



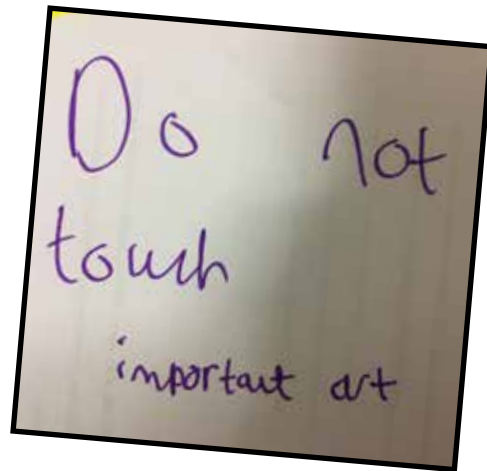
Developing capacity, knowledge and skills through embedding arts and culture into the lives of young people.



“They trick us in to learning without us even realising”

**PHASE ONE: January – September 2017
A Review**





A unique collaboration between Coleridge Community College, Cambridge City Council, Cambridge Junction, NIE, Menagerie, University of Cambridge Museums, including Fitzwilliam Museum and Kettle's Yard and The Museum of Cambridge.

ACTIVATE is a My Cambridge project funded through the Cambridge City Council Sharing Prosperity Fund.



Contents:

An introduction:	2
Aims:	3
Partners:	4
Recruitment and Development:	5–6
An Overview:	7
Outcomes:	8–15
Feedback from the Audience:	16–17
Arts Award:	18
Working in Partnership:	19–20
Dissemination:	21
Lessons:	21

“I used to think Cambridge was really small. I didn’t even know that there was a thing called The Junction, or the museums. But now I know, Cambridge is bigger in my mind and in reality.”

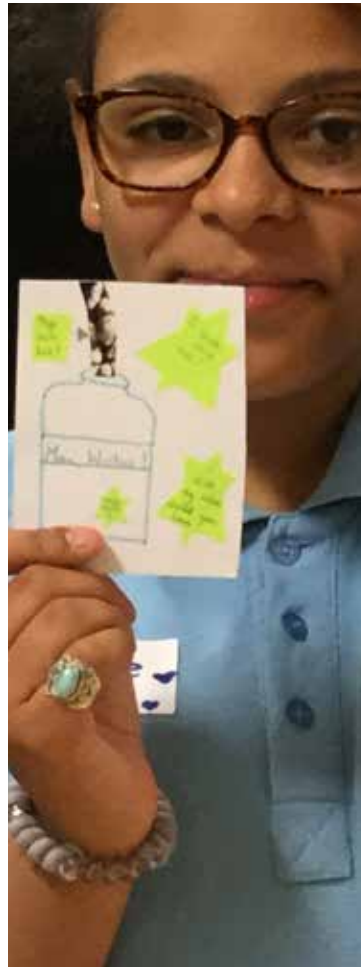
ACTIVATE: An introduction

“In a recent Centre for Cities report, Cambridge was identified as the most unequal city in the UK.

Whilst we have the sixth highest average weekly earnings of any city in the UK, the benefits of prosperity have not been shared by all residents in the city. Evidence shows that a significant proportion of people are experiencing poverty, while others may be at risk of poverty due to factors such as low wages and rapidly increasing housing costs. One in 10 households earns less than £16,518 per year and poverty is concentrated in particular wards and neighbourhoods that are primarily in the North and East of the city. The difference in life expectancy between the highest ranked neighbourhood compared to the lowest is around 10 years. Centre for Cities identified the Cambridge population as having the highest level of qualifications of any city in the UK, with two thirds of residents holding higher level qualifications. However, data suggests that social mobility is an issue in the city. Cambridge has the fifth lowest score in the Social Mobility Index of all local authorities nationally, based on outcomes for young people in terms of educational attainment, employment and housing market. Less than a third of pupils receiving Free School Meal achieved GCSE 5+ grades A*-C, compared to two thirds of children not eligible for free school meals in the city.

In light of this divide, Cambridge City Council has a clear vision to lead a united city, ‘One Cambridge – Fair for All’, in which economic dynamism and prosperity are combined with social justice and equality. We have had an Anti-Poverty Strategy since 2014.”

Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti Poverty Officer,
Cambridge City Council



ACTIVATE is a My Cambridge project funded through the Cambridge City Council Sharing Prosperity Fund, designed to support Cambridge City Council’s Anti-Poverty Strategy, specifically ‘supporting the educational achievement and aspirations of children from low income families’.

ACTIVATE was designed to address the entrenched inequalities faced by young people living in poverty in an otherwise affluent and highly educated city. The young people taking part in the project live in a city where many other young people take development through arts and cultural activity for granted, which makes it doubly difficult for them to value their own perspectives, make their voices heard, and put themselves forward for leadership roles. Through ACTIVATE participants’ engagement in

cultural activity will shift from the level nationally associated with children in low income families to that associated with high income families.

The two year project was offered to up to 30 pupil premium students across years 7 and 8 at Coleridge Community College, a Parkside Federation school. Coleridge was chosen as it is catchment for one of the most economically deprived areas in the city, with a greater than average number of Pupil Premium pupils (students eligible for free school meals).

To ensure the participants are offered a varied and high quality experience of arts and culture from across the city, ACTIVATE works in partnership with Cambridge Junction, Menagerie Theatre, The University of

Cambridge Museums, Kettle's Yard, the Museum of Cambridge and NIE Theatre. Workshops are delivered by professional artists, actors, curators and directors, providing consistent, high quality, progression based arts and cultural activity.

The sessions are extra-curricular and voluntary - held on Wednesday afternoons after school - with the young people specifically invited to take part in conjunction with their school. The school identifies young people on free school meals (FSM) most likely to benefit from the intervention.

