



# **The Arts Backpack UK Fife Pilot**

Evaluation Report

Written by Michael Judge



# Contents

**1. Executive Summary and Key Findings**

**2. Context**

**3. Areas of Enquiry**

**3.1 Need**

**3.2 Value**


**3.3 Delivery**

**3.4 Legacy**

**4. Annexes**

# 1

## **Executive Summary and Key Findings**




This report has been commissioned by Action for Children's Arts (ACA) to evaluate *The Arts Backpack UK* pilot in Fife, Scotland. ACA's mission is to campaign for the arts for children between the ages of 0-12 years old.

The idea for *The Arts Backpack UK* is driven by an awareness of:

- I good practice internationally
- I a perceived lack of provision in the UK.

*The Arts Backpack UK* enables children to access a minimum of five artistic and cultural experiences, including digital arts, heritage and library experiences across the school year.



## Key Findings

- I *The Arts Backpack UK* can successfully foster arts and culture in areas where children may experience barriers to provision.
- I *The Arts Backpack UK* has a clear value for the teacher and their professional development and confidence.
- I *The Arts Backpack UK* can be presented as being about the art-forms, or as a way of engaging with curriculum topics, or a well-being agenda.
- I Local partners (teachers and cultural organisations) can help co-design the contents and influence its make-up according to each location.

This report gives a steer to *The Arts Backpack UK* delivery partners to hone and shape *The Arts Backpack UK* in its next iteration.

It also gives a picture of *The Arts Backpack UK* in action to those looking to address inequalities in arts and cultural provision. One political party in Scotland has already made a commitment to “*a Cultural Rucksack Programme to ensure that every child has access to artistic and cultural experiences.*”<sup>1</sup>

For further information and enquiries about *The Arts Backpack UK*, please contact the Project Manager whose contact details can be found on the back page of this report.

<sup>1</sup> <https://scottishlabour.org.uk/where-we-stand/national-recovery-plan/> P.109/10

# 2

---

## Context



This report builds on *The Arts Backpack UK Feasibility Study 2018*<sup>2</sup> and evaluates that report's recommendations on the practical delivery of arts and cultural experiences to children in five Fife primary schools.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.childrensarts.org.uk/campaign/the-arts-backpack-uk/>



## Recommendations of the Feasibility Study

*The Arts Backpack UK* Fife Pilot tests the recommendations outlined in the Feasibility Study.

The recommendations were as follows:

- I Focus on primary school age children. The study found there is a gap in strategic thinking and arts and cultural provision for primary-aged children and *The Arts Backpack UK* was an easy to understand concept to address this.
- I Focus on a geographic area where there is a particular need for enhanced access to arts and cultural provision. In this area of Fife, the need arises from barriers of socio-economic and geographic circumstance. The study makes the case for *The Arts Backpack UK* as a means for levelling an unequal playing field.
- I Prioritise the intrinsic value of the arts alongside extrinsic outcomes such as well-being. The study noted the complexity of the way arts and culture deliver and communicate both intrinsic and extrinsic outcomes.
- I Partnerships. *The Arts Backpack UK* Fife works in partnership with the local council who have a recognised appetite for supporting the arts (as evidenced in the three previous years of the Jennie Lee Project).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Jennie Lee Project is named after the first Minister of State for the Arts who hails from the area and was set up to mark the 50th anniversary of the Open University which she helped set up. The project supports arts and education in the area.

## Local Delivery Partners

*The Arts Backpack UK* delivered arts and cultural experiences to five primary schools in Central Fife, and the Lochgelly and Cowdenbeath area.

Participating schools:

**Cowdenbeath** Primary School

**Benarty** Primary School

**Cardenden** Primary School

**Kelty** Primary School

**Hill of Beath** Primary School

The schools were recruited by a process of invitation via Fife Council, who are also the principal funders of *The Arts Backpack UK* Pilot. The teachers recruited were teaching classes of children from ages 8 to 11 (Primary 4 to 7 in the Scottish system).

The region has areas of high socio-economic deprivation and has transport challenges in accessing the cultural centres of Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee, particularly in the evening. The area scores very high in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) which combines seven different domains of deprivation: income; employment; health; education, skills and training; geographic access to services; crime; and housing.

