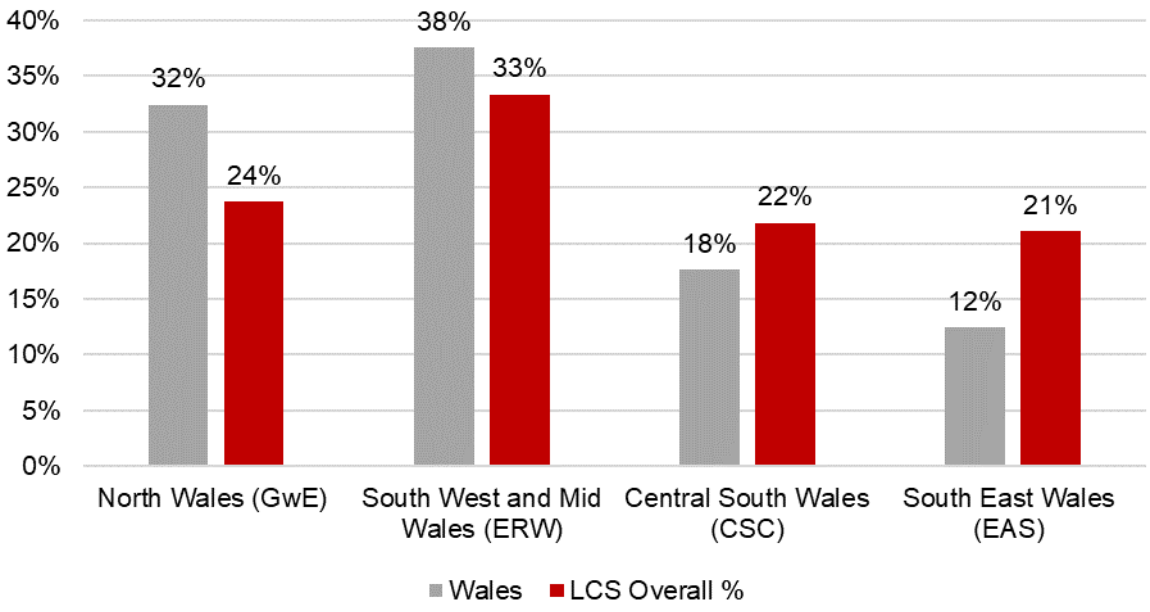


[6] This figure refers to unique schools that have completed the full two-year intervention. Some schools counted as having engaged with Round 1, 2 or 3 dropped out before completing the intervention, or had not completed all evaluation documentation at the time of writing. These are consequently not counted within this total of 533 schools having taken part and completed their intervention.

Distribution and representativeness of schools engaged

1.20 Figure 1.2 illustrates the representativeness of Round 1, 2 and 3 schools (in total) by region (Regional Education Consortia). The grey-coloured bar shows the proportion of all schools in Wales in each region, while the red-coloured bar shows the same for Lead Creative Schools. Although the distribution is relatively similar to the proportion of schools in Wales, schools in North Wales (GwE) and South West and Mid Wales (ERW) are underrepresented, while those in Central South Wales (CSC) and South East Wales (EAS) are overrepresented. These findings echo data from previous reports with only marginal variations. The most significant overrepresentation arises in EAS, which constitutes the region with the lowest proportion of schools. No data was available with which to assess why this was the case.

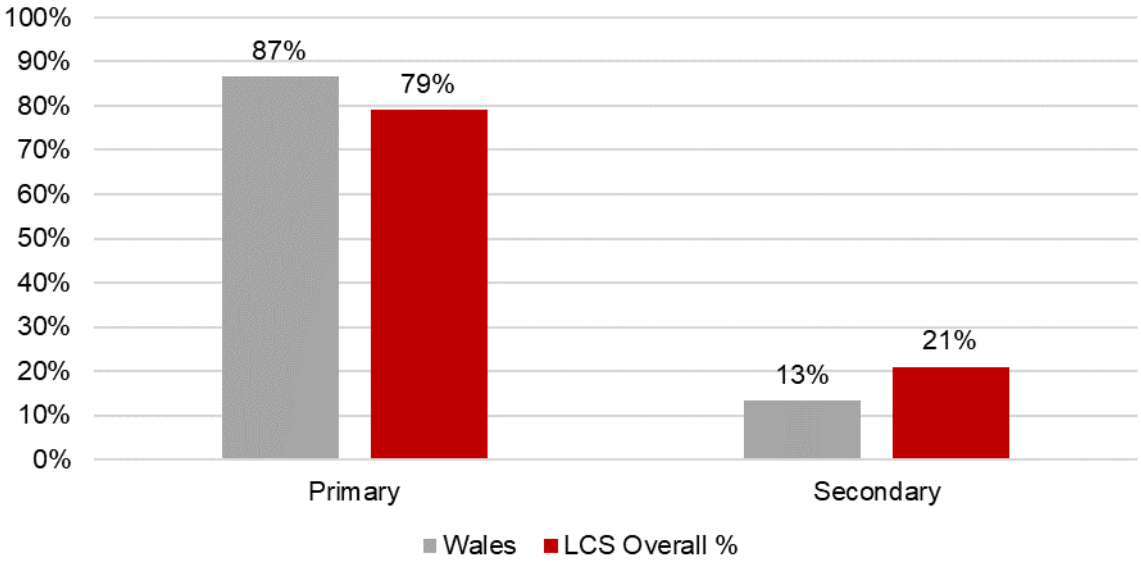
Figure 1.2: Representativeness of Round 1, 2 and 3 Lead Creative Schools, by region



1.21 Figure 1.3 overleaf compares the proportion of Lead Creative Schools that are primary and secondary schools to the proportion of all schools in Wales. Primary schools are underrepresented within the group of Lead Creative Schools, while secondary schools are overrepresented. The change from the previous interim report is marginal, and the figures for this year reflect a historic and consistent picture. The involvement of primary schools has proportionally fallen since the last interim report, and secondary school proportions have increased (from 78% to 79% and from 21% to 22% respectively). The data suggests that secondary schools

have been overrepresented within the programme at the expense of primary schools, but this was (to some extent) intentional in order to ensure a representative sample of secondary schools within the proportion of schools benefitting from the programme.

Figure 1.3: Representativeness of Round 1, 2 and 3 Lead Creative Schools, by primary school and secondary school

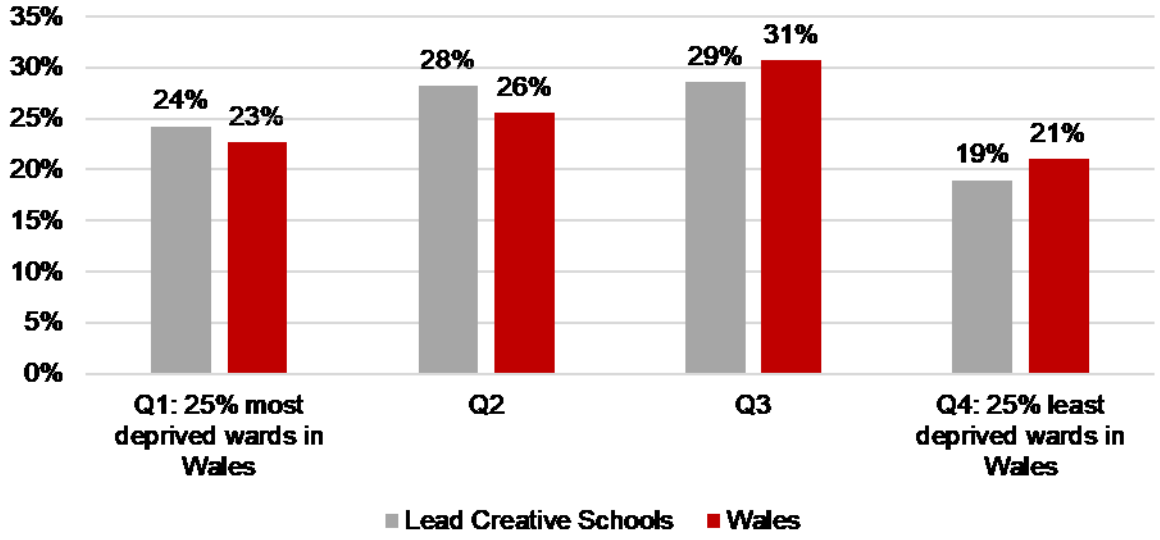


1.22 The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the Welsh Government's official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It is designed to identify those small areas in which there are the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. As such, the WIMD is a measure of multiple deprivation indicators that is both an area-based measure and a measure of relative deprivation. The latest version was published in 2014.[7]

1.23 Figure 1.4 shows the percentage of schools participating in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme and the proportion of schools in Wales as a whole per WIMD quartile. It shows a very close match between the distribution of Lead Creative Schools and the distribution of all schools in Wales, whereby suggesting either that deprivation does not have a substantial impact on participation in the scheme or that the Arts Council of Wales has found a way in which to successfully overcome any barriers to participation that these groups face.

[7] Further information about the WIMD can be found here: Welsh Government Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Figure 1.4: Percentage of schools per WIMD (2014) quartile – Lead Creative Schools and all schools in Wales



Lead Creative Schools Scheme fieldwork findings

Motivations for participating in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme

1.24 Understanding teachers' and artists' motivation for participating in the scheme can inform the development of approaches to engaging teachers within either this scheme or similar schemes in the future. The Teacher and Artist Survey provides data on the motivations of teachers and supports the qualitative findings from interviews and case studies.

1.25 One hundred and twenty-four responses were received from teachers to the survey in 2018–2019, with 121 respondents (98%) self-identifying as Lead Creative Schools Coordinators. This sample represents a significant proportion of Lead Creative Schools Coordinators for the academic year. The findings discussed below should therefore be considered in this context: the majority of school-based respondents are Lead Creative Schools Coordinators or teachers working within a school engaging in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme and, therefore, should possess a greater awareness and understanding of Creative Learning Through the Arts and its aims and objectives.

1.26 The survey results show that the main motivations identified by teachers were an 'interest' in the project or in creative learning (82%), followed by 'professional development' (71%). Meanwhile, the other responses were as follows: 'asked to participate' as a result of a broader school-level strategic decision to engage (49%) and 'other teachers were doing it' (9%). The results echo previous findings and

(again) suggest that developing skills in teaching creatively is a major consideration for teachers.

1.27 Data derived from interviews with Arts Council of Wales management personnel strongly suggests that the emerging Curriculum for Wales, as well as preparations for its implementation, in schools is a positive, if unintended, key motivating factor for encouraging participation. While curriculum reform and adaptation to the approach outlined in the Successful Futures report were identified in previous reports as being an important motivating factor, it is widely believed by management staff that curriculum reform and the emergence of the Curriculum for Wales and a firmer notion of what is to be implemented are an increasingly important motivation and context for the intervention. Indeed, echoing statements by Welsh Government officials from the Department for Education and Skills, management staff see the intervention as being a model for the new curriculum.

> '…the closer we get to the new curriculum, it would be silly to say that this wasn't a precursor to the new curriculum. It was never set out to do that, but that's becoming more apparent.' (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

> 'It's very much seen as a way of working with the new curriculum. Schools are seeing it as an opportunity to try out inquiry-based learning in terms of Lead Creative Schools and putting pupils' voice at centre and new approaches to teaching and learning. In terms of CPD from Networks, it's about developing knowledge of the arts. We have seen a shift in terms of why schools and teachers are getting involved.' (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

1.28 This view of the programme as a means of preparing schools and teachers for the new curriculum is echoed at the strategic management level.

> 'Getting schools ready for the new curriculum, which will have creativity at its heart. It's very much a programme to get schools ready for the new curriculum.' (Strategic Management Interview, 2019)

1.29 A mapping exercise by the Arts Council of Wales has explored non-engagement with respect to the programme and identified schools that have not had contact with any aspect of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. While this has fed into the management and delivery of the programme (as detailed below), it remains unclear at this stage as to why such schools have not engaged. There is a

clear desire, however, to extend the reach of the programme's activities to those schools that have not engaged to date.

> 'We've got a number of schools across the country that haven't engaged for whatever reason. We try to reach them as part of the development strand. What I would like to see between now and the end of the programme — from a Lead Creative Schools perspective — is something that allows us to target those schools. We'd probably offer training to start with, using the new curriculum as a hook for that.' (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

1.30 Echoing the views of RAEN Coordinators and the findings of previous evaluation reports, management staff suggest that a key obstacle is likely to be at the level of school leadership. When the leadership of a school do not appreciate or value the expressive arts, or creativity in teaching more generally, they are unlikely to engage with the programme or encourage their staff to engage. What is more, previous reports and interviews with management and delivery staff suggest that where schools have identified more pressing priorities that are likely to impact performance indicators, the leadership are also less likely to engage with the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme.

1.31 Previous reports also noted that some Regional Education Consortia sought to discourage 'red category' schools from engaging with the programme. While some have since engaged, as noted in the previous report (Report 3), there remain a small number of such schools. Some Consortia were believed to have advised 'red category' schools to focus on meeting their own challenges, rather than delivering the Lead Creative Schools programme. This has, beyond the control of Arts Council of Wales management, threatened to open a gap between schools that have and those that have not felt able to access the programme. More evidence and data are required to inform whether this has been a firm policy decision by Consortia, whether it has been a decision driven by potential miscommunication as to the aims of the programme, or other reasons. Aside from the operational decisions and advice given locally and the factors motivating those, there is research evidence from other educational programmes to suggest that efforts to develop schools as creative learning environments in which the whole school culture is not in a position to buy into and model creative behaviours and approaches is highly problematic.

Hatton and Mooney (2018)[8] have shown in Australian contexts how schools can flourish creatively only when the whole learning ecology is able to access and explore creative pedagogies. Offering small pockets of activity in schools which are preoccupied with other agendas rarely leads to larger-scale change in terms of creative or arts-based learning.

1.32 That being said, the wider relevance of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme does appear to have been amplified by the curriculum reform agenda and the explicit links that not only programme management but also RAEN and Welsh Government personnel have made between the new curriculum and the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. In particular, the associated methods, practices and pedagogies of the scheme are widely understood to be integral components of the Curriculum for Wales. Creative Learning Through the Arts and, in particular, the Lead Creative Schools Scheme are therefore magnified by the new curriculum.

Delivery and management

1.33 Fieldwork was conducted during the spring term of the final year of Lead Creative Schools activities (Round 3 Year 2). Management staff were satisfied with the delivery and management of the programme, which is a sentiment that was echoed by key stakeholders.

> 'Overall, it's been very well managed and closely monitored by the engagement team within the Arts Council. They convene and chair the meetings. The Welsh Government has an influence but it's been very closely managed. The team that we have in our region work fantastically well and are happy to keep us up to date.' (Regional Education Consortia Interview, 2019)

1.34 These views were reflected by beneficiaries and wider staff and stakeholders, all of whom commented on the efficient and clear management and delivery of the programme. Furthermore, respondents and interviewees noted that, being in its fourth year, practices and processes were well established and well understood.

1.35 Staff are confident that delivery challenges identified in the early phases of the programme's delivery have been overcome and that the delivery model and approach have been established. What is more, management staff are confident enough in their capacity to deliver, tailor the planning and delivery phases and

[8] Hatton C and Mooney M (2018) Creative Ecologies in Education: Teaching Relationships Within Sustained School-Based Artists-in-Residence Projects, in Creative Policy, Partnerships and Practice in Education, Ed. Snepvangers, K, Thomson, P and Harris A, Palgrave Macmillan.

ensure a less formal and more conversational process in an attempt to help develop the most relevant intervention for participating schools.

> ‘Not everything is set in stone. It’s about a conversation and helping schools along a journey, maybe mentoring them in a way. It’s responding to the needs of schools on a case-by-case basis.’ (Arts Council of Wales Interview, 2019)

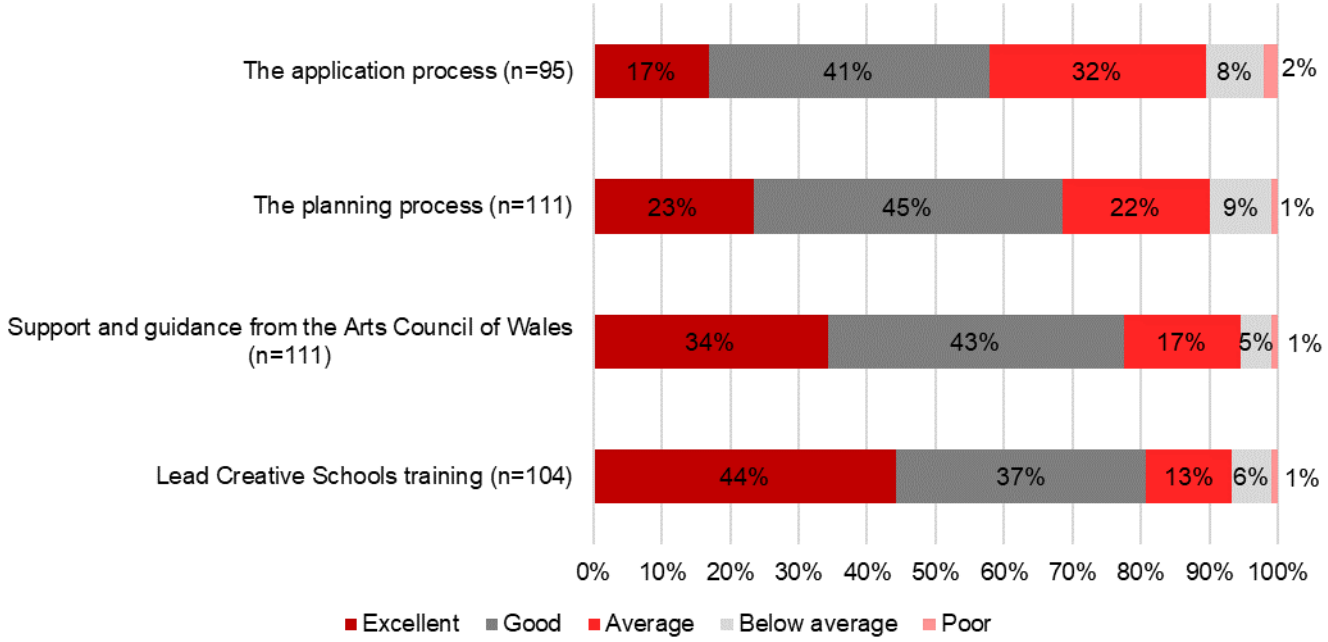
1.36 The placement of Lead Creative Schools teams within Regional Education Consortia has emerged as being a particularly important aspect of the delivery structure that has a number of benefits. Firstly, it is believed by programme management and Consortium personnel to have benefitted the school recruitment process by lending the programme the authority of Consortia and informing the selection and approval process. Secondly, the placement of Lead Creative Schools staff within the Consortia has increased the visibility of the programme and its impact. In addition, the placements have facilitated the building of relationships that have helped to develop a team ethos with respect to delivery. Finally, the impact of staffing changes upon the institutional knowledge and understanding of the programme has been minimised. Following a period of secondments and staffing changes at Consortia, largely relating to development of the new curriculum, Lead Creative Schools staff have received immediate access to new staff and been able to brief and inform them of the programme.

1.37 What remains uncertain without further data is the impact that the placement of the teams alongside Consortia has had upon Consortia’s understanding of the workings and philosophy of the programme. Has Consortia’s understanding improved by engaging more closely with the Arts Council of Wales, leading to the development of Consortia’s own imprimatur in a more general sense, i.e. credible and authoritative permission-giving for schools to “be creative”?

1.38 Feedback from teachers upon various aspects of the management and delivery of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme was generally positive (see Figure 1.5). Respondents were particularly positive towards the training that they received, with 76% of respondents providing a response of ‘good’ or ‘excellent’. Feedback on the support and guidance received from the Arts Council of Wales was also very positive (with 75% providing a response of ‘excellent’ or ‘good’). Fifty-eight per cent thought that the application process was ‘good’ or ‘excellent’, which constitutes an increase of eight percentage points upon the previous report’s findings, with only 10% noting that the process was ‘below average’ or ‘poor’. The increase in

satisfaction scores for the application process may suggest that changes introduced to the process over the previous academic year have begun to address concerns and dissatisfaction. A less positive view of the application process was reflected in the qualitative data provided by teachers and Coordinators in particular, suggesting that the process was too bureaucratic and burdensome.

Figure 1.5: Feedback on management and delivery of Lead Creative Schools (teachers)



Source: Teacher Survey 2019

Successes and impact

1.39 This section explores data concerning the impact of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme and its associated activities upon learners. The section draws on data generated by the 5 Creative Habits of Mind tool, the self-efficacy questionnaires, a range of sources concerning attainment, and the Teacher and Artist Survey questions regarding the impact on the educational attainment of learners.

General

1.40 All management staff, strategic management staff, stakeholders, and beneficiaries interviewed perceived the Lead Creative Schools Scheme to have been a success. Many echoed successful aspects of the programme that previous evaluation reports reported, such as the impact on teachers and their teaching, on schools and their culture and attitudes with regard to the arts and creative learning, and on learners.

1.41 Programme management staff and (to some extent) stakeholders claim that the scheme can be attributed with sparking interest more generally amongst educational and teaching professionals in creative learning and its teaching.

> 'But there's definitely been a shift toward creative learning. I'd put that down in part to Creative Learning Through the Arts because more than one third of our schools have been involved in Lead Creative Schools. Creative Learning Through the Arts (as a programme), I would say, has raised the awareness of that.' (Regional Education Consortia Interview, 2019)

1.42 Management personnel also reported that they have noted a developing and common vocabulary amongst the teaching profession with regard to creative learning and teaching. Staff attribute the emergence of this common vocabulary to the Lead Creative Schools intervention. The importance of professional discourse is a noted feature of recent research conducted by Professor Pat Thompson, who suggests that the professional discourse of artists is observably different from that of teachers in ways that may invite more in-depth engagement with learning and this can lead to improved learning outcomes.[9] Future evaluation reports may explore this issue in more detail.

> 'One thing that came out to me that came apparent in the reconnecting days was that we've tried to develop a common language about creativity, and it's good to hear schools using that same language. To hear that was rewarding.' (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

1.43 Programme management staff also highlight the international interest that has been taken in the programme as being an indicator of its success. International delegations from Chile and LEGO, a pending request from Pakistan, and a visit by programme management staff to India over the past year have emphasised the growing interest in the model and practices employed. Management personnel

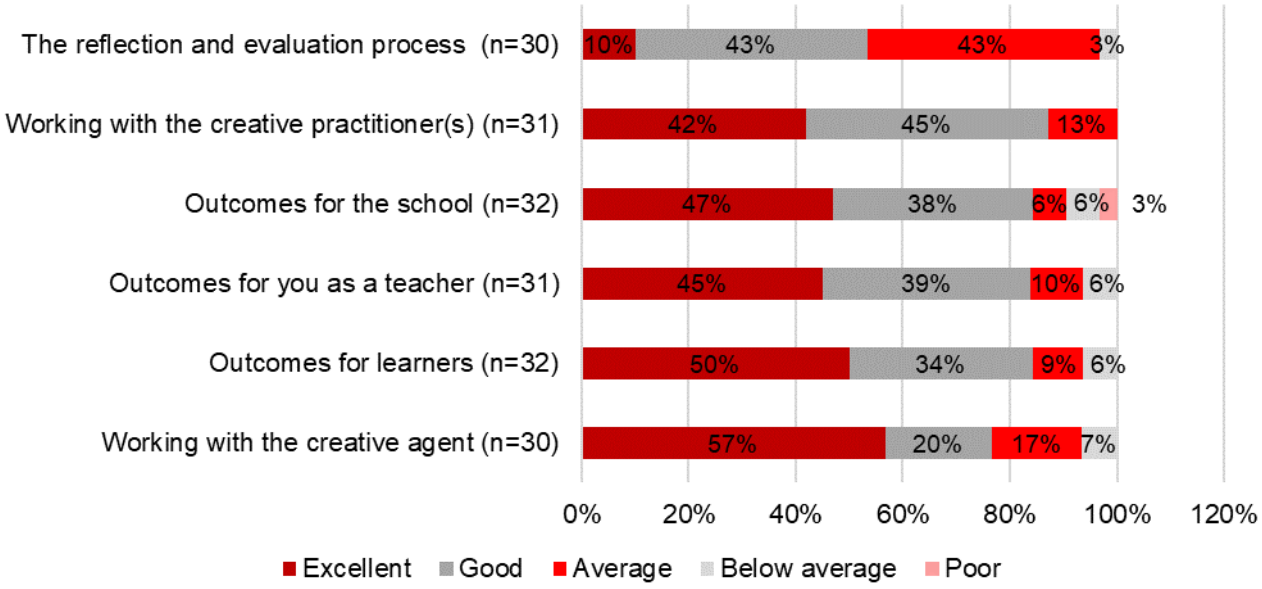
[9] See Whole School Change: A Literature Review and The Signature Pedagogies project: final report

noted, however, that such interest has posed key strategic questions with regard to addressing the interest and its value to the programme, the Arts Council of Wales, and education in Wales.

> 'None of that was planned and it's a danger that it can become a distraction for us. But we are responding and are at the point of thinking that if we are going to continue to have these demands, then we have to think how we're going to respond to that. Can we make money out of it to reinvest into the programme here? It's a sign of the success and the fact that when they do learn about it, they want us to come back to do the training. That wasn't planned and that's clearly a success. It does mean we have to give some thought to how we respond to that with a small team.' (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

1.44 Meanwhile, teachers are consistently reporting similar successes and impacts. Teachers were asked within the Teacher Survey to reflect on the broader aspects of the programme. Figure 1.6 below presents data from the responses of teachers regarding the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. The data suggests that many aspects of the programme were perceived by teachers to have had a positive overall impact on the school and staff. Working with Creative Practitioners was a particularly well-received aspect of the programme, as were the outcomes for schools, teachers and learners. Teachers did not perceive the reflection and evaluation process as positively as they perceived other aspects, although over half (53%) were still positive.

Figure 1.6: Teachers' opinion of Lead Creative Schools Scheme



Source: Teacher Survey 2019

Impact on creativity and the 5 Creative Habits of Mind

1.45 The 5 Creative Habits of Mind[10] tool was designed to evaluate the impact of Lead Creative Schools activities upon the creative skills of the pupils involved. The tool was not compulsory, but all teachers involved in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme were invited to supply data through the tool. The purpose was to provide common evaluation data with which to evidence impacts of the programme. What is more, the tool was designed to provide schools with immediate top-line analysis of their responses. Further details are presented in Appendix 3.

1.46 The tool identified the following '5 Creative Habits of Mind' as indicators of creativity:

1. inquisitive – wondering and questioning, exploring and investigating, and challenging assumptions
2. persistent – tolerating uncertainty, sticking with difficulty, and daring to be different
3. imaginative – playing with possibilities, making connections, and using intuition
4. disciplined – crafting and improving, developing techniques, and reflecting critically
5. collaborative – cooperating appropriately, giving and receiving feedback, and sharing the creative 'product'.

The improvement made by individual pupils in each category was scored by their teacher on a scale of 1–10 after the activity (1 = no improvement and 10 = the most significant improvement). This was therefore a judgment made by individual teachers based on common guidelines. The results for all pupils by year and by region for the purposes of this analysis, as well as an aggregate, are presented in the figures below.

1.47 Figure 1.7 draws on all data received from R2Y1, R2Y2 and R3Y1 participating schools. One round (R3Y2) was yet to submit responses at the time of writing. One thousand and seventeen responses have been received in total, with 289, 93 and 635 responses per R/Y, respectively. This represents a healthy response rate for a voluntary process, whereby suggesting that teachers are interested in evidencing the impact on learners. The pupils in Year 1 activities are not necessarily the same pupils as those in Year 2 activities. They can constitute two completely different

[10] More information on the tool can be found here: 5 Creative Habits of Mind Tool.

cohorts of pupils, the same pupils, or a combination of pupils who have previous experience and some who have no previous experience of the scheme.

1.48 The data suggests that teachers perceive the Lead Creative Schools activities to have had a positive impact on all 5 Creative Habits of Mind, scoring each indicator between 6.1 and 6.4 on average. The activities appear to have had the most positive impact on pupils' imagination — playing with possibilities, making connections, and using intuition.

1.49 The sample for R2Y2 is smaller than those for the other rounds and may explain the increased deviation from the average in some categories such as inquisitiveness. The scoring for indicators suggests that the overall ('all rounds') average is representative of the impact that the intervention has achieved to date.

Table 1.1: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: All Round 2

	Inquisitive	Persistent	Imaginative	Collaborative	Disciplined
All rounds (1,017 responses)	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.1
Round 3 Year 1 (635 responses)	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.1
Round 2 Year 2 (93 responses)	5.7	6.2	6.2	6.6	6.5
Round 2 Year 1 (289 responses)	6.3	6.3	6.5	6.7	6.4

1.50 Tables 1.2 to 1.5 represent data from each individual Consortium region. Smaller numbers of responses for Year 2 will account for more pronounced deviation from the overall average, and should be disregarded due to the small sample size for the purposes of evaluating the specific year within each region. Nonetheless, a particularly high impact was recorded in the ERW region during the second year, while the data for EAS and GwE during the same period suggests that the activities were less impactful. ERW recorded consistently higher-than-average scores in all years and may merit further investigation.

