



Watch this Space teacher training event at FACT, Liverpool

Cover image: Pupils from Peckham Park Primary School at South London Gallery. © Richard Eaton

engage in the visual arts

Inspiring education in galleries

Briefing note 6: working with teachers and initial teacher trainees



Watch this Space has been funded jointly by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education as part of the Strategic Commissioning Programme for Museum and Gallery Education. **Watch this Space** is managed by **engage** and has been developed in association with the Museums Libraries and Archives Council.

Strategic Commissioning for Museum and Gallery Education aims to develop capacity for galleries and museums to provide learning opportunities for children and young people and to make that learning increasingly effective. Since 2004, **enquire** and **Watch this Space**, the strands working with contemporary art and managed by **engage**, have involved more than 100 galleries across England.

enquire has supported opportunities for thousands of children and young people to work with galleries and artists. Through these projects clusters of galleries, schools, youth groups, artists and universities have researched what children and young people learn through engaging with contemporary art. In doing so they have explored the conditions that support and enable that learning. The published research reports can be found at www.en-quire.org or purchased from **engage**.

engage is the National Association for Gallery Education: the lead professional association promoting understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts through advocacy, professional development, research and projects and disseminating practice.

engage has a membership of around 1,000, including galleries, museums and arts centres across the UK and in 18 countries internationally. **engage** is funded by Arts Council England and receives project funding from Creative Scotland and the Arts Council of Wales.

For further details visit www.engage.org

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Charity Registration Number 1087471
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This series of briefing notes explores how gallery education addresses social provision and educational opportunities for children and young people, in the context of current arts, education and local authority policies.

Since 2004, **Watch this Space** has supported placements for teachers and trainee teachers in galleries and for gallery educators and artists in schools. By learning how galleries work, finding out about contemporary art, and about techniques used by gallery educators, teachers have been able to gain greater understanding of the learning benefits of working with galleries, and how that learning contributes to school plans and the curriculum.

Gallery educators and artists developed partnerships with teachers and learnt about school policies, practices and the curriculum, which will enable them to provide appropriate and tailored learning opportunities.

Key research findings

The evaluation of Watch this Space¹ identified two main benefits for teachers: the development of knowledge, skills and understanding and personal development.

The Watch this Space programme:

- increased teachers' knowledge of contemporary art and artists and of how to access artists and gallery educators
- demonstrated that students respond positively to contemporary art and can become confident young artists
- demonstrated the flexibility of galleries in meeting teachers' needs and removed teachers' perceived barriers to visiting galleries
- expanded teachers' arts and education networks, the potential for partnership working and professional development
- increased opportunities for cross-curricular working through engagement with contemporary art and artists
- increased awareness of the opportunities for pupils to take part in arts activities out of school hours such as Arts Award and gallery workshops
- in some cases reinvigorated the profile of the Art Department in school

In relation to their personal development teachers reported:

- increased confidence in working with contemporary art
- reconnection with their own art practice, which was refreshed and expanded
- a new sense of their role as a teacher and as a co-learner
- renewed recognition of the value of professional development

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¹ An independent evaluation of Watch this Space and enquire was carried out by Stuart Davies Associates in 2010 and can be found at www.engage.org/downloads/enquire_advocacy.pdf

Case studies



Sue Crudgington and students at Shire Hall Gallery.
© Staffordshire County Council

The experienced teacher

Sue Crudgington, Director of Art and Design at Friary School, Lichfield, worked with Shire Hall Gallery in Stafford, to enrich the Key Stage 3 curriculum. The partnership also provided a Graduate Teacher Placement (GTP) student with the opportunity to learn about working with a gallery, and helped Shire Hall to improve its learning offer for secondary students.

A visit to the Gallery to see a related exhibition extended a Year 8 project about insects, and a practical workshop was specially arranged. Eight students were selected to make work at the glass workshop at Wolverhampton University. Finally, the class curated their work in the School Art Exhibition at Shire Hall. The project brought professional development for the teacher and trainee, significant enrichment opportunities for the young people, and a continuing relationship with the Gallery.