According to one of the teachers, it is “a luxury to do arts (here).”

*The Arts Backpack UK* Pilot has been facilitated by a Community Learning Project Manager from Fife Council who was effectively acting as a local champion for *The Arts Backpack UK*.

## The arts and cultural activities in *The Arts Backpack UK*

The arts activities have been selected via a call-out from ACA to its members, and through online research of arts and cultural providers.

Activities are targeted at the 5-12 age range.

Further details about the process of selection are contained in this report and there is an annexe showing all activities on offer.

## Evaluation methodology

The report has been produced by Michael Judge, appointed in October 2020 to review the impact of *The Arts Backpack UK* in the targeted schools and how *The Arts Backpack UK* has been received by teachers delivering the content. The report is based on 10 interviews with the teachers (at the start and at the end of the project), and interviews with *The Arts Backpack UK* Schools' Co-ordinator and *The Arts Backpack UK* Project Manager.

The report focuses on the **delivery** of *The Arts Backpack UK* in bringing arts and cultural experiences to children and teachers in primary schools, as well as the **need** for it, the articulation of the **value** of it and its potential **legacy**.



## Impact of Covid-19

The project was initiated in October 2020 with a completion date in April 2021.

At the beginning of the project, plans did not anticipate the full extent of the second wave of Covid-19 and the new lockdown restrictions which meant that children were being home-schooled January-March 2021 just at the time when project delivery was due to happen.

As a result, it was not possible for all teachers and pupils to engage in the full range of *The Arts Backpack UK* activities, however the teachers were able to engage sufficiently to offer valuable feedback.

The wider education landscape has been significantly changed by the impact of the pandemic and it is useful to reference the second report from Durham Creativity Commission<sup>4</sup> which offers insights that chime with the findings of this report. Whilst the research is from English schools, the context of pandemic is the same.

Findings from that research reveal the following:

- I Covid-19 has shown that creativity and cultural experiences are fundamental to the lives of young people and school culture and should be an essential part of the return to in-school education.
- I The rapid adoption of digital platforms by schools is an opportunity to increase the understanding and practice of teaching for creativity in schools. The shift to remote working and digital tools has reshaped society and the economy; as such, digital literacy and the creative use of technology are essential skills for young people.
- I Universal access to teaching for creativity is not possible without addressing the current inequity in digital access which currently only reinforces existing inequalities. Digital skills and access to quality digital devices confer considerable advantage.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dur.ac.uk/creativitycommission/report/secondreport/>

# 3

## **Areas of enquiry for this report**

**3.1 Need 3.2 Value 3.3 Delivery 3.4 Legacy**

### 3.1 Need

The schools have a positive view of the arts, as evidenced by their engagement in the Jennie Lee Project over several years. However, there is clear evidence of a need for a more consistent and extensive approach to arts and culture, and that teachers wanted **more confidence** in how they delivered arts and culture.

#### Visual Art

Visual Art had the strongest existing provision. Teachers found it easier to find resources online. Several teachers felt more confident with craft activities like cutting and building. The Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland offers guidance around progression in terms of a focus on line and colour.

#### Drama and Music

Teachers felt less confident in delivering these activities and generally lacked specialist knowledge. Drama might involve acting out some scenes from a novel.

One teacher noted: *“most children will have no idea what a theatre is.”*

Another teacher pointed out how,

*“we used to have a company touring come into school, now we have a yearly panto trip to theatre – parents have (to) put money in.”*

Music had a slightly higher general level of confidence amongst teachers, but provision was still uneven.

One teacher noted that there was *“a colleague with Ukelele skills”* but this was not replicated in each school. Another teacher said there was a specific gap around a music specialist in the school.

#### Dance

Dance was generally an activity that took place outside of curriculum time via Scottish country dancing club. It was also the main ‘outside of school activity’ noted by teachers, with school children going to dance clubs paid for by parents.