The programme of activity has been highly tailored and designed to develop self-awareness, resilience and understanding of their potential to change, in particular focusing on their capacity for metacognition and self-regulation. There has been a clear focus on progression, aiming for regular and on-going dialogue, reflection and evaluation between the young people themselves, their school and the arts and cultural providers.

This first phase of the project has focused on developing their own capacity, knowledge, and skills through arts activity in a supported group setting.

The second phase of the project will further develop their leadership role, specifically as young community leaders, identifying and commissioning arts and cultural activity not only for themselves but also for their peers.



ACTIVATE: Aims

Through delivering consistent, progression based high quality arts and culture engagement ACTIVATE aims to improve outcomes for young people, including:

- **increased educational attainment;**
- **increased aspiration;**
- **increased capacity for creativity, questioning and innovation;**
- **increased sense of being able to make a difference;**
- **improved metacognition;**
- **improved self regulation;**
- **increased awareness of the city's cultural offer; and**
- **increased engagement with the city's cultural offer.**



ACTIVATE is part of the My Cambridge initiative, which aims to support every young person to be able to confidently construct their own cultural life, drawing on and feeling connected to the whole of the city in which they live.

My Cambridge is a partnership project working across education, arts and culture, and children and young people's services (steering group members provide significant educational and cultural expertise, including representatives from Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Kite Teaching School Alliance, Cambridge Arts and Cultural Leaders, University of Cambridge Museums, and the Festival Bridge).



ACTIVATE brings different skill sets together and combines them with the detailed knowledge held by the school about individual young people, their attainment and their potential, enabling a highly targeted and young person centred programme of activity focused on increased educational attainment and aspiration.

ACTIVATE: Working in partnership

Coleridge Community College is the catchment school for Abbey - one of the most deprived areas in Cambridge. The school has a high number of students on Free School Meals (FSM). The Centre for Cities Report evidences the low level of academic achievement of students on FSM and the gap between them and students from more affluent families. Looking to address these issues, Dan Roberts, Deputy Head of Coleridge, was keen to partner with ACTIVATE and give support to identify and select participants and to measure impact using the Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) evaluation tool.

All the arts and cultural organisations commissioned through this project have experience of working with young people in challenging circumstances and are committed to engaging the participants in their wider programmes of delivery, in particular opportunities for work experience, placements and, if appropriate for the young people, their apprenticeship programmes. Each organisation has different specific areas of expertise.

Kettle's Yard has particular expertise in supporting young people to take the lead. Throughout 2015, Kettle's Yard worked in partnership with Cambridge Youth Foyer (accommodation for young people at risk of homelessness); Cambourne Youth Club; Changing Frames Youth Support Service; and GAPS (an NVQ programme for NEET young people).

Cambridge Junction offers a comprehensive programme of Creative Learning opportunities that put young people at the heart of our organisation and our building. Complementing the programme you see on our stages, our Creative Learning work focuses on the contemporary performing arts. We use theatre-making, dance and music practises to provide accessible, impactful and enjoyable creative activities. Led by professional artists, with experience of working with young people

with a range of needs, we work hard to engage young people who would not normally access opportunities, and reach those who are hardest to reach.

University of Cambridge Museums is recognised as a highly successful Arts Award provider, and delivers regular Arts Award programmes for vulnerable young parents, looked after children and disabled young people. UCM have experience using the Award in activities to support transition from Primary to Secondary school, and to provide structured progression within extended projects with schools. They also work with ChYPPS across the city to provide highly accessible arts and cultural activity as part of the Summer Daze programme.

Menagerie Theatre has developed good practice in working with vulnerable young people to explore their stories through devised theatre. In 2015 they worked with Coleridge Community College to identify and support a group of year 8 students living in challenging circumstances, who worked together to create and present a drama piece.

New International Encounter (NIE) is an international company that makes award-winning theatre performances and projects through a mix of physical theatre, award-winning theatre performances multiple languages, live music, storytelling and a European ensemble, forging new narratives of place.

The Museum of Cambridge is a small independent museum with an outreach programme that provides a voice for a diverse mix of local people and groups. With a strong focus on diversity, inclusivity and creating a sense of place through oral histories, community exhibitions, film and events it connects residents to one another across Cambridge and enables them to tell their own stories.

ACTIVATE: Recruitment and development



a

with ACTIVATE and Coleridge School at The Junction on Wednesday 7th Dec 2016

ACTIVATE was introduced to year 7 and 8 pupils at Coleridge Community College in November 2016, with a short film describing the project shown in form classes and an assembly for 60 Pupil Premium pupils selected by the school. This was followed by trip to The Cambridge Junction, held during school hours, to see the play Beauty and The Beast and meet the cast, which 22 students attended.

Pupils were sent letters, fliers promoting ACTIVATE were displayed in the school and workshop sessions started in January, exploring and mapping the local area, places and objects that hold personal importance and the stories attached to them.

Five students attended the first session - a follow-up recruitment assembly workshop the following week encouraged 17 students to attend the second session, with 11 of these continuing throughout Phase One.



Where is your favorite place?

- My house
- My house
- The theatre
- Cherry Hinton Hall
- The Fitzwilliam
- My house
- The Lion's Buffet
- The Light Cinema
- The Fitzwilliam
- My room
- My house

December 2016



Early observations and adaptations

- Observing the group in the first few weeks and working with the school to identify needs, we recognised that we needed to adapt the original programme and deliver a six week kick-starter project to focus the group, galvanise energy and act as a show piece as part of the recruitment drive.
- Initial sessions ran after school from 3.30–5.30pm but this was soon changed to 3pm–5pm as we realised students were more focused on coming to the sessions if they came directly from their last lesson.
- The Christmas break fractured attention. Mr Burgess, Head of Create, started his post in January, so we hadn't been able to develop a relationship with him prior to that and the students hadn't had continuity in that period.