I learned a great deal that will help with further programmes of study and visits in the future. My GTP student was introduced to a complex and multi-layered programme of study that included a great deal of liaison work, planning sessions and organisational skills. This has enriched her understanding of working with other agencies, what can be gained by the interaction between school and gallery/museum, and how important networking can be for the provision of Art & Design education in a school.

Previously we attended larger galleries only as visitors. This was a great networking opportunity that provided the school with more contacts in the wider community. Really strong local links were made with Shire Hall Gallery and with Wolverhampton University. It increased the prospect for us to exhibit students' work, raising the profile of the department and the school.

We will be organising an annual Year 8 visit to Shire Hall Gallery. This will encourage youngsters to visit the gallery with family and friends and will also provide inspiration for enrichment activities back at school. Sue Crudgington, Director of Art and Design, Friary School

The secondary teacher trainee

Hillside School was one of two non-visiting Liverpool schools that were invited to work with The Bluecoat arts centre. The teachers were regular mentors for PGCE Art and Design trainees studying at Liverpool John Moores University. They, and the trainees, worked alongside gallery educators to deliver projects for Key Stage 3 pupils based on exhibitions at the Gallery, leading to an exhibition at The Bluecoat. Managing a gallery visit is now embedded in each trainee's placement at Hillside School.

I took part in Watch this Space in my first term of PGCE, and was one of the first students from our course to be involved. There was an immediate impact on my teaching practice and confidence; for example in learning how to engage young people and work with a challenging exhibition. I developed project management skills, and through putting on the exhibition I learned about



University of Wolverhampton glass making workshop.
© Staffordshire County Council



Erin Bushell (teacher) presenting at a Watch this Space event at The Bluecoat. © Annie McLean

planning timescales and working with other professionals and understanding their needs and objectives

Participation in Watch this Space supported my being offered my current job. The school works with Creative Partnerships, local galleries and artists in school. I am using the techniques that I learnt through Watch this Space, for example planning visits and work with artists, observation techniques and follow-up.

I teach on the Diploma in Creative and Media and so far we have made visits to theatres and museums as well as having artists come into school. If I wasn't in a school that was supportive of out of school visits I would be committed to making them happen. Erin Bushell, teacher, Heath Park Business and Enterprise College, Wolverhampton

A primary teacher and teacher trainee

Two teachers and two teacher trainees from Cherbourg Primary School, Eastleigh, worked with an artist and gallery educator from the John Hansard Gallery. The theme of 'journeys' linked the book Year 4 pupils were studying with a photographic exhibition at the gallery, and provided the basis for an exciting cross-curricular project involving literacy and art. The school used the partnership as part of a strategy to refresh teaching. The trainees, who would be on placement at the school the following term, worked alongside their future mentors to gain an understanding of the potential of working with galleries.

The unit worked well as a model for curriculum redesign and identified some important factors. Cross-curricular units allow for in-depth development of specific skills, knowledge and concepts. It has supported the development of our curriculum. As the new Art Co-ordinator, it has made me focus more on ensuring that there is a progression of skills that allow children to respond to and create art with more confidence.

The gallery visit was exciting and made an impact. It is a resource we will use again and try to embed in different year groups in school. Most of our students had never been to a gallery before so this was a huge opportunity. Their sense of achievement in their finished work is tremendous. Gilly McCully, Year 4 teacher and Art Co-ordinator

The training session was brilliant and I came away brimming with ideas for things I can use in the classroom once I have qualified. I hope to carry that knowledge with me throughout my career.

The project enabled me to observe first-hand the opportunities there are available for schools to work in partnership with galleries and arts organisations. It has given me lots of ideas for using art in the classroom and reinforced my belief that contemporary art is not beyond the abilities of primary school children.

Madeleine Jenness, trainee teacher

It has been a very valuable experience for the trainees and potentially for all of our trainees. The project improved our partnership with the John Hansard Gallery, giving us confidence and enthusiasm to participate in further projects, and demonstrated the benefits of a more personalised approach to teacher training. Jo Wright, tutor, Primary PGCE Programme, University of Southampton