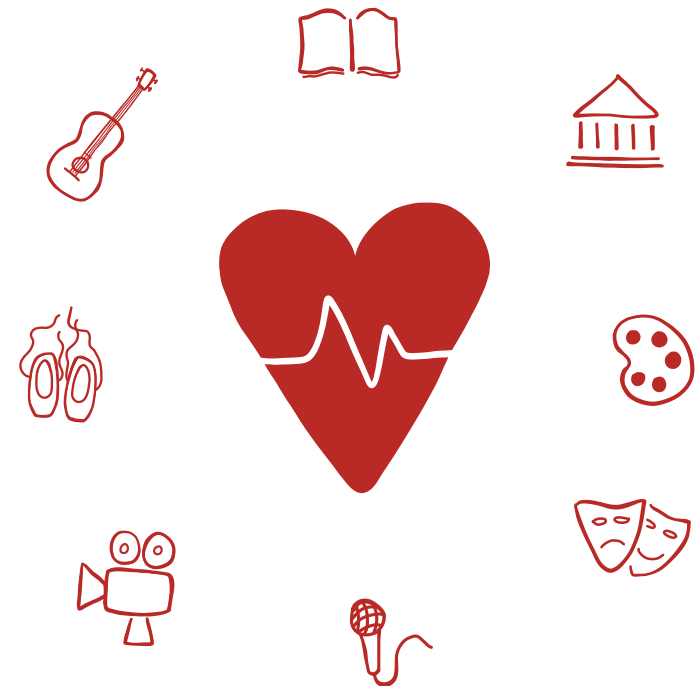
## Well-being

The context of Covid-19, lockdown and home-schooling has created a need for teachers to place a focus on mental health and emotional well-being.

One teacher noted how the focus on health and well-being meant less time for expressive arts. This report recommends offering a way of connecting the arts and culture with the delivery of a well-being agenda, so that the connections are clearer for senior management in schools.

The baseline picture is that of uneven provision and a limited offer for arts and culture in these Fife schools. This is a context where a project like *The Arts Backpack UK* can have a high degree of impact.

Teachers were very open to new ideas and many saw *The Arts Backpack UK* as a way to stimulate their own development and increase their confidence to deliver arts and cultural activities.



## 3.2 Value

### **Teacher Training – Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

*The Arts Backpack UK* ran five CPD sessions, two in Drama, one in Music, one in Dance and one in Visual Art. Feedback from teachers gave strong evidence of the value and need for CPD.

*“One of the best trainings I’ve been on.”*  
Participating teacher

One comment noted that one hour was preferable to one and half hours, in terms of the duration of the training. One of the notable features of the feedback was the value of making it simple and breaking down the learning so that that it was easy for teachers to introduce these subjects into the classroom.

*“It was good to go back to basics and realise how easy it can be to sing songs, incorporating rounds and teaching pulses.”*  
Participating teacher

The need and appetite for CPD came through very clearly from all the interviews, and this is a valuable strand of *The Arts Backpack UK* which can be developed further. The CPD was open to teachers from across the school, not just the teachers participating in *The Arts Backpack UK* pilot. The inclusion of these teachers strengthens the legacy of the project, with other teachers in the school developing confidence in arts and cultural delivery and being ready to take up the next iteration of *The Arts Backpack UK*.





## Recommendations for CPD

### Deliver CPD before starting *The Arts Backpack UK* project

- I Introduce *The Arts Backpack UK* concept, including a screen-share and a tour of the website.
- I Introduce an element of co-design, where teachers could make specific requests for activities or further training. The Project Manager noted how the specific teachers who had been consulted prior to *The Arts Backpack UK* starting in Fife were the ones who demonstrated the most engagement. In other schools, where the pre-consultation had been with the headteacher who had passed the project to another teacher, there was less engagement in the project.

### Create a peer to peer learning and support network

Several teachers requested an opportunity to network with their peers as a way to share tips on delivery, or to swap ideas about the best activities to pick.