Table 1.2: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: CSC region

CSC	Inquisitive	Persistent	Imaginative	Collaborative	Disciplined
All rounds (257 responses)	5.8	6.2	6.0	6.4	6.0
Round 3 Year 1 (137 responses)	5.5	5.9	5.5	6.1	5.4
Round 2 Year 2 (20 responses)	6.9	8.0	7.5	7.7	8.5
Round 2 Year 1 (100 responses)	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.6	6.4

Table 1.3: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: ERW region

ERW	Inquisitive	Persistent	Imaginative	Collaborative	Disciplined
All rounds (268 responses)	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	6.6
Round 3 Year 1 (180 responses)	6.4	6.5	6.7	6.6	6.4
Round 2 Year 2 (18 responses)	6.0	6.7	7.3	7.1	7.0
Round 2 Year 1 (70 responses)	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.6	7.1

Table 1.4: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: EAS region

EAS	Inquisitive	Persistent	Imaginative	Collaborative	Disciplined
All rounds (206 responses)	6.2	6.2	6.4	6.4	6.2
Round 3 Year 1 (145 responses)	5.7	6.1	6.3	6.0	6.0
Round 2 Year 2 (24 responses)	6.1	6.4	6.1	6.6	6.2
Round 2 Year 1 (37 responses)	5.7	5.7	6.2	5.9	5.7

Table 1.5: 5 Creative Habits of Mind: GwE region

GwE	Inquisitive	Persistent	Imaginative	Collaborative	Disciplined
All rounds (286 responses)	5.8	6.0	6.3	6.0	5.9
Round 3 Year 1 (173 responses)	5.7	6.1	6.3	6.0	6.0
Round 2 Year 2 (31 responses)	6.1	6.4	6.1	6.6	6.2
Round 2 Year 1 (82 responses)	5.7	5.7	6.2	5.9	5.7

1.51 The data from the 5 Creative Habits of Mind tool suggests that teachers perceive activities to be having a positive impact on the key creative habits of pupils. This suggests that the Lead Creative Schools activities are contributing to achieving a core aim of improving the creative skills and habits of pupils. Following the hypothesis of the intervention as outlined in Report 1, more creative pupils will exhibit improvements in academic performance, develop their interest in the arts and develop their career/life aspirations.

Impact on learner well-being and attitudes towards education and school

1.52 As outlined within Evaluation Report 1: The Theory of Change[11], a key outcome of the Lead Creative Schools intervention for learners is that their behaviour and attitudes towards school and learning change.

1.53 The (self-)efficacy questionnaire was developed in order to collect data regarding the efficacy outcomes of the interventions for pupils. Pupils were asked to respond

[11] Evaluation of the Creative Learning Through the Arts Programme First Interim Report

to a series of statements in a pre-intervention questionnaire, followed by the same statements in a post-intervention questionnaire. When combined, the results indicate whether the Lead Creative Schools activities have had a positive or negative impact on pupils with regard to the statements.

1.54 The questionnaire was not compulsory and a number of pupils completed either a pre- or a post-intervention questionnaire only. These responses were effectively unusable. At the time of writing, however, 664 pupils had completed both pre- and post-intervention questionnaires. This offered representative samples for Year 3–4 learners (317 responses), Year 5–6 learners (218 responses), and Year 7–9 learners (129 responses). Figures 1.8 and 1.9 detail the responses to the questionnaire and are presented in Appendix 4. The current data from the self-efficacy questionnaires has not provided clear or significant correlations between the intervention and learner self-efficacy. However, qualitative data collected through interviews and unprompted survey responses has consistently, throughout the evaluation of the scheme, suggested that there are clear impacts on the efficacy and welfare of learners, as well as their attitudes towards classroom and school life. These are discussed under the '*Broader impact*' section below but suggest also that the tool employed to capture the data explored in this section may not be effective.[12] In recent years, research has pointed to self-efficacy studies paying more attention to the environmental variable, and discussing individual versus collective self-efficacy.[13] In a context such as schools, wherein young people are constantly in close interaction with their peers and teachers, self-efficacy measurement may need to go beyond individual efficacy studies and examine the collective efficacy of the entire class, subgroups within the class, teachers and students as subgroups within a school, or one school versus others in open competitions with other schools.

1.55 As adolescents are still mainly under the influence of families and schools in their development, attempts to theorise and enhance adolescent development and performance may also need to pay more attention to the efficacy beliefs of parents

[12] At this stage it is unclear why the tool may not be effective. Using two surveys, pre- and post- intervention, may mean the responses to the questionnaire are influenced by a myriad of factors on the two specific days. A more robust but intrusive approach may be to run the survey more frequently, over a prolonged period of time.

[13] Klassen RM, Usher EL. Self-efficacy in educational settings: recent research and emerging directions. In: Karabenick S, Urdan TC, editors. *Advances in Motivation and Achievement Vol. 16A: The Decade Ahead: Theoretical Perspectives on Motivation and Achievement*. Vol. 16. Bingley, UK: Emerald Books; 2010. pp. 1–33.

and teachers. The quality of the role performance of parents and teachers may need to be examined together with the impact of such upon the development of young people's study habits, values and attitudes, health and social habits, and how they can avoid negative learning behaviours and anti-school dispositions. This multifaceted approach to determining self-efficacy among young people, when set in the context of other fieldwork elements of this evaluation, may have revealed more significant data but (unfortunately) was beyond the scope of the study.

Broader impact

1.56 The 5 Creative Habits of Mind form and Lead Creative Schools evaluation forms asked teachers to outline what they perceived to be the broader impact of the Lead Creative Schools activities upon pupils who were involved. Figures 1.13–1.16 present this qualitative data, which has been coded into categories. Lead Creative Schools case studies presented in previous reports also noted the positive and additional impact that teachers perceived the scheme to have had, which is largely reflective of that which is presented in the figures below.

1.57 Figures 1.13–1.15 present data from the 5 Creative Habits of Mind forms. Following the scoring of learners against the respective categories of creativity, teachers were given an opportunity to elaborate on the broader impact of the intervention. In all three cohorts, engagement with the project, confidence/self-esteem, and collaboration consistently ranked as the most common responses from teachers.

Figure 1.7: 5 Creative Habits of Mind qualitative remarks (Round 2 Year 1)

Figure 1.8: 5 Creative Habits of Mind qualitative remarks (Round 2 Year 2)

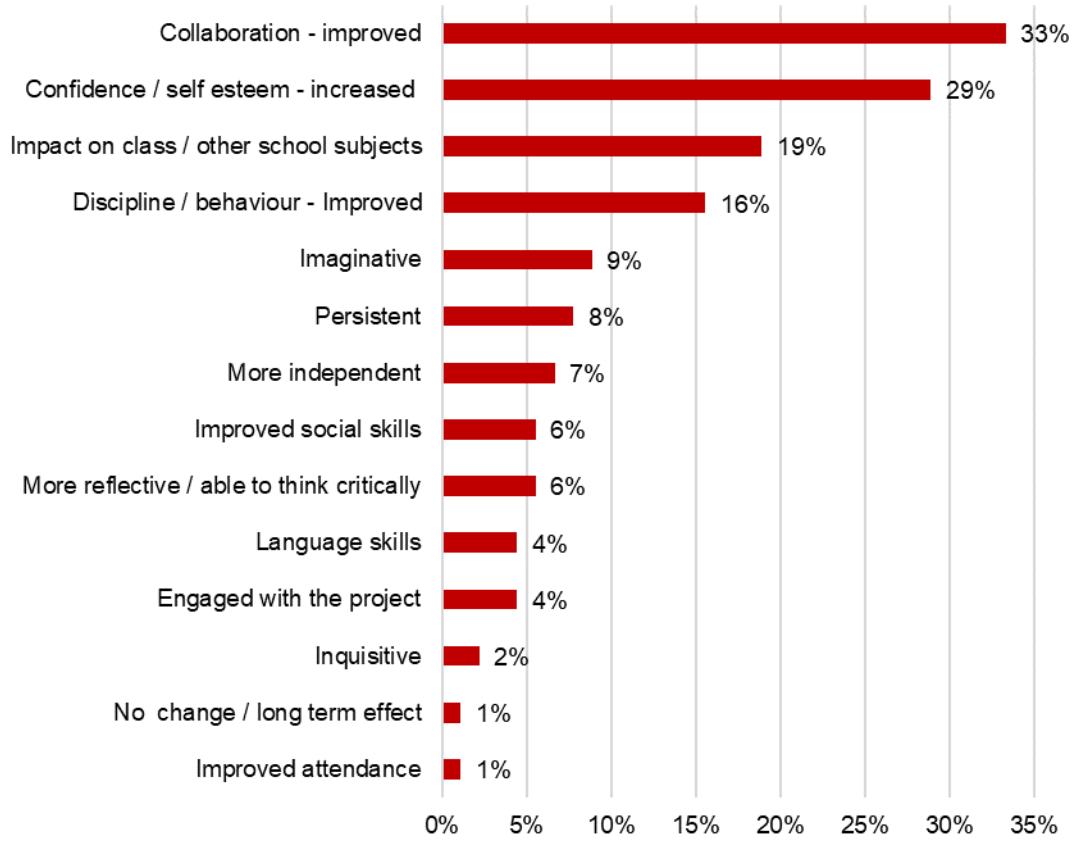
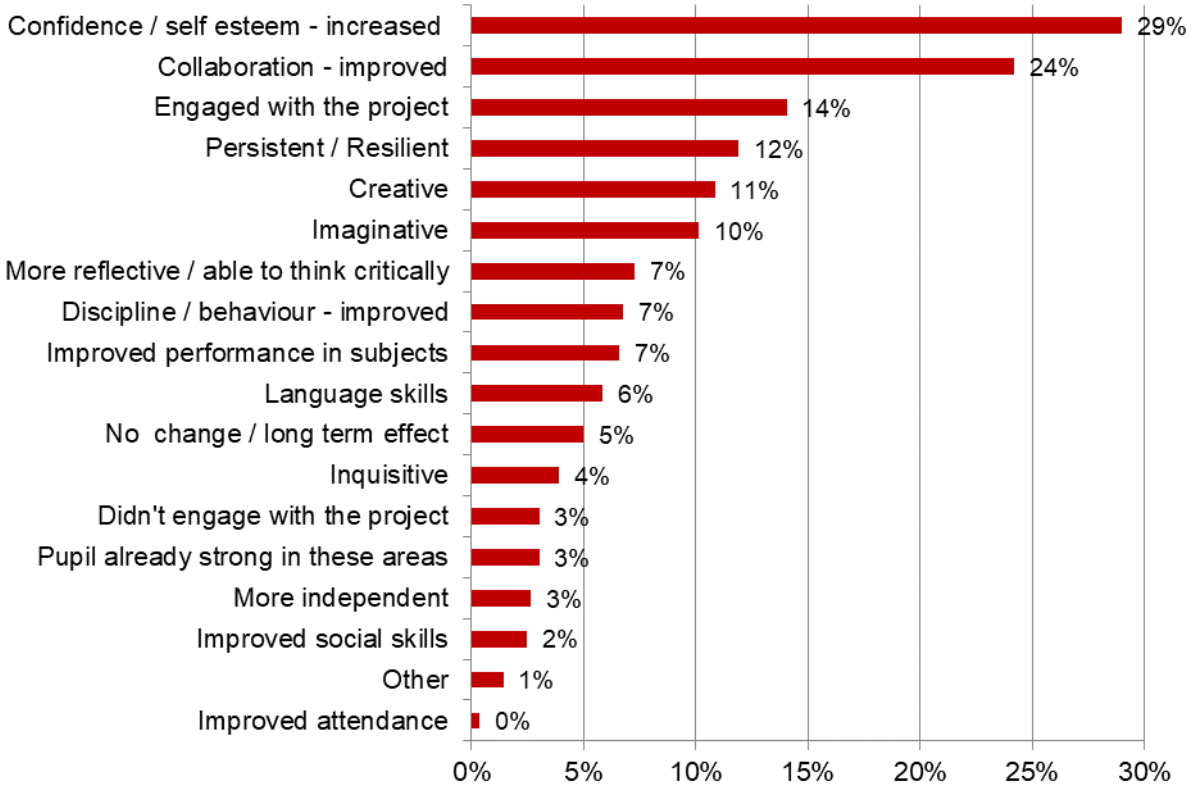
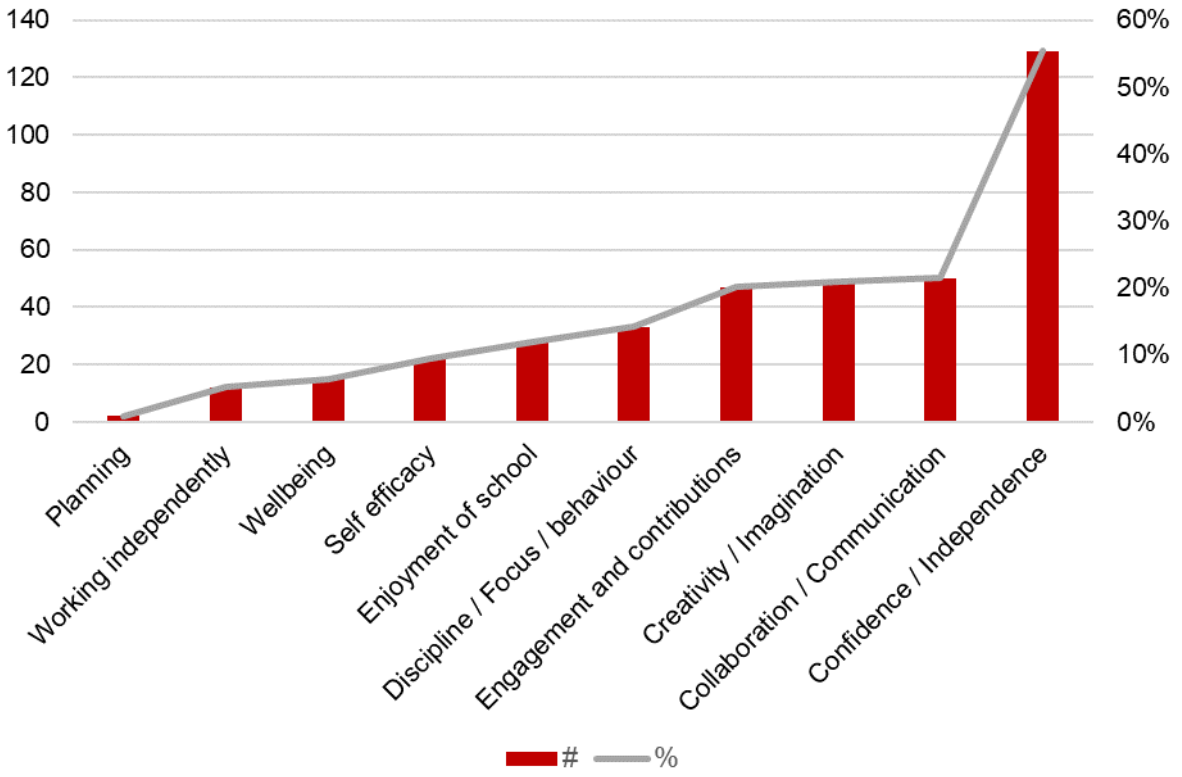


Figure 1.9: 5 Creative Habits of Mind qualitative remarks (Round 3 Year 1)



1.58 Figure 1.16 presents coded qualitative data collected through the Lead Creative Schools evaluation form. Furthermore, the data shows that teachers (55%) believe the intervention to have had a positive impact on the confidence of learners and their ability to work independently. Moreover, the intervention is credited with improving collaboration and engagement with the project, echoing the comments in the 5 Creative Habits of Mind forms.

Figure 1.10: Broader impact comments (evaluation forms)



N=233

1.59 The unprompted qualitative data suggests that a significant number of teachers consider the intervention to have had a broader impact, specifically on the confidence of learners, as well as their ability to work collaboratively. In addition, teachers see the intervention as being one that encourages more engagement from learners. This appears to be consistent with the notion of creative projects helping to reshape the learning environment in a staged way. Initial gains in confidence, collaboration with classmates, and a heightened sense of engagement with learning would support the development of specific skills later as a result of recursive opportunities to work in these improved conditions. Data relating to academic attainment (as presented below) also supports this notion.

Academic attainment

1.60 The Lead Creative Schools strand is designed to improve learners' academic performance. Specifically, it is designed to contribute to improving standards in literacy and numeracy and reducing the impact of disadvantage upon attainment.

1.61 Report 3 recommended (Recommendation 4) that the Arts Council of Wales continue to attempt to source data that could be used to evidence the impact that the intervention has had upon the attainment of the learners involved. While ongoing efforts to enable the evaluator to access attainment and attendance data collected from the Welsh Government have led to the release of some data for evaluation (explored below), no further data has been collected.

1.62 Evaluation forms of Lead Creative Schools also ask teachers to outline the impact on attainment that they believe the intervention has had upon learners. Teachers are asked to provide information regarding the sources that they have used to make judgments, as well as whether they think that the intervention has resulted in any impact on attainment.

1.63 Previous reports noted that the nature and quality of the data varied from submission to submission, potentially compromising its generalisability and utility for programme-wide evaluation purposes.

1.64 Specifically, there is variation in the type of data used to make a judgment, with some sources that are referenced being more robust than others. Due to variation in the nature of the data, it is not possible to provide a common measurement for the intervention's impact on attainment across the programme. Moreover, there are limits to the comparability of responses in which the quality of data differs.

1.65 The data can, however, be used to note the impact that teachers generally believe the intervention to have had upon the attainment of learners, be it a positive or negative impact or no impact at all. The data can be used to determine the quality of data underlying those judgments. If coded and categorised, it is possible to outline a) what impact teachers believe the intervention to have had upon learner attainment and b) the quality of data underlying those judgments.

1.66 Data from the evaluation forms was first categorised based on the quality or type of data upon which teachers drew in support of their judgment. Five categories were used:

Category 1: Pre-intervention testing or benchmarking and post-intervention testing, compared to capturing the impact of the intervention.

Category 2: Profession- or industry-approved attainment measurement or monitoring systems, e.g. Incerts.[14]

Category 3: Other attainment measurement or monitoring systems, e.g.

case studies, or internal or ad hoc measurement systems such as challenge targets and sublevels.

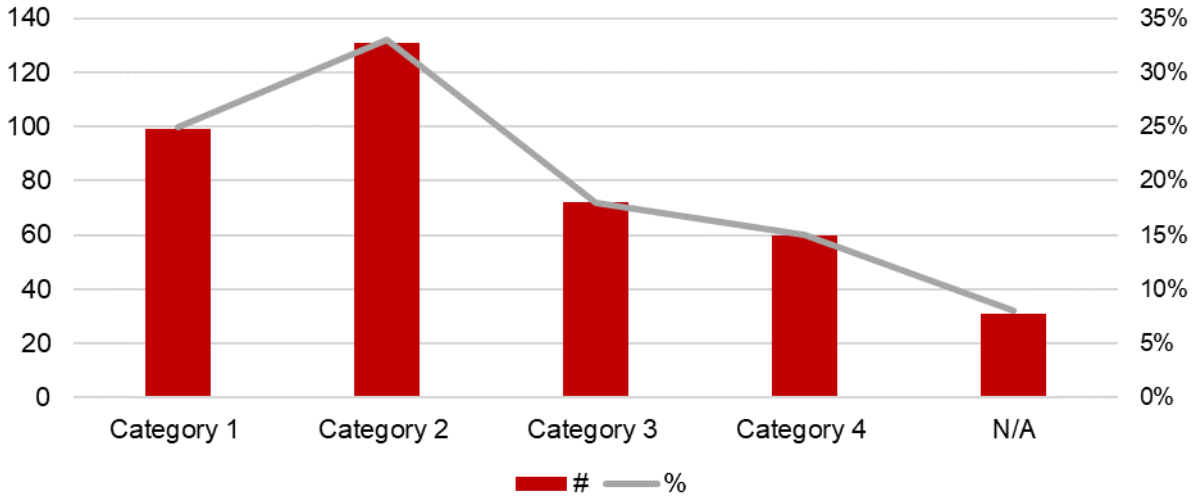
Category 4: Observational or anecdotal data or the opinion of a teacher with no data specified.

NA: Impact on attainment was not measured or referred to in the submission.

1.67 While responses have been categorised in this manner, there remain differences between submissions within each category. Not every Category 1 response can be compared to others within the same category. Consequently, even within categories, it is still not possible to draw on a common measurement, necessitating more general statements in reference to impact.

1.68 Figure 1.11 below notes the number and proportion of responses that fall into each data quality category. Over half of the responses are based on robust data. Ninety-nine responses (25%) fall into Category 1, which is the most robust category of data, while 131 (33%) fall into Category 2, which concerns robust and industry- or profession-approved data but without pre- and post-intervention testing.

Figure 1.11: Data quality categorisation



N=393

[14] Incerts is a tool used by teachers to regularly track the assessment scores of a pupil. More information can be found here: Incerts Tool.

1.69 Thereafter, responses within each category were coded according to the impact that teachers perceived the intervention to have had upon the attainment of learners. The categories used were as follows:

Positive Impact: Where teachers attributed a noticeable improvement in attainment to the intervention, or where the data provided demonstrated at least a 5% improvement.

Partially Positive: Where teachers did not feel confident in attributing any improvements to the intervention specifically, or where data suggested only marginal improvements of less than 5%.

No Significant Change: Where teachers did not perceive the intervention to have had any impact on attainment, or where the data did not suggest any impact.

Partially Negative: Where learners' attainment declined over the course of the intervention but teachers did not attribute the decline to the intervention specifically.

Awaiting Results: The testing of attainment was yet to conclude at the time of submission.

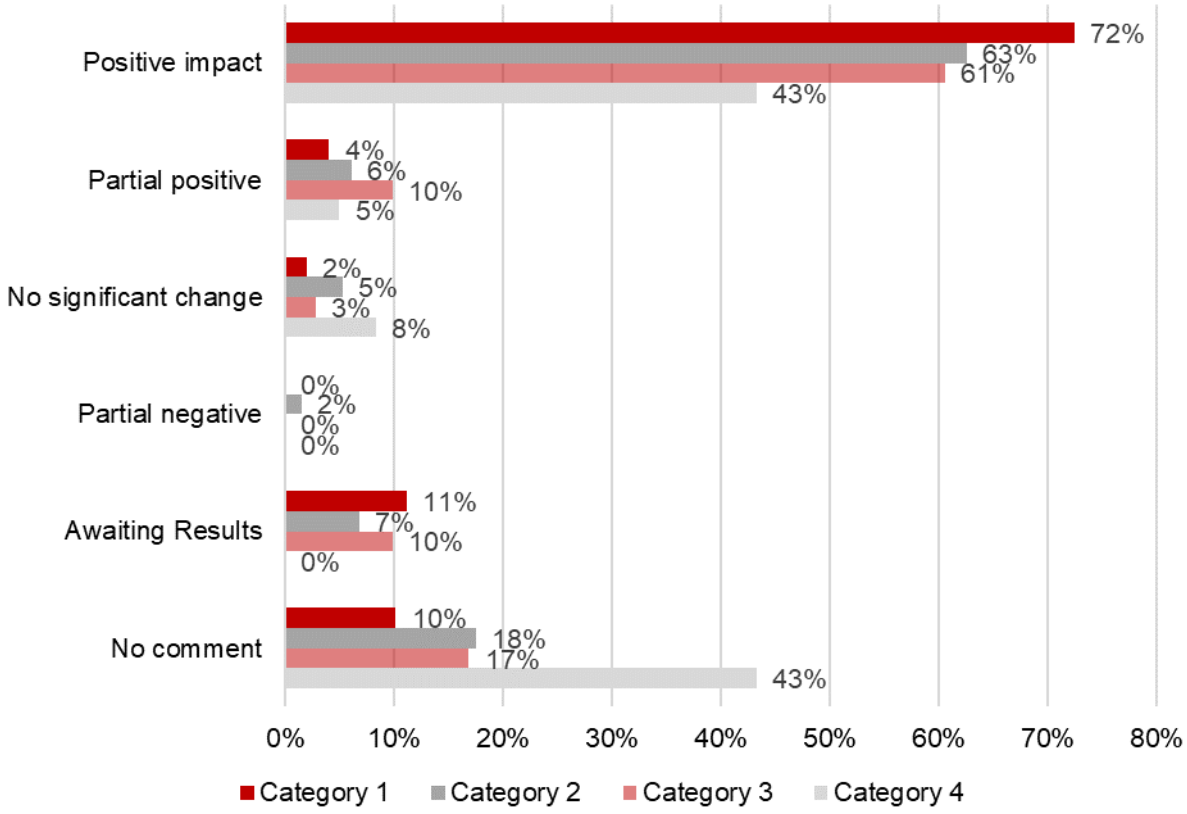
No Comment: Where teachers did not comment on the impact of the intervention upon the attainment of learners, or where the reporting was not relevant (e.g. relating to soft skills).

1.70 Figure 1.12 below notes the impact on attainment per data quality category, while Figure 1.13notes the impact on attainment without the inclusion of the 'Awaiting Results' and 'No Comment' categories. Both figures suggest that the majority of teachers within the categories (43–72%) believe the intervention to have had a positive impact on attainment.

1.71 When the 'Awaiting Results' and 'No Comment' categories are removed from the analysis, over three quarters (76–92%) of teachers within the categories believe the intervention to have had a positive impact on the attainment of learners. Moreover, a correlation can be identified between the quality of the data used as a basis for judgments and the likelihood that teachers attribute the intervention with positively impacting on the attainment of learners. The more robust the data, the more likely

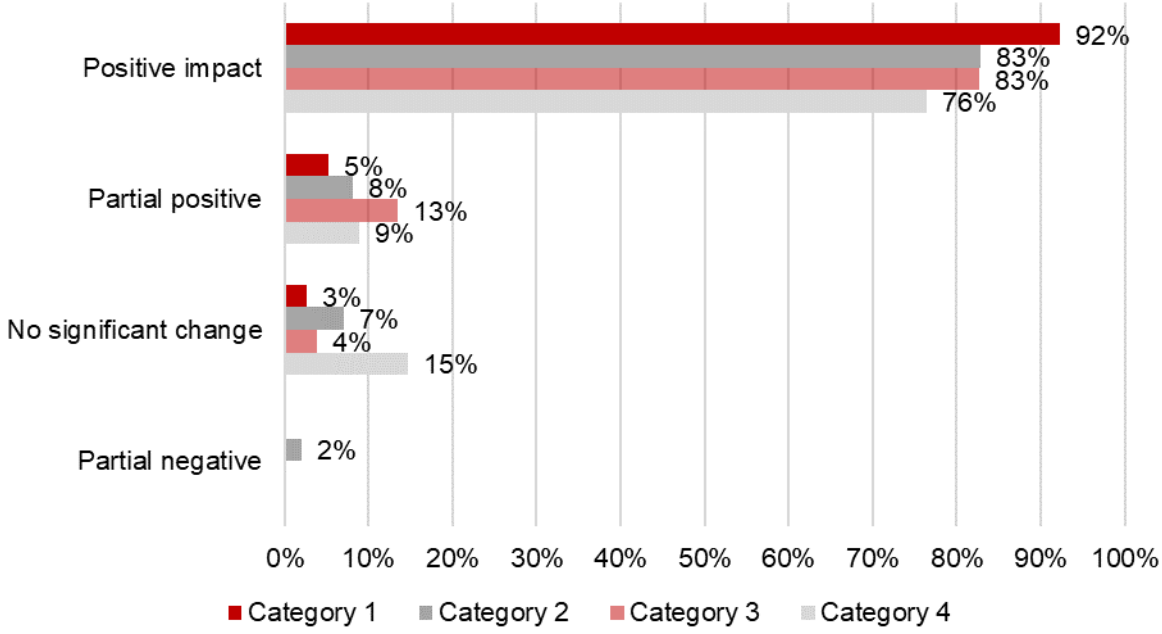
teachers are to recognise that the intervention has had a positive impact on the attainment of learners.

Figure 1.12: Impact on attainment



N=393

Figure 1.13: Impact on attainment (excluding 'Awaiting Results' and 'No Comment' categories)



N=262

Impact on teachers and the sharing of learning, promising practices, and experiences

1.72 An additional question was added to the survey during this evaluation period in order to consider the degree to which learning and promising practices that teachers are developing through the Lead Creative Schools activities are being shared more widely with other staff members.

1.73 Overall, 98% of teachers responding to the survey had shared their knowledge and practices in some form, while only 2% had not shared them at all.

1.74 Out of 117 responses, 39% of teachers had shared their practices on an informal basis, such as through discussions with colleagues. Meanwhile, a further 35% had shared their learning through dedicated, structured sessions. INSET days were used by 19% of teachers as a means of sharing their knowledge, and a further 5% had shared practices and knowledge through other means.

1.75 The Teacher Survey asked participating teachers if they would recommend the Lead Creative Schools Scheme to other teachers. This question can be seen to be a means of gauging the value that teachers place on the intervention. Eighty-five per cent of the respondents suggested that they would recommend the scheme to other teachers, whereby supporting the suggestion that the learning and experiences derived from the intervention are valued by teachers and that they see value in sharing access to the experiences and learning.

1.76 The data, particularly as it is supported by similar findings in previous reports, strongly suggests that teachers are continuing to disseminate and share learning, promising practices, and positive experiences to the rest of the teaching staff following their engagement with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. While qualitative data from previous reports details the nature of the sharing, less data is available on the consequent impact on teaching in the classroom.

1.77 It is notable that the bulk of sharing remains informal, consisting of teachers talking with other teachers. This method should in no way be discounted or undervalued. But schools, particularly those that have senior leadership buy-in to the approaches could be expected to promote the methods widely. It is noteworthy however that there is much less by way of organised, scheduled knowledge sharing through INSET. Instead of creative teaching being a whole-school venture, it seems to be more of a pedagogical insurgency by small groups of teachers.

Future planning, legacy and sustainability

1.78 Most recently, management staff have echoed comments made publicly by Welsh Government officials, suggesting that the scheme and the related practices, pedagogies and methods should be seen to be precursors to the developing new curriculum. Future evaluation reports will explore in detail the impact of Creative Learning Through the Arts upon the Curriculum for Wales documentation and supporting guidance, particularly in relation to the expressive arts AoLE. It is clear in the minds of Arts Council of Wales management staff, however, that the Lead Creative Schools Scheme has influenced the form of the new curriculum and will consequently influence the teaching of creativity and the expressive arts in schools in Wales for a prolonged period of time.