Sessions have a set structure to them, starting with a game to bring the group together and an introduction to the session and activities. Ground rules and group pledges have been established through group conversations and are referred to at the beginning of – and throughout – each session.

A 15 minute snack break at 4pm gives the group a relaxed time in which to chat. The project co-ordinator attends every session, developing a strong relationship with the group and workshop leaders and observing developments and any issues that may occur.



The partners worked together to develop the 'Museum of Us' programme over the year. Working in pairs to deliver sessions in four week blocks, with a cross over session at the end of each block, the group have developed strong working relationships with all the partners and the film-maker working to record to process.



Phase 1 – The Museum of Us PLAN

- To focus on the local social history and its connection to contemporary communities, people and places in Cambridge now.

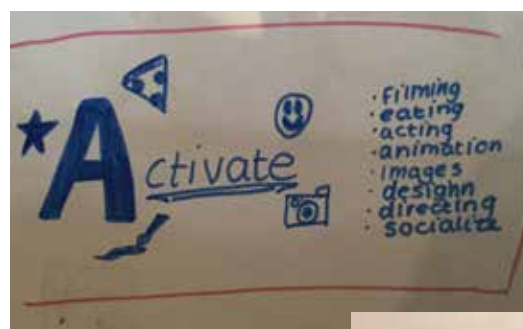


- To use the collection as inspiration to explore, compare and connect the histories of the ACTIVATE young people and their communities in Cambridge.

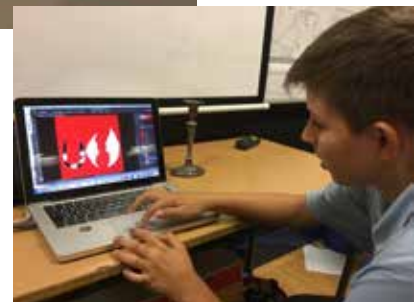
- Through exploring the past, young people will decide on contemporary items that can be used to create a modern collection for contemporary audiences.

- Modern and past objects will be used to develop stories as part of The Museum of Us to be performed at Cambridge Junction and in the school.

- The participants will take part in live performance, marketing, event management, film, animation, sound, stewarding, interpretation, design and production management.



ACTIVATE



The group worked together to develop and design the ACTIVATE logo and



ACTIVATE: An overview

Phase One of the ACTIVATE project has focused on developing the group's capacity, knowledge and skills through delivering the arts activities and forging the students' creative connection to Cambridge, their friends and themselves. The end piece – 'The Museum of Us' – was an interactive theatre piece shown at the Hotbed Theatre Festival at The Cambridge Junction and an exhibition displayed at The Museum of Cambridge throughout the Summer. Showcasing at The Junction and The Museum of Cambridge not only enabled the participants to work alongside other professionals at the venues, it ensured that the students' work was held in esteem. The students' felt a sense of ownership of these cultural venues and were also able to bring along family and friends - a new experience for many.

Hands-on workshops have developed skills in acting, writing, directing, film making, visual interpretation, 3-dimensional modeling, curating and design. Participants are developing skills, strategies and coping mechanisms which they are able to carry through into both their academic and personal lives.

As well as the creative professionals delivering the workshops, ACTIVATE has commissioned external artists, curators, actors and film-makers to develop a deeper understanding of creative roles, skills and the career steps taken. Artists have been involved in running the workshops and developing the performance piece and the group took part in 'Hunch' with artist Emma Smith. The participants interviewed curators, directors and other professionals during visits to museums and cultural venues and have developed relationships with creative professionals, dispelling a sense of 'otherness', nurturing aspirations, establishing links throughout the city and opening up future possibilities.

THE MUSEUM OF US
A performance installation from ACTIVATE exploring the Coleridge Community College students' creative connection to Cambridge, their friends and themselves.

THE MUSEUM OF US
Saturday the 8th of July
The Hotbed Festival at The Junction, Cambridge
Time: 3.30pm – 4.30pm Free (but ticketed with £1 booking fee)
Tickets: www.junction.co.uk or on the door (space limited).

Wednesday the 12th of July.
The Auditorium at Coleridge Community College.
Time 3.15pm – 4.15pm. Free admission. Arrive at reception for 3pm.

ACTIVATE is a unique collaboration between Coleridge Community College, Cambridge City Council, Cambridge Junction, N.E. Managieria, University of Cambridge Museums, including Fitzwilliam Museum and Kettle's Yard and The Museum of Cambridge.

CONNECT THE ARTS
CONNECT CAMBRIDGE
CONNECT FRIENDS

ACTIVATE



Through performing at The Cambridge Junction and exhibiting at The Museum of Cambridge, participants have not just familiarised themselves with the cultural offer, they have become a part of it. Through their performance and exhibition the group have also extended the audience. Friends, tutors and family members have not only visited and felt a part of these venues but they have also started to see the participants in a different light - as actors, curators and advocates of Cambridge culture.

Documentation filmed throughout Phase One can be seen on the website www.activatecambridge.co.uk or on our ACTIVATE Cambridge Youtube channel.

ACTIVATE: Outcomes

Increased educational attainment

Although numbers fluctuate around half the group have Special Educational Needs. Others are shy, anxious, struggle with friendship groups or have low attendance at school. Reducing stress levels, overcoming shyness, developing strategies to deal with anxiety and forging supportive friendships has enabled the students to feel more comfortable in the school environment and given them the confidence to participate more in class. Through this increased confidence in school, and their performances as part of ACTIVATE, tutors state they have gained more insight into the students – seeing them in a more positive light – giving them a greater understanding of the child: their abilities, aspirations and needs. Gaining confidence, forging friendships and relaxing in the school environment has helped the students to engage more in the classroom, to ask questions, focus on their tasks without anxiety and overcome fear of writing. This evaluation has been gathered throughout the year, through observation, discussion and informal interviews with the participants and conversation with key members of staff and workshop leaders.