A science training delivered via a local Secondary school was cited as an example of how a peer to peer network functioned well. One teacher commented how it would

*“be useful to talk others who were involved in the pilot - to bounce ideas with peers who are working on it – can there be a message-board on the website?”.*

The Project Manger suggested that if there were several *Arts Backpack UK* projects running across the UK, there may be a possibility of running national peer to peer networks. Whilst this would be more complex to manage, the opportunities provided by digital communication make it viable and align well with ideas put forward by the Durham Commission Second Report, which proposes a pilot programme of Creativity Collaboratives bringing together schools to model pedagogies and practices that cultivate creativity in young people. It will aim to reach children who are most disadvantaged by inequity. The online work has already begun with the Creativity Exchange<sup>5</sup>, an online forum for schools and educators to share ideas and best practice in teaching for creativity. The focus of the Creativity Exchange is more about teaching practice rather than external cultural offers so there is space for *The Arts Backpack UK* to share ideas.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.creativityexchange.org.uk/about>

### **Think of *The Arts Backpack UK* as workforce development**

For several teachers, the CPD, the opportunity to meet arts professionals and the chance to engage with *The Arts Backpack UK* website, presented a very strong way of developing their arts and cultural delivery skills.

One teacher noted the importance of meeting an art professional to understand the value of the arts. The CPD experience gave *“a freedom from being too prescriptive, not just making something and taking it home - someone taught me this who does this for a living - someone who does it for a career.”* Another teacher noted how, as a probationary teacher, he did not know what school he would be teaching at next year, but *The Arts Backpack UK* experience had given skills and ideas to carry with him, in his own personal teacher Backpack.

The importance of connecting with the teachers and empowering them to take ownership and have the confidence to fully exploit the resource of *The Arts Backpack UK* was a strong learning outcome for the project delivery team.

*“This project hinges on connecting with teachers and ensuring that we can provide support and contact time in the beginning stages of the project, allowing for more independent scope as the project progresses.”*

Schools’ Co-ordinator

*The Arts Backpack UK* is presented as a Backpack of arts and cultural experiences for the children, it can also be a Backpack of skills development for teachers. *The Arts Backpack UK* is not a ‘one size fits all’ model and the inclusion of professional development journeys for teachers is one way to give it local and sustainable shape.

## Teacher Confidence

All of the teachers who engaged with the project noted how their confidence in delivering arts and cultural activities had increased over the course of the project.

On a scale of 1-10 the average increase in confidence was measured at 2 points or more, for example, one teacher scoring 6 out of 10 at the start of the project moved to 8 out of 10 by the end of the project. Participating teachers gave clear examples of how *The Arts Backpack UK* improved their confidence.

*“I am not confident in music at all but I feel I now have some ideas of where to start.”*

*“The website gave ideas and confidence to try new things rather than those I am always comfortable with.”*

*“I feel that a mixture of the courses and the website has increased my confidence.”*

*“Feeling more confident about creating stories now that I have more ideas to kick them off.”*

There were some interesting reflections about the teacher’s role as the person who introduces and delivers the arts and that confidence in the teacher’s own creative abilities was an important factor. One teacher noted how he was:

*“the face of the arts in the classroom, and I need to develop my own understanding, and enthusiasm and different strategies and positive styles of learning. Our job to is to deliver – and becoming more confident gives me ideas of how else to deliver and use these creative resources.”*



### Art-form v Curriculum links

Teachers made several comments on how linking to Topic was a starting point. *“Everything I was looking for was mainly ‘Space’ based – moving forward I’d look at other things eg. Castles – take my own swing on it.”*

*“Good to link into Topic – I’d never have thought to have done a puppet show – that is so outside of my comfort zone!”*

Some teachers specifically referred to it as *The Arts Backpack UK* project, and for others it was a way of introducing different activities but not identifying specific art-forms. *“Many will not want to join in if it’s too much about the performance - maybe not call it Drama initially.”*

Others enjoyed the definition of the art-form. *“Drama activities – (doing) something you already do but calling it Drama – and good to meet someone who does it for a living.”*

For others there was a pragmatic approach to linking to curriculum need;

*“(the) comic strip – this was a good avenue to go down – we can differentiate that – for example, 3 little pigs – I made a wee comic book – it gave (the children) onomatopoeia which is a success criteria. I see this as Story and Literature, not under Expressive Arts.”*

This approach has the benefit of being pragmatic but makes it harder to identify distinct arts experiences and to measure *The Arts Backpack UK*’s intention to provide five quality arts experiences each year.