> 'The Successful Futures new Curriculum for Wales will become statutory from 2022, and the work of the Creative Learning Through the Arts has inputted into those developments as far as the new curriculum is concerned. I'm quite comfortable in saying that what has been developed in Creative Learning Through the Arts has helped shape the new curriculum. Just listening to the teachers last week at the 'Let's Celebrate' event — there's a lot of a link between Creative Learning Through the Arts and new curriculum.' (Strategic Management Interview, 2019)

1.79 Consortium personnel noted in interviews that the picture was not conclusive with regard to the scheme's impact on attainment. Moreover, their view was that the scheme impacted learner engagement and enjoyment more than attainment. This may be reflective of a more general and traditional approach to pedagogy amongst Consortium personnel, which may lie in contrast to the learner-centred, constructivist pedagogy exemplified within the Lead Creative Schools approach.[15] However, evaluation and research from other programmes focused on creative learning, notably Creative Partnerships in England, suggest that one of the key initial benefits of such programmes is related to broader changes to the learning environment, which might be thought of as condition setting for later gains in achievement. This is characterised by new approaches to teaching, more open-ended, exploratory forms of learning, and an increasing sense of agency among learners who feel themselves to be more at the heart of their own learning

[15] See Education system alignment for 21st century skills

experiences.[16] That being said, the overarching point continues to indicate the need for further evidence of impact, which is an issue that the findings of this report may begin to address.

> 'What we all need to get better at is to look at and ask more questions about the impact. The trouble is that you might get an increase in attendance from children, but we don't really know [what that leads to]. The case studies show evidence of engagement. I'm not sure it should be quantifiable, but you could look at some things. We looked at one school …..., and they did have an improvement on their expected grades. But it's probably more about the engagement of children. We all want to see an increase in grades, but I'm not sure you'll get that, especially after three years. But the impact we've had in case studies is engagement and enjoyment of pupils.' (Regional Education Consortia Interview, 2019)

1.80 Future planning for the scheme was at a critical juncture at the time of fieldwork. Management staff were hopeful of an extension to the programme, enabling more schools to benefit from the model. However, detailed information or an official confirmation of further funding had not been made available. Consequently, Arts Council of Wales management staff were unsure of the future of the programme or how to wind down the programme in a manner that did not jeopardise the ongoing impact of the knowledge and learning that had been generated and shared during the scheme's lifetime. Until strategic decisions had been made and confirmed, future plans were difficult to form.

> 'In my mind — because we don't know what's happening post-2020, and because we do know that there is potential for something to happen — how we wind down the programme is still sort of up in the air. Until we get a definitive answer we can't decide. If we get to know it'll continue after the lifetime, you start to bridge and look to build what we're doing.' (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

1.81 While unable to provide details on the ongoing talks at both strategic management and governmental levels, Arts Council of Wales management staff were, nonetheless, optimistic that the scheme would be extended beyond its initial end date in some form. The talks had reflected a positive view of the scheme and its impact within the Welsh Government.

[16] Creative learning environments in education—A systematic literature review

1.82 Due to the lack of strategic clarity or decision making, therefore, details of what may continue remain to be decided. Moreover, if the funding levels are reduced in comparison to the initial three rounds, it is likely that management staff will be required to develop a delivery plan that ensures valuable impact from reduced activity. Management staff suggest that this process is already underway.

2. Regional Arts and Education Networks

Introduction, background, and Report 3 findings

2.1 Regional Arts and Education Networks were established with the following remit:

a) collating and disseminating best practice
b) establishing and coordinating arts and creative learning networking opportunities (face-to-face and digital) for teachers, artists, and arts and cultural organisations
c) providing a 'brokerage' service between schools, artists and arts/cultural organisations
d) providing training opportunities for arts practitioners to improve and tailor their provision to the needs and priorities of schools
e) providing opportunities for teachers and artists to develop and share their knowledge and skills
f) managing and coordinating a 'Local Arts Champions' programme.

2.2 Regional Arts and Education Networks were also launched as the model for managing and ensuring the delivery of the objectives of the wider programme. Four Networks have been established, with their geographical focus mirroring the Regional Education Consortia. Each Network, and its activities, is managed by a Regional Network Coordinator and additional staff members. The Networks vary in their composition and nature. The Networks are as follows:

- NAWR, the Regional Arts and Education Network for Mid and West Wales, led by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- Edau, the Regional Arts and Education Network for North Wales, led by Flintshire County Council
- A2:Connect, the Regional Arts and Education Network for Central South Wales, led by the Arts Active Trust on behalf of Arts Connect
- The Arts & Education Network: South East Wales, the Regional Arts and Education Network for the South East region, led by Caerphilly Borough Council.

2.3 This is intentionally a much broader and less targeted intervention than is the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, which is designed to work intensively with individual schools. Their focus is on creating 'opportunities' that will support teachers in

developing their methods of teaching. This (again) differs from the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, which is tasked with a very specific final outcome, namely improving pupil attainment through creativity. The Networks are commonly defined by management and delivery staff as being concerned with teaching ‘in’ the arts.

2.4 Integral to the design of the Regional Arts and Education Networks is an element of freedom with regard to adapting and developing their offer in order to suit local needs. Report 3 identified such freedom as being a key factor in their success. It has led to a variety of delivery approaches amongst the four Regional Arts and Education Networks, as well as the Networks providing content and training that they believe to be relevant to teachers in their locality, whilst also cooperating and delivering in collaboration across Wales.

2.5 As concluded in previous reports, however, the objectives outlined for the Networks constitute activities rather than outcomes. While providing a framework for the Regional Arts and Education Networks to develop as they see fit in order to suit local need, there is also an element of compulsion built into the design for Networks to deliver specific activities. A lack of detailed definition of these activities has, as planned for, allowed for variety and locally relevant delivery, which, in turn, is recognised as both being a strength while simultaneously presenting challenges in evaluating and comparing the impact of the activities upon teachers and schools.

2.6 A redesign of the monitoring and evaluation requirements and procedures for the Networks was undertaken during the 2017–2018 academic year. This redesign helped to capture monitoring and evaluation data for effective and consistent reporting across the Networks. However, it also led to perceptions forming among Network staff of an increase in administrative tasks, and a sense that outputs and targets surrounding the volume of delivery and rates of participation were foregrounded as a success measure, implicitly at the expense of other forms of impact. It is important to respect the perceptions of staff on the ground, and such concerns should be taken seriously. However, it should also be noted that many large-scale educational interventions suffer similar tensions as they develop throughout the stages of a rollout. Reporting on the scale of delivery is often a condition of funding related to large grants and, as such, brings about additional reporting responsibilities which come into full focus once activities are being delivered and patterns of partnership working become established.

2.7 Though not explicit from the start, supporting curricular change alongside developing relationships with local Lead Creative Schools teams has emerged as being a common goal for Network Coordinators, Arts Council of Wales programme management staff, and strategic management staff.

2.8 This chapter presents and analyses data regarding the Networks. Data was collected from a range of sources including interviews with Network Coordinators, staff, Arts Champions, and steering group members. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation data was examined alongside additional evaluation materials provided by the Regional Arts and Education Networks themselves, including Teacher and Artist Surveys alongside interviews with Arts Council of Wales management staff and strategic management personnel.

2.9 The following section of the report outlines the progress made by the Networks over the 2018–2019 academic year. It is important to recognise that the reporting examines issues that were present at the time the fieldwork was undertaken during the spring term and may have since been recognised, with actions taken to address concerns — this will be examined in future fieldwork. In addition, legacy issues raised in previous reports were explored during interviews and fieldwork.

Legacy issues and key previous findings

2.10 The previous evaluation report noted that strategic management staff understood the Networks to have an important role in the delivery of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. However, they were not entirely convinced of their impact and contribution to the programme at the time of the fieldwork. There was an acceptance that the Networks were established later and with less of a steer or strategic lead than the Strand 1 activities. Previous reports noted among Network participants some perceptions of divergence from a lack of shared vision between Arts Council of Wales or strategic management staff and the delivery staff in the Networks with regard to the value and ultimate contribution of the Networks. Moreover, there was a perception that the Networks were ‘still finding their feet’. This report, however, provides data on a full academic year of activity for the first time.

2.11 More generally, Arts Council of Wales programme management staff and Network staff were of the view that the communication and dialogue between organisations could be improved. Network staff suggested that more in-depth engagement with their activities would be appreciated, while Arts Council of Wales programme

management staff stated that they would benefit from Network staff more openly communicating the difficulties that they encounter.

2.12 To this end, Report 3 recommended that both partners should seek and offer clarity surrounding monitoring criteria and data, the communication of difficulties being experienced, and the sharing of 'on-the-ground' experiences and learning. This issue is explored in detail below.

2.13 Report 3 also identified further issues surrounding communication between Arts Council of Wales and Regional Arts and Education Network staff. A lack of clarity surrounding the ultimate contribution of the Networks or their outcomes to beneficiaries, beyond the five core outputs, had led to confusion. In addition, the report recommended (Recommendation 5) that management communicate to Network Coordinators their vision for the contribution of the Regional Arts and Education Networks, beyond the delivery of the five core outputs, even if such a statement only clarified the outcomes and impact set out in the programme's theory of change.

2.14 As a counterpoint, Arts Council of Wales staff noted that Networks applied for grant funding with a delivery plan and that grants were awarded on the basis of the predefined outputs that each Network set for itself, which, in turn, were derived from and linked to the vision and remit for the Networks in the original ACW plan. From the perspective of the Arts Council of Wales, there was a desire not only to set broad parameters and high-level goals but also to give Networks the opportunity to interpret those in ways that made the best sense locally.

2.15 From the vantage point of the ACW, there is certainly a balance to be struck between setting strategic goals for the programme and the dynamics of local management and delivery. At the same time, if a network's perceptions are to be respected, there may be some merit in reflecting on the arm's-length relationship that the grant award implies, as well as in considering whether there are spaces opening up between strategy and delivery that may be leading to uncertainty or confusion on the part of those managing the Networks. From the data gathered to date, it is difficult to ascertain whether this is a Network issue rooted in communication and a desire to informally connect with the Arts Council of Wales as a way of testing progress and potentially correcting one's course if necessary, or in more practical challenges related to engagement in Network offers that were unforeseen or which were underestimated at the time of the grant application. Some

further dialogue may be helpful in bringing to the surface the nature of such confusion.

2.16 Networks' provision was generally perceived by Coordinators to be very popular amongst teachers. Teacher responses in interviews and focus groups, as well as responses to the survey, also supported the view that CPD and professional learning opportunities were in high demand and widely appreciated, while the activities of the Arts Champions also elicited particularly positive responses.

2.17 The Arts Council of Wales programme management staff were also satisfied that the targets jointly set with, and for, Networks were being met. Moreover, the responses to the Teacher Survey as outlined in Report 3 indicated high levels of satisfaction with the provision, as well as a demand for the services from those teachers who had not taken up the professional development opportunity to date.

Report 3 also noted the absence of data with which to properly evaluate the impact of Regional Arts and Education Network activities upon teachers and schools. The data available related largely to levels of activity and participation. Fieldwork conducted for this report sought to address this issue and generate data relating to the impact on teachers and schools as outlined in the theory of change report. However, Report 3 also recommended that further sources of data should be established that explore the relevance of Networks' training courses for schools and teachers, and with regard to implementation of the knowledge, skills and good practice that have been shared.

Participation and activity

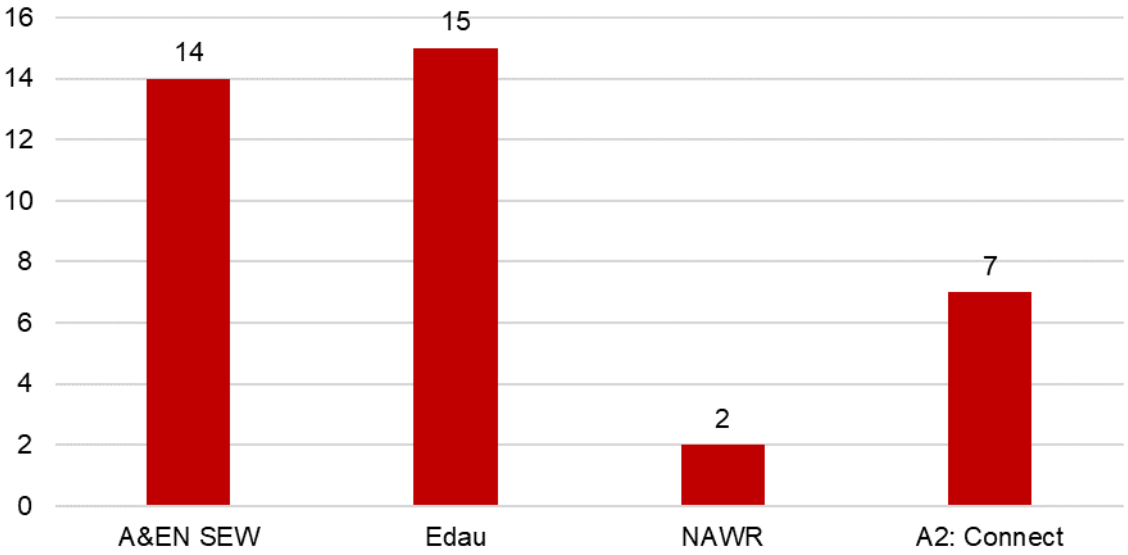
2.18 During their initial 12–18-month period, Networks were given a broad remit to develop the manner in which they would deliver their support while also taking local circumstances into account — 2017–2018 therefore represented the first full year of activity. At the time of fieldwork, Networks were believed by Coordinators to be reaching a point at which awareness amongst teachers and delivery by Networks were close to their peak.

> 'It takes a long time to establish a Network and get it up and running… It's at a tipping point.' (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.19 Data collected for the purposes of this report offers a glimpse into a complete academic year of activity for the first time. With regard to networking opportunities, the data shows that 27 networking events were held during the 2017–2018 academic year and that 38 have been held in total since their launch. Across the 38 events, 390 teachers and 489 artists or arts practitioners have been engaged, constituting an average of 11 and 15 per event respectively.

2.20 Figure 2.1 below demonstrates that there is some variation in the number of events held within each Network region. Monitoring reports and interviews with Network staff reveal that there are differences regarding both how Networks approach these and, consequently, what constitutes a 'networking event'.

Figure 2.1: Networking events held, per Regional Arts and Education Network



Source: Arts Council of Wales monitoring data (as supplied by the Networks)

2.21 Edau have held the most events (15) to date, while NAWR have held only two events. The differences can be explained firstly by how Network Coordinators approach the events. A&EN SEW and Edau have sought to hold regular but smaller-scale events; meanwhile, NAWR have focused on developing networking events specifically for heads of Drama or Art, while A2:Connect have frequently sought to hold events at third party conferences in order to increase participation at the expense of a narrow or specific focus. Consequently, it is difficult to compare numbers of events held and teachers reached based on the monitoring data. Each Network runs its own bespoke version of a 'networking event' as envisaged in the design.

2.22 While difficult to evaluate using existing data, this does raise a fundamental question as to which Network approach, if any, is the most effective in achieving the stated objectives. Further research and data will be required in order to explore such a question and investigate whether this indicates that there may be an imbalance between sensitivity to local context and assuring some common purpose and content with regard to the Networks. Furthermore, it is unclear as to whether the variation in speed and coverage/frequency is pointing also to a variation in the message and purpose; alternatively, it may be that by foregrounding local context in terms of Network formation and modes of delivery, a differentiation of outcomes or the rate at which impacts are felt will be inevitable.

2.23 The provision of CPD sessions comprises a key component of the Regional Arts and Education Network offer. Networks have held 219 CPD events to date, and 118 within the 2017–2018 academic year.[17] As Tables 2.1–2.3 outline, 2,104 participants have benefitted from CPD in total, 1,499 (71%) of whom were teachers. In the full 2017–2018 academic year of activity, 1,083 participants benefitted from CPD courses.

Table 2.1: Participant type (CPD)

Participant Type	#	%
Teacher	1,499	71%
Artist	423	20%
Creative Professional/Educator	128	6%
Cultural Organisation	10	0%
Marketing	4	0.2%
Arts Officer/Champion	3	0.1%
Student	2	0.1%
Other	13	0.6%
Unspecified	22	1.0%
Total	**2,104**	

Source: Arts Council of Wales monitoring data (as supplied by the Networks)

[17] The 219 figure derives from monitoring data received from the Arts Council of Wales (as supplied in Grant Monitoring Forms from the Networks), while the 118 figure is stated in the Arts Council of Wales' own annual report on the 2017/18 academic year.

Table 2.2: Number of participants per academic year (CPD)

Academic Year	# of Participants	% of Total
2015–2016	7	0.3%
2016–2017	718	34%
2017–2018	1,023	49%
2018–2019	356	17%

Source: Arts Council of Wales monitoring data (as supplied by the Networks)

Table 2.3: Number of participants per Regional Arts and Education Network (CPD)

Regional Arts and Education Network	# of Participants	% of Total
A&EN SEW	553	26%
Edau	726	35%
NAWR	430	20%
A2:Connect	395	19%
Total	**2,104**	

Source: Arts Council of Wales monitoring data (as supplied by the Networks)

2.24 While data is collected on brokering, as with networking events, without a detailed and common definition of activities, comparisons between Networks and judgments on participation (beyond meeting the agreed targets) are difficult. Network staff noted that Arts Champions often broker relationships informally as part of their work, but rarely are these instances counted as part of Network activity data. What is more, networking events are increasingly seen to be appropriate vehicles for connecting schools with artists or arts organisations on a more formal basis.

> 'We are keen to use our networking events and professional development courses as a springboard for connecting schools with artists and arts/culture organisations. We think we could do better at connecting schools with the arts and culture organisations in the region… This will promote the creative use of cultural venues and their educational offer to schools.' (Regional Arts and Education Network Progress Monitoring Form, 2019)

2.25 Moreover, Network Coordinators commented on the nebulous nature of activities, as well as the difficulty in determining when activities have taken place. Consequently, doubts were raised as to the validity and utility of counting brokering activities.

‘It is actually very difficult to report or monitor this area of our work, because so much of this happens informally through conversations at events and courses.’ (Regional Arts and Education Network Progress Monitoring Form, 2019)

2.26 Brokering connections and possible future partnerships are, by all accounts, difficult to pin down precisely, but the ACW do offer space for more narrative-based accounts of the informal nature of such activities, and while such descriptions could not be interpreted as being reflective of all encounters within a Network, they may give a sense of how the process works and what it is characterised by when it is the most effective. Currently, the ACW suggest that Networks underuse this form of reporting. There may be merit in the ACW simultaneously encouraging more in-depth engagement with more descriptive accounts of brokering while attempting to understand if there have been any systemic issues preventing its take-up to date.

Motivation and awareness

2.27 There is more motivation than previously to engage with the Networks in the views of both Network staff and Arts Council of Wales management staff. This is largely due to the growing status and awareness of the Networks amongst teachers, as well as the context of the new curriculum. The new curriculum, in particular, was widely referenced in interviews with Network staff as being a key aspect that has worked to focus the minds of heads seeking to upskill and prepare staff for the transition and delivery of the new curriculum. Furthermore, Arts Council of Wales management staff commented on the relevance of the new curriculum and the perceived need to upskill teachers in order to support its delivery: ‘…the biggest motivation is new curriculum and upskilling to prepare for that’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019).

2.28 The new curriculum in Wales remains a factor in determining the engagement of teachers at the present time. While acknowledged as being a key motivating factor, there was a widespread belief among Network staff that the new curriculum was likely to become a more powerful motivation for teachers and a driver of engagement with Networks in the future. There was a view among Network staff that, as strategic objectives in relation to the new curriculum filter through the teaching culture within Wales, it would help to build demand for more creative approaches to pedagogy.

> ‘Until the new curriculum for expressive arts starts rolling out, you’ll only get the interested teachers. They’re unable to look forward. They can’t think outside that box because they haven’t the time to do it. They’ll be more interested in what we’re offering in terms of support once the new curriculum is introduced. Until the monitoring processes for teachers move on, they’ll continue without looking for further development.’ (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.29 In particular, CPD recruitment has also benefitted not only from continued marketing but also from word of mouth and the positive experiences of teachers from previous years being shared. Moreover, slight tweaks to costing have started to mitigate the issue of non-attendance. Non-attendance involves teachers registering for the course — with fees having been paid by the Networks — but not attending. By charging a small fee, Coordinators believe that it increases the perception that teachers have bought into the training, consequently being more likely to attend. This was an issue highlighted by a few Coordinators and Arts Champions but that was difficult to corroborate without further data on non-attendance. Such an approach may support future or post-funding provision of similar CPD.

2.30 An issue drawn from monitoring data for Report 3 and explored in more detail during the fieldwork for this report was that primary school teachers were more likely to engage with the Networks than were those of secondary schools. This issue was confirmed by qualitative interviews with Network Coordinators. Demands on the time of secondary school teachers were widely thought to be a key factor.

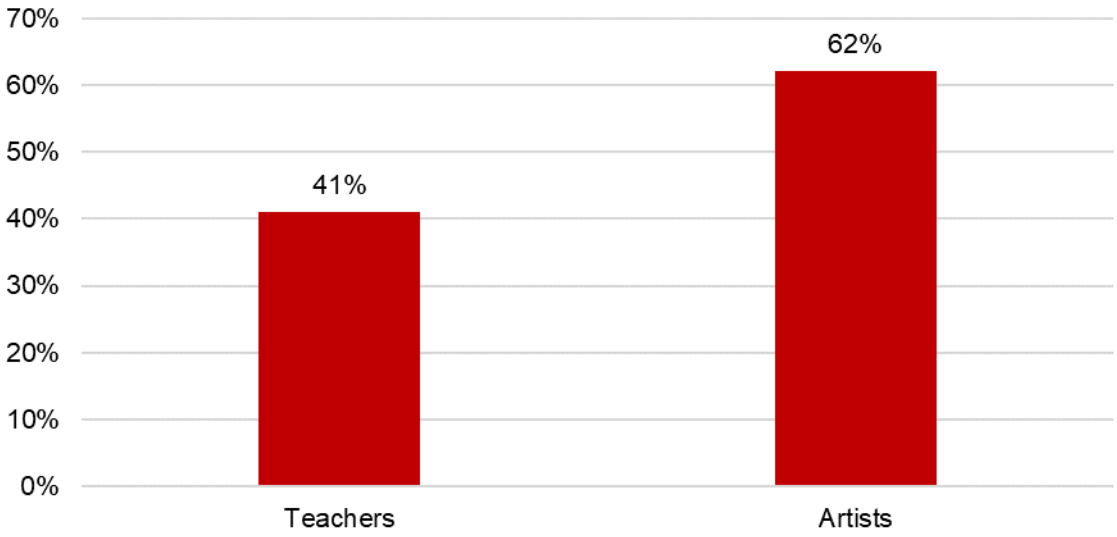
> ‘It’s primary teachers on the whole [engaging with the Networks]. It’s really hard to engage secondary teachers, and [Consortia] say this as well. It’s really hard to release teachers. Timetabling for teachers in secondary schools is very difficult. We’ve shared that with [Consortia] and they have the same problem. We sympathise but it is hard to get hold of them.’ (Author’s Translation of Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.31 Network staff anticipated growing interest from secondary schools and teachers in their services as further details regarding the new curriculum were released.

2.32 While participation has been increasing, data suggests that there continues to be scope for further promotion of the Networks and their activities. Figure 2.2 below draws on data from the Teacher Survey, which suggests that 41% of teachers involved with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme are aware of the Networks and their services. Teachers involved in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme should be

expected to possess an increased level of awareness due to their exposure to the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. Therefore, the figure below is likely to suggest a more favourable picture than had the sample been of the general population of teachers.

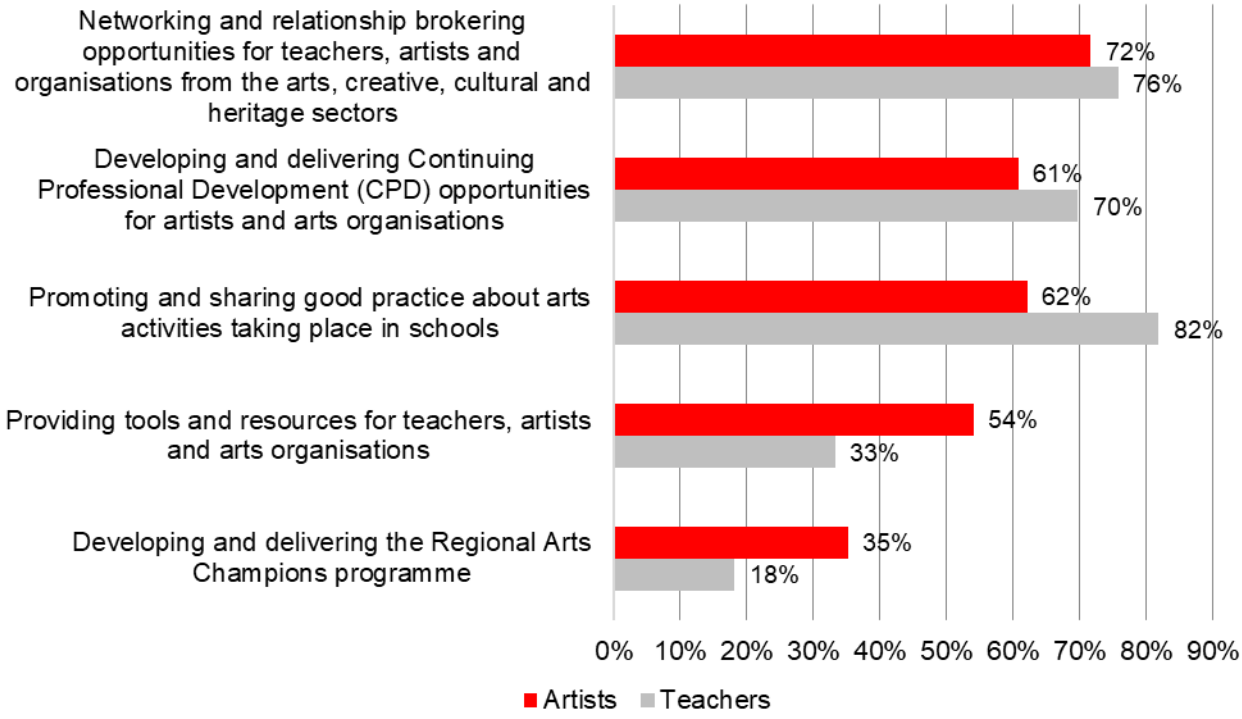
Figure 2.2: Awareness of the Regional Arts and Education Network



Teachers N=124 | Artists N=119

2.33 Figure 2.3 offers a more detailed picture of the awareness levels amongst those Lead Creative Schools teachers who noted that they possessed some awareness of the Regional Arts and Education Network. The figure shows that while awareness of CPD and networking and brokering opportunities was above 70%, fewer than one in five (18%) were aware of the Arts Champions.

Figure 2.3: Awareness of specific Regional Arts and Education Network activities and services



Teachers N=124 | Artists N=119

2.34 The lack of awareness of the Arts Champions and their tools and resources in particular amongst Lead Creative Schools participants echoes concerns expressed by a few Network staff regarding the promotion of the strand by Lead Creative Schools staff and within the Arts Council of Wales' promotion of Creative Learning Through the Arts more generally. Some Network staff reflected variability in the degree of integration and general awareness between the creativity- and arts-focused strands of the ACW-led offer across Wales.

2.35 However, Arts Council of Wales management staff were of the opinion that the strands were promoting each other's work, though it was accepted that there was variation between the levels of cooperation in each region.

> 'I'm confident that it should be happening and is happening in the most part. The relationships between Lead Creative Schools and Networks are different for each region. Some are working better than others at this point.' (Arts Council Management Interview, 2019)

2.36 It is unclear as to why this perception exists amongst Regional Arts and Education Network staff, or, if accurate, why Lead Creative Schools are not felt to be promoting Regional Arts and Education Networks always to the extent that they

could be. Both qualitative interview data and data from the Teacher and Artist Survey suggest, however, that awareness of the Regional Arts and Education Networks and their offer could be improved among beneficiaries of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme.

Management and delivery

2.37 Arts Council of Wales management staff expressed views demonstrating that they are satisfied with the delivery of the Regional Arts and Education Network. Output targets continue to be agreed with the individual Networks and to have been met. What is more, Network staff were satisfied with the delivery of their targets over the year.

2.38 The ability (as designed) of Networks to respond to local need and develop CPD relevant to teachers within the region is still considered by Coordinators and management staff to be a key aspect of their success. Not only are targets for CPD met, but a wider appreciation for the quality and content of CPD was also noted during interviews.

2.39 The links between Networks and Regional Education Consortia are also thought to be strengthening, with more cross-Network provision of national courses. This is believed by both Consortium staff and Regional Arts and Education Network staff to be adding value to the provision of statutory education in the respective regions.

2.40 Some Networks have worked closely with Regional Education Consortia in identifying teachers and schools to target with CPD and Arts Champion support. Indeed, in the Edau/GwE region in particular, the Network has developed into a key provider of expressive arts CPD, aligned with and supporting the pursuit of the region's educational and workforce priorities. Network staff and Consortium staff also consider the contribution to be one based on expertise and quality, which is associated with the Regional Arts and Education Networks.