Developing supportive friendships and relaxing in the school environment::

- **“ACTIVATE helps me with my stress. I have been stressing a lot. It’s made me more sociable. I’m not normally sociable. It takes my mind off stuff that is going on, stuff at home and that. It’s made me closer to some of my old primary school friends.”**
- **“It has helped me to become friends with more people and build stronger friendships. And helped in class as I have a stronger understanding about Create subjects. I never used to like to do any of the creative subjects school – drama, music, dance and art – I am less reluctant in school now.”**



“ACTIVATE tricks us into learning stuff without us even realising.”

- **SENCO: “She is behind at school and there are concerns about her progress mainly because of her lack of attendance rather than ability. She is often stressed – what ACTIVATE is doing is making her comfortable in the school and with other people – she is making friends.”**
- **“I have made new friends and some of my friends that I didn’t really get on with before I now get on with. And I get help from them now, because of my dyslexia I am always forgetting what the teacher says, now I ask my friends.”**
- **SENCO: “He was very shy, quiet and reserved, he spent a lot of time in the Engage Room space. He seems to be getting on fine now and there is no longer any cause for concern. Being involved in ACTIVATE helped bring him out.”**
- **Tutor: “He has really developed over the year. He came to the school in January, so ACTIVATE really helped him to forge new friendships. His friends in school are the friends he made in ACTIVATE. He is calmer now and taking more responsibility for himself and his work.”**

Building confidence and reducing stress levels:

- **"I have let my imagination expand through acting. I have learnt to work in a team and helped other people. I talk to more people now. It has helped me focus in class - I got distracted and nervous before, but knowing more people has made me more confident."**
- **Tutor: "There are a lot of behavior issues, but she does seem more confident and more creative now, she loves writing and feeling calmer does wonders."**
- **"I think I am better at communicating now, I am more confident in talking to people."**
- **"It has helped me to make new friends and helped with my acting. It has helped me feel more confident in class."**
- **Tutor: "Last year he was so nervous he used to keep going out of the class to be sick, he couldn't put anything down on paper because he was so worried about making a mistake. ACTIVATE has given him so much confidence - he is far more relaxed and able to put his ideas down on paper."**
- **Tutor: "He has slowed down, in a positive way, and he takes more care of his work. I think it is very likely a result of ACTIVATE: looking closely and considering the presentation - thinking about how things look."**
- **I have started to do more drama - because normally I am very shy, but drama helps me be more outspoken. I am not one to try new things and I don't like to be the centre of attention, but with this I am starting to do that. It has increased my confidence a lot - I will put my hand up more and talk more."**
- **SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator): "He flourishes with a sense of responsibility. He has dyslexia, made worse by lack of confidence in himself, so helping him with his self esteem really helps with his reading and writing."**
- **"I was very shy but I learnt to speak to the camera and I walked on the grid at The Junction. I was very determined. I learnt to be more creative, to work with my friends. I took the initiative to play piano. It makes me happy every week I look forward to ACTIVATE - I am excited to go to school on a Wednesday now."**
- **Tutor: "In watching the students perform and tell their stories - especially the ones who are quiet in class - I got to know them and understand them better. I now have a greater understanding of their needs which helps me to help them."**

"ACTIVATE is a good thing. You get to do the things other people can only dream of."



Increased aspiration

ACTIVATE opens up new opportunities and widens the vision of

what the students' future could be through working with professionals, talking to actors, curators and artists and seeing them at work and through having a broader view of the city and the options available to them. It also gives students the sense that they can achieve something they believed they are incapable of, that they CAN achieve – getting a taste of success opens up new opportunities and gives them confidence to explore more options currently available – both in and out of school – as well as in the future.



Dec 7 2016
 Students walked to Cambridge Junction from Coleridge to see *Beauty and The Beast* as an introduction to **ACTIVATE**. 21 students attended. This was a new experience for most of the group. Of these, 10 signed up to **ACTIVATE** and 7 performed in *The Museum of Us* at the same venue the following July.

- **SENCO: "ACTIVATE gives her the experience of success and, for her, school can't give her that."**
 - **"I would love to write and perform a musical play."**
 - **"I want to be an architect."**
 - **"I would like to go on to do the Silver Arts Award. I would like to do more computer work - make our own movie which we can edit ourselves. I would like to learn animation and computer graphics."**
 - **"I'm going to do GCSE Art."**
- "I have started to write poetry."**
- **"I am writing a novel. I want to win lots of awards."**
 - **"I make other people smile, and make myself smile. I like to talk about serious things, but put a comedic twist on it. Being on stage I pretend I am just talking to one of my best friends. I discovered I am funny - it felt really great. It makes people laugh – makes them see what kids could be in the future. It's a great feeling. If you can make yourself laugh you know you are good. Inside school I get insulted a lot about my hygiene and my hair - they say I smell and my hair looks like a poodle - but now I can joke about it. I want to be a stand up comedian. This is my first step. I felt nervous but I learn to live with it. I like making people laugh."**

Increasing creativity, questioning and innovation



Through learning creative skills and developing creative thinking throughout the development of the project, participants have gained the ability to explore the creative options available to them, and the confidence to take part. Students have developed their capacity to observe, question and innovate change, and they have been able to transfer this creative thinking process to the classroom and beyond.