The project included some *Arts Backpack UK* specific workbooks but due to lockdown these were not used. They present a good way of giving definition to the project. Similarly, the Arts Award<sup>6</sup> was considered as part of *The Arts Backpack UK*, but this was not included as it is not a formal accreditation in Scotland.

The Arts Award could be a good way of providing art-form definition if that was what the teacher or school wanted in England. This can be considered as another of the resources in *The Arts Backpack UK* through which the schools can take ownership of their delivery of arts and culture.

<sup>6</sup> Arts Award is a system of arts accreditation in England - <https://www.artsaward.org.uk>

## Health and well-being

Teachers recognised that many children might be anxious coming back after the lockdown so that, for example, as one teacher put it, *“getting involved in a comic strip activity might be more accessible than a Drama performance.”*

The Project Manager is clear that a focus on health and well-being is potentially a good way of presenting the *Arts Backpack UK* to the teachers.

*“We can sit this under the well-being agenda as opposed to ticking off the Creative Curriculum through Music, Drama, Art.”*

This is a complex area. Some teachers see the arts as separate from well-being, for example, one teacher commented, *“there is a priority on health and well-being, so the arts get pushed to one side...”*. For one teacher the well-being agenda post-lockdown was represented by the trauma packs issued by the Council and a focus on belonging and a compassionate and connected classroom.

Other teachers saw direct connections with *“activity that works on team development – and requires pupils to work together to develop communication skills – the children need particular development in this area.”*

The links between arts and well-being for *The Arts Backpack UK* were addressed in the Feasibility Study. The report noted the pitfalls of too much emphasis on ‘a goodness programme.’ This context is characterised by a distinctive type of enthusiastic rhetoric because arts and cultural lobbying battles against other, ‘weightier’, agendas for political prioritisation and budgetary allocations. From the child’s perspective, the idea of being told to ‘eat your greens’ or that a portion of ‘cultural spinach’ is good for you, is less attractive.

This view is corroborated by Arts Council England research noted in the Feasibility Study which shows 78% of young people engage with arts activities for fun, and 22% use the arts as a means of socialising.

The Project Manager is aware of these issues and the need to communicate the activities of *The Arts Backpack UK* in different ways for different audiences.

### 3.3 Delivery

#### **Selection of Cultural offer**

The activities in *The Arts Backpack UK* were selected by the Project Manager from three different sources.

1. A call-out for content from ACA members
2. Research of online experiences from local Scottish companies
3. Research of national platforms for content eg. Royal Opera House (ROH).

The criteria the Project Manager used for selection was as follows:

- I Evidence of successful prior engagement (eg. Feedback from participants)
- I Recognised programme of delivery eg. ROH Bridge (design) or Arts Award at home
- I Activities suitable for a range of abilities for pupils and teachers eg. Using pictures for discussion or using technology such as iPads to record
- I Covid-feasible eg. Limited singing or dance activities and guidance on how to do the activities safely
- I Activities that gave children creative agency and ownership
- I Activities that developed critical faculties eg. Discussing a play or artwork
- I Quality lesson plans or lessons with supporting teacher guidance
- I Activities that linked together to make a scheme of work, for example, watching a play, discussing a play and putting on a play

She stressed the importance of quality, and the need to know what good quality looks like and how this may look different in different localities. She noted that the Arts Council England quality principles<sup>7</sup> may be a useful common reference point.

Another aspect that the Project Manager stressed was the view of *The Arts Backpack UK* as a top-up to existing activities; *“if the children are all already taking part in recorder lessons, The Arts Backpack UK does not need to add to that.”*

The Project Manager recognised that this balance would vary with the different iterations of *The Arts Backpack UK*. This would involve a conversation with local partners on how the balance of local to national offers might be weighted.

She also noted how *The Arts Backpack UK* can work to support local creativity through working with local artists and arts organisations.

This conversation would involve assessing the value of local practitioners with lived experience and knowledge of the local area versus access to work available nationally.

Several teachers noted the importance of a range of activities.

*“Having a choice and a big range of options is good. Dipping in and out of everything is good.”*

*The Arts Backpack UK* aims to be built locally in each area through co-design with teachers and with local artists. There is an ambition that children have some choice in picking the activities they do. One school successfully engaged the children in the process of selecting activities. This involved discussion and then a vote.

