

### Schools' Engagement with Creative and Cultural Education

To find out more about the challenges facing schools and teachers, in 2023, REACH worked with Dr Federico Pendenza and Dr Liz Haddon from the University of York School of Arts and Creative Technologies. The report they produced has helped us to identify and understand issues concerning engagement with cultural and creative education in specific primary and secondary schools within the City of York. The questionnaire was distributed among selected primary and secondary schools in the City of York in July 2023 and in September 2023. The findings in this report offer valuable insights into our current understanding of creative and cultural education, and are being used to guide future development of REACH's work with schools.

The key findings were as follows:

- Connections between schools and local providers of cultural and creative education should be established to tackle limited awareness of the potential cultural and creative offer available across the City of York.
- Cultural and creative initiatives aimed at developing the curriculum offer, with cross-subject collaborations across the curriculum, should be developed to promote cultural and creative education across different subjects and support students' learning and development.
- Hands-on activities should be prioritised to spark and enhance learning. These activities should include practical outcomes to boost children's motivation.
- Priority should be given to disciplines such as Visual Arts, Theatre and Performance, Digital Music, Music and Sound, Dance, Storytelling and Creative Writing.
- The provision of cultural and creative education should address and support the requirements of students with additional needs.
- To tackle accessibility and inclusion issues, extra-curricular activities should also be offered, but cost may need to be minimised and provision should ideally be within curricular hours.
- Specific work with target groups of students should be developed to enhance their confidence, self-esteem, and well-being. However, aims and feasibility may need to be discussed with the individual schools to mitigate potential frictions with school ethos and regulations regarding parity and equity.
- CPD on cultural and creative education for staff should be offered to help staff embed cultural and creative education into the curriculum. It is recommended that schools' interests are sought prior to discussing potential benefits and content.
- A REACH Schools Network could be developed to provide training opportunities for school staff and enhance networking between schools and local cultural organisations and providers. A hybrid approach (in-person/online) could be offered, with meetings taking place once a term and during twilight hours. Nevertheless, the feasibility of establishing a digital network via social media platforms (such as Facebook or Instagram) may require individual discussions with schools due to the limited consensus on this matter.