- **"I learnt performance skills and it gave me the courage to act in front of the whole of year 7 as part of CAS."**
- **Parent: "I can not thank you enough for the amazing change in confidence for my son. He started the year being incredible shy and quiet. Since ACTIVATE he has gone on to be awarded Drama Student of The Year! I definitely feel ACTIVATE contributed to this huge achievement. Thank you!"**
- **"I have learnt filming and teamwork - working together so everything ran smoothly. I have learnt to take the initiative by asking people questions. And I have responded to suggestions. "**
- **"I built on the script, like I build my story writing. I would like my books to be published – I started writing before Christmas and wanted to win a competition - I won the story writing competition. Writing the script has helped with developing my writing."**
- **"I have learnt how to research. I researched old maps of Cambridge and England – it was really**



Artist Lisa Temple Cox: **"I was really impressed by working with this group: not only did they take on the methods of making that I showed and the construction suggestions I made, but they took them further to work up really creative, individual responses to both the practice of box-based artworks and the themes that they had been already exploring. Not only that, but their responses to my work – and the questions they asked – were quite different to those I've experienced before, and very pertinent."**

interesting to see how it has changed – I have really enjoyed finding out about the history of Cambridge."

- **"As soon as I get a solid idea I can run with it, and work with a small group before working with the whole group."**
- **Tutor: "She is more open to suggesting things now, and to asking for help."**
- **"I was very shy but I learnt to speak to the camera. I was very determined. I learnt to be more creative, to work with my friends. I took the initiative to play piano."**
- **"I like ACTIVATE because I like the creativity. I like making the boxes. We are telling each other about ourselves through our acting and stories."**
- **"I have let my imagination expand through acting. I have learnt to work in a team and help other people."**
- **Tutor: "He has become more creative, more 'focused creative', his interpretation of work now has the**

higher thought. It has unlocked his creativity - he is writing, drawing, creating poems."

- **"I am looking forward to doing the performance, it's going to be awesome. I never used to like to do any of the creative subjects in school – drama, music, dance and art – I am less reluctant in school now."**



“The project has had a huge impact on students’ development. Their verbal vocabulary has been extended and they have developed a real ‘cultural capital’ - becoming more aware of what the city has to offer and accessing experiences and places they otherwise couldn’t afford.”

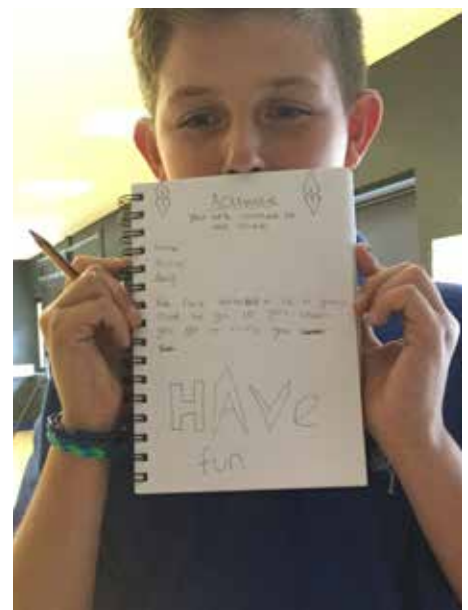
Russell Burgess
Head of Create, Parkside Federation.



Increased sense of being able to make a difference

During Phase One we have focused on building a sense of self confidence and strength: the recognition that their voices are important. During phase two we will be developing how to make a difference.

- **“I am awesome and legendary and so is our play.”**
- **“We are artists. We never give up! We are brave!”**
- **“It makes people laugh – makes them see what kids could be in the future. It’s a great feeling.”**
- **“I was very shy but I learnt to speak to the camera. I was very determined.”**



Improved metacognition - recognising thought processes and applying them in the classroom

The participants are building resilience through feeling more confident, developing techniques to overcome anxiety and recognising their own abilities. They are starting to learn new skills – stepping out of their comfort zone – and applying that to other areas of their lives. The participants have shaped the project through developing ongoing reflection and analysis skills, identifying areas for improvement and self-regulation. They are learning to manage their feelings, deal better with difficulty and stress, adapt their own behavior and be more in control of what they are doing.

- **“You have to get into character, not to be scared. At first I was a bit nervous, but then stayed in character to answer audience questions. My voice was louder.”**
- **“I spoke on the stage and I was really frightened but I said more than I thought I would.”**
- **Parent: “It’s given him so much more confidence - with social media they just don’t interact. It takes him out of his comfort zone and he is doing things he wouldn’t usually do.”**
- **“The biggest challenge was speaking in front of people and overcoming that fear. I have let my imagination expand through acting. I have learnt to work in a team and helped other people.”**
- **“Performing can be difficult, you have to keep remembering your lines. You have to try hard to not argue.”**
- **“The first time we did a performance I was very scared and I couldn’t do it. But I overcame it - I realised that the worst thing that could happen is that I would forget my lines... It was so scary but I think it was one of the best things I have ever done, because now I know I can do something I am scared of.”**
- **“I just did a performance and it is quite shocking. In rehearsals it’s all fun and laughter, but actually being on stage is so shocking. My anxiety mixes up all my emotions. It makes me want to throw up. I found it very hard sitting and waiting to perform. I was very anxious - I was actually calmer when everyone was looking at me. After I thought ‘o my god did I actually do that?’. I had to keep swallowing sick.”**
- **“I am not one to try new things and I don’t like to be the centre of attention, but with this I am starting to do that.”**
- **“Normally I am relatively quiet - but I have gained the confidence to perform by coming along to ACTIVATE every week. As soon as I get a solid idea I can run with it, and work with a small group before working with the whole group. It really helped me with my confidence, trying new things and exploring new places.”**
- **“I liked the film making best - I really enjoyed it after the performance, when we got to reflect on all the amazing things we did here.”**
- **“It’s good to pretend you are confident.”**
- **“People rushed what they were saying and you couldn’t hear the beginning and end. We need to slow down.”**



Increased awareness of the city's cultural offer

Early conversations with participants established that whilst some had been to the Fitzwilliam Museum and seen a pantomime as a school trip, none knew the smaller museums or other cultural venues and very few went into Cambridge at all. They worked on mapping the area, working with partners from cultural venues across the city, visits, discussions, developing the story of The Museum of Us, rehearsing at Cambridge Junction, performing as part of the Hotbed Festival and exhibiting at The Museum of Cambridge

ACTIVATE is a good club to go to - you learn, you go on trips, you have fun!! I hadn't been to the museums before.