The Schools Co-ordinator noted that for future iterations the cultural offer will change as restrictions ease and *“artists and others are allowed back into school to deliver other activities that aren’t solely online.”* This reinforces the focus on co-designing locally.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/quality-metrics/quality-principles>

## Online Engagement

The teachers engaged with *The Arts Backpack UK* activities through a web-portal linked to ACA's main website.

The different arts activities are categorised on the website according to duration, as follows:

**Act 1**  
**Short Activities** a single lesson or morning

---

**Act 2**  
**Medium-Length Activities** activity over 2 or 3 days

---

**Act 3**  
**Longer Activities** an extended project running over half a term

---

All the teachers involved saw the value of the website as a resource for new ideas, however there were clear ways in which the presentation of the material on the website can be improved. *The Arts Backpack UK* website was created on a low budget as an add-on to the main ACA website.

The Project Manager noted that there was a need to invest money in the development of a more user-friendly website for future use.

The need for an online presence for the project was supported by the teachers involved.

*"A good resource for coming up with ideas."*  
 Participating Teacher

The questions for *The Arts Backpack UK* team and the local partners include:

- I Does *The Arts Backpack UK* have a different local website for each project?
- I What are the elements of *The Arts Backpack UK* website that are generic and can be transferred between projects?
- I How to categorise and navigate the website?
- I Are there existing online solutions with the right fit for *The Arts Backpack UK*?



## Teacher Comments on Website Navigation

*“The website can be hard to navigate as it takes you to a dashboard area first which can be hard to figure out. I have to fiddle about a bit to get the resources through the website. A button to click to add the activity might be easier than commenting in the comments section too.”*

*“There are lots of activities. It’s hard to identify the activities you’ve done or to find them again. Could it be categorised in art-form so if you wanted drama you could click on it and go there... Or could you have it so that you can put it into your profile - bookmark it. I was doing animation - there are different parts to this - can it all be one place? I was looking for it and I had to go through the theatre stuff I had already done.”*

*“The majority of links were on easy access websites. This was useful as children could access at home during lockdown or if they were self-isolating. For example, for Stop Animation there was a link took you to a website with example videos.”*

## Levels of Complexity and the duration of activities

All the teachers using *The Arts Backpack UK* found the Act 1, Act 2, Act 3 categorisation helpful, and a good way of differentiating the activities, for both the children and the teachers.

The different levels are a useful guide for assessing the length of activity and for gauging the age appropriateness of an activity. One teacher noted how the CPD was important to grow their confidence to adapt a Drama activity for different age-ranges.



### 3.4 Legacy

ACA are hoping to support another pilot of *The Arts Backpack UK* in Fife, potentially with the same schools.

The teachers who were spoken to as part of this evaluation were unanimous that they would like to take part in a new iteration. There was a sense that this pilot had whetted their appetite for what was possible through *The Arts Backpack UK*, and that they would relish the opportunity to take part again with fewer COVID-related challenges.

Two teachers noted that they were keen to share the learning from the project with other teachers in the school. This has already started to happen both formally, with other teachers taking part in the CPD sessions, and informally, with a teacher having conversation across the corridor with a colleague about how the learning could be shared.

The role of the Schools Co-ordinator was noted as being essential by the teachers, and the need to have a face rather than just an email address as a point of contact.

The learning from this Fife pilot, together with the preparedness of the partner schools and teachers would mean that another iteration of *The Arts Backpack UK* Fife would land on fertile ground and would be very likely to flourish.

### **Co-design and Partnership-working**

The Project Manager is clear that *The Arts Backpack UK* is not a 'one-size fits all model' and on the need to co-design with schools and local cultural partners. This leads to the question, what are the transferable elements of *The Arts Backpack UK* Fife?