> 'We can be a mark of quality and offer quality advice to them by now. They can turn to us. When they need to deliver something around creativity and the arts, they come to us. The partnership is fantastic… The Consortia don't have this expertise.' (Author's Translation of Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

> 'Without the relationship that GwE have with Edau, we wouldn't have had the expert input we have today. We wouldn't've known where to go for the experts in dance, the experts in music and singing… We wouldn't have the Arts Champions

working and supporting and making such a difference really to the confidence and skills of our teachers. We know that the expressive arts is making a bit of a comeback really with the new curriculum... So, as a service, we need to know who we can go to help our teachers, and it's Edau who provided that essential support for us.' (Edau Impact Case Study Interview with GwE, 2019)

2.41 Meanwhile, the development of a brokering app is perceived by Network and Arts Council of Wales management staff, as well as stakeholders, to be a key development that will assist the facilitation of relationships between artists and teachers. The freedom for Networks to develop their own provision is likely to be a key enabling factor in the app's development. While no data has been received on the use of the app to date, stakeholders and Network and management staff are optimistic, nonetheless. Future reports may wish to explore data on the app's use and draw on comparisons with the use of other apps within education and by teachers.

'The app could be a real game-changer. It's gold dust in terms of getting teachers and artists together.' (Regional Education Consortia Interview, 2019)

2.42 While optimistic towards its potential, Network staff, nonetheless, are aware of the need to promote the app and encourage teachers and artists to sign up. Take-up has emerged as being the primary challenge and risk facing the app.

'Pick-up has been pretty good and growing and feedback has been good on its usability. I think our key driver now is to have as many teachers on it and having a profile on it — whether they have a project on it or not at this stage. They'll start to see more of what is on offer in the area and across Wales as more teachers sign up to it and that will drive it more. That's our next step with that: to really push it out to teachers more.' (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.43 Two Networks have sought to innovate and develop their offer over the past 18 months or so. One has begun to offer 'seed innovation funds' of up to £1,000 to support and facilitate collaboration between teachers and artists. The fund is designed to support collaboration between teachers and artists following Lead Creative Schools or Creative Collaborations, rather than to take the place of any existing aspect of the CLTA programme.

2.44 While Networks occasionally develop and deliver CPD in partnership with one another, which is thought to save money and ensure quality, some concerns were

raised regarding the time that it takes to deliver in such a manner, specifically that delivery is occasionally slower.

2.45 Coordinators also suggested that there were opportunities to draw on a wider pool of expertise and experience in order to support and enrich delivery and increase the quality of CPD. The thrust of such views was that there generally seemed to be a desire within the ACW to circulate knowledge and expertise within Wales and encourage teachers to access such knowledge and expertise, rather than connecting with repositories of knowledge and experience in England or farther afield that may be viable to access and a useful point of comparison. There were some criticisms of this as being a somewhat insular approach, but, at the same time, cultivating a more global approach to CPD and creative learning would inevitably bring with it considerable cost implications. Moreover, it could be argued that a good deal of international thinking and practice were seamlessly built into the programme design via consultancy with Culture, Creativity and Education (CCE).

2.46 That point aside, the delivery of CPD has, nonetheless, developed in other ways over the past academic year, again evidencing the ongoing innovation and development by programme and Network management staff. Regional Arts and Education Network staff have drawn on wider educational expertise in order to enrich the offer, for example, increasingly led by or with contributions from Consortium curriculum leads to increase the relevance to the new curriculum.

Cooperation and working alongside Regional Arts and Education Networks

2.47 The potential for Regional Arts and Education Networks to contribute to, co-deliver or independently deliver creative learning training was raised by a range of respondents. Most notable is the demand from teachers, as well as Networks' attempts to provide creative learning training that can be applied across the curriculum, reaching outside of the original remit of teaching 'in' the arts and drawing on creative and expressive arts methodologies so as to deliver teaching across a range of subjects.

> 'There's an element of what we're doing that we've shifted slightly. It's driven from the expressive arts as a starting point, but it does explore the possibilities for cross-curricular work whilst still being expressive arts training. That's very much what schools and teachers want right now and it's a way for them to start changing their teaching. It might be music working alongside drama practitioners and blending within expressive arts area. [It's about] looking at expressive arts

more holistically whilst not ignoring ways of integrating with the humanities or literacy area — drama is naturally going to fit in with literacy.' (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.48 Network staff suggested that it was difficult at times for them to offer the CPD that teachers were now requesting. Specifically, Coordinators perceived the delivery of cross-curricular and creative learning CPD to be beyond their remit. Coordinators noted that the work about which they were being approached, and which participants would like to have delivered, overlapped with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme in terms of themes and competencies. It is not uncommon as interventions become more embedded to see teachers work towards the integration of arts and creativity agendas, as it is a productive path which navigates between some of the longstanding distinctions made between the arts and creative education, or between academic and expressive philosophies. More integrated approaches take no sides in such divisions. Teachers focus more on what Wakeford (2004) has described as 'the goal of bringing the arts wholly and multidimensionally into the service of the learning mind'.[18]

'What's interesting is that where we're working with schools to trial things, expressive arts teachers are talking about working across with humanities and languages AoLEs and working much more across the curriculum more broadly. It's an interesting and a natural development. We find it a little tricky, then, to navigate the dividing line between what is creative learning and what is expressive arts. Teachers don't necessarily see the boundaries so much, especially in primary schools. We have to define that boundary because it's a boundary with the Lead Creative School programme. Teachers aren't seeing that boundary. We're having to navigate that divide...' (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.49 Network staff wanted to meet the requests of teachers and deliver creative learning CPD that was beyond their remit, as they felt as though they were in a good position in which to deliver such training, either themselves or alongside Lead Creative Schools teams. However, their interpretation of their role and their perception of advice from the ACW suggested to some a lack of openness towards integrated approaches.

[18] Wakeford, M (2004) *A Short Look at a Long Past* in Putting the Arts in the Picture, Ed. Rabin, N and Redmond, R, Colombia College Chicago

‘Specific [creative learning] pedagogies are being taught through Lead Creative Schools. I don’t understand why we can’t offer training that takes teachers over that threshold and into other subjects. That’s frustrating…When can you tell a teacher not to take drama into the world of science? It’s a waste of opportunity. It restricts us from taking the broader programme to a fantastic place… You have to let a Network develop to adapt to the people within it. They haven’t stopped us from doing things, but when we try to develop, they clearly say definitely not. It feels negative.’ (Author’s Translation of Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.50 Regional Education Consortium personnel also noted their desire to see both strands being delivered together, most notably in relation to cross-curricular creative learning CPD, which is widely considered to be in demand by the teaching community. Furthermore, Consortium staff saw Arts Champions as being potential vehicles or deliverers of the creative learning training associated with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme.

‘The training for Arts Champions and Lead Creative Schools has to be brought together so that it trains creativity leaders, rather than two separate things.’ (Regional Education Consortium Interview, 2019)

2.51 Relaxing the dividing line was also thought by Coordinators to be a way of developing the coherence of the CLTA programme and increasing the impact on the education profession.

‘It’s a line that needs to be [slightly divided between Lead Creative Schools and Networks] but so that we also have the same terminology and reference points. In the celebration day there was a celebration of interdisciplinary and cross-curricular and another way of explaining how the arts can be merged across [the curriculum] more. Well, there’s a need for clarity and linking and sharing that with the Education Consortia, and potentially with Estyn and everybody, so that we’re all talking about the same things. Now, as teachers are coming on board and seeing the nature of the curriculum, it’s actually about a holistic approach in everything. [Teachers] want to blur the boundaries.’ (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.52 However, ‘blurring the line’, as it is commonly referred to amongst Network staff and stakeholders, presents challenges to Arts Council of Wales management staff. Management staff accepted that cooperation and co-delivery were happening in

some instances, but that it was a varied picture across all four Networks. In addition, the ACW make the point that there continues to be a need for upskilling and delivery *in* the arts disciplines, which is the intention of all the various elements of Strand 2 of the programme, including Network activities. It may be that different Networks are responding to the developing demand for forms of CPD across varied local contexts, some of which are increasingly seeking fusion and integration between the creativity agenda and the arts. While ACW staff suggest that there is no hard-line demarcation as to where CPD can or cannot develop in more integrated ways, there is a widespread and persistent view among Networks that explicit separation of the different strands and their aims is important to maintain.

2.53 This is borne out by Arts Council of Wales management staff signalling their concern that blurring boundaries would, firstly, duplicate what was being delivered, and may also jeopardise the ability to evaluate and validate the two models used in both strands. Consequently, management staff are clear in their justification for the restriction, as well as the need to maintain a distinction between the Lead Creative Schools Scheme and the Regional Arts and Education Network.

> '[There is] varied cooperation between Lead Creative Schools and the Networks. It has [happened] in some and hasn't in other regions. It's a difficult one because we allocated the funding to two strands. The Lead Creative Schools Scheme was half the funding. A significant amount — [£]10 million — went into Lead Creative Schools. The Networks were part of the other strand. We needed to be absolutely clear that we weren't duplicating. We also designed the programme to be clear as to what we were addressing. It was arts education and it was creativity.
>
> For us it's about whether that model works. If we allowed other kinds of creative models to come in, it would be difficult to validate the model. There were very clear reasons why we kept them distinct. It was a decision that was taken and the right decision to take. We needed to prove that it works.' (Arts Council Management Interview, 2019)

2.54 In the past, Arts Council of Wales management staff have considered bringing the two strands closer. While the potential for closer working was appreciated, concerns were also raised regarding duplication and the reluctance of Networks to adopt a model of working.

2.55 The decision to relax the restrictions and support or encourage the delivery of cross-curricular creative learning training by both strands is for the strategic management of the programme. The justification for not relaxing the restrictions has been clear and consistent from Arts Council of Wales management staff, namely to protect the integrity and validity of the delivery models, as well as avoiding the risk of duplication. Regional Arts and Education Network staff, key educational stakeholders, and (perceived) demand from teachers suggest, however, that revisiting and relaxing the restrictions would enable a wider delivery of the sought-after cross-curricular creative learning training and develop the impact and successes of both strands.

2.56 If the restrictions are reviewed, management staff may wish to consider the weight of data and evidence that have already been collected in relation to the Lead Creative Schools programme, as well as the extent to which the model and its successes can be evidenced and validated already.

Communication

2.57 Report 3 concluded that, in the views of both Arts Council of Wales programme management staff and Network staff, the communication and dialogue between them could be improved. Network staff suggested that more in-depth engagement with their activities would be appreciated, while Arts Council of Wales programme management staff stated that they would benefit from Network staff more openly communicating the difficulties that they encounter. The report recommended (Recommendation 7) that efforts be made to improve the communication, suggesting that both partners should seek and offer clarity surrounding monitoring criteria and data, the communication of difficulties being experienced, and the sharing of 'on-the-ground' experiences and learning.

2.58 Report 3 also noted a perceived lack of clarity surrounding the ultimate contribution of the Networks or their outcomes for beneficiaries beyond the five core outputs. It was thought that a lack of clarity had led to confusion. The report recommended (Recommendation 5) that management communicate to Network Coordinators their vision for the ultimate contribution of Regional Arts and Education Networks beyond the delivery of the five core outputs.

2.59 At the time of interviews, both Regional Arts and Education Network staff and Arts Council of Wales management staff agreed that the communication and relationship

between the parties had improved. ‘The communication has definitely improved over the last year’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019).

2.60 However, both are also of the view that some communication issues persist. In particular, management staff suggested that Network staff did not sufficiently appreciate their responsibilities with respect to evidencing the impact of their activities.

> ‘There are still issues with communication. We’ve certainly addressed a lot of the communication issues. We’ve been very, very clear about what we need from them and there’s been a lot more communication and meetings around expectations and what’s being achieved. There is still a lack of understanding on the behalf of the Networks that they are accountable for the funding and the impact of what they’re doing. We continue to struggle.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

2.61 Arts Council of Wales management staff suggested that Networks were reluctant to evidence their successes and share detailed evidence of their impact with Arts Council of Wales management staff.

> ‘...they say they hadn’t expected to have to provide the level of detail; that surprises me, considering the amount of money they’re being offered. We clarified that and formalised that and did recognise that.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

2.62 Network staff were of the opinion that, while it had improved somewhat, not least as a result of meetings arranged between management and Network staff, issues remained that affected delivery and planning. Some Coordinators were less positive than others, while a common issue concerned the tone and nature of the communication with Arts Council of Wales management staff. The range of views were apparent in interviews conducted with staff members of the various Regional Arts and Education Networks.

> ‘[We have] a good relationship with [Arts Council of Wales management staff]. They’re very busy, so we’ve been trying to have meetings and find time to spend face-to-face, but is difficult. But I’d say (generally) it’s an amicable relationship and supportive.’ (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

> ‘It can be a bit steely sometimes and it doesn’t need to be. I know how overworked they are and they’re under pressure with not enough staff to deliver

at the Arts Council [of Wales]. But I think that a warmer relationship would be better… They don't need to have their professional face on. They need to drop the barriers down and maybe work on the relationships. An ongoing dialogue would be much more productive, and a warm dialogue as well… To have a discussion before the bids go in would be much more helpful, rather than the very formal inputting of something then coming back with feedback.' (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.63 Network staff expressed some frustration towards particular aspects of the programme's management, most notably that management neither appreciated nor understood the nature of the work being undertaken by Networks, mirroring comments noted previously with regard to Arts Council of Wales management staff not being informed of impacts and successes.

'[I would like] more recognition of the work that's happening. I'd like them to come to speak to the people who are coming to our courses... A creative programme needs to be hands-on — they need to be more hands-on… Do they want more dialogue or just to fund us? That exciting feeling isn't there.' (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.64 A further issue that continues to be affected by communication and possible mixed messages was that of planning for the legacy and post-funding period. This issue is discussed in detail in a later section of this report. In short, Arts Council of Wales management staff suggested that they had consistently and clearly stated their expectation that Networks would provide details of their post-funding planning and lead in sustaining a legacy of impact and activity.

2.65 A common remark from Network staff concerned a desire for more clarity and vision from the Arts Council of Wales with regard to the legacy and future direction of the programme and the strand. This could perhaps be expected, given that decisions had not been made regarding the future and legacy at the time of writing. This contrasts with the Arts Council of Wales' desire for more clarity surrounding the same issues from the Networks.

'It would be good to get a clear idea from the Arts Council [of Wales] and the government, and (probably) Consortia, as to where they see the Networks sitting. Do they see the Networks continuing? And if so, are they independent or do they see them as a national body? Because we don't know what their vision is, we

need to all come together and discuss what could be the vision and what is feasible.' (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.66 Looking to the future, Regional Arts and Education Network staff desire a clear steer from the Arts Council of Wales with respect to their vision for the future of the Networks. Furthermore, Network staff desired a more informal approach to communication and a warmer, more deliberative application process. This suggests, alongside comments made during interviews, that Regional Arts and Education Network staff understand the management relationship to be based on compliance — Regional Arts and Education Networks complying with the specific delivery and reporting requirements of the Arts Council of Wales.

2.67 The responses and previous report also suggest, however, that despite the relationship being predicated on a service or supplier arrangement — a relationship based on compliance — in reality, much has been constructed and defined by the Networks themselves. In terms of vision, content, and quality assurance, therefore, albeit not monitoring, the Networks are accountable to themselves rather than to the Arts Council of Wales. This perhaps gives rise to tension between the autonomy that Networks feel they possess in delivering in varied ways, sensitive to local needs, and the requirement to demonstrate value for money in ways that seem to be fixed and immutable. Networks have formed an impression that current forms of monitoring activity may not capture all of the value that they add, while the ACW maintain that long-form answers give scope to describe more qualitative elements that Networks have delivered, but that (generally) Networks make little use of these outlets.

2.68 In the gap that has opened up, Networks are seeking guidance and validation of their approach from the ACW, while the ACW desire more detailed and firmer proposals on the future direction and activities of Regional Arts and Education Networks from Network staff. Moreover, Arts Council of Wales staff expect Network staff to be more proactive in evidencing the successes of their activities. Ultimately, this suggests, while also echoing interview data, that Arts Council of Wales management staff see the relationship differently from Regional Arts and Education Network staff. They regard the relationship as being one based on a framework provided by themselves, which enables freedom for Regional Arts and Education Networks to operate as they see fit within that framework, albeit with the

responsibility for evidencing success as well as delivery clearly placed on Regional Arts and Education Network staff.

2.69 Arts Council of Wales management's view is supported by the initial guidance document which sets a clear framework within which Regional Arts and Education Networks have the freedom to operate. However, the activity-focused nature of the framework, as well as increasingly specific monitoring demands which are focused on target fulfilment, may have contributed to the perception amongst Network staff that the relationship is based on their compliance with Arts Council of Wales demands.

2.70 Of key concern is the impact that the management relationship may have upon the preparations for legacy planning and possible future activities. As both partners look to each other for a lead on legacy planning, there is a risk that preparations will not be made, successes will not be capitalised upon, and the potential long-term impact of the programme will be diminished.

Successes and impact

2.71 The theory of change identified, beyond the programme-wide outcomes, three specific interim outcomes for Strand 2 that focus on teachers in particular. These are as follows:

1) Teacher awareness of the value of creative skills for teaching and learners increases

2) Teachers change the way in which they teach, whereby increasing their use of creative approaches, and

3) Teachers engage in arts and creative activities outside of school. These interim outcomes should lead to the final outcomes.

Meanwhile, the outcomes for artists are as follows:

1) Artist awareness of the value of creative skills for teaching and learners increases; and

2) There is an increase in the supply of services to schools from within the arts sectors. These will lead to the final outcomes in respect of:

a) Artists and arts organisations becoming more financially sustainable; and

b) Changes within the artist and arts organisation models (self-efficacy).

2.72 This report draws on all data collected by Network staff on behalf of the Arts Council of Wales. As noted during Report 3, the objectives outlined for the Networks are activities rather than outcomes. What is more, Report 3 recommended (Recommendation 6) that further sources of data should be established that quantify as well as qualify the relevance of Networks' provision for schools and teachers.

2.73 Previous reports also noted that the monitoring data collected relates to levels of activity and participation numbers rather than to the impact that such activity has had upon beneficiaries. To some extent, the focus on collecting and providing monitoring data may have been a factor limiting Regional Arts and Education Network staff capacity to evaluate their own activities; in other words, time is dedicated to collecting and reporting monitoring data rather than evidencing the impact on beneficiaries.

2.74 In addition to requesting numerical outputs, Arts Council of Wales management asked all Networks to compile case studies demonstrating the impact of their activities. These case studies were not available at the time of writing, but if Networks engage with the opportunity to evidence their work in more qualitative ways, describing their methods and approaches and their perception of initial impacts, it may help to counterbalance the perceived reliance on target-driven metrics.

2.75 In reviewing the monitoring and evaluation data on the activities that have been delivered by the Networks, the Arts Council of Wales was satisfied that each Network had met its targets for the 2017–2018 academic year, and no concerns were raised regarding the 2018–2019 academic year.

2.76 Both Arts Council of Wales management staff and Network staff suggested that Regional Arts and Education Network activities had led to clear successes and impacts on the educational, teaching and artist beneficiaries. Both expressed the view that the support that Regional Arts and Education Networks have lent to schools and teachers as they prepare the workforce to deliver the Curriculum for Wales has been a key success.

2.77 Arts Council of Wales management staff were of the view that the ability of Regional Arts and Education Networks to link schools and teachers with artists, facilitate the involvement of artists in schools and facilitate teacher-to-teacher support through the Arts Champions scheme was a particular strength.

2.78 Particular attention was also paid to the support provided for schools to prepare for the new curriculum.

> ‘Strengths? Their ability to connect schools with arts organisations. The teacher-to-teacher support and that’s high-quality support… Providing schools with opportunities to transform and prepare for the new curriculum, and CLTA provides that across the programme. What the Networks are doing is they’re enabling schools to draw on experts.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

2.79 Meanwhile, Regional Arts and Education Network staff were more nuanced in their responses, suggesting that some aspects of their work were more impactful than others. Most commonly, Arts Champions’ teacher-to-teacher support and the CPD provision were identified to be key aspects of their successes.

> ‘I think that the work that we do, and I’m realistic about the fact that some of what we do isn’t essential, but the Arts Champions and CPD and resources are going to be increasingly valuable to those teachers that are only now being told that they’ll be in charge of expressive arts. On the whole, they haven’t got a clue what a creative school looks like or what creativity in the curriculum looks like. I think we are in a brilliant position to deliver that support. We are increasingly putting together workshops to explain to people what it’s going to look like. So, when Estyn come and ask them to show creativity in the school, they know what they’re talking about and they can do it.’ (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.80 Consistent with previous reports, CPD elicits the most positive feedback from teachers to Network Coordinators, alongside the Arts Champions.

> ‘I think that the kind of training that we offer is essential, training that lasts more than one day. It deepens what we offer. The next step is to develop and secure a deeper impact and offer support that is more prolonged.’ (Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.81 Regional Education Consortium personnel also noted, with reference to CPD and Arts Champions, that the feedback that they had received had demonstrated an impact on teachers and pedagogy.

‘Unanimously, all the evaluation feedback is overwhelmingly positive, not just “I had a good day”, but “It’s had an impact on the way they teach” — all feeding toward helping pupils to make progression.’ (Regional Education Consortia Interview, 2019)

2.82 Regional Arts and Education Networks collect feedback from participants and beneficiaries. A selection of these comments are made available to the Arts Council of Wales and to this evaluation through monitoring forms. While comments provided are frequently positive, not all of them relate to outcomes; furthermore, those offered are a sample and not necessarily a representative one. Nonetheless, the comments indicate that there are instances in which CPD in particular has influenced how some teachers approach their teaching, and that some teachers intend to put their learning into practice. Appendix 2 offers a selection of feedback responses.

2.83 Network staff also suggested that the impact on the well-being and enthusiasm of teachers was an indication of further success. This is also consistent with findings from previous reports. Regional Arts and Education Network staff noted that the impact was evidenced not only in the feedback provided but also in the attitudes of teachers at events. At least one Regional Arts and Education Network was in the process of compiling case studies to support the task of evidencing this impact.

> 'I've seen hard examples of teachers feeling excited, having left the training and used [what they have learned] in the classroom and recommending the training to others. These "Arts in the Foundation Phase" training packages are still popular. After two years the course still fills up… I'm preparing a list of examples and case studies [with which to support evidencing of the impact].' (Author's Translation of Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.84 Regional Arts and Education Network staff also noted that the impact on artists and arts organisation was becoming more visible. This impact is also evidenced to some extent in the case studies presented below.

> 'The National Museums staff, Literature Wales, Ty Newydd — without doubt, their awareness has been raised and we've pointed institutions in the right direction with regard to the requirements of the new curriculum; without doubt with individual artists as well. They're all more geared up to know what schools need when the new curriculum comes. If we were to end tomorrow, that would be the most valuable thing: that they know what's on the agenda.' (Author's Translation of Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.85 Data from the survey of teachers and artists presented in the last report suggested that the satisfaction levels are particularly high amongst those teachers and artists who have made use of the Networks and their services or support. However, though also positive in relation to the support, numbers responding to the questions in the current survey did not provide a reasonable sample (31).

2.86 A survey of teachers participating in Regional Arts and Education Network events was launched during the fieldwork stage; however, the sample at the time of analysis limited its value to this report. The survey will remain open until the next report with the aim of establishing a more robust sample of responses.

2.87 The data suggests high levels of satisfaction with the performance of Networks. There is scope to generate better-quality data, however, in order to present a more robust picture of the impact that Network activities have had. Network and management staff are satisfied that the Networks are delivering, while teachers engaged with the Networks are satisfied with the provision being delivered.

2.88 The paucity of data from beneficiaries in relation to the impact of Regional Arts and Education Network services and activities continues to represent a key weakness and challenge facing the strand (as detailed in a later section). Evidencing the impact that it has (and is having) upon teachers and artists must consequently be considered a key challenge during its final year of operation. While the qualitative data from management staff and wider stakeholders suggests that the Regional Arts and Education Networks are having an impact, the lack of data representing the views of beneficiaries limits these conclusions.

Opportunities, challenges and risks

2.89 Interviews revealed several areas in which the strand faced opportunities or challenges. Some have been discussed in previous sections, such as the potential for closer working between the two strands, as well as for the Regional Arts and Education Networks or Arts Champions to deliver or co-deliver creative learning training across the curriculum. The challenges brought about by communication difficulties have also been discussed in a dedicated section.

2.90 The key challenge for Regional Arts and Education Networks lies in robustly evidencing their impact on teachers and schools. While the research undertaken to support the evaluations offers some insight into the impact of Regional Arts and Education Network activities to date, Regional Arts and Education Networks themselves have not produced a significant body of data that evidences their impact in a manner which relates to the theory of change for the programme and strand.

2.91 While some Networks have begun the process of compiling examples and case studies, Arts Council of Wales management staff have expressed frustration towards the lack of forthcoming evidence. This lack of evidence is particularly pertinent, given that the process of planning for future activities and securing a legacy would benefit from such evidencing. The ACW have therefore formed the view that Networks are seeking to be led into a future that they largely need to invent for themselves. In the ACW's view, Networks are not demonstrating that they are planning ahead by collating evidence with which to demonstrate the impact of

their work and, therefore, make a case to continue beyond the lifetime of the programme.

2.92 Arts Council of Wales management staff conceded that more could have been done to ensure that evaluation data was being collected by Regional Arts and Education Networks. Staff suggested that it was encouraged while the Networks were being designed and developed, albeit never an explicit requirement. This reveals a potential weakness of the framework approach to managing the Regional Arts and Education Networks and allowing a degree of freedom for Regional Arts and Education Networks to develop their own activities as well as their own data collection activities.

> ‘That’s something we didn’t [do], but we would’ve encouraged to be built in. It’s one of those potentially assumed things without having reassurance.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

2.93 The geography of Wales has been highlighted in previous reports as being a challenge to some of the Networks. The ACW acknowledged this factor in encouraging Networks to design their programmes of activities based on local needs. This has been confirmed in monitoring data and interviews presented in this report. Both Edau and NAWR (North Wales and Mid and West Wales) are tasked with providing activities to a large geographical area with a dispersed population. NAWR’s approach to networking events is particularly impacted by the size of the region, as well as the disparity and range of educational communities represented by the region. Holding conveniently central or accessible events has been a challenge, and the duplication of events in different locations remains necessary in order to ensure that all teachers and artists are presented with similar opportunities.

2.94 The inherent differences deriving from the design and offer of the four Networks have been regarded as being a clear advantage by management and delivery staff, as highlighted in previous reports. However, a consensus appears to be developing amongst Arts Council of Wales management and Regional Arts and Education Network staff with respect to the notion of a single, Wales-wide Network offering more potential, whereby suggesting a possible option or opportunity for the future.

> ‘I wouldn’t look to extend this particular model. Basically, the Networks need to be seen as part of a bigger picture.’ (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.95 The monitoring data noting the amount of participants and enrolment in training and networking events confirms the view of Regional Arts and Education Network staff that Networks have a wide reach and a growing reputation for delivering relevant CPD for teachers within their regions. The reach and reputation of Regional Arts and Education Networks emerges as being a key strength and presents opportunities for future or further development of the Regional Arts and Education Networks as platforms or structures through which to deliver training, networking or other services in the future.

2.96 However, a concurrent risk to this potential derives from the uncertainty surrounding Networks' future and the possibility that key staff, knowledge and experience will be lost. Regional Arts and Education Network staff suggest that as the uncertainty surrounding the future form of Networks or their activities continues, it becomes increasingly likely that key personnel will be lost. This issue is discussed in more detail in the next section, however, as one Coordinator states:

> 'That's one of the issues. We need to know [from the Arts Council of Wales] or people are going to start leaving. I need to know. I'm only programming until December. I need to know by March if the money will be there, because I'm programming for that now.' (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.97 Close cooperation with Consortia, as noted in this report with regard to Edau and GwE, may offer a model for the future. As a provider of expressive arts CPD, which is valued by Consortia, as well as being at the centre of a developing Network of Creative Practitioners and arts organisations, Regional Arts and Education Networks are well placed to support the delivery of training in preparation for the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales. Consortia, given the value that they have professed to place in Regional Arts and Education Networks and their provision of expressive arts CPD, may emerge as a source of support and potential funder or co-funder of future activities.

> 'We've also talked about the expressive arts curriculum as well and looking at the gaps between what they're asked to deliver and what they can, with the Arts Council [of Wales] in a good place to support the upskilling and training. Could the Arts Council [of Wales] be in a good place to support schools with that?' (Regional Education Consortia Interview, 2019)

Legacy and sustainability

2.98 The legacy and sustainability of activities and impacts, and the planning for these have become an issue of contention between Regional Arts and Education Network staff and Arts Council of Wales management staff. Such contention derives from an expectation held by both partners that the other will offer a lead with regard to planning for the future and the sustainability of activities and impacts.

2.99 Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinators noted that the funding environment was not favourable for the arts at the moment, suggesting that the Arts Council of Wales were key to sustaining the funding of arts activities. Future plans and the relationship with the Arts Council of Wales emerge in this context as being key to securing lasting impacts and activities beyond the lifespan of the programme.

> ‘If you’re a fundraiser for the arts at the moment, there’s really limited opportunities in Wales. All the community money goes into sport. You think on a local level for the shops, they’ll always fund the local football kit, but never the local arts organisations. It’s not valued. That’s why it’s so difficult to fund the arts. They’ll fund rugby, but not an exhibition. We don’t have any big corporate donor to fund these projects.’ (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.100 The Arts Council of Wales have consistently stated that their own capacity and resources with which to sustain activities in the future are limited and will need to be justified. Moreover, such support will likely be available, if at all, at a much reduced level. The Arts Council of Wales expect such justifications and future plans to be developed and presented by Regional Arts and Education Networks themselves.