Feb 13 2017

11 students spent a day walking from Coleridge Community College to The Museum of Cambridge. Stopping at Parker's Piece and exploring the old Lloyds Bank along the way. One student knew the route. Others hadn't been in to town independently, hadn't been to The Museum of Cambridge or knew the local history of Parker's Piece. The workshop at the Museum mapped the local area, further familiarising the group with the city. The participants interviewed Charlotte Woodley, curator, about her role and the museum collection.

- "It's a lot bigger than you think it is – I used to think it was really small. I didn't even know that there was a thing called The Junction, or the museums. But now I know, Cambridge is bigger in my mind and in reality."
- Tutor: "ACTIVATE is wonderful in developing students and getting them involved in the world around them. So many don't know Cambridge, don't know where the Fitz is, it's just not part of their reality."
- "I liked going to see Beauty and The Beast. I have really enjoyed going to the Fitz and the Junction – places I hadn't been before."



Increased engagement with the city's cultural offer

Trips have included a day walking from Coleridge, exploring Cambridge, visiting The Museum of Cambridge and interviewing the curator; a workshop at Hobbs Pavillion; picnicing on Parker's Piece; tours and workshops at The Cambridge Junction; a tour and drawing workshops at The Fitzwilliam museum. ACTIVATE opens up the city through familiarising the group with their local environment and developing relaxed relationships with the cultural venues on offer.

- Workshop leader: **"He had never been able to travel in a taxi before because of his anxiety, now he comes in every week with new information about different museums across the country that he wants to visit."**
- **"I know Cambridge a lot better now - I know where a lot more things are, where museums are and what we can do. I picked up leaflets at The Junction and realise I can do something every day in the holidays! There are loads of workshops in museums, I have lots of plans!"**
- **"I have found out lots of history I didn't expect – like Reality Checkpoint, the post on Parker's Piece."**



March 15 2017

12 students visited Cambridge Junction for a tour behind the scenes of the performing arts venue. The group were given an insight into the work required to stage a performance and experienced walking on the lighting nets above the theatre before rehearsing their own performance in J2.



26 April 2017

Nine students visited the Fitzwilliam Museum, this is the one museum most participants knew through earlier school visits. During the trip they further familiarised themselves with it, drawing the objects they related to and developing the Museum of Us theme. Imogen introduced the Alfred Wallis collection and Colin (filmmaker) spoke about his aunt, who had known the artist. (The group later compiled questions about the artist for Colin to ask his aunt, which he was able to do and further discuss.) The group met the curator, who spoke about her role and, specifically, the Cabinets of Curiosity in the collection.

- **"I had been to the Fitz before with my family. This was the first time on my own. I would like to go back there with my friends and to the Museum of Cambridge too."**
- **"I explore more in Cambridge now – like the cycle to Parker's Piece."**



Film documentation of these trips can be seen on the website www.activatecambridge.co.uk or on our ACTIVATE Cambridge Youtube channel.

ACTIVATE: Feedback from the audience

Comments collected from members of the audience following performances of The Museum of Us at The Hotbed Festival, Cambridge Junction on the 8th July 2017 at Coleridge Community College on the 12th of July.

● **“Congratulations to all the artists and curators of ‘The Museum of Us!’. I have loved seeing your amazing creative ideas take shape and know all the imagination, team work and focus that went into today’s performance. You should be so proud of yourselves!”**
Miranda, Fitzwilliam Museum

● **“Well done to all the artists and curators. Great stories – great team work!”**

● **“A fantastic exhibition. The artworks were fascinating, and the brilliant curators so impressive at bringing them to life – huge congratulations to them!”**



● **“Museums are one of my favourite places and I particularly enjoyed this museum. The curators were so knowledgeable and generous to give their time. I think all the curators should get a pay rise!”**

● **“Well done to all the fantastic youth curators who shared their artworks, their ideas and their inspiration. We look forward to your future museum careers!”**
Liz Hide, Fitzwilliam Museum

● **“Well done to all involved. All the children were so knowledgeable and confident in their presentations. Excellent work and a great exhibition.”**
Parent



● **“Well done to you all. You should all be very proud of yourselves to all come across so well.”**

● **“Well done to all involved in The Museum of Us’ – it was a brilliant performance and the young ‘curators’ were enthusiastic and passionate about their ‘exhibits’! Congratulations!”**
Cllr Richard Johnson

● **“The imaginative approach of all the curators made my tour hugely enjoyable – I felt your personalities shine through. Thank you!”**

● **“Thank you for such a wonderful and uplifting event last week! You have made my heart sing! A thousand thank yous! ACTIVATE has given a gift to these young people. A gift that you will never see them fully open, but will be something they will treasure for the rest of their lives! Thank you! And please pass on my thanks and congratulation to the young people themselves! No only is achieving the Bronze Arts Award a wonderful thing but their poise and confidence makes them exceptional ambassadors for their City!”**

Rachel Snape, Headteacher and National Leader of Education, MyCambridge

● **“Wonderful, fantastic to see young people with such confidence and commitment. I can see this running and running.”**
Parent

- "I loved the fact that they were so confident! I loved that the artwork was so different – it really represented where they came from."
Steph Hogger, Norfolk and Norwich Festival
- "I thought it was fantastic. The way the students have grown in confidence through ACTIVATE this year has been amazing. I felt quite emotional when they spoke about their connections, hopes and dreams."
Russell Burgess,
Head of Create, Parkside Federation.