## Questions to inform next steps

As *The Arts Backpack UK* project considers potential new pilots in the United Kingdom the need to connect with existing programmes and partnerships will be important. In England, these include:

Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs)<sup>8</sup>

Bridge Organisations<sup>9</sup>

Artsmark<sup>10</sup>

The Creativity Exchange and Creative Collaboratives

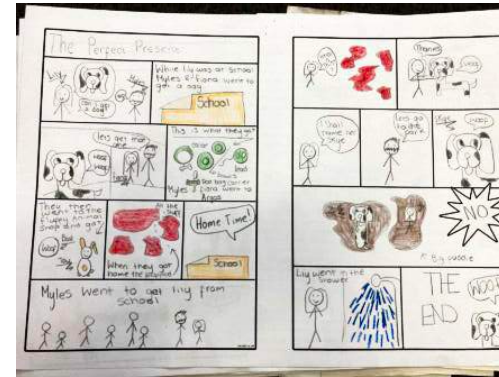
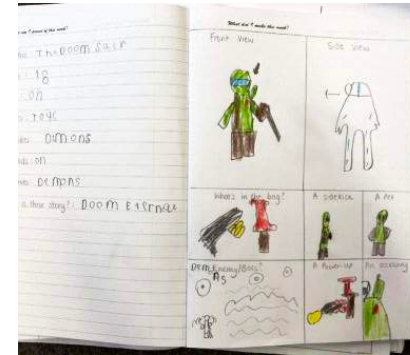
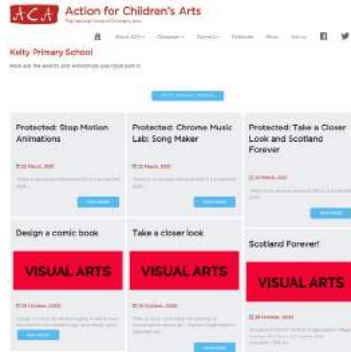
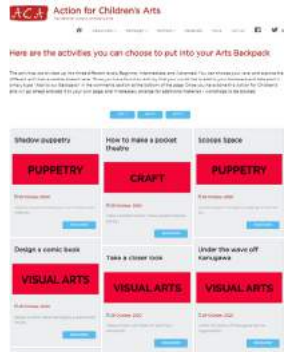
The following questions are designed as useful starting points for conversations with partners.

- I What is the balance of online v live delivery?
- I What is the balance of local v national cultural offers?
- I What makes it an *Arts Backpack UK* project? How do the children relate to the project? As an artistic element of curriculum subjects, or as a discrete arts project?
- I How does *The Arts Backpack UK* identify as a brand?
- I In communicating about *The Arts Backpack UK*, how much emphasis to give to the well-being agenda?
- I Is it a project for a particular year group, or is the ambition for the school to run *The Arts Backpack UK* across multiple years?

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/children-and-young-people/working-partnership>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/children-and-young-people/bridge-organisations>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.artsmark.org.uk>



# 4

## Annexes

## Annexe 1

### Arts Backpack UK – Activities

Fly High Stories: The Elves and the Shoemakers  
Fly High Stories: How to write your own play  
Google Chrome Music Lab: Song Maker  
Google Art and Culture: Art colouring book  
Imagine: Talking about theatre  
Imagine: Creating stop motion animations  
Little Angel Theatre: Scoops space part 1  
Little Angel Theatre: Scoops space part 2  
Little Angel Theatre: How to make a pocket theatre  
Little Angel Theatre: Shadow puppetry  
Logo competition  
Magic Lantern: Scotland Forever!  
Magic Lantern: Street Art  
Magic Lantern: Under the Wave off Kanugawa  
National Galleries of Scotland: Take a closer look  
National Theatre of Scotland: Everything's a Moving Picture  
Royal Opera House: Design and make  
Royal Opera House: Building Blocks Explorer: Dance  
Royal Opera House: Create and Sing: Hansel and Gretel

Scottish Opera: Fever  
Theatre Alibi: Making paper puppets  
Theatre Alibi: Make a story house  
V&A Dundee: Design a comic book  
V&A Dundee: Video game character design  
Wake up / Shake Up!  
Scottish Opera: Fever  
Theatre Alibi: Making paper puppets  
Theatre Alibi: Make a story house  
V&A Dundee: Design a comic book  
V&A Dundee: Video game character design  
Wake up / Shake Up!