> ‘We are very clear. We couldn’t communicate any clearer than we are now… We’ve been asking [Networks] to start thinking about legacy. We’ve always been very clear that 2020 is the stop for the Networks, unless they establish themselves as something we can’t lose… That has now got to come from them… We’ve been encouraging all the Networks to consider independently how they’d sustain the work they’ll be delivering. I would’ve expected all of them to have had some kind of sustainability plan from the outset how they’d continue or whether they had an intention to continue. Networks should be considering what their own ambitions might be.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

Meanwhile, Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinators stated their request for a lead from the Arts Council of Wales, as well as input from other stakeholders with regard to their future and what was needed.

> ‘It would be good to get a clear idea from the Arts Council [of Wales] and the government, and probably Consortia, as to where they see the Networks sitting. Do they see the Networks continuing? And if so, are they independent or do they see them as a national body? Because we don’t know what their vision is, we need to all come together and discuss what could be the vision and what is feasible.’ (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

> ‘I would like to know what the government think that schools should do with their training budgets. The feeling is that Lead Creative Schools will carry on, even though I think we’re very strong in [our region].’ (Author’s Translation of Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.101 Despite there being no official confirmation — at the time of fieldwork — with regard to future continuation of the LCS strand, some Network Coordinators held the belief that they would continue in some form. This seemed to exacerbate their frustrations that the future of Networks had yet to be settled.

> ‘…we’ve had no feedback but also no expectations… to know what the [Arts Council of Wales] would like for the Networks. Better communication would be helpful in terms of putting people at ease.’ (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.102 Legacy and future activity planning is likely to require time and resources due to the structural nature of some Networks which have a range of boards directing operations or involved as stakeholders. This further emphasises the need for clarity surrounding future plans as soon as possible in order to avoid the risk of key staff members, knowledge and experience being lost, as outlined in the previous section.

2.103 Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinators also expressed frustration towards the nature of the relationship with the Arts Council of Wales and the process of developing future plans. This issue has been explored in a previous section; nonetheless, further data is provided in order to illustrate and detail such frustrations.

‘I am disappointed that the question of our plans for next year has become a condition of funding this year for us. I don’t think the Arts Council [of Wales] has thought it through clearly. It’s not clear what they want us to do either.’ (Author’s Translation of Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.104 Staff and Coordinators of some Regional Arts and Education Networks noted that they have, nonetheless, been preparing and developing resources or training materials that would remain available following the lifetime of the strand, whereby ensuring continued impact and contribution to the upskilling of teachers.

‘We’re working to develop resources or materials or training sessions or videos that present easy ways into drama or art sessions that can kick off the skills that are on the curriculum without it being threatening to a teacher who is not a specialist. The music one was the first and that came from the Arts Champion, who is a music specialist. Mentoring and INSET day sessions have come out of that working group of [Arts] Champions developing that work. We’ve [also] got a drama group being put together.’ (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

‘It was always in our plans that people weren’t dependent upon us. We think that we’ve been very successful and have ensured that the arts is at the top of the agenda [within the region].’ (Author’s Translation of Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

Arts Champions

2.105 The development of Arts Champions was a requirement for all Networks. However, the data suggests, as intended in the initial plan, that the Arts Champions operate slightly differently across the Networks. The view of all Networks was that the role was continuing to develop. This section offers the first update on the progress of Arts Champions and will focus on outlining the manner in which they are operating in practice.

2.106 As a further component of Strand 2, schools may nominate a member of staff to assume the role of School Creativity and Arts Champion. This person was to be the link between their school and the opportunities available through the Regional Network. Originally, Arts Champions were expected to be experienced teachers of the arts. Their schools would be funded to release them so as to spend short periods of time promoting best practices, supporting others in adopting similar

approaches, and/or bringing others into their school to observe and learn. Furthermore, artists and arts/cultural organisations are able to undertake this role.

2.107 In practice, teachers or artists are approached informally before the process of nomination is undertaken. Arts Champions themselves were either teachers, artists, or individuals working within the arts industry. Some Networks exclusively appointed teachers to the roles of Arts Champions, while others opted for a mixture of personnel.

2.108 Arts Champions were seen to fulfil a number of roles in practice during the first 12–18 months. These roles varied between Networks, operating as 'brokers' of good practice or conducting more intensive visits to schools in order to support the development of arts provision and work plans.

2.109 Table 2.4 below outlines the number of sessions and number of engagements.[19] The data indicates that there is some variety in the ratio of engagements per session, whereby pointing to the different approaches across the Networks. Edau tend to keep the number of engagements per session relatively low and consistent, constituting only around four engagements on average per session. Meanwhile, A2:Connect tend to hold sessions that vary in size, including a few sessions that enable more engagements to be undertaken (i.e. more teachers in the room). An example of the latter would be a single session at Barry Primary School that was attended by 22 teachers. While this single session constitutes 22 engagements, further data is required so as to assess whether this type of engagement is equivalent to several sessions with a smaller number of teachers. Until such data is available, comparisons between the Networks remain difficult.

Table 2.4: Arts Champions, total number of sessions and teachers

	Sessions	Engagements	Ratio (Engagements per Session)	Standard Deviation
A&E SEW	10	47	4.7	4.5
Edau	13	49	3.8	0.6
NAWR	4	25	6.3	2.0
A2:Connect	13	92	7.1	8.3

Source: Arts Council of Wales monitoring data

[19] Engagements are defined as the number of mentoring/peer-to-peer relationships that are formed between an Arts Champion and a teacher regardless of the number of sessions. For example, 1 Arts Champion and 1 teacher working together for 3 sessions counts as 1 engagement.

2.110 Table 2.5 notes the number of engagements per academic year. During their first academic year operating at full capacity, the Arts Champions of the four Networks conducted 99 opportunities for peer-to-peer engagement.

Table 2.5: Arts Champions, number of sessions per academic year

Academic Year	Number of Sessions
2016–2017	9
2017–2018	99
2018–2019	3

Source: Arts Council of Wales monitoring data

2.111 This supports the qualitative data that notes variation in the types and intensity of Arts Champion engagements. Edau, for example, offer longer-term support to schools and teachers, with Arts Champions undertaking several visits and maintaining support and relationships with schools or teachers over a prolonged period of around six months. Meanwhile, A2:Connect have offered 'one-off' training sessions for a number of teachers.

2.112 Interviews conducted with Arts Champions as well as Regional Arts and Education Network staff members have further enriched the picture of Arts Champions' activities on the ground. More recently, a degree of convergence appears to have taken place, as Arts Champions across Networks tend to fulfil similar roles. More noticeable is the convergence and focus of activities around the Curriculum for Wales and in supporting the transition towards and preparation for the delivery of the expressive arts component of the new curriculum. Some Arts Champions themselves have supported the development of the Curriculum for Wales documentation through other roles, making them well placed to support teachers' transition.

2.113 Arts Champions themselves suggest that there has been a notable change in the attitudes of schools and their head teachers towards the arts and, therefore, the support that Arts Champions offer. This is likely to have some relation to the prominence of the expressive arts within the Curriculum for Wales.

> 'There's been a big change in the attitudes of schools and head teachers. Before [the Consortium] came in, schools were not placing much importance on the Network, but since [the Consortium] has come in, its status with head teachers has improved a lot. Teachers have always seen value, but only since [the Consortium] has come in have head teachers seen the value and importance,

because [Consortia] go around discussing our work.' (Arts Champion Interview, 2019)

2.114 There is also evidence that the focus of some Arts Champions had been upon pedagogy and more creative approaches to teaching. Indeed, Consortium and Regional Arts and Education Network personnel noted that it was largely with the work of Arts Champions that they observed the potential of a crossover between the strands discussed in a previous section, and for Arts Champions to deliver an element of creative learning training across the curriculum.

'Arts Champions' work has very much been about turning up and supporting staff and class assistants so they feel comfortable using the equipment or starting a session the way practitioners might, getting them comfortable about delivering and working in this style. It's a lot more similar to the Lead Creative School work — putting teachers at the helm.' (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.115 More commonly at this stage of the project, Arts Champions resemble teaching advisors or mentors for individual teachers or departments. Differences remain, however, largely with regard to the length of time that Arts Champions typically spend with teachers or schools. In some instances, Arts Champions conduct one-off visits or sessions, while in others they engage in a prolonged intervention and develop a longer-term relationship with teachers, departments or schools.

2.116 In some regions, the partnership with Regional Education Consortia is central to Arts Champions' deployment. NAWR, for example, work with ERW in raising the profile of arts subjects in schools where needed, as well as growing the Network of lead practitioners. In GwE/Edau, meanwhile, Consortia identify schools that require or request support with respect to teaching of the expressive arts, and Edau provide suitable Arts Champions to work for a period of time with schools.

'The team [of Arts Champions] has stayed the same and they've developed their skills and we've looked at how to select schools. Last year we set a programme of looking to bring yellow-band schools together with [Arts Champions] because it was obvious that yellow-band schools weren't putting their hands up [i.e. requesting support]. This was an opportunity for Arts Champions to work with the Consortium, and they really add value with their offer, but also enable access…Everyone was shocked with the feedback they had and very impressed. This year we're moving on to use Arts Champions to "train the trainers" — to

identify strong teachers in the arts and offer further training [for them to become trainers of other teachers in turn].' (Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinator Interview, 2019)

2.117 Teachers have consistently provided positive feedback following engagement with Arts Champions. Developing skills and confidence was commonly referenced as being the key outcome of such engagement.

'Before coming on this course, art was something I put to one side. I did a session once a year maybe or before Estyn called. I felt I needed help, especially with the new curriculum. [Teacher X] came as the Arts Champion and after a discussion she sat me down like a pupil and said: "Right, this morning I'm the teacher and you're the pupil and we're going through everything." After that morning I felt I knew what I wanted to do with the pupils. So I got on the classroom floor and was just creative and experimental. The fun I had as a teacher — and the fun and enjoyment the children had — I think is shown in the final work. I can't believe I had produced this with the children… I can now identify with the children because I've been put out of my comfort zone here. I know that this is what we're asking children to do, so I can identify more with the children and know that if they need to accomplish something, they need the skills to do so. Definitely, this course has changed the way I think. We're almost talking about a growth mentality with children. Well, that's worked with me. There's not one subject I now think I need to put to one side.' (Author's Translation of Edau Teacher Case Study Interview, 2019)

2.118 Data from the Teacher Survey suggests that teachers are particularly satisfied with Arts Champions. Every response (100%) rated the service as being excellent.

2.119 The challenges or weaknesses noted by interviewees tended to concern a lack of presence of or exposure to either the Arts Champions themselves or the associated Regional Arts and Education Network offer across the region. While valuable, the potential demand for further training and support from Arts Champions dwarfs what can be realistically covered within the timescale by the teams of Arts Champions within the region.

2.120 This is supported by data relating to the awareness of Regional Arts and Education Network services. Only 35 per cent of artists and 18 per cent of teachers who have engaged with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme are aware of the Arts Champions scheme. This suggests that further promotion of the service is possible, even

amongst teachers who have already engaged with some aspect of the CLTA programme more generally.

2.121 Arts Champions continue to be regarded by Arts Council of Wales management, Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinators, and stakeholders as an effective and valuable support service. Moreover, Arts Council of Wales management staff, reflecting comments made by some Regional Arts and Education Network staff members, noted that they considered Arts Champions to be a support service that they would like to see continue beyond the lifespan of the programme.

> ‘There’s something about what we’ve been offering that we don’t want to lose. It should be acknowledged. I’m certainly hearing and picking up that those messages are coming through as a value of the Networks. And the Arts Champions is definitely coming out of that and some really successful CPD.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

> ‘What’s also been good is the work with Arts Champions, that collaboration and that schools know that there are people out there, professionals with the skills that the schools don’t have are out there — that aspect has been very successful.’ (Regional Education Consortia Interview, 2019)

3. Experiencing the Arts Fund

3.1 The Experiencing the Arts Fund is designed to encourage schools to provide children and young people with opportunities to 'go one step further' in their exploration of creative, cultural and arts experiences. It includes two elements: Go and See and Creative Collaborations. Both elements were launched in March 2016.

Go and See and Creative Collaborations design and management

3.2 Go and See provides schools with the opportunity to apply for small, one-off grants of up to £1,000 to fund single visits to high-quality arts and cultural events in venues across Wales. Experiences could include visits to performances and exhibitions or visits in order to experience arts professionals developing and creating their work.

3.3 The application process for the fund is designed to be 'light-touch' in comparison to the detailed application process for Creative Collaborations. Arts Council of Wales programme management staff were of the opinion that this approach remains appropriate for the size of the grants available.

3.4 Creative Collaborations is a programme intended to bring schools and arts and cultural organisations together to work on innovative projects. Grants of between £5,000 and £25,000 have been available to fund up to 90% of the cost of a project.

3.5 Arts Council of Wales programme management staff also introduced a 'taster' grant (a grant of between £5,000 and £7,500) for smaller-scale projects with a strong element of experimentation and/or creative risk-taking.

3.6 Applications are led both by arts organisations and by schools. Some applications during the first two years were rejected due to the fact they did not meet the criteria, e.g. projects that were similar or identical to previous or existing projects and that did not demonstrate a fit with the criteria for the fund. However, previous reports found that the quality and appropriateness of applications had improved over time.

3.7 The application process has consisted of three rounds within which schools and arts organisations can apply for funding. The Arts Council of Wales programme management staff noted (while evaluating the scheme) that three rounds had become difficult to manage, particularly as Go and See and Creative Collaborations were managed using a combined budget. Applications were on a "first come, first served" basis (with applications received all year round on a rolling basis for Go and See), resulting in a smaller budget remaining for the final round of Creative

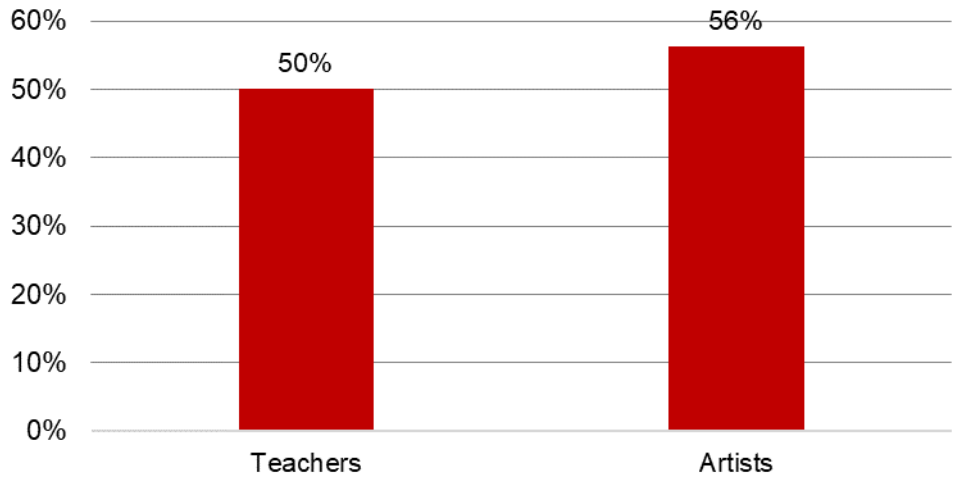
Collaborations. It was decided, therefore, that the application process for Creative Collaborations for the following year would consist of two rounds.

Progress and delivery

3.8 Previous reports explored the distribution of grants approved and schools in Wales per WIMD quartile. These reports found that the distribution of Go and See grants was representative of the four quartiles. Furthermore, a slight underrepresentation of Creative Collaborations grants in schools in the 25% least deprived wards in Wales and an overrepresentation in the third quartile were noted. These statistics reflected previous trends. Data for the 2018–2019 academic year did not enable such an analysis. Interviews with Arts Council of Wales management staff suggested that the situation was unlikely to have changed significantly.

3.9 The Teacher and Artist Survey produced data on their awareness of and involvement with the Experiencing the Arts Fund. The survey was distributed amongst teachers either directly involved or who were working at a school involved with Creative Learning Through the Arts via Lead Creative Schools activities. The sample of 124 teachers therefore represents respondents who were aware of some aspects of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. Figure 3.1 below indicates that around half (50%) of these teachers and little over half of artists (56%) surveyed were aware of the fund. This suggests a slight increase in awareness amongst teachers and a slight decrease in awareness amongst artists upon previous years. The data highlights that there continues to be scope for further promotion of the fund, even amongst teachers who possess some awareness of Creative Learning Through the Arts more generally.

Figure 3.1: Are you aware of the Experiencing the Arts Fund? (Go and See or Creative Collaborations)

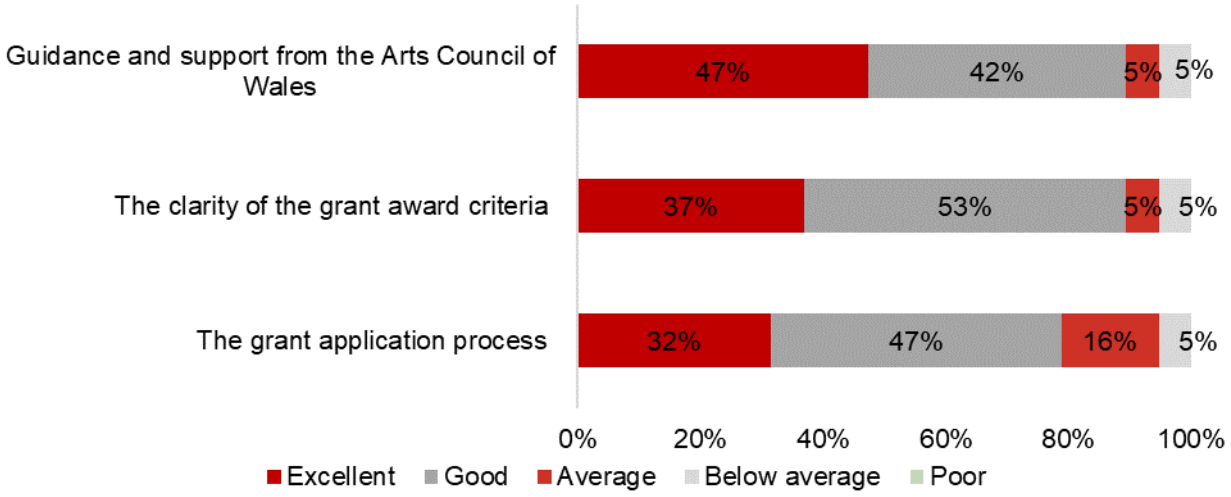


Source: Teacher and Artist Survey 2019

Teachers N=124 | Artists N=133

3.10 Figure 3.2 also draws on data from the Teacher and Artist Survey with regard to the same teachers' opinion on the fund. The data suggests high levels of satisfaction with the grant process and with guidance from the Arts Council of Wales.

Figure 3.2: Teacher and artist opinions on the Experiencing the Arts Fund



Source: Teacher and Artist Survey 2019

N=257

Creative Collaborations

3.11 Two hundred and twenty schools in Wales have benefitted to date — or will have benefitted by the conclusion of the programme — from a Creative Collaborations grant. A single grant may be associated with several schools. Table 3.1 below outlines the spread of grants approved by Consortia and, together with Figure 3.2 above, suggests that schools associated with the grants are representative of the wider population of schools.

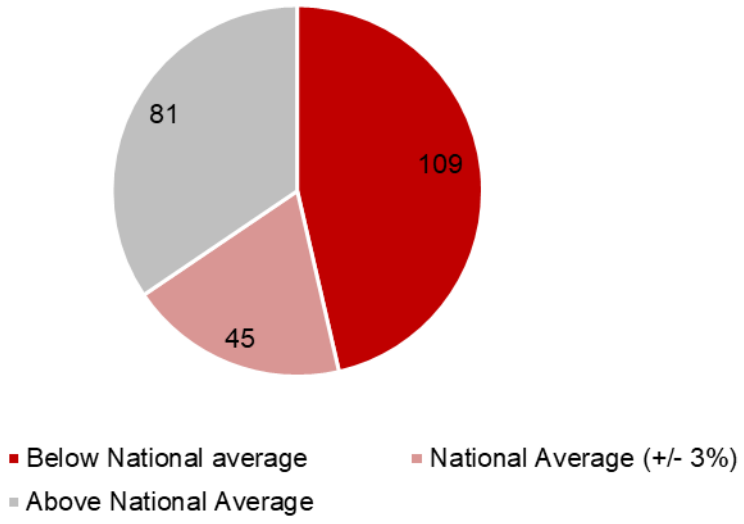
Table 3.1: Number of schools in Creative Collaborations

Number of Schools (per region)			
Region	Number	%	% of Schools in Wales
GwE	74	34%	32%
ERW	88	40%	38%
EAS	22	10%	12%
CSC	36	16%	18%
Total	**220**		

Source: Arts Council of Wales

3.12 Figure 3.3 below presents data relating to the number of participating schools that were below, around (within +/- 3%) and above the national Free School Meal (FSM) average.

Figure 3.3: %FSM of participating schools



Source: Arts Council of Wales

3.13 In total, £1,196,612 has been awarded to date. The average grant amount is £14,417, which suggests that the preference is for grants that are smaller than the £25,000 limit. Coupled with suggestions from management staff that applications in the last year have been characterised by more experimental and risk-taking projects, this suggests that the 'taster' grants have proven to be suitable. This is not to suggest, however, that the full £25,000 grants are not sought after, as 16 grants ranging from £24,000–25,000 were awarded.

3.14 In total, 14,779 pupils have benefitted from the grant by being involved in the associated activities. This figure constitutes around three quarters of the number of pupils who have benefitted from the Go and See grant, equating to a spend of around £81 per participating pupil. On average, 255 pupils are involved in each project.

3.15 Projects engage a wide range of pupil numbers, ranging from 12 pupils involved in one project to 1,920 in another. Such disparity suggests that the high degree of flexibility within grant guidelines meets the needs of schools.

3.16 Furthermore, the number of pupils engaged suggests that the grant can support very intensive projects with small groups of learners, as exemplified in the Canolfan y Gors case study below. These projects provide a level of engagement between artists and learners that is comparable to the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. Moreover, and as also exemplified in the case studies, these projects have in some instances been cross-curricular in their approach, potentially blurring the boundary between the arts- and creativity-focused strands of the programme.

3.17 In total, 63 unique arts organisations are also identifiable from the planning documentation, indicating that they played a significant role in the projects and helped to foster in-depth collaboration. However, interviews with teachers for case studies and with Arts Council of Wales management staff suggested that (in at least some instances) the involvement or role of some arts organisations and artists has gone unrecorded in the documentation. This would, for example, include visits by pupils to arts organisations and talks by artists as part of broader projects; therefore, some of the lighter-touch encounters may not have been recorded alongside the more partnership-based work.

Creative Collaborations: Motivations and development of grant bids

3.18 While grants have been awarded to a range of schools and organisations seeking to engage in a variety of activities, there were some similarities amongst successful applicants with regard to their motivations for applying for funding. Schools commonly sought the grant in order to fund an intervention involving artists and arts organisations that would develop the capacity for teaching the expressive arts.

3.19 The nature and quality of applications has developed over the years towards what was originally envisaged by Arts Council of Wales management. The original and intentionally open criteria elicited several applications from arts organisations that lacked the originality and innovation desired by management.

3.20 The approach of supporting grant applicants in developing and refining applications is thought to have been successful. Arts Council of Wales management staff commented, and interviews with grant recipients revealed, that the feedback-driven refinement of grant proposals has led to applications and, consequently, awarded grants that better reflect those desired by management.

3.21 Moreover, as Lead Creative Schools beneficiaries end their engagement with the scheme and seek further funding in order to develop similar projects, their applications for the Creative Collaborations grant have reflected the types of projects that the management staff hoped for originally. This suggests that schools and teachers are reflecting on their learning, changing their approach and developing more innovative projects through which to support teaching and learning. In addition, case study interviews revealed that previous engagement with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme had in some instances proven to be crucial in stimulating engagement with the grant. Indeed, the Creative Collaborations grant has, in this respect, proven to be an important means for teachers to further develop what they have learned from the Lead Creative Schools Scheme.

3.22 Finally, it was believed by management staff, and reflected in interviews with Regional Arts and Education Network Coordinators and recipients of the Creative Collaborations grant, that Networks were promoting the grant effectively.

Creative Collaborations: Successes and limitations

3.23 Arts Council of Wales management staff were of the opinion that each individual grant award was essentially a bespoke programme developed around the key challenges of individual schools and arts organisations. The projects are seen to be part of a broader suite of interventions that schools are taking forward in order to address priorities and challenges. Their impact cannot be isolated from other interventions, nor is the impact planned for comparable across projects. Consequently, a robust evaluation of the impact of the grant in its entirety is not possible, whereby limiting the scope for generalisations and comparisons. Monitoring data and the data presented below do, however, offer some insight into specific instances and the range of impacts and successes that the grant has stimulated at an individual-project level.

3.24 Ultimately, the inability to evidence programme-wide successes applicable to all or at least the majority of grant recipients is considered by Arts Council of Wales management staff to be the Creative Collaborations grant's most significant limitation. In being unable to evidence success succinctly, potential applications are likely to be from schools, teachers and arts organisations that are already inclined to explore means of working together innovatively in order to develop teaching of/through the expressive arts. 'You can easily grasp Go and See and you can't do that with Creative Collaborations and understand the depth and benefit it offers' (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019).

3.25 Interview data and all case studies presented below suggested that those individuals who provide leadership and the impetus to engage with the grant and develop or implement projects share a common trait, namely that they are perceived by themselves, school leadership or management to be enthusiastic proponents of creative learning and/or the expressive arts.

3.26 The nature of the schools and teachers involved with the grant must also temper the notion that successes can be replicated amongst the wider school population. Enthusiastic proponents of creative learning and/or the expressive arts are thought to be crucial catalysts and drivers of applications and projects. These teachers may not be present in all schools. The Creative Collaborations grant may be appealing to the "usual suspects". Further reports may wish to explore or test this.

3.27 A range of successes were noted by staff and participants. Management staff suggested that the most successful and impactful projects were strongly and clearly related from their outset and design to the challenges faced by grant-receiving schools and arts organisations/creative partners.

> ‘The best will outline the key challenges each school and their creative partners are facing… The most successful projects are where the intended outcomes are clearly defined for each partner at the beginning, even if the detail isn’t necessarily planned at the very beginning. It doesn’t have to be a firm, detailed proposal, but they’ve at least had the discussion at the beginning about the challenges they’re facing.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

3.28 Across the programme there were repeated instances of teachers stating that they had developed skills and confidence in delivering expressive arts lessons. Moreover, management personnel drew attention to the consistent feedback with regard to upskilling and the development of confidence. Interviews with teachers during case study visits supported the claims that working with Creative Practitioners had developed teacher confidence in both teaching and delivering expressive arts lessons, as well as making use of new techniques and technologies.

3.29 Creative Practitioners were commonly praised by teachers for developing their confidence and skillsets, particularly where sessions were delivered collaboratively as opposed to the Creative Practitioner delivering lessons and the teacher observing.

3.30 There is also evidence of the grant enabling and facilitating the development of sustained relationships between teachers/schools and Creative Practitioners beyond the funding period.

> ‘Some [projects] are quite interesting in terms of forging new relationships between arts organisations and schools. Some teachers who have worked with Creative Practitioners in the past have applied for funding to do something different. We’ve had lots of applications from arts organisations and schools that have never worked together before.’ (Arts Council of Wales Management Interview, 2019)

3.31 Arts organisations have also been able to use the grant and its associated activities as a catalyst for developing and establishing a relationship with schools.

3.32 Artists and arts organisations spoke regularly in interviews of developing a greater understanding of the new curriculum and of the teaching of expressive arts within statutory education more generally. This enabled them to tailor and develop their own work in order to better suit learners and their educational needs and requirements.

3.33 More generally, schools themselves had drawn on experiences in developing their delivery of expressive arts teaching. In addition, projects had become reference points and a means of supporting wider teaching across the curriculum.

Creative Collaborations case studies

3.34 This section presents case studies on three Creative Collaborations grant projects. The case studies offer a picture of the grant at work, as well as the types of activities, outputs and outcomes that are possible amongst recipients of the grant.

3.35 Case study fieldwork was undertaken in spring–summer 2019, from a few months to two years following the completion of activities. The case studies would consist of in-person visits to schools and centres, interviews with teachers and artists, focus groups with participating learners, and a review of evaluation documentation. Furthermore, follow-up telephone interviews were conducted in order to develop the case studies further.

3.36 The case studies in question were:

- Canolfan y Gors PRU, Carmarthenshire
- Ysgol Pendalar & Cwmni'r Fran Wen, Gwynedd
- Venue Cymru, Conwy

Case Study 1: Canolfan y Gors

Background

3.37 Canolfan y Gors caters to 26 children aged 11–16 years and with significant emotional difficulties within Carmarthenshire. It is linked, as part of the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and a joint head teacher, to the Burry Port Centre, which caters to children aged 11–16 years and with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. No data is publicly available on pupil demographics.

3.38 The lead teacher involved had previous experience with the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme, having been involved with a Lead Creative Schools project at a different school during Year 1. Moreover, she is an Arts Champion in the NAWR region. As an enthusiastic proponent of the arts within education, she was keen to capitalise on the Experiencing the Arts grant, suggesting that the Creative Collaborations grant offered more flexibility than did the Lead Creative Schools approach, given the timeframe within which the money was to be spent.

> 'I really felt the Creative Collaborations offered more flexibility and the opportunity to build something that had longevity. We could allocate one day per week to work solely on this project. Working with artists, visiting locations — it's always about this project on that day.' (Canolfan y Gors Interview, 2019)

3.39 The centre more generally also makes use of the arts as a vehicle for therapeutic intervention, supporting young people in redirecting negative thoughts. While appreciative of the impact on literacy and numeracy, staff at the centre were also aware of the potential positive impact on well-being.