- "I enjoyed all of it. Thank you for sharing your hard work."
- "Well done to the creators! I really liked hearing those stories. We weren't meant to hear the one about stolen objects. Great spontaneity!"

- "What an interesting collection. Curators were so knowledgeable. Thank you!"
- "Such a wonderful museum with fascinating objects and such knowledge and generous curators. I will definitely visit again. Thank you!"
Rosie, Kettles Yard
- "I can not thank you enough for the amazing change in confidence for my son. He started the year being incredible shy and quiet. Since ACTIVATE he has gone on to be awarded Drama Student of The Year! I definitely feel ACTIVATE contributed to this huge achievement. Thank you!"
Parent
- "Very enjoyable hearing from the experts, you should all feel proud of your work."

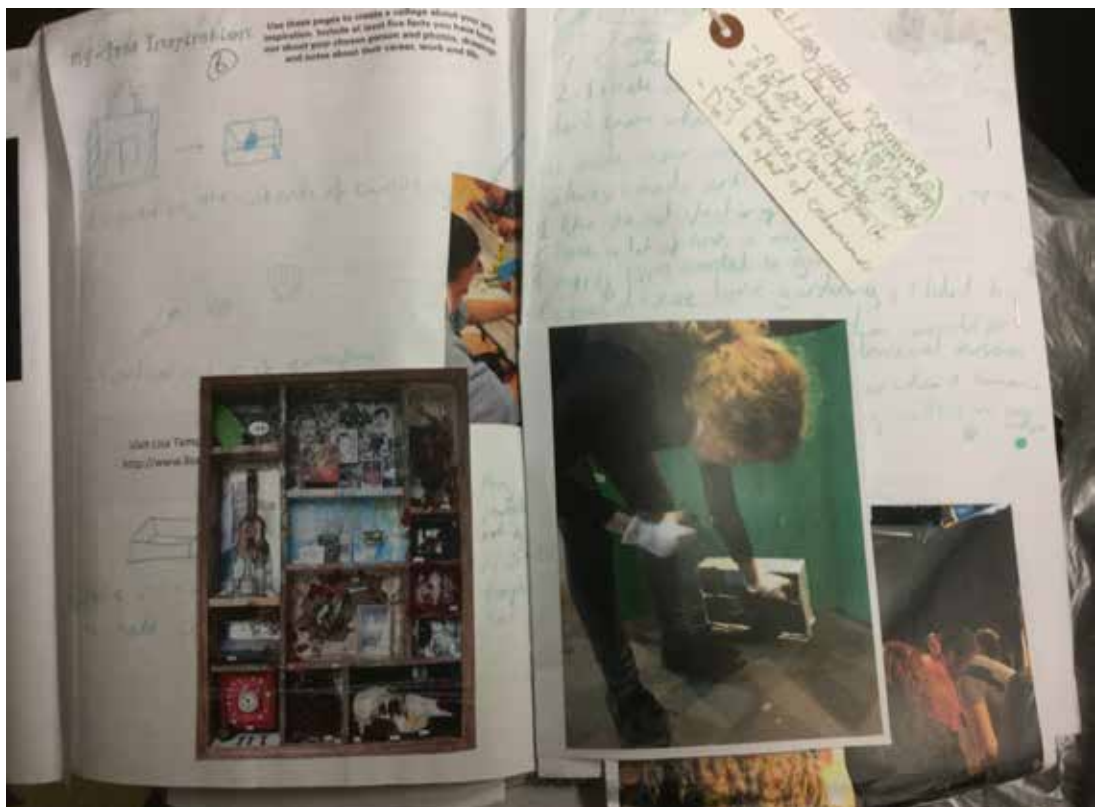


Film documentation of the performances, including feedback from performers and the audience, can be seen on the website www.activatecambridge.co.uk or on our ACTIVATE Cambridge Youtube channel.

ACTIVATE: Arts Award

Throughout the project the group are being supported to achieve Arts Award at Bronze Level at Phase One, with some participants moving to Silver in Phase Two. Arts Award is a nationally accredited qualification which develops both leadership and arts and cultural engagement. It is particularly recognised as highly effective for young people at risk of 'failure' within mainstream education, because it enables young people to demonstrate skills and interests in an area of their own choosing, has multiple routes to assessment (not just written) and is clearly progression based.

Enabling young people to be recognised formally for progression in creative skills and leadership is a very strong tool to support re-engagement with more traditional education. In Phase One seven of the participants achieved Bronze Award - some of whom are going to work towards their Silver in Phase Two - with the rest of the group continuing to work on their portfolios, with additional



ACTIVATE: Working in Partnership

The ACTIVATE project is led by Jane Wilson, of Cambridge City Council, co-ordinated by Hilary Cox Condron and is delivered in partnership with Michael Judge (NIE Theatre), Lucy Shipp and Miranda Stearn (University of Cambridge Museums), Lisa Broom (Cambridge Junction), Imogen Philips (Kettle's Yard), and Patrick Morris (Menagerie Theatre). Film-maker Colin Stevens has been recording progression (see: ACTIVATE Cambridge on YouTube). Head of Parkside Federation's Create, Russell Burgess, has worked closely to support the group. Artist Lisa Temple-Cox and actress/composer Sussanah Austin delivered sessions with the workshop leaders. The group also worked with artist Emma Smith as part of The HUNCH Project, in collaboration with young artists from The Circuit Group to develop a blue print for the future as part of a large scale public installation on Parker's Piece.