## **Annexe 2**

### **A teacher's report on *The Arts Backpack UK* experience**

Written by a Primary 6/7 teacher at Kelty Primary School, teaching 10/11 yr old children

#### **Take a Closer Look and Scotland Forever**

When the children selected the two activities, Take a Closer Look and Scotland Forever, they thought that they would be recreating the art. They enjoyed discussing the art and the style more than they thought initially. They especially liked creating the sounds of the horse's hooves using their hands. The feedback from the children was that they all enjoyed looking at pieces of art and discussing it. They also said that they were able to see pieces of art that they wouldn't normally get to see, especially during COVID. Children were keen to go and look further on the websites to see other pieces of art. We discussed some of the art and they wrote about other pieces within their *Arts Backpack UK* booklets.

#### **Chrome Music Lab**

This has definitely been a favourite activity for the children in all the music learning we have completed this year. The class loved the opportunity to be creative while playing around with the features of sound. They were using the vocabulary for the style of music and types of instruments and experimenting with notes. The feedback from the children was that it was really fun and they enjoyed having the opportunity to be more independent with their creativity (not having a specific task that they needed to achieve). Some focused on the sound they were creating and others tried to create images on the screen and then listened to what it sounded like. They are really keen to continue using this for music learning. The children asked for the link to the website to be posted in our Teams page so that they could use this at home. I noticed that the children with additional support needs really thrived in this activity and were really keen to continue using this. I have also shared this with colleagues who are keen to use this also. Children who normally would stay quiet and avoid music tasks were smiling and engaging and the children enjoyed sharing their creations with their peers and the staff.

### **Stop Motion Animations**

We created stop motion animations as part of home learning. Some children managed this and others did not have the resources or did not complete the assignment. The children who did complete it found it a really exciting opportunity and created a range of interesting animations. They found it could be challenging- keeping the camera still and not getting hands in the videos but over the few weeks that we did this, the animations improved and the children are keen to create something like this in school, when we can get an appropriate app on the iPads to do this. The ones who didn't complete it enjoyed watching the others and were keen to create their own in school, so we plan to do this after Easter. It was a new skill for me, as a teacher, and something that I would like to continue doing with classes in the future.

### **Design a Comic Book**

The children enjoyed this activity, creating their own comic book. We went slightly away from the original idea of creating a comic book using a fairy-tale, and instead used one of the pupils' own pieces of writing to create a comic book. They used images, colour, speech and sound effects to tell their story, which they had written the week before.

Some feedback from the children was that they enjoyed being able to tell a story, that they created, in a different way. They also liked adding speech and sound effects to their writing. Other children liked that they could be more creative than they would in a standard piece of writing and that there were no right or wrong ways to create their comic book.

### **Video Game Character Design**

My class have 'create a video game' as one of our Bucket List Targets to achieve before the end of the school year and this tied in nicely with something that we were already planning on looking into. It was useful for the children to think about all the different aspects of their characters, rather than just what they look like. We will hopefully extend this learning in our ICT time by creating similar characters online and designing a game around the characters.

Some children found it difficult to create a new character and therefore, combined aspects of characters that they already knew to create a new character. They wanted to keep going back to this task and adding more or editing their characters when they had new ideas and this continued for a few days afterwards. The children were keen to compare characters and discuss pros and cons of their own and others characters.



## Credits

*The Arts Backpack UK Fife Pilot has been set up by ACA in collaboration with Fife City Council.*

*Project Manager - Mimi Doulton*

*Schools Co-ordinator - Amanda Glover*

*Evaluation - Michael Judge*

*Editors - Janet Robertson, Dr Chris Abbott*

*Front cover logos - Participating children*

*Many thanks to all the teachers who took part in the project and contributed to this report. Thank you to the young people at Chickenshed Theatre and the readers of First News for their valuable contributions to pilot planning. Our thanks also to the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers and Fife City Council for their generous financial support.*

*ACA is currently fundraising to run a new pilot of The Arts Backpack UK with the same Fife schools in Autumn 2021. Further UK pilots will be announced shortly.*

*For further information please contact Project Manager:  
[mimi.doulton@childrensarts.org.uk](mailto:mimi.doulton@childrensarts.org.uk)*