Objective and development

3.40 The initial application proposed working with Oriel Myrddin, the Carmarthen School of Art, and the Carmarthenshire Wellbeing Intervention Centre in utilising art as a vehicle for therapy developing emotional, literacy and life skills.

3.41 However, staff had a broader aim that they felt could be developed within the less structured and time-constrained Lead Creative Schools intervention.

> 'We wanted to create something that had long-term longevity for the centre… We were always clear that longevity and sustainability was key. Funding is difficult everywhere, but becoming sustainable through the brand has given us autonomy

as well. We've been able to fund an artist to work on the beach [since the project].' (Canolfan y Gors Interview, 2019)

3.42 Canofan y Gors, as the lead organisation, was awarded a Creative Collaborations grant worth £18,000 to work with the Carmarthenshire Wellbeing Intervention Centre, Oriel Myrddin, and the Carmarthen School of Art in supporting the centre's commitment to using art intervention to support young people and as a vehicle for therapy developing emotional, literacy and life skills. The project was to run from April 2017 to February 2018.

Delivery

3.43 Funding was used to collaborate with professional artists and the Carmarthen School of Art in developing a range of branded products for sale at pop-up shops, which would sustain, and fund continued collaboration with artists in the future.

3.44 While the bid was led by staff at the centre, the project itself was led by young people through a steering group. The steering group would explore ideas, reflect on decisions and develop an understanding of the manufacturing and marketing processes required in order to develop their brand. In addition, the steering group would make decisions regarding artists and workshops with which to collaborate in order to develop products for the pop-up shop.

3.45 Workshops with a total of nine artists took place off site, usually at the Carmarthen School of Art. Not only young people were given the opportunity to experience artists in their own setting and workplace, but also individuals to whom art was a vocation — a key additional outcome for the project lead.

3.46 The project developed the Man a Man a Mwnci brand of products, itself a play on a Welsh phrase meaning 'you might as well', implicitly promoting the notion of taking a chance, having a go, or experimentation. This has since become a valuable shorthand with which to encourage learners at the centre itself to explore new ideas and experiences.

3.47 The range of products included mugs, cushions, t-shirts, original prints, collage designs, and cards. Pupils would select products to manufacture following the design phase conducted alongside artists at the workshops. Thereafter, pupils would promote the brand and shop through social media, identify costings and profit margins and establish retail prices. The process was considered by teachers at the

time, as well as after the project, to be a means of drawing learners into and engaging with literacy and numeracy learning.

3.48 The pop-up shop was successful, not only in selling merchandise that was created but also in generating profit that enabled the steering group to reinvest and further develop activities of the brand. Money generated has since been invested in developing more merchandise, expanding the brand and funding educational visits and collaborations with artists.

3.49 As part of the legacy or post-funding activities related to the project, pupils have developed a children's story concerning a bear who lives in a nearby wood. Pupils presented and read the story to primary school pupils in the area. Funding is currently being sourced to publish the book under the Man a Man a Mwnci brand, and a statue of the bear is being constructed and placed in the park itself.

3.50 Alongside presentations of the work, teachers from the centre held creative skills workshops with primary school teachers.

3.51 Pupils have also toured other schools and conferences in order to present their experiences with the project, subsequently developing their public-speaking skills and confidence.

Outcomes and impact

3.52 Staff involved, broader school staff and leadership, pupils, and artists spoke positively of the project and identified a range of outcomes attributed to the activities developed using the grant.

3.53 Teachers commented on the positive impact on pupils involved in the project, noting in particular a marked development in confidence. Pupils involved with the project were often reticent in sharing experiences or talking of their feelings and thoughts. However, the project had enabled every member of the team to share and explore their experiences and feelings towards the project, as well as providing a space for those to be discussed and voiced. This, in turn, helped to develop the pupils' confidence and willingness with regard to discussing feelings and experiences more generally.

3.54 Teachers also noted that some pupils elected to talk about the project and its aims and activities as part of their English GCSE oral assessments. Moreover, the real-life situations presented by the project were frequently used as 'hooks' for a range of subjects, enabling teachers to engage pupils with respect to literacy, numeracy,

real-life situations, and well-being through discussions of the project. In this sense, teachers saw the project as being 'cross-curricular' in its reach and impact, not one confined to the expressive arts.

> 'We can always relate things to the project. In English-speaking and [English-writing] classes, we can always have something that we can draw on and make it real life. [We can ask] "When you were promoting that product, what did you say that was persuasive?". In humanities, we can draw on their experiences as well. Same with maths, where we can talk about profit and loss and interest, because it's real for them and they need those concrete experiences [to relate to].' (Canolfan y Gors Interview, 2019)

3.55 All pupils involved with the project showed improved levels of literacy and numeracy, all of whom progressed at least two sublevels in the National Curriculum Assessment Criteria. Teachers attribute the development (at least in part) to activities related to the project.

3.56 Pupils themselves commonly spoke of the powerful impact that involvement with the project had had upon their confidence, resilience and attitude with regard to work. Pupils spoke of their surprise that they had developed their capacity to speak in front of audiences and present at conferences, given that they would struggle to contribute in class prior to the project.

3.57 Involvement in the project was also attributed to changes in attitudes towards learning as well as future plans. A few pupils noted that they had decided to pursue aspects of the project in college and as a career.

> 'When I go to college I want to study social media marketing to promote and design a brand as a business. It wasn't a big thing when I joined comp[rehensive school]. When I came here, [the teacher] helped me get into it. This was confidence building.' (Canolfan y Gors Pupil Interview, 2019)

3.58 A broader measurable impact was attributed (at least in part) to participation in the project, including fewer exclusions, improved attendance, and better engagement in the classroom. Regional school improvement officers have since recognised the work as being outstanding practice.

3.59 More generally for the centre, senior leadership noted that the centre's vision of a bespoke model of learning for all pupils had been strengthened and embedded by/through the project. Staff had gained confidence and felt empowered to deliver teaching and learning at the centre through a holistic programme, embracing, in their view, the 'Donaldson model' of thematic and experiential learning.

> 'I think the project was ready to go when I started in 2017. When we write our self-evaluation for our challenge advisors, we draw on the project. Our priorities are to develop the well-being agenda. When we measure our well-being, those are the things that our Coordinator will point to — concrete ways we can relate to and evidence.' (Canolfan y Gors Interview, 2019)

3.60 Meanwhile, artists and arts organisations — of most relevance to the anticipated outcomes — noted their developing understanding of the curriculum. Moreover, artists noted that the experience had helped to develop their capacity to work with schools and, in some instances, their outlook on and likelihood of working with schools again in the future.

Case Study 2: Venue Cymru

Background

3.61 Venue Cymru is a theatre and conference centre in Llandudno, Conwy. While generating revenue through its commercial activities, it also receives funding from the Welsh Government and Conwy Council for its provision in the community. Furthermore, the Arts Council of Wales and the National Lottery have provided additional funding for an Education and Outreach Officer for two days per week.

3.62 This latter funding of an Education and Outreach Officer is intended to support Venue Cymru's strategic decision to develop its educational and school work. The decision itself reflects a desire by staff to embed itself in the community and contribute to the Local Authority and the region's educational objectives. However, this desire is coupled with the belief that engaging with schools and pupils, through exposure and opening the venue to more people, generates revenue in the long term. Generating revenue has been (and continues to be) a pressing concern for Venue Cymru staff.

> 'It's all down to funding. Our funding is diminishing by the hour, really. Financially, it's extremely frightening what we're going into in terms of arts provision in the Local Authority. The cuts look set to be worse next year. We don't know what's

going to happen with “the B word” and the consequences of that. Lottery funding is reducing year on year and we know that Arts Council of Wales are struggling as well… It does bring income back in in the long run. I’m enormously proud of this: the Welsh National Opera came to perform The Magic Flute and we had loads of children in the audience and I was so proud. Finally, we’re seeing families coming into opera.’ (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

Objective and development

3.63 Venue Cymru staff became aware of the Creative Collaborations grant through Arts Council of Wales promotional material; however, the application was submitted following conversations with a head teacher. While Venue Cymru would become the main grant holder, the project was essentially the result of a collaboration between the staff members and a head teacher.

‘I applied because the head teacher of the school we worked with knew me and said she was seconded to a school for a year in an area where there was quite high deprivation... She asked if we could put a project in place to raise the confidence of children and leading to something they could share with the community. I came up with a creative idea and we sat down to build it up to a project together.’ (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

3.64 Staff noted that, despite the lack of a link officer in North Wales to contact with regard to the application, the process of applying for the grant from the Arts Council of Wales was satisfactory. Staff suggested that they were confident that support was available if needed, but noted that their application was strong and accepted on the first occasion.

3.65 The vision was to emulate the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympic Games, telling a story through dance, music and puppeteering. In addition, the staff had a desire to involve parents as well as pupils, as well as giving the participating pupils access to and an experience of Venue Cymru and professional theatrical productions as part of the project.

3.66 In particular, Venue Cymru was to work with a local primary school on a series of artistic residencies and event visits over the course of six months, culminating in a large celebratory and participatory community event. A key focus of the proposal was upon using creative ventures as a way in which to enhance learning and raise attainment in literacy, numeracy, and digital competency.

3.67 More broadly, the project was designed to act as a catalyst for engaging with schools in the area, equip teachers with the skillsets with which to continue to deliver expressive arts teaching, and lead to Venue Cymru playing a more permanent role in supporting education in the Local Authority. The Creative Collaborations funding and the nature of the project that could be funded by the grant would enable Venue Cymru to develop their educational work, which was not possible through the work of the Education and Outreach Officer (who worked two days per week).

> 'We've had an ambition to be more strategic and to run events that have a legacy…The Creative Collaborations money was welcome because it meant that we could put in place a project that went for a long time with a CPD element for the teachers to be able to deliver further work after we left. That's where we are.' (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

3.68 The project was approved and Venue Cymru was awarded a grant of £13,000 to run from November 2016 to November 2017 with Ysgol y Foryd. Moreover, the project counted the University of Bangor (Confucius Project) and the British Council as partners.

Delivery

3.69 The project was developed in stages and involved a range of artists and arts organisations as well as pupils and their parents. Initially, pupils were invited to Venue Cymru to experience a range of artists and Creative Practitioners showcasing their art. Thereafter, pupils were given time to develop and construct a story to be told through a performance at the end of the project.

3.70 A dancer, poet, drummer, puppeteer and storyteller were involved in delivering the project, working in the school with pupils for one-and-a-half days each. The artists developed parts of the final performance.

3.71 Following the sessions with pupils, artists would stay in order to deliver CPD and general training sessions with teachers of the school where possible, but no record was available of how many sessions were undertaken.

3.72 The project continued over the months with a combination of activities in schools and at Venue Cymru. For example, Magic Light Productions, which is a theatrical production company producing live theatrical shows and offering specialised workshops, delivered a production in the school itself. Thereafter, pupils were

invited to explore and develop ideas with the crew. On other occasions, meanwhile, pupils were invited to Venue Cymru to experience professional performances.

3.73 The project culminated in a celebratory event at Venue Cymru which involved opportunities for pupils and parents to engage with a range of artists and experience professional performances. The event culminated in pupils delivering the performance developed over the preceding months with the artists and Creative Practitioners.

> ‘We started the project by getting everybody to come on the bus to Venue Cymru. They all got involved with their families to start with, and opening their eyes to a load of different art forms and genres and that it’s fun and it’s interesting. We started the project with that and finished with their own performance.’ (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

Impact

3.74 The performance and the culminating celebration at Venue Cymru were particular highlights for staff and teachers.

> ‘We set up on the day a lot of activities and each year group had their parents or family invited to come along. The pupils were able to go around making models, cartoons, Jim Aardman had come along, dancing together. When they’d done this the kids did their performance. Martin Dawes did some poetry, for example, and the kids would join in. It was absolutely brilliant. Kids were beaming and loving it. We hoped to do it outside [in the open air] but we live in Wales, so we moved it into the community centre and the place was absolutely packed. The head teacher said they couldn’t believe we’d got all these families together to come along.’ (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

3.75 Staff sought to collect feedback through SurveyMonkey from teachers, artists, pupils and parents. Teachers and the head teacher of Ysgol y Foryd commented through the feedback exercise that working with Creative Practitioners had had a noticeable impact on teaching: ‘The feeling at the time from the head teacher was that it had made a difference and it had augmented their teaching practice’ (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019).

3.76 The head teacher, following her return from secondment, approached Venue Cymru to develop a further Creative Collaborations project with three schools in the area. This led to the award of a Creative Collaborations grant of £14,800 for a

collaborative project between Venue Cymru, Ysgol Hiraddug, Ysgol Gymraeg Mornant, and Ysgol Pen y Bryn (all primary schools), producing a creative, cross-curricular project through which to develop ICT, literacy and Welsh-language skills. The project was scheduled to run from January to June 2019. This suggests that the activities were valued by the head teacher and attracted further attention from other teachers and schools.

3.77 Artists were exposed to the statutory education sector as part of the project, some for the first time. Through such exposure, artists suggested through their feedback that they had developed their practices and methods of working with young people, though no data was available on how these methods and practices had changed. More broadly, however, and in the view of Venue Cymru staff, the project had supported and enabled practitioners to continue to live and work in the area.

> 'It's really important for the cultural economy in North Wales, ensuring there's work for all these Creative Practitioners to stay in North Wales. Otherwise they'll all have to leave to live in Liverpool, Manchester or London.' (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

3.78 For Venue Cymru, the original grant enabled staff to develop a relationship with Ysgol y Foryd and establish a way of contributing to Local Authority educational outcomes and broader strategic goals. As planned for, the grant has, it is believed, also enabled the development of Venue Cymru as a space that is owned by young people and their families in the community.

> 'We're part of the Local Authority and — from that point of view — it helps us contribute to the Local Authority outcomes and Well-being Act and to help in the community and schools. But also, through working with the children, it gives us an opportunity to work with their families as well. Crucially, it makes those young people feel that Venue Cymru is theirs. It's not something scary — it's part of their lives.' (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

3.79 While staff members clearly attribute the grant with enabling Venue Cymru to develop their activities with schools and expanding the theatre's appeal within the community, concerns were also raised with regard to the sustainability of such activities in a context in which public funding for the arts is diminishing. Moreover, such concern is relevant to a context in which Arts Council of Wales funding through the Creative Collaborations grant, for example, is no longer available. The long-term

sustainability of arts organisations like Venue Cymru (and its work with schools and teachers) is not secure in the views of its staff.

> ‘Creative Collaborations has given us a good model of working and left us with teachers more empowered to work creatively. It’s established our links with schools. In terms of us as Venue Cymru, we now know we can do that work, but we have to find the money to do that as well. Local Authority funding is down… We’re having to reduce and reduce and we’re having to find more and more income and we see education outreach as absolutely imperative to keeping the creative industry going into the future.’ (Venue Cymru Interview, 2019)

Case Study 3: Cwmni’r Fran Wen (with Ysgol Pendalar)

Background

3.80 Cwmni’r Fran Wen was established in 1984 as a theatre-in-education company based primarily in Gwynedd and Conwy. While the theatre company continues to engage schools through giving performances, it has developed the manner in which it engages schools and teachers. The company offers creative packages with which to support curriculum delivery and develop and support teachers in delivering expressive arts teaching. The company contracts around 180 artists per year to deliver its work packages with schools.

3.81 While not an immediate factor in spurring the company to engage with Ysgol Pendalar or the Creative Collaborations grant, the decline in Local Authority funding for the arts was a contextual factor considered as the company was making a strategic decision to develop more sources of funding.

3.82 Cwmni’r Fran Wen staff noted in interviews that, while fully supportive of the initiative, they felt that the type of activity encouraged and funded by the grant was already in existence: ‘There was very rich activity in Gwynedd [before CLTA]. It would be wrong to believe that there was nothing here to begin with’ (Author’s Translation of Cwmni’r Fran Wen Interview, 2019). It should be noted that the ACW were always aware that pockets of excellent creative and arts practices already existed and that the grant award did not imply that pre-existing work was somehow undervalued.

3.83 Ysgol Pendalar is a special school with post-16 provision that is located in Caernarfon, Gwynedd. It caters to 113 pupils with special educational needs. Some

learners have multiple and severe educational needs. Learners are aged 3–19 years. No data is publicly available on the make-up of the school population.

3.84 A new head teacher had been appointed prior to the application. The head teacher was widely thought to be key in instigating and facilitating the development of both the grant and the associated project. The head teacher, upon appointment, sought to raise the profile and status of the expressive arts throughout the entire school.

3.85 The centre generally makes use of the arts as a vehicle both for therapeutic intervention and through which to support education. However, it was felt by teachers in interviews that staff had lost confidence not only in teaching expressive arts but also in using the equipment that the centre possesses.

Objective and development

3.86 The idea for the project was developed from a performance given by Cwmni'r Fran Wen at Ysgol Pendalar. The performance revealed gaps in Cwmi'r Fran Wen's provision, most notably the manner in which they communicated ideas to audiences with severe and multiple difficulties, where communication through dialogue and speech, for example, was neither sufficient nor possible.

3.87 Cwmni'r Fran Wen had also held a number of workshops at the school with staff over the preceding years; however, there was a desire to deepen the partnership.

> 'This wasn't just us seeing an opportunity for funding. We'd recognised that we needed to develop a project like this for a while, and [the Creative Collaborations grant] enabled us to do that... The new head teacher had been shocked by how little use was made of the arts. We had talks with the [head teacher] over a prolonged period of time. We worked closely during the planning phase to ensure the project met the needs of the school, originating in something that the school had recognised as a weakness.' (Author's Translation of Cwmni'r Fran Wen Interview, 2019)

3.88 Staff and teachers of the school noted that the information and guidelines surrounding the grant and the application phase were clear. The company's staff suggested, however, that they were well placed due to their experience in applying for grants over the years, and found the process to be familiar.

3.89 The Arts Council of Wales designed the application process (with arts organisations or schools in mind) to be institutional applications. However, there were occasions on which a subcontracted artist became directly involved in drafting material for

submission. In such circumstances, artists found the process to be difficult. For example, while Fran Wen officers did not raise any issues with regard to the process, subcontracted artist Mirain Fflur noted that she felt as though the application process was restrictive for her and many other artists due to the technical nature of the application. She suggested that the process was difficult for individual artists unfamiliar with grant applications and the associated language.

> ‘Artists feel that the system goes against the way we work. I had to explain to Y Fran Wen what I saw in the project to support their application. I lost [sole] ownership of the idea by working with the theatre — it’s me and Fran Wen who own the idea now. I see it quite hard to source funding for projects on my own. The Arts Council [of Wales] are more willing to work with big companies… [Application processes] should be video interviews. The guidelines expect answers and a definite output. But with art and theatre, it doesn’t work like that. Language like “the piece is interactive or networked” is required to secure the grant, but artists don’t know this language. Fran Wen know this language, so it’s people who are used to winning grants [who win the grants]… They think in a different language.’ (Author’s Translation of Artist Interview, 2019)

3.90 In November 2017, the application for a collaborative project between Cwmni'r Frân Wen and Ysgol Pendalar was approved. A total grant of £25,000 was awarded for the project to run until June 2018. The project involved 194 learners.

Delivery

3.91 The project took place during the spring term (2018), focusing on communication and with an aim of developing a permanent installation on school grounds. In addition, the project involved engaging with a range of multidisciplinary arts and artists and an installation consisting of contributions and involvement from across the school community.

3.92 From the perspective of the arts organisation, it was an opportunity for Cwmni’r Fran Wen and their associated artists to develop their understanding of complex, multiple and severe learning needs and the means by which to deliver a project inclusive of such learners.

3.93 From the outset, staff recognised the need for flexibility in developing the activities in order to meet the needs of individual learners.

‘We had to recognise the needs of individuals. We weren’t “delivering” a project. There was a need to remain flexible so that we could meet their needs as individuals, so we had a team of freelance artists who would come in, specialising in a few specific fields. We brought a musician in, someone else who specialised in art. There was a constant presence from us, but we’d bring in specialists.’ (Author’s Translation of Cwmni’r Fran Wen Interview, 2019)

3.94 The funding was used to subcontract a range of artists to work with learners through a variety of artistic disciplines. Key success factors in the view of Fran Wen staff included the intensive nature of the project, the constant presence of the company itself, and the range of specialist artists brought in to work with learners.

‘One thing that was important was the fact that it was intensive and that we became part of the school for a prolonged period of time. With the young people especially, establishing an environment of trust and respect is terribly important, and that takes time. By doing that, the artists were part of school life. That was terribly important.’ (Author’s Translation of Cwmni’r Fran Wen Interview, 2019)

3.95 While the work focused primarily on older learners at the school, the presence and nature of the school (i.e. providing for 3–19-year-olds) led to younger learners being drawn into experiences.

3.96 Teachers were incorporated into the planning process and invited to spend more time with artists in order to develop their own skillsets and confidence. However, sessions had to be held after school hours due to the contact-intensive nature of the school day. Cwmni’r Fran Wen staff suggested that the planning process could be improved.

‘That was a challenge and could be improved. I was in a few meetings after school but it’s hard because [staff] leave school at 15:30. From 09:30–15:00, they’re with the children. You have to weigh up the best use of time. You have to acknowledge that developing the skills of the teachers is a by-product of the project but that could be developed further. The staff have to be available for that. How do you timetable and plan for that?’ (Author’s Translation of Cwmni’r Fran Wen Interview, 2019)

3.97 While difficult to secure the presence of teachers at all times, the artists involved as well as the arts organisation leading the project, nonetheless, noted the range of activities and interventions undertaken with teachers themselves. Moreover, artists

spoke of a demand from some teachers for support, particularly in making better use of the equipment that the school already possessed.

Outcomes and impact

3.98 Cwmni'r Fran Wen staff noted that the project had opened a new direction for the company. While the company had been delivering performances in schools throughout their existence, this project had developed their understanding of special schools and learners with multiple and severe educational needs.

3.99 Moreover, the partnership between Y Fran Wen and Pendalar was maintained post-funding and bore fruit in the form of Llwybrau Llachar. Llwybrau Llachar is a multi-arts project that seeks to offer young people with additional needs the opportunity to work intensively with artists in developing a project.[20]

3.100 The company has also, building on the work and practices developed in the project, developed courses on behalf of Edau, i.e. the Regional Arts and Education Network.

3.101 Meanwhile, artists spoke very positively of the opportunity to engage with the school and learners for a prolonged period of time. Such an experience enabled experimentation, learning from failure and, ultimately, the development of techniques and practices in respect of working with learners with different and (in some cases) multiple and severe educational needs.

> 'Six weeks is a lot of time to really try things. It's terribly important that it's possible to make mistakes and to see where you can develop. Huge lessons come from things that don't work. It was a time to be experimental and very ambitious.' (Author's Translation of Artist Interview, 2019)

3.102 Artists also spoke of gaining confidence and changing career ambitions following the experience.

> 'I've been working with Fran Wen forever. I'd like to do more work on my own and start a company of my own. It's given me a lot of confidence leading projects. It's given me the vision and the opportunity to trial [new techniques and practices]. It was a priceless opportunity — six weeks in a school is great.' (Author's Translation of Artist Interview, 2019)

[20] See http://www.franwen.com/en/events/llwybrau-lachar/

3.103 Every artist who worked with the project was appreciative of the opportunity, and ‘none of us wanted to leave’ (Author’s Translation of Artist Interview, 2019). As noted, one artist had turned to starting a new company, while another had reportedly sought to enrol on a course in order to train as a teacher.

3.104 Meanwhile, teachers commented largely on the increased confidence in delivering teaching through the expressive arts. In addition, teaching assistants were thought to have benefitted from the experience, developing their confidence in using equipment and supporting in learners in engaging with the arts.

3.105 Teachers were also thought to have developed skills in the various disciplines related to the project. These skills were thought to have been developed through exposure and from working with artists in the classroom.

3.106 The difficulty in providing more structured training and upskilling sessions was recognised by the lead, however, and a follow-up project with the school has been planned explicitly to enable such sessions to take place.

3.107 More generally, there was a belief by Cwmni’r Fran Wen staff in particular that the project had an impact on the approach of the school to the arts in general. This was caveated, however, by the admission that the new head teacher, and key instigator and facilitator of the grant bid and project itself, had explicitly sought to develop the use and prominence of the arts within the school.

> ‘Certainly, [it has changed] within the school. I feel that the project has led to other things. That’s one of the main successes. We’ve succeeded in developing another project with the young people with disabilities with money from Children in Need. It started with this project and we moved to thinking about offering opportunities outside of the school.’ (Author’s Translation of Cwmni’r Fran Wen Interview, 2019)

3.108 Arts organisation staff expressed concerns surrounding the sustainability of such an intervention. Furthermore, staff expressed further concerns surrounding the potentially problematic precedents set by the Creative Collaborations project and the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme in general.

3.109 Staff members queried how sustainable this way of working was, and raised the possibility that it had generated unrealistic expectations amongst artists in the region. Staff members did not see that schools would be in a position in which to sustain and finance the involvement of the organisation and artists in the future.

> ‘The sustainability of the project is what concerns me. I don’t think that every project has worked or that every artist is experienced enough to work in the field. How is this sustainable in the field? From my understanding, schools have been inspired to invest in the field, but at the end of the day, budgets are incredibly tight. Have we raised expectations too far with this project? While everyone acknowledges the value [of the project], how are we going to ensure that this level of activity with schools is maintained?’ (Author’s Translation of Cwmni’r Fran Wen Interview, 2019)

3.110 Cwmni’r Fran Wen staff also noted that they employ or subcontract around 180 artists per year, and were consequently cognisant of the freelance market in the area. Staff expressed concern surrounding the £250/day base cost set out by the Arts Council of Wales’ guidelines, noting that it exceeded their average fee.

> ‘We follow the Independent Theatre Council guidelines and have never paid that much. There are many artists, some without experience [in the market], who now think that this is the going rate. It’s unsustainable for us as a company and for schools… It’s going to have an impact on the sector.’ (Author’s Translation of Cwmni’r Fran Wen Interview, 2019)

3.111 The latter issue linked to a wider concern surrounding the potentially unforeseen but negative impact that Regional Arts and Education Networks could have upon the sector and the region. The flurry of activities and the rush to spend budgets and commission courses and activities during its final year were also raising expectations across the region while simultaneously presenting challenges relating to the sustainability of such activities and spending.

Conclusions and common findings

3.112 Common to the three cases was the previous experience that key personnel had with some aspect of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. This would be either the coordinating teacher or an individual who was key in instigating a partnership or encouraging a bid to be submitted.

3.113 The key individuals involved, be they instigators of partnerships or bids or the coordinating teachers themselves, tended to be enthusiastic proponents and advocates of using the arts in the classroom for wider outcomes than simply teaching the creative arts. Teachers in Canolfan y Gors, for example, regularly

looked to the arts, even prior to the Creative Collaborations grant, to support the development of learner well-being and welfare.

3.114 While this is not hard evidence of Creative Collaborations largely 'preaching to the choir', it does echo the common observation noted in previous reports, i.e. that Creative Learning Through the Arts is primarily appealing to and engaging 'the usual suspects' of artistically engaged, enthusiastic and proactive schools. This might be expected to some extent, considering the self-selective nature and arts focus of the Creative Collaborations grant. What is more, since legacy and sustainability may, in large part, be rooted in the circulation of knowledge and skills developed and embedded by such enthusiasts, it may be advantageous to further develop their reflective capacities, thereby ensuring that future peer-based learning is likely to be clear and coherent.

3.115 There was certainly some evidence to suggest that previous experience of other aspects of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme had encouraged or played a catalytic role in engagement with the programme. This suggests that the programme more widely is spurring involvement and engagement with the expressive arts, while this particular component of the programme complements the impact of the other strands by enabling schools and teachers to further develop such involvement and engagement.

3.116 Projects commonly consisted of a significant element of learner control and decision making. This was through either a steering group of learners at Canolfan y Gors, development of the story by learners involved with Venue Cymru, or the freedom for learners at Pendalar to engage with the artists and arts as they desired.

3.117 All projects had specific goals: Canolfan y Gors focused on developing the emotional, literacy and life skills of their learners. Venue Cymru looked to use the funding to establish and develop a relationship with local schools, subsequently developing their educational outreach work. Meanwhile, Ysgol Pendalar sought to focus on the communication of learners and developing the capacity of the school to deliver creative arts lessons. The focus on outcomes while activities were left free to develop was, echoing comments outlined in the previous section, key in ensuring that the impact was sustainable and valuable, as well as a positive experience in and of itself.

3.118 While the application process was deemed to be satisfactory by (successful) respondents in respect of engaging with individual and subcontracted artists, it was

suggested that established arts organisations, resourced and experienced in developing strong grant applications, are much better placed than individual artists. Specific attention was drawn to the language of grant applications, alien to many individual artists with no experience.

3.119 In all cases the process of artists and learners engaging with one another was an overwhelmingly positive experience. Learners commonly expressed joy and happiness towards their experiences, as well as a desire to repeat them. Artists and teachers also spoke of their enjoyment and motivation. Future reports will explore artists and their engagement with the programme in more detail, seeking to elaborate on these comments.

3.120 In each case, furthermore, learners, artists and teachers have been positively impacted by their experiences, beyond their enjoyment. Learners spoke of developing their confidence and skills and focusing their goals and career ambitions. Moreover, teachers referred to the positive impact of the project upon both the attainment and the well-being of their learners. Improved attendance and better engagement have been recorded in some instances.

3.121 Artists commonly reflected on the manner in which the experience spurred and enabled development of their techniques in respect of working with young people in a school context. What is more, artists spoke of a developing understanding and appreciation of the statutory education context, as well as seeing further collaboration as being a source of future work.

3.122 Teachers spoke of their developing skillsets and confidence as a result of working with teachers. In some instances in which outcomes were clear and activities focused on achieving those outcomes, such as the development of well-being and life skills for learners, techniques continue to be used and referenced as evidence of the development of the well-being agenda within schools.