An example of Working in Partnership to deliver a cross-arts project and explore the City's Cultural offer

Following on from the group exploring the narrative of objects through both drama and exploring the collection at The Museum of Cambridge, the group visited the Cabinets of Curiosities at the Fitzwilliam and held a discussion with the curator there to find out more about both the objects and her role at the museum. Artist Lisa Temple-Cox then worked with the group to create their own Cabinets of Curiosity - her creative medium - over a period of three sessions.

During this period the group were also able to work towards their Bronze Arts Awards through recording and evaluating their working process, and interviewing Lisa as their chosen Arts Hero. The Cabinets of Curiosity were then incorporated into a performance piece shown at The Junction and Coleridge School, and exhibited at The Museum of Cambridge.

"I was invited to run a couple of artist workshops for the ACTIVATE group, inspired by my practice of making box-based assemblages, and the research that the group had done previously in the Fitzwilliam Museum, looking at cabinets of curiosity. I proposed making small personal cabinets out of card and paper-maché, using maps, found objects, and the participants own ephemera. I was really impressed by working with this group: not only did they take on the methods of making that I showed and the construction suggestions I made, but they took them further to work up really creative, individual responses to both the practice of box-based artworks and the themes that they had been already exploring. Not only that, but their responses to my work – and the questions they asked – were quite different to those I've experienced before, and very pertinent. I know when I've engaged with an interesting – and interested – group, because I come away from it with a new understanding of my own work, and new perspectives from which to consider it. This was definitely the case here. The participants made me reconsider and re-engage with my personal practice, and the reasons why I do it. I really felt that I gained a lot from these short workshops, and I really hope the kids did too."

Lisa Templar-Cox



Building working relationships with cultural venues and gaining a better understanding of the offer and contribution each can make enables ACTIVATE to quickly adapt and respond to the groups needs. From being able to develop a cross-arts programme to bringing in artists or signposting to develop individual skills and interests. Developing these partnerships is creating an easily accessible network to arts and culture across the city.

Partner's Feedback from Phase One

An overview of Phase One and moving forward, with workshop leaders Michael, Imogen, Patrick, Miranda, Lisa, Lucy and Hilary. July 2017.

- Good that we have created a safe space, peer support and management starting to take place. Room was very hot sometimes - Lots of doors! Should there be a different room for visual arts activity?
- More training to manage behavior would be good. Need for stronger rules and consistency: develop a 'contract' for the participants.
- Ensure there are enough staff in the room - and enough different levels of activity to fit different needs especially if there is a bronze/silver Arts Award split. Should there be a continuous presence in the room from a teacher?
- Need to think more specifically about the needs of individual students - have discussions with TAs etc for more specific info about individuals.
- Session times were tricky – overlapping with the athletics club. It felt like a short amount of time for delivery. Follow same structure for each workshop session: game, activity, break, activity.
- Buddy up older members with new year sevens. How ready are young people for commissioning? Rise to the challenge: incorporate problems to solve along the way.
- Use existing performance to recruit year 7's (and get more teachers engaged) in first two weeks of new year.
- Plan how to use a similar structure for a bigger outcome. A display in Kettle's Yard?
- Post news and updates on the website. Have more visibility at Arts Venues
- How do we build on what they have learned? How do we know what they have learned? How do we know it is doing any good at all?



- More advocacy of ACTIVATE within the school. Many teachers weren't aware of the project. Promote more in the school – in the school mag, facebook, etc. posters, 'update assemblies'. Can the students lead an assembly on the project?
- How do we achieve commitment? More advance notice – manage communication with the young people through the school? How can we collaborate more effectively and creatively?
- The 'new places': pre-opening tours with The Museum of Zoology and Kettle's Yard? Possible reporting and film to share with the rest of the school and Cambridge.
- Important to have the film reporting for the workshop leaders too, to see what has been going on.
- Strategic planning to make the Arts Award easier to deliver. How will we manage the Silver Arts Award? Pos partner: Arts Picturehouse. Include dedicated times for Arts Award. Build Arts Award into future planning.
- We had to build relations and achieve in a limited time frame. Fix dates in advance. Good mix of visits to cultural venues. Seemed to work that all organisations worked together. Clarity over who does what when. Provide an external practitioner brief.
- Great to work cross-arts eg: curators at the museums and the The Hunch project.

ACTIVATE: Dissemination

- Social Media
- ACTIVATECambridge website
- Presentations at Coleridge School, The Museum of Cambridge and The Fitzwilliam.
- Press releases in The Cambridge Evening News
- Feature in Cambridge Matters
- Radio 105
- Exhibition at The Museum of Cambridge
- Display and posters within Coleridge School
- Feature with This is Cambridge TV

ACTIVATE: Lessons and observations

- What are our expectations from the school?
- We have qualitative evaluation but not quantitative data, which we need. What is the best way to achieve this? The PASS evaluation tool was purchased for the school, but not implemented. How can we support the school to do this to ensure it's delivery? Do we need to draw up a contract before delivery?
- Buy-in from the school as a whole. Tutors were not aware of ACTIVATE. Moving forward: interviews with key staff, support for delivery of the Arts Award and inclusion in staff meetings is planned.
- Observation of the group: A large percentage of the group are boys. A large percentage are SEN with additional needs and behavioral issues. Early discussions about the individual students would ensure we can adapt delivery to the student's needs. Being aware of specific needs would also allow us to be more supportive and develop key coping mechanisms, which we can further discuss with tutors. Tutors may be able to encourage pupils they believe will benefit from ACTIVATE to participate.
- Develop an exit strategy. Where do students go after phase 2?
- There was such a significant impact after 6 months – could ACTIVATE be delivered with-in a tighter, shorter term programme?



ACTIVATE



www.activatecambridge.co.uk

