

Arts Backpack UK update – November 2022

Our Leicester pilot is currently underway, in partnership with Attenborough Arts Centre and supported by the Mighty Creatives and crowdfunding via Aviva.

We have been so grateful to AAC for their enthusiasm and hard work in getting this project off the ground. We are working in two infant schools and one junior school, with twenty classes in total. This is very different from other backpack pilots in terms of scale: we are delivering the arts to far more children and young people, with generous in-kind support from organisations such as Leicester International Music Festival and AAC's ACE-funded work.

So far, children have been to an exhibition at AAC, had visiting musicians from LIMF into their school, and watched a performance by Daryl Beeton. Each school is also getting a selection of workshops, for example a calligraphy workshop that unites the Farsi and Roman alphabet, in recognition of the fact that over 90% of the children participating in this pilot speak English as a second language.

We are thrilled to be working with Jo Stockdale at Well Within Reach to conduct the evaluation, which aims to place the child voice front and centre. Jo has produced some beautiful visual resources for our learners to use.

Concurrently to this, we have begun a second-phase pilot in Fife as recommended by the evaluation of the first, supported by Fife Council, Creative Scotland and the Robertson Trust. We are working in four of the schools from the preliminary pilot to deliver a more ambitious programme of in-person activity, including three school trips, a number of in-school workshops, and teacher CPD. Once again we are delivering this pilot in partnership with Amanda Glover at Youth Music Theatre Scotland.



As with all our Arts Backpack pilots, we have covered the transport, tickets and materials costs for every child participating in this pilot, so that nobody faces financial barriers to participation. In recognition of the cost of living crisis, we have also budgeted on this pilot for packed lunches for each of the school trips.

Last, but not least, we presented our findings so far to ACA members and friends via Zoom. We will be sharing an abridged version of this presentation with you all soon!