3.123 With the focus being upon learners, however, opportunities to develop teacher skills were not always fully exploited. Interviewees commonly noted the missed opportunities for further development of teacher skills. This suggests that the grant has the potential for a greater impact if built into the planning and design of specific projects.

3.124 More broadly, however, the experiences offered ‘hooks’ and relatable contexts for wider teaching and learning across the curriculum. This suggests that individual

projects will continue to impact teaching and learning positively, beyond the lifetime of the projects themselves. Moreover, it suggests that teachers are seeing that the expressive arts can be used to support teaching across the curriculum.

4. Creative Learning Zone

Background

4.1 The Creative Learning Zone (CLZ) was launched in March 2016 and is managed by the Welsh Government's Department for Education. The CLZ is an online information-sharing platform designed to be a source of information and a collaboration hub for teachers, learners and arts/cultural organisations and practitioners. Material is added to the portal as it becomes available.

4.2 The CLZ aims to fulfil a recommendation included in Professor Dai Smith's 2013 report on the arts in education, entitled Independent Report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales.

> 'The Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales should ensure that a Creative Education Portal is developed, as an additional, integrated element of 'Hwb', the All-Wales Digital Learning platform.'[21]

Previous findings and issues

4.3 Previous reports noted several concerns that had been raised by stakeholders and users of the CLZ. Most notably, there was a perception that the platform was not fit for purpose, largely due to accessibility issues, an absence of social networking opportunities, and a lack of interaction and sharing of ideas amongst users. Teachers and artists have reported difficulties in logging into Hwb, website crashes, and finding the website 'clunky'.

4.4 Welsh Government officials, while accepting that artists in particular had experienced difficulties in logging into the CLZ during the early period, suggested that the issues were often related to the technical competence of users. Furthermore, officials have consistently stated for over two years that any technical issues with regard to the website have been addressed and continue to be: 'There is absolutely (now) no issue with the technical aspect of the Zone' (Welsh Government Management Interview, 2019).

4.5 Further issues raised by teachers in previous reports include conflicts between their expectations and the core remit of the CLZ, namely that it is a platform for content, not a social networking space.

[21] An Independent Report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales

4.6 These issues were found to have been potentially compounded by the growth in private sector platforms that facilitate social networking as well as the provision of resources. Platforms such as Facebook and Google Scholar continue to adapt and change at a rapid pace to meet teachers' evolving needs. Furthermore, Regional Arts and Education Networks have commissioned their own platforms and in one case an app to provide a similar and enhanced provision to teachers.

4.7 Indeed, the previous interim report (Report 3) concluded that the CLZ platform has suffered reputational damage and is facing competition both from private and established platforms and from platforms developed by components of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. While there is no data available for comparison or with which to track trends in views over time, it is the view of Welsh Government management staff that the CLZ faces a challenge from rival platforms for users.

4.8 The previous report also recommended (Recommendation 9) that further options for enhancing teachers' understanding of the role and function of the CLZ should be explored.

CLZ usage data

4.9 Figure 4.1 below shows Google Analytics data for the CLZ: page views, unique visitors to the site, and the number of resources viewed. Overall, the data shows an increase in unique visitors, resources viewed and page views during the academic year, with a notable rise in page and resource views between March and April 2019.

4.10 Reductions in the number of page views can be explained by school holiday periods (Christmas and Easter). The number of views and the use of the website peak and drop in accordance with the teaching term. The growth in numbers in June and the dip in July still echo recognised trends with respect to Hwb usage.[22] However, a dip in November contrasts with a more established rise within Hwb usage. It is unclear without further research and data as to why this is the case or why CLZ usage varies from Hwb usage during this period. The rises in January and March, meanwhile, echo previous reports and data.

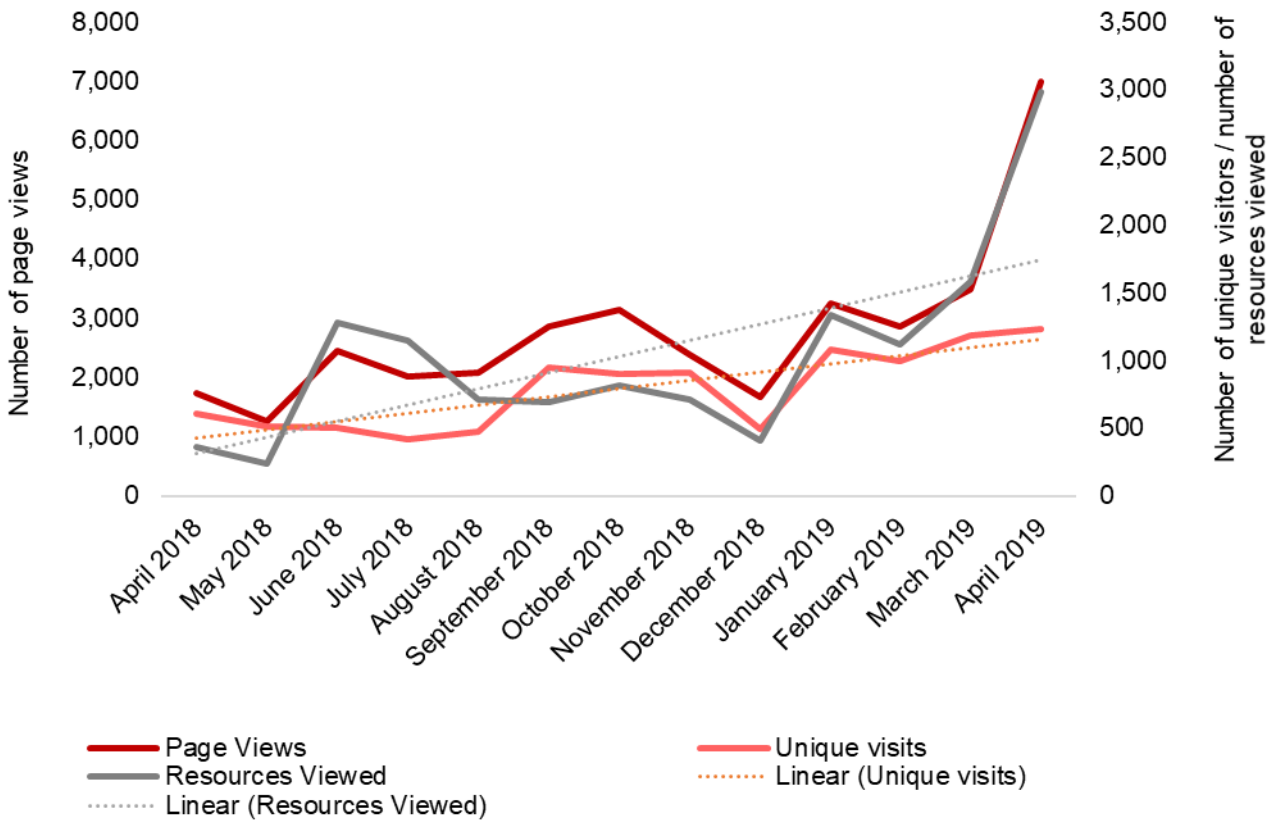
4.11 The rise in April 2019 contrasts sharply with dips during the same period in previous years. The rise to around 7,000 page views and around 3,000 unique visitors is double the recorded numbers for any month over the previous year. This spike may

[22] Welsh Government Evaluation of the Implementation of the Learning in Digital Wales Programme

be related to the launch of the curriculum documentation discussed above, and should be treated with caution. However, there is no corresponding rise in unique visits, whereby suggesting that some users are making almost double the usual use of the website. While it may indicate the beginning of a new period of increased usage, or more intensive use by users, until reflected in longer-term trends, this spike should be understood as being an outlier within the current figures.

4.12 If the April 2019 peak is discounted as being an outlier, comparisons with the number of page views and unique visitors presented in previous reports suggest that the CLZ has been viewed by fewer users on fewer occasions. Highs of around 9,000 page views and more than 2,500 unique visitors were recorded in January or March in previous years. This can be compared to highs of around 3,000 page views in October and January and highs of around 1,500 unique visitors in June and January 2018/2019.

Figure 4.1: CLZ number of page views / number of unique visitors / resources viewed



Source: Welsh Government data using Google Analytics

4.13 More detailed analysis of Google Analytics data for the CLZ presented in Table 4.1 reveals that ‘case study’ and ‘art’ were the most popular search items over the 2018–2019 period, offering some insight into the type of content that users seek to access.

4.14 In comparing popular search terms from the previous report and the most recently provided data, the trends are broadly similar. However, ‘AS / AS Level’ is the second most popular term.

Table 4.1: Most popular search terms in CLZ

Most popular search terms – Report 3	Most popular search terms – Now
Case Study	Case study
Key Stage 2	Art
ffotogallery	AS / AS level
intofilm	Poem poetry
Art	Activities
literatureWales	Creative learning
KS2	KS2
creativity	Intofilm
Mathematics	Art and Design
nlw	Foundation Phase

Source: Welsh Government data

4.15 Table 4.2 below outlines the most popular resources accessed in the CLZ. The notable revelation from the data is that three of the top 10 resources accessed are case studies from other schools.

Table 4.2: Most popular resources accessed on the CLZ

A Creative Approach to Literacy – Gwernyfed High School
Welsh Baccalaureate: Enterprise and Employability Challenge
Children and The Second World War in Wales
Hedd Wyn
Case study video: Lead Creative Schools – Ynysboeth Primary School
Thinking Skills for ESDGC
Get Creative at National Museums Wales
Roman School
Case study video: Lead Creative Schools project – Sully Primary – Victorians in Key Stage 2
Film Study – Patagonia

Source: Welsh Government data

4.16 It is unsurprising that 98% of all visitors to the website are from the United Kingdom. However, an unusually high proportion of visitors from Italy were recorded in June 2018, accounting for 7.33% of all visits in that month (which equates to 179 page

views). Typically, viewers from other countries account for approximately 2% of the total page views combined. No explanation could be found for this sudden Italian spike.

4.17 Data from the Teacher and Artist Survey presented in Figure 4.3 below further enriches the understanding of the CLZ's use. Only 32% of teachers and 56% of artists already engaged with CLTA, or in a school engaged with CLTA in some form, are aware of the CLZ. Notable, however, is that of those teachers who were not aware of the CLZ, 98% would be interested in accessing the platform. This suggests that further promotion of the CLZ would likely encourage more use.

4.18 Also notable is that only 21% of artists and no teachers stated that they had contributed content to the CLZ, whereby suggesting either that further promotion and encouragement are possible in order to increase content contributions to the platform or that broader issues obstruct contributions.

4.19 Moreover, the figures support the view of Welsh Government management staff as outlined above, i.e. that LCS staff could further promote the CLZ and its use amongst teachers benefitting from the intervention.

Table 4.3: Have you accessed the Creative Learning Zone online on Hwb?

	Have you accessed the Creative Learning Zone online on Hwb?	If 'No', would you be interested in accessing the Creative Learning Zone on Hwb?	Have you contributed to the Creative Learning Zone on Hwb?
Teachers (Yes)	32%	98%	0%
Artists (Yes)	56%	54%	21%

All responding 'Yes'		Have you accessed the Creative Learning Zone online on Hwb?	If 'No', would you be interested in accessing the Creative Learning Zone on Hwb?	Have you contributed to the Creative Learning Zone on Hwb?
Teachers	N	20	41	0
	%	32%	98%	0%
Artists	N	29	20	6
	%	56%	54%	21%

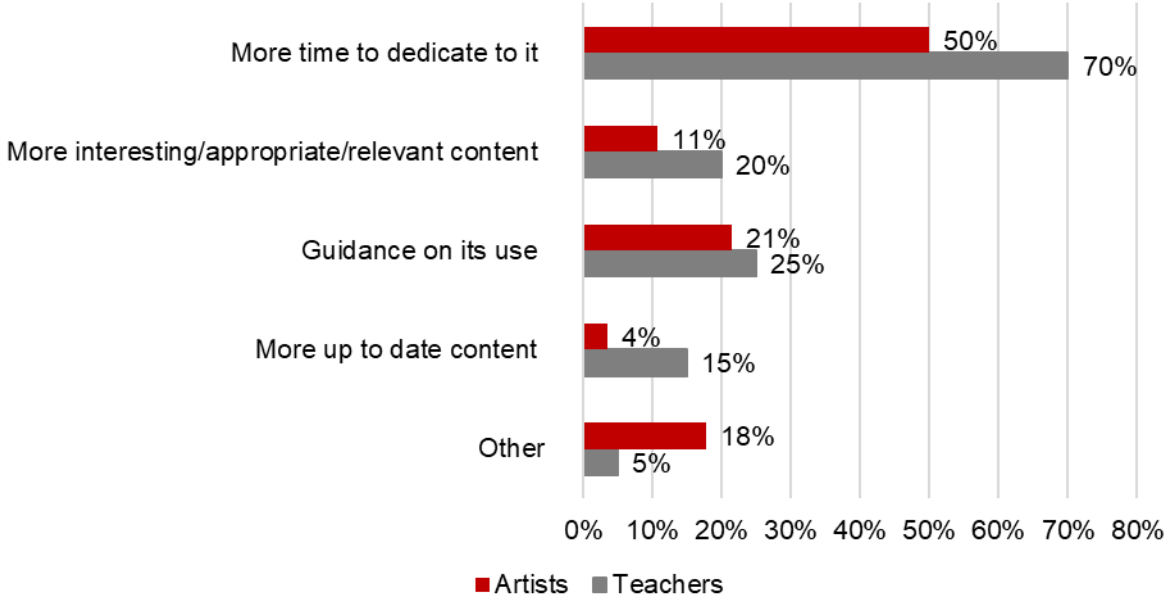
N= 419 [162 (2018) + 257 (2019)]

Source: Teacher and Artist Survey 2018 and 2019 combined

4.20 The Teacher and Artist Survey also asked all respondents for qualitative feedback on the use of the CLZ, which was coded for the purposes of analysis. Over half of artists and teachers noted that more time was needed in order to make best use of the platform, while approximately one quarter of teachers and artists felt as though

they needed more guidance on the use of the Zone. This response suggests that messaging and promotion of the CLZ may save teachers time.

Figure 4.2: What would help you make best use of the Creative Learning Zone on Hwb?



Source: Teacher and Artist Survey 2018 and 2019
(N=243 | N Teachers = 124 | N Artists = 119)

Management and delivery

4.21 In order to address some of these issues and respond to the Report 3 recommendation that teachers' understanding needed to be developed, training has been provided to staff at the RAEN with regard to using and introducing teachers to the CLZ and its functions. This training has been perceived to be worthwhile and has encouraged Network staff to share resources within the Zone. There is no data available on how much or where the training has been conducted.

4.22 Concerns were raised by Welsh Government personnel, however, that Lead Creative Schools teams have not promoted the CLZ as effectively as possible amongst teachers engaging with the scheme. This could be seen to be a possible reason for the decline in usage figures. Indeed, the data presented above suggests that teachers who have benefitted from the Lead Creative Schools Scheme could indeed make more use of and contribute more resources to the CLZ.

4.23 It is unclear without further research amongst Lead Creative Schools delivery staff as to why the CLZ has not been adequately promoted. Nonetheless, the perception of the CLZ amongst teachers may influence the degree to which delivery staff are

inclined to promote its use. A platform that is perceived negatively amongst teachers and staff may be difficult to promote.

4.24 Stakeholders continue to suggest that a potential barrier to usage may be the technical skills of individuals, which would be key to forming Networks through the website. Arts Council of Wales staff suggest that the lack of intuitiveness of the website in comparison to competing sites may be a further possible factor. The provision of further training for these individuals may, in the view of these stakeholders, be of benefit. This would suggest that the CLZ remains too difficult to access or navigate.

4.25 However, there is a perception amongst Welsh Government management staff that a cultural change is needed amongst teachers before wholesale engagement and take-up of the CLZ and Hwb more generally will be witnessed, and its full potential realised.

> ‘It’s about changing cultural mindsets. They do need to look at opportunities and what this could be and what it is, rather than criticise it…It has to be a message that everyone is using it.’ (Welsh Government Management Interview, 2019)

4.26 In April 2019, the Welsh Government published documentation in relation to the new curriculum inspired by Successful Futures. The documentation was published on Hwb and made available to all teachers. This is understood by Welsh Government management staff as being a critical juncture for the website and a significant incentive for teachers to engage with the platform more regularly. It is thought that the CLZ will benefit from this more in-depth and increased engagement over the coming years, and the publication of curriculum documentation could prove to be a catalyst for the type of cultural change required amongst teachers.

4.27 As noted in a previous report, Regional Arts and Education Networks have developed their own websites which offer similar or additional services, with one Network having developed an app to support access to services and networking opportunities. Welsh Government management staff (again) expressed concerns that these websites were potentially duplicating provision as well as resources, mixing messages and undermining the impact of the CLZ. However, the ACW are less convinced that such services and functionality will duplicate one another, seeing clear differences between the CLZ and the RAEN app.

4.28 Further investigation and consideration of the analytical figures from the RAEN websites and app would, firstly, help to provide insight into the prevalence of their use. Secondly, the data may provide insight into whether teachers are interacting with the two websites differently or whether the websites are duplicating the CLZ's provision. Finally, if the websites are providing the same service, then the figures should be considered to be contributing to the fulfilment of the core remit, albeit through duplication.

4.29 However, while there is a potential space for the RAEN to report usage figures within current evaluation procedures, the information actually reported does not enable a close or detailed investigation. For example, one Network provides data on the number of profile registrations and visits to the Facebook page, while another Network has reported figures for only one quarter.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 This is the fourth and final interim report, which seeks to note progress being made and highlight key issues; it does not seek to evaluate the performance of the strands against their ultimate aims and the theory of change outlined in the first evaluation report. It does, however, aim to contribute to the evidence base from which the final evaluation can draw.

5.2 The findings at this stage of the evaluation are, nonetheless, largely positive, particularly with regard to the successful delivery of the programme and the immediate impact of the activities upon beneficiaries and participants. A key finding is that teachers are overwhelmingly of the view that the Lead Creative Schools intervention has had a positive impact on the engagement and attainment of learners. This finding builds on the qualitative data collected and presented in previous interim reports.

5.3 Findings from the fieldwork and data received regarding the All-Wales Arts and Education Offer, meanwhile, suggest again that progress is being made with regard to key aspects of delivery. However, the report has also identified gaps in the data, most notably in relation to the impact that Networks have had upon teachers and their teaching, which would evidence their successes. Qualitative data presented in this and previous reports remains the only source of data available and is confined to specific instances.

5.4 The scale of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme is considerable, and during the year of the programme examined for this report (2018–2019), hundreds more learners, teachers, Creative Agents and Creative Practitioners will benefit from the provision throughout Wales. Entering the final year of delivery as designed, programme management should be firming plans for sustaining the impact and securing its legacy amongst beneficiaries and within the policy community.

5.5 While noted in previous reports, the emergence of the curriculum inspired by Successful Futures, more recently referred to as the Curriculum for Wales, has proven and continues to represent a key contextual factor in relation to the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. This was widely believed by management and delivery staff as well as participants to be a factor that was likely to increase in importance in the coming years. Moreover, it was widely believed that the CLTA

programme was particularly relevant to both the expressive arts AoLE and to pedagogy more generally within the emerging Curriculum for Wales.

5.6 Indeed, the emergence of the Curriculum for Wales during the lifetime of CLTA has magnified the relevance of, interest in and potential impact and legacy of the programme. Data and evidence presented in this and previous reports suggest that programme management and delivery staff, particularly in relation to Regional Arts and Education Networks, have taken advantage of this and sought to complement and support wider efforts to align and develop the delivery of the new curriculum.

5.7 Several important issues have been identified, however, which should be reviewed by the programme management and administration teams. Of primary concern is the need for clarification regarding the programme's future and its legacy and sustainability, which are issues not necessarily or completely in the programme management's control. Without clear plans in place, several concerns are raised at this stage with regard to the potential transience of the impact of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme: the loss during an uncertain final year, both of personnel and, with them, of expertise and impact from the whole programme, including Regional Arts and Education Networks, wherein ambitions in relation to legacy and sustainability are clearly a priority; and the demise of the Creative Collaborations grant, which emerges in this report as being a possible means of continuing the Lead Creative Schools-style interventions in a modified and more flexible manner.

Strand 1: Lead Creative Schools Scheme

5.8 The Lead Creative Schools Scheme has, since its inception, represented the element of the programme that is most concerned with pedagogies associated with the development of creative skills and capacities. Planning and preparation for the scheme were initially more of a focus for the management staff than was development of Strand 2 activities, since there were innovative concepts and a series of underpinning ideas which needed to be inculcated within the ACW delivery team; this was partly undertaken through early work with the education charity CCE. Furthermore, it was necessary to tie LCS rounds of activities to successive academic years, which made the strand an initial focus. Interest in the scheme from schools has always been strong, with a broad range of schools participating to date and no concerns surrounding the target of ultimately reaching one third of all schools in Wales.

5.9 The scheme has also been expanded through the addition of a third year for Round 1 and 2 schools. This has been termed a ‘development strand’ and has focused on the transfer of good practices and experiences from these schools to other schools that have not benefitted from the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. While some data was available for the evaluation of this strand, further research will be conducted in order to report on this component comprehensively in future reports.

School participation and motivation

5.10 The data regarding participation suggests, as was stated within the previous interim evaluation report, that the level of interest in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme from schools was high.

5.11 Again, the data presented in this report suggests that the take-up of the Lead Creative Schools strand of Creative Learning Through the Arts is largely representative of Wales with regard to deprivation, the primary–secondary split, the linguistic medium, or geography.

5.12 Professional development has emerged as being a key motivation for engaging in the Lead Creative Schools process, and developing pedagogy is a key programme outcome for teachers. Evaluation reports have continued to notice the influence of the emergence of the Curriculum for Wales as a further motivation. In seeking to align and develop their delivery of the new curriculum, teachers and schools have seen the programme to be a means of developing pedagogy and upskilling teachers.

Management

5.13 Feedback from schools and teachers continues to be positive. The least positive remarks concern the reflection and evaluation stages, which are commonly seen to be time-consuming and burdensome. This has been consistently noted in evaluation reports, and Arts Council of Wales management staff have taken action to address the issue. Satisfaction levels noted within the Teacher Survey have increased since doing so. However, the reflection and evaluation stage remains key to identifying what works and embedding or disseminating learning throughout the school.

5.14 Responses to the survey and the qualitative data suggest that the support offered by the Arts Council of Wales to schools and teachers continues to be well received, effective and appreciated.

5.15 In addition, Arts Council of Wales management staff commented that the familiarity with the programme built to date, as well as consistency of the delivery team, has enabled staff to engage with schools in a spirit of constructive flexibility during the initial period. They are, in the view of staff, better prepared to explore and tailor applications with a better understanding of what works.

5.16 The placement of Lead Creative Schools delivery staff within Regional Education Consortia has also emerged as being a key factor in supporting the successful delivery of the strand. Placing staff alongside Consortium staff has fostered easy access to (and the easy exchange of) information between the two partners. In turn, this has ensured good partnership working and supported promotion of the scheme and the recruitment of schools. Moreover, as Consortium staff have left and been replaced, Lead Creative Schools staff are uniquely placed to impress (upon new occupants of roles) information and details relating to the delivery and impact of the strand.

5.17 What remains uncertain is the impact that placement of the teams alongside Consortia has had upon Consortia's own understanding of the workings and philosophy of the programme. Programme management or further reports may wish to explore the extent to which Consortium staff members' understanding of creative learning has improved by engaging with the Arts Council of Wales.

5.18 Securing a positive impact and changing the attitudes of Consortium staff may prove to be challenging based on the data analysed for this report. Consortium staff suggested that further evidence was still required in order to push and promote the programme and its benefits to more schools and teachers, as well as convincing them of the programme's benefits. While this report provides some evidence that may satisfy the wishes of Consortium personnel, tensions between pedagogies and approaches with respect to developing the whole child and the increasingly outmoded assessment regimes continue to make it difficult for innovative interventions to prove their worth.[23] Engagement with Consortia — and (potentially) educational professionals more generally — may therefore need to engage with these tensions, as well as encompassing the evidence generated by the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme.

[23] See also; Education system alignment for 21st century skills

Successes and impact

5.19 The Lead Creative Schools Scheme is widely perceived to be a success by management and delivery staff as well as beneficiaries and stakeholders. This was consistently noted in previous reports, with qualitative data pointing to a positive impact on learner attainment and engagement and to teachers upskilling and gaining confidence.

5.20 The 5 Creative Habits of Mind data explored in this report builds on the findings of previous reports, indicating that teachers continue to perceive Lead Creative Schools activities to have had a positive impact on the creative skills of learners.

5.21 Moreover, there are strong correlations within the unprompted qualitative comments provided by teachers on both the evaluation and the 5 Creative Habits of Mind forms. These correlations reflect previous findings and reports and suggest that teachers are of the view that the programme has had a positive impact on the confidence, collaboration and engagement of learners in the classroom.

5.22 The (self-)efficacy tool explicitly seeks to gauge the impact of activities upon the well-being of pupils and their attitudes towards school and learning. The sample of responses was large enough to analyse with confidence. However, with some minor exceptions, the data did not suggest that there was a significant positive or negative correlation between the scheme and learners' well-being or attitudes towards school/classwork.

5.23 While a possible conclusion would be to suggest that the programme does not impact learner well-being, this would contrast with the above-referenced consistent, unprompted and widespread qualitative comments that were received from teachers through various sources. A more likely conclusion, therefore, that complements the qualitative data is that the tool is not capturing relevant or accurate data effectively.

5.24 Importantly, and for the first time, this report presents data from a large sample of schools (262) that notes that over three quarters (76–92%) of teachers within the categories believe the intervention to have had a positive impact on the attainment of learners. Moreover, a correlation can be identified between the quality of the data used as a basis for the judgment and the likelihood that teachers attribute the intervention with positively impacting on the attainment of learners. The more robust the data used to evaluate the impact of the intervention upon attainment, the more likely teachers are to recognise that the intervention has had a positive impact on

the attainment of learners. Of those teachers who employed the most robust methods of evaluating the impact on attainment, 92% stated that CLTA could be attributed with a positive impact on literacy and/or numeracy.

5.25 The data suggests that the strand has had a positive impact on learners and the attainment of learners, and represents an important body of data which will inform the final evaluation. Furthermore, the findings equip management with programme-wide evidence of a perceived impact, which may support future efforts to promote the method, delivery model or activities of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme.

5.26 The data goes some way in evidencing the 'proof of concept' and corroborating the theory of change in relation to the Lead Creative Schools Scheme's impact on attainment.

5.27 However, the question of 'how much of an impact' the scheme has upon attainment has not been answered. Significant challenges and obstacles hinder efforts to gauge the extent of the impact. The primary obstacle in drawing on data from this and previous reports may be the inconsistency of delivery methods and content. Each Lead Creative Schools project is unique, involving different artists, projects, and cohorts of learners; therefore, comparability is limited. Without consistent baselining and post-intervention testing across Lead Creative Schools projects, comparisons between any attainment data will be limited, too.

5.28 If management wish to explore 'how much of an impact' the scheme has upon the attainment of learners, consideration should be given to sampling participants/learners and incorporating standardised pre- and post-intervention testing throughout the sample.

Recommendation 1: Management may also wish to explore instances in which teachers have not felt that the intervention has had a positive impact on the attainment of learners. Such an exploration may inform future design and development of the programme and highlight components of the approach that risk failure. Findings may further strengthen the concept and help make a case for further support or funding.

5.29 A further challenge, drawing on wider literature, may relate to the time that it can take to change a school's cultural and pedagogical approaches. It is generally agreed to be a process that takes at least five years.[24] We may be witnessing in

[24] Whole School Change: A Literature Review and The Signature Pedagogies Project: Final Report

Creative Learning Through the Arts — particularly Lead Creative Schools — evidence of condition setting and priming for improved attainment in the future. The challenge would therefore be to ensure that there is capacity to continue such practices and maintain such learning cultures after the funded lifetime of the programme.

5.30 Data for this report reflects previous findings and still suggests that teachers continue to share experiences and learning amongst themselves. The bulk of sharing remains informal, however, and while not to be discounted, it may merit further attention and action from management staff. The project should aim for senior leadership buy-in to the methods and approaches promoted, but there is little by way of organised, scheduled knowledge-sharing through INSET days. Instead of creative learning being a whole-school venture, therefore, there may be a risk that the project supports only a pedagogical insurgency of small groups of teachers.

5.31 Interviews with management staff and stakeholders also suggested further impacts beyond that which was anticipated and planned for. These included an emerging common language surrounding creativity, creative learning, and teaching of the expressive arts. This language is (at least in part) attributed to the CLTA programme and, in particular, the Lead Creative Schools Scheme and thought to be reflected in the draft guidance for the Curriculum for Wales.

Recommendation 2: Further research into and exploration of the developing language surrounding creativity, creative learning, and teaching of the expressive arts amongst educational professionals may reveal the extent of the impact that the programme has had within the field.

5.32 Stakeholders and management and delivery staff have noted a growing interest in creative learning methods from school leaders. This growing interest has partly been attributed to the impact of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme but is also coupled with the implication within curriculum documentation that schools and teachers will be expected to explore and develop their pedagogy and teaching methods.

5.33 Arts Council of Wales management staff also noted that they had experienced a growing level of interest from other countries. Staff members had conducted trips to India and other countries/international partners, sharing their experiences of the CLTA programme and, in particular, Lead Creative Schools.

5.34 These aspects suggest, firstly, that the programme is valued by parties outside of management, delivery staff, and beneficiaries, and, secondly, that information relating to the successes and impact of the programme has a wide reach.

Sustainability and legacy

5.35 As discussed above, stakeholders such as Regional Education Consortia and governments abroad recognise the value of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme and its impact on teaching and schools. These stakeholders and interested bodies, if convinced of the impact of the programme, may represent potential sources of funding that may sustain levels of activity in the future.

5.36 Arts Council of Wales management staff noted, however, that planning for sustaining activities in the future, beyond the lifetime of the project, was currently dependent on strategic decisions being made and clarity being offered regarding the coming years. This is, however, a critical juncture in the lifetime of the programme. Core activities wind down in anticipation of the end of funding and with no future funding confirmed to date. In order to avoid the risk of losing key staff and expertise, as well as momentum and awareness of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme more broadly, it may prove to be important that those decisions are made as soon as possible in order to enable the planning of future activity to continue and to help in retaining key staff. If no funding is forthcoming from strategic partners, the Arts Council of Wales may wish to consider approaching stakeholders (such as Regional Education Consortia) or international partners as potential funders of future activities.

Recommendation 3: Strategic partners and management staff should consider the need to confirm details regarding future funding of the programme in order to enable programme management staff to put plans in place without risking the loss of personnel and expertise. If no funding is forthcoming from strategic partners, the Arts Council of Wales may wish to consider approaching stakeholders (such as Regional Education Consortia) or international partners as potential funders of future activities.

5.37 The legacy of the scheme is becoming clear at this stage of the programme. The training of hundreds of teachers and Creative Practitioners, as well as the experiences of learners, must be acknowledged as being the scheme's key impacts and successes. A concern remains, however, as to how transient these successes

are and how lasting this legacy may be, given that much of the knowledge sharing remains informal between individuals.

5.38 Staff members did not see that schools would be in a position in which to sustain and finance the involvement of arts organisations and artists in the future, while some schools have looked to the Creative Collaborations grant as a means of sustaining activities. Following Creative Collaborations, however, if schools themselves are envisaged to be direct commissioners of arts-led training or projects in the future, the levels of funding for doing so will unlikely be available to schools without significant restructuring of school spending priorities and budgets.

5.39 The question with regard to legacy, therefore, is whether the legacy should be driven by the desired change in teacher practice or through schools seeing local arts organisations as long-term partners. If the former, and the contribution of the development strand notwithstanding, it appears as though continued CPD and efforts to share and institutionalise knowledge should form a key component of legacy planning. If the latter, further sources of funding need to be identified and accessed to support school commissioning of artists.

5.40 However, alongside the activities of Regional Arts and Education Networks, the scheme's impact on teaching of the expressive arts more generally under the Curriculum for Wales merits further investigation. Most notable is an acknowledgement by the Welsh Government that the scheme has been recognised as being a precursor to the new curriculum, as well as an indication of how they would like to see creative learning develop within schools in Wales.

Recommendation 4: Future reports should examine the impact and legacy of the programme in relation to the Curriculum for Wales. This may link with Recommendation 2 above (i.e. developing language).

Regional Arts and Education Networks

5.41 This interim report examined the progress being made by Networks, subsequently presenting data on a full academic year of Regional Arts and Education Network activities for the first time. The analysis revisited some process-related issues raised in the last report, as well as examining delivery and impact over the academic year.

Motivation

5.42 While objectives stipulated for Networks constitute, in reality, the delivery of five outputs, i.e. being focused on activities rather than outcomes, Coordinators continue to perceive that Networks offer added value and a role in supporting schools in developing and delivering the Curriculum for Wales. Indeed, stakeholders and delivery staff were of the opinion that the context of the curriculum was a significant motivation for teachers and schools to engage with the activities of Regional Arts and Education Networks. Furthermore, it was perceived that the emergence of the new curriculum would likely lead to yet more demand for support of the type that Regional Arts and Education Networks were delivering.

5.43 Data suggests that there was scope for more exposure to Regional Arts and Education Network activities through the Lead Creative Schools Scheme in order to encourage engagement. Both Network Coordinators and survey data from teachers involved with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme suggested that awareness of Regional Arts and Education Networks was low, though interest in the offer, once informed of it, was high.

Recommendation 5: Arts Council of Wales management staff and Lead Creative Schools delivery staff should look to capitalise on opportunities to promote Regional Arts and Education Network activities through their engagement with teachers.

Management and delivery

5.44 The freedom for Coordinators and their staff to design and develop the Networks continues to be perceived as being a strength. This year's data suggests that the ability to develop and deliver CPD sessions in relation to the new curriculum has enabled the Regional Arts and Education Network offer to 'tap into' the demand and motivating factors, as well as remaining relevant to teachers' training needs and demands. Moreover, Arts Champions have been able to focus on similar areas and also 'tap into' the demand from teachers.

5.45 While Networks have continued to seek to support one another in developing and delivering their provision, some suggested that co-producing CPD in particular has proven to be time-consuming.

5.46 In at least two instances, a close relationship has been developed with Regional Education Consortia. The Edau–GwE relationship emerges as a particularly positive example of where a Regional Arts and Education Network has proven to be able to contribute to the strategic aims of key educational stakeholders in the region. Moreover, they have (in the views of Consortium personnel) become sources and providers of expertise and support for schools in the region. The Arts Champions programme, for example, has been aligned with the priorities of Consortia, with Arts Champions being allocated to schools identified by Consortia as requiring support with regard to teaching or development of the provision of expressive arts.

5.47 Regional Arts and Education Networks continue to innovate and develop new forms of support, while continuing to seek to satisfy their core requirements. The use of 'seed funds' by at least one Network has, in the view of Coordinators, supported schools in taking initial or small steps towards integrating Creative Practitioners into the delivery of expressive arts education. Though in this instance the 'seed funds' operate on a much smaller scale than that of the Creative Collaborations grant, management and delivery staff must take care not to duplicate delivery as they innovate and develop their offer.

5.48 Development of the brokering app, primarily by one Network but supported and likely to be rolled out by all, is a further instance of innovation. The app was developed as a means of facilitating the brokering of relationships between teachers and artists that Networks were tasked with delivering. Management and delivery staff have expressed excitement towards the prospect of brokering relationships quickly and easily through the app. Meanwhile, stakeholders have suggested that the app may prove to be a 'game changer' in bringing Creative Practitioners and teachers/schools together. The app presents an opportunity to sustain the impact of the programme, and may represent a component of the strand's legacy.

5.49 However, caution was expressed by some Network staff wary that the app's success depends (to a large extent) on its successful promotion and the willingness of teachers and artists to use the app. Usage data relating to the Creative Learning Zone over the past few years suggests that this may prove to be a challenge, Management and delivery staff should give consideration to developing a promotion and outreach plan for supporting the app.

Recommendation 6: Arts Council of Wales management staff should seek to develop and resource a promotional and marketing strategy for the rollout of the brokering app. Furthermore, management staff should consider whether there is a need to pilot the app initially. Findings of the pilot and a successful rollout and widespread usage of the app may result in lower expectations of Networks with regard to their own brokering requirements.

5.50 More generally, Network Coordinators commented on the nebulous nature of the activities, as well as the difficulty in determining when activities have taken place. Consequently, doubts were raised as to the validity and utility of counting brokering activities.

5.51 The delivery of cross-curricular creative learning CPD by Networks is perceived by Coordinators to be beyond the remit of Regional Arts and Education Networks. Coordinators noted, however, that they were being approached and would like to deliver cross-curricular creative learning CPD that is perceived to overlap with the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. Furthermore, Consortium personnel expressed a desire to see the strands coming together in order to deliver more of creative learning CPD. Both Coordinators and stakeholders stated that the dividing line should be relaxed and Regional Arts and Education Networks allowed to deliver cross-curricular creative learning CPD either themselves or alongside Lead Creative Schools teams.

5.52 Arts Council of Wales management staff have, nonetheless, been consistently clear in their reasoning for not approving of this development, namely their concerns surrounding the duplication and validity of any evaluation of the delivery model.

Recommendation 7: If the restriction is reviewed, management staff may wish to consider the weight of data and evidence that have already been collected in relation to the Lead Creative Schools programme, as well as the extent to which the model and its successes can be evidenced and validated already. Moreover, staff may wish to consider initially trialling the delivery on a smaller scale in order to inform their decision.

Communication

5.53 Communication between Arts Council of Wales management staff and Regional Arts and Education Network staff represented a legacy-related issue from previous reports and was re-examined. Data suggested that communication between the two

parties, in the opinions of management and delivery staff, had improved. Both parties conceded, however, that issues remained and were impacting delivery and legacy planning. Crucially, there is a risk that preparations will not be made to sustain impact, successes will not be capitalised upon, expertise and experience will be lost and the long-term impact of the programme will be consequently diminished.

5.54 In particular, Arts Council of Wales management staff expected Network staff to be more proactive in evidencing the successes of their activities. Meanwhile, Regional Arts and Education Network staff desired a more informal approach to communication and a warmer, more deliberative application process.

5.55 More importantly, Regional Arts and Education Network staff expressed a desire for more clarity from the Arts Council of Wales with regard to the legacy and future direction of the programme and the strand. This contrasted with Arts Council of Wales management staff's view that Networks should lead in providing details relating to post-funding arrangements. This represents something of a 'standoff' at a crucial stage for legacy planning, with both parties looking to the other for a lead.

Recommendation 8: The current impasse regarding legacy planning and developing proposals for post-CLTA activities risks impacting the long-term outcomes that Regional Arts and Education Networks may achieve. Furthermore, a period of uncertainty surrounding the future increases the risk of losing key and experienced Regional Arts and Education Network staff. It is therefore recommended that the Arts Council of Wales now take control of the process for developing post-funding arrangements. Arts Council of Wales management staff, based on their current understanding of Networks' activities and impacts, may wish to present Regional Arts and Education Networks with their proposals for post-funding arrangements. This will provide a degree of clarity for all and may serve to generate further discussion with Regional Arts and Education Network staff.

Successes and impact

5.56 A key issue relating to the success and impact of Regional Arts and Education Networks was identified in Report 3, namely that the paucity of evidence and data available limits the capacity to evidence progress towards Networks' outcomes and hypothesised impacts. This was partly due to Regional Arts and Education Networks being tasked with only the delivery of activities, not securing outcomes or impacts. More data was required in order to examine how beneficiaries were

engaging and what benefits they were deriving from their engagement with Regional Arts and Education Networks. Report 3 recommended that further sources of data be established that would quantify and qualify the relevance of Networks' activities with regard to the hypothesised outcomes detailed in the theory of change.

5.57 Arts Council of Wales management staff have instructed all Networks to compile case studies demonstrating the impact of their activities. These case studies were not available at the time of writing. In addition, a survey of beneficiaries was opened, the responses to which will be analysed in future reports.

5.58 This remains the key challenge of the strand: to generate data that enables the successes and impact of the activities to be evidenced.

5.59 Arts Council of Wales management staff noted that they were satisfied that Networks had met their delivery targets for 2017–2018 and no concerns were raised regarding the 2018–2019 academic year. These targets, as noted previously, relate to output and activities.

5.60 While no data was available with which to evidence the successes and impacts, Regional Arts and Education Network delivery staff and Arts Council of Wales management staff were of the opinion that activities had led to clear successes in and impacts on education, teaching, and artist/Creative Practitioner beneficiaries. Both expressed the view that the support that Regional Arts and Education Networks have lent to schools and teachers as they prepare the workforce to deliver the Curriculum for Wales has been a key success.

5.61 Arts Council of Wales management staff were of the view that the work of linking schools and teachers with artists/Creative Practitioners, as well as teacher-to-teacher support through the Arts Champions scheme, had proven to be a key success.

5.62 Network staff and Consortium personnel also saw the Arts Champions as being key successes, having supported the development of expressive arts provision in schools across regions. Furthermore, they saw the CPD provision as being a further and crucial aspect of their contribution.

5.63 Network delivery staff stated that the feedback received from participants was frequently positive. Comments made available to the Arts Council of Wales through monitoring forms reflected this belief. Although not always in relation to the intended

outcomes, comments did suggest that CPD has influenced how some teachers approach their teaching, and that some had put their training into practice.

5.64 Moreover, Network staff noted the positive impact that they felt the activities were having upon teacher well-being. Teachers were reported to comment often on the rejuvenating and exciting experience of receiving CPD in relation to the expressive arts.

5.65 Regional Arts and Education Network staff also noted that the impact on artists and arts organisations was becoming more apparent. In particular, arts organisations and Creative Practitioners were becoming familiar with the expectations and the potential opportunities for contribution and collaboration with the educational sector following the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales.

5.66 It remains the case, however, that beyond a selection of feedback comments provided through monitoring forms and the perceptions of delivery and management staff, there is insufficient data available to evidence the progress made against the intended outcomes for the strand.

Recommendation 9: A key priority for staff responsible for managing and delivering Regional Arts and Education Network activities over the next and final year should be the collection of data for the purposes of evidencing successes and impacts. Responsibility for collecting this data should be made clear.

Legacy and sustainability

5.67 The miscommunication relating to the responsibility for planning legacy and post-funding arrangements has been discussed above. In addition, the implications and risks for the programme's legacy have been discussed and remain key aspects for programme management and delivery staff to consider.

5.68 In exploring and planning the possible legacy, management staff may wish to look at broader experiences in the field such as bridge organisations which have grown out of creative partnerships in England under Arts Council England management[25], or the more variegated Local Cultural Education partnerships which have recently been evaluated.[26]

5.69 Regional Education Consortium personnel have consistently expressed that they place value in Regional Arts and Education Networks and their activities. In at least

[25] Bridge Organisations
[26] Research into Local Cultural Education Partnerships

one instance, the relationship between a Consortium and Network is particularly close, with the Network's Arts Champions programme structured around the Consortium's priorities for the region.

Recommendation 10: Given the value that Regional Education Consortia place on Regional Arts and Education Networks and their activities, Arts Council of Wales and Network management staff should approach such stakeholders in order to explore potential future funding options and possibilities.

Experiencing the Arts Fund

5.70 The Experiencing the Arts Fund continues to attract a sufficient number of applications to spend its budget. Furthermore, Arts Council of Wales programme management staff spoke of receiving more applications than they could fund, whereby suggesting that the fund is popular and in demand.

5.71 Nonetheless, data presented in this report suggests that awareness of the fund could be higher. Therefore, there is a possibility that due to a lack of awareness, schools that would like to take advantage of the offer are not able to do so. Moreover, it suggests that there is (again) a possibility that the schools and teachers benefitting and applying for an aspect of the Creative Learning Through the Arts provision are 'the usual suspects' of engaged, innovative or creatively minded schools and individuals.

5.72 A particular focus has been upon the Creative Collaborations grant within this report. The data suggests that the grant has engaged 220 schools in Wales and 14,779 learners. Each project engages an average of 255 learners, though they may range from 12 to 1,920. This suggests that the model is flexible and able to accommodate a range of project types.

5.73 Indeed, the range of projects constitutes a potential challenge for the Creative Collaborations grant. With the freedom to develop a range of different project types, schools can engage with and benefit from the grant in a wide variety of ways — either in a 'light-touch' manner, as one of several schools participating in a single artistic event, or as a small group of learners working intensively with a range of Creative Practitioners. The case studies presented in this report evidence the range of project types carried out using the grant.

5.74 However, the variety and variation in the types of projects restrict the capacity to evidence the impact of the grant as a whole. Consequently, the evaluation is constrained to limited case study examinations of specific projects.

5.75 Moreover, Arts Council of Wales management staff commented on the difficulty in communicating the possible successes of the project, given the variety and complexity of projects funded by the grant. The difficulties in evaluating and evidencing its successes are, undoubtedly, contributing factors, too. Once more, attention could be drawn to the conceptual differences between the learner-centred, experimental approach of the intervention and the programme-wide, positivist manner in which educational professionals and policymakers may expect outcomes to be evidenced.

5.76 Nonetheless, case studies suggest that the grant has the potential to fund the development of projects (alongside Creative Practitioners) that have benefits for learner attainment and well-being, for school attitudes towards the arts, and in building relationships and links between arts organisations and schools. Meanwhile, individual artists, similar to the Lead Creative Schools strand, have been exposed to and presented with opportunities to develop their understanding of the statutory education context, as well as the potential for further contribution and cooperation with schools. Furthermore, the case studies suggested that there was scope for further outcomes that only became apparent in hindsight.

5.77 Based on the personnel and nature of the schools explored within the case studies, there is a possibility that the grant tends to benefit and be accessed by a limited number of already innovative and creatively inclined schools and teachers — what previous reports referred to as ‘the usual suspects’. Further reports may wish to explore or test this.

5.78 A further issue relates to the role of the Creative Collaborations grant and the legacy of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme. The case studies highlighted that previous experience with other aspects of the Creative Learning Through the Arts programme had encouraged or played a catalytic role in engagement with the grant. This suggests that the programme more widely is spurring involvement and engagement with the expressive arts, while this particular component of the programme complements the impact of the other strands by enabling schools and teachers to further develop such involvement and

engagement. In this sense, the Creative Collaborations and Go and See grants are the legacy vehicles for other parts of Creative Learning Through the Arts.

5.79 If the Experiencing the Arts grants are means of sustaining and continuing some of the wider benefits of the overall CLTA programme, it appears to be contingent not so much upon sustainable success through teacher development, but upon replicating stimulus through successful grant applications and more projects. A concern emerges in this instance, and a risk to the continued impact of the programme if beneficiaries are vulnerable to failed applications and a reliance on external expertise. Either schools will need the resources with which to continue with a culture of partnership working with arts organisations or some element of teacher development may need to grow in relation to this strand in order to help the flow of professional learning in less resource-intensive ways.

Creative Learning Zone

5.80 The usage figures for the Creative Learning Zone suggest that fewer teachers and artists are making use of the platform. This is despite what appears to be a temporary boost to use figures at the time of drafting Curriculum for Wales documentation.

5.81 It is possible, therefore, that the Creative Learning Zone continues to suffer from the reputational damage inflicted at earlier stages of the programme and explored in previous reports. Welsh Government management staff have undertaken training with staff at Regional Arts and Education Networks who are tasked with engaging teachers in relation to the Creative Learning Zone. The results of this training are unknown at this stage, and may require further investigation in future reports.

5.82 Interviews and survey data suggest, however, that the Creative Learning Zone has not been adequately promoted through the Lead Creative Schools Scheme. It is unclear without further investigation as to whether this is due to a lack of promotion, promotion being ineffective or the perception of the Creative Learning Zone amongst teachers being so negative as to dissuade Lead Creative Schools staff from engaging with them on the issue.

Recommendation 11: Arts Council of Wales management staff should explore the processes and methods in respect of promoting and engaging teachers with regard to the Creative Learning Zone. Staff should seek to determine whether the Creative Learning Zone is widely promoted and how it is promoted. Moreover, staff should canvass staff and teacher opinions regarding the Creative Learning Zone, seeking to identify reasons as to why the take-up remains low.

Recommendation 12: The key and consistent issue raised by teachers as a barrier to engaging with the Creative Learning Zone is a lack of time. Arts Council of Wales management staff may wish to consider the value of promoting the time-saving benefits of using the Creative Learning Zone.

5.83 Welsh Government management staff continue to express the view that platforms and websites commissioned by Regional Arts and Education Networks compete with the Creative Learning Zone for the time of teachers and artists. A broader concern emerges with regard to duplication; in other words, there is a possibility that the platforms are offering the same to teachers as that offered by the Creative Learning Zone.

Recommendation 13: Usage data from Regional Arts and Education Network platforms was not available for analysis but should be available for consideration in future reports.

5.84 Moreover, issues continue to be compounded by the growth and development of private sector platforms that facilitate social networking as well as the provision of resources.

5.85 Data relating to use made of the Creative Learning Zone by teachers in particular suggests that case studies and examples of good practice are in demand. Previous reports, meanwhile, drew attention to the perceived guarantee of quality and relevance of the content. This may prove to be particularly relevant as the new curriculum emerges.

5.86 The release of curriculum documentation on Hwb and a broader effort to encourage use of the platform amongst the teaching profession may also provide an opportunity to renew efforts to promote the Creative Learning Zone and the perceived merits and strengths.

Appendix 1: More details on the Lead Creative Schools Scheme (Strand 1)

Application process

Schools applying to be Lead Creative Schools identify key issues that they wish to address through a creative approach to learning. For example, a secondary school may choose to tackle low attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 3 using a range of techniques in order to engage and motivate learners. Perhaps a primary school may wish to develop innovative, cross-curricular approaches in order to boost literacy skills.

The design and quality assurance process with regard to the application, selection and recruitment of schools is critical, with a view to ensuring that issues identified by schools are plausible and in keeping with the overarching aims in relation to literacy and numeracy. Lead Creative Schools applications from schools are checked by Arts Council of Wales regional teams for their eligibility, with their basic categorisation indicators being noted so as to ensure that a good spread of schools are shortlisted:

- School support categorisation[27]
- Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM)
- Number of pupils
- Welsh-language and/or rural school.

A regional moderation meeting is conducted in which representatives from Regional Education Consortia (REC) meet with Arts Council of Wales Lead Creative Schools Scheme staff in order to moderate the scoring and assessment of local applications and utilise their existing knowledge of the schools so as to recommend, or advise against, their inclusion in Lead Creative Schools in this round. The final decision as to the grant award offer is made at a National Panel meeting, at which additional conditions of the grant for successful applications can also be recommended. The National Panel includes Welsh Government and external advisors, as well as Arts Council of Wales officers.

[27] National School Categorisation System – three levels: Standard Group 1–4 (1 = very good overall performance and 4 = the greatest need for improved performance), Improvement Capacity A–D (A = most capacity to improve themselves and D = least capacity to improve themselves). These are then combined to give each school a support category as follows: Green – highly effective school – least support; Yellow – effective school; Amber – in need of improvement; and Red – in need of greatest improvement – most support.

The criteria sought in Lead Creative Schools applications are as follows:

- Senior management commitment and its ability to mobilise staff
- Evidence of the active involvement of learners
- Evidence of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme being integral to schools' vision and their school improvement plan priorities
- Evidence of a contribution to improving literacy and numeracy/reducing the impact of poverty upon attainment
- Capacity to deliver.

The moderation meeting of the National Panel also seeks to:

- Achieve a balance throughout Wales/regions
- Achieve a good spread of primary, secondary and special schools
- Reflect the needs of rural/Welsh-medium schools
- Examine the priority given to schools facing significant challenges.

Implementation

Supported schools are allocated a specially trained Creative Agent who works with the schools in developing projects which will address their identified priorities. The first term of the school year (autumn term) is spent planning the programme for the spring term. At this planning stage, activities and Creative Practitioners are identified and a Planning Form submitted to Creative Learning Through the Arts programme staff for approval. Classroom creative learning activities between the pupils, teachers and Creative Practitioner take place in the spring term and an internal reflective evaluation of the activities is undertaken in the summer term. Schools are supported for two years, with the second-year structure being the same as the first-year structure and with priorities and activities informed by Year 1 learning.

Creative Agents are recruited by and contracted to the Arts Council of Wales, while Creative Practitioners are identified by Creative Agents and schools and contracted directly by schools through their Lead Creative Schools grant award. The Arts Council of Wales has provided a collated list of potential Creative Practitioners from individuals or organisations that have submitted Expressions of Interest. The Arts Council of Wales makes neither an endorsement nor an assessment of these Expressions of Interest. Schools are not obliged to choose from this Register of Interest; rather, it is provided as a tool with which to help them.

Teachers are described as being central to the scheme, partnering with Creative Practitioners in designing and delivering new approaches and reflecting on their practices. Because of this, it is anticipated that there will be a transfer of knowledge and an improvement/change in teaching approaches with regard to their own classroom practices. Furthermore, this deep involvement of teachers during the delivery phases is designed to ensure that they have a sense of ownership, and is intended to help them to acquire confidence in delivering the arts and new creative skills.

In order to ensure that a school takes ownership of the improvement process, it is anticipated that the programme will also be embedded in the School Improvement Plan (SIP), with benchmarking criteria being agreed upon and data gathered in order to evidence impact.

It is anticipated that because experienced artists, working as Creative Agents and Creative Practitioners, will be active in the delivery of the programme, it will be of high quality and will ensure that creative skills/attributes are catalysts for change. Effective recruitment and induction processes will, however, be necessary in order to ensure that the quality of artists and Creative Practitioners will be sufficiently high to add value to projects and model the creative attributes and skills that the programme aims to foster.

Participating schools are supported for a minimum of two years in bringing about improvements in outcomes for learners; it is expected that changes will be embedded in teaching practices in order to generate a sustainable impact. Senior management support in embedding the intervention within a whole-school improvement policy is said to be key to the success of the intervention.

Because there will have been a clear expectation from the outset that teachers will share the knowledge, skills and experience that they gain from the scheme, both within their school and with other schools, it is anticipated that there will be a considerable spillover effect, helping to improve the quality of creative teaching within schools and between schools.

Appendix 2: Selection of RAEN activity/service feedback quotes

‘Excellent ideas to take back to school and well-being support for staff. Lots of directly transferable ideas and inspirational talk.’

‘Relaxing, creative — shows ways to expand ideas, creativity and imagination to develop minds with the outdoors.’

‘A fantastic day of creativity. We gained a vast amount of ideas/techniques to use within the classroom and also on a personal level.’

‘It was fantastic to have live musicians perform during the course. Diolch!’

‘Fantastic!’

‘Learning to utilise my contacts and to keep in contact with the Arts and Education Network to continue my professional development.’

‘I found this course really informative and took away some of the apprehension I had about working as a freelance artist in schools.’

‘All workshops were engaging and thought-provoking, giving a great sense of well-being. I would have liked to do all four workshops.’

‘Enjoyed LCS and Arts Matter workshops and could very much see potential... so relevant for the coming changes to the curriculum.’

‘I will use aspects of all the apps used today. I work with the school library and parent open session, developing reading for pleasure and sharing through a digital medium.’

‘I have really enjoyed today. It’s been informative, imaginative and inspiring! Can’t wait to put into practice the ideas I have come away with. Thank you!’

‘I really enjoyed the course on Tuesday — it was wonderful. I came back to school and not only felt relaxed after such a great day but totally inspired to try out some of the activities with my class.’

Appendix 3: Self-efficacy questionnaire

Tables A1 and A2 below detail the statements that were posited to learners as part of the self-efficacy questionnaire. The same questions were asked before and after the intervention and both responses were compared. The ‘change’ column notes whether the response to a statement has been positive or negative, while the ‘statistically significant’ column notes whether a change can be attributed to the intervention.

Table A1 notes that changes were significant and attributable to the intervention in only eight instances. These were mostly positive responses relating to work in class and school life in general. However, with regard to school life in general, learners did feel less safe and as though they enjoyed things less. While statistically significant in eight instances, the more general conclusion to draw is that the data has not captured a clear or significant correlation across the responses.

Table A1: Self-efficacy of Year 3-4 learners

Statement	Change	Statistically significant
I get to learn interesting things	Positive	Yes
I can choose how to do activities	Positive	No
The work we do is fun	Positive	Yes
The work is too hard for me	Positive	No
I get worried when I'm working	Positive	Yes
Other children listen to my ideas	Positive	No
I put a lot of effort into my work	Positive	No
I am happy to talk about my work with the teachers	Negative	No
I feel good about myself	Positive	No
I feel healthy	Positive	No
I feel I am doing well	Positive	No
I feel miserable	Positive	No
I feel I have lots of energy	Positive	No
I feel cared for	Positive	No
I feel valuable	Positive	No
I feel worried	Positive	Yes
I feel I can deal with problems	Positive	No
I feel bored	Positive	No
I feel noticed	Positive	No
I feel there is lots to look forward to	Positive	Yes
I feel safe	Negative	Yes
I feel confident	Negative	No
I feel a lot of things are a real effort	Negative	No
I feel I enjoy things	Negative	Yes
I feel lonely	Negative	No
I feel excited by lots of things	Positive	Yes
I feel happy	Positive	No
I feel I'm treated fairly	Positive	No
I feel people are friendly	Negative	No

N=317

Table A2 below outlines the findings from the pre- and post-intervention self-efficacy questionnaire completed by Year 5–6 learners. While a positive response to three statements could be linked to the intervention — with the specific changes contrasting with Year 3–4 responses — the data (again) failed to provide a clear or significant correlation across the responses.

Table A2: Self-efficacy of Year 5–6 learners

Statement	Change	Statistically significant
I get to learn interesting things in lessons	Positive	No
I can choose how to do activities in lessons	Positive	No
The work we do is fun	Negative	No
The work is too hard for me	Positive	No
What I learn is important for my future	Positive	No
I get worried when I'm working in lessons	Positive	No
Other children listen to my ideas in lessons	Negative	No
I put a lot of effort into my work	Positive	No
I do good work at school	Positive	No
I am happy to talk about my work with the teachers	Positive	No
I am looking forward to learning more in the future	Negative	No
I feel good about myself	Negative	No
I feel healthy	Negative	No
I feel I am doing well	Negative	No
I feel miserable	Negative	No
I feel I have lots of energy	Positive	No
I feel cared for	Negative	No
I feel valuable	Positive	No
I feel worried	Negative	No
I feel I can deal with problems	Negative	No
I feel bored	Negative	No
I feel noticed	Positive	No
People are friendly	Negative	Yes
I feel there is lots to look forward to	Negative	No
I feel safe	Negative	Yes
I feel confident	Positive	No
I feel a lot of things are a real effort	Positive	No
I feel I enjoy things	Positive	Yes
I feel lonely	Positive	No
I feel excited by lots of things	Negative	No
I feel happy	Negative	No
I feel I'm treated fairly	Positive	No

N=218

One hundred and twenty-nine pre- and post-intervention responses to the questionnaire were also received for Year 7–9 learners. However, no changes in self-efficacy were deemed to be statistically significant.