



**coram** | better chances  
for children  
since 1739

## All the World's a Stage

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Impact Report  
2023-24

 **coram**  
SHAKESPEARE  
SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

“One child offered to take a lead role when another student left the school halfway through our Festival journey. This child used to be very quiet and shy and so I was concerned she wouldn’t be able to take on the role but she did it! Her confidence grew as we rehearsed and her teacher from Year 2 who came to watch couldn’t believe that she was able to project her voice as confidently as she did. We were so proud of her.”

Laura, Teacher, Horton Park Primary School, Bradford

# TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH THE UNIQUE POWER OF SHAKESPEARE

Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation is a cultural education charity that gives young people of any ability and background the skills they need to succeed in life. At the heart of our work is our annual Festival - the world’s largest youth drama project. Months of preparation culminate in performances in professional theatres nationwide, a journey which builds confidence and self-esteem to last a lifetime.



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**“Robbie is a child with anxiety and on the autistic spectrum who normally shies away from class discussion and speaking up. He confidently took on a speaking part in the play and had amazing expression and actions. He amazed all of us. We didn’t know he had that voice (nor did he or his mum!)”**

*Kate, Secondary School Teacher, Bootle*



Robbie’s story exemplifies the transformative power that participating in the arts can have in the lives of young people. Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation’s mission is to provide every child with the opportunity to find their voice – by exploring their creativity, building confidence and self-esteem and fostering their aspiration. When students like Robbie take on the challenge of performing Shakespeare, they are given the chance to shine in ways they might never have experienced in a traditional classroom setting. For many, this is a revelation – not only to their peers and teachers but also to themselves.

We believe passionately in the importance of creativity and oracy in schools. The arts are not a luxury; they are an essential component of a well-rounded education for all young people and key to building the essential skills needed for success in life. They teach problem-solving and critical thinking, empathy and resilience, and are proven to boost outcomes and chances for children. Yet the current picture in schools is

one where access to the performing arts has been eroded; teaching hours have been cut by a fifth in the past decade and take up of these subjects to GCSE Level has fallen by over 40%. School trips have been cancelled at an alarming rate, depriving countless students of the learning opportunities they so richly deserve.

Despite this, through our programmes we are constantly inspired by the extraordinary creativity of young people and the dedicated teachers who help them harness it. We are proud to be their collaborators and I am delighted to share this report with you, highlighting their achievements and the impact that performing Shakespeare has had on more than 10,000 pupils across the UK.

2023/24 marked a special year for the organisation as we celebrated 400 years since the publication of Shakespeare’s First Folio. You can read about our *What You Will* competition, in partnership with Cambridge Schools Shakespeare (Cambridge University Press and Assessment) and the Criterion

Theatre. Through our supporting resources, over 200 pupils were inspired to write a new speech for a Shakespeare character, bringing their own perspective and voice to these centuries-old texts. You can read one of the entries on page 29. Winners included Kira, a Ukrainian student now living in the New Forest, who wrote an emotional new speech for Juliet, and Annabelle, a pupil from North London, who brought new depths to the Porter from *Macbeth*.

In our continued partnership with Magdalen College Oxford, we supported a Virtual School to take part in our annual Theatre Festival programme for the first time. The company of care-experienced young people from across Leicestershire came together to stage a production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with direction and facilitation from Leicester Curve Theatre.

Our International Film Festival grew, with 21 schools from China, Spain, Belgium and the United Kingdom participating.

We are proud that this year the Shakespeare Schools Festival returned to all four nations of the United Kingdom, with celebratory performance evenings taking place in 67 partner theatres. We successfully worked with 143 priority schools\* across programmes and a projected 3,500 children in these settings. A

\* Priority schools include those with high % FSM eligibility, SEND settings and schools located in the top three deciles of the IMD.

pilot report from Newcastle University explored the positive links between Theatre Festival participation and impact on wellbeing for pupils and teachers over time.

When students engage actively with Shakespeare’s timeless works, they do more than learn about the characters, stories and worlds of the plays – like Robbie they discover their voices and their potential. They learn to collaborate, to express themselves, to step out of their comfort zones and in doing so, achieve something exceptional.

We look ahead to 2025 when the organisation will celebrate its 25th Anniversary – a quarter of a century working with children and theatres to achieve our mission – when over 400,000 young people will have felt the buzz of confidence and pride that comes from achieving something huge in front of an audience.

Thank you for your continued support for our work and belief in the transformative power of the arts.

Warm regards,  
Mike Tucker





# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation gave thousands of young people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds a chance to shine in 2023/24. Through our Theatre Festival, Film Festival and workshops, young people have come together to learn, play and create, building key skills they will need for life.

This was our year.

10,224

pupils supported through Theatre and Film Festivals, and workshops.

561

primary, secondary, SEND schools and pupil referral unit classes involved.

403

workshops delivered across schools and theatres in every corner of the UK.

604

teachers supported to develop their skills through our resources and workshops.

99%

of teachers report students express themselves creatively following our Festival.

83%

of teachers said their teaching had improved through the Theatre Festival.

“One student said she likes coming to school on rehearsal days. It’s something to look forward to. She was on the brink of being suspended but after a conversation with the deputy head about how she was needed in the show she promised to improve her behaviour if she was allowed to continue to participate.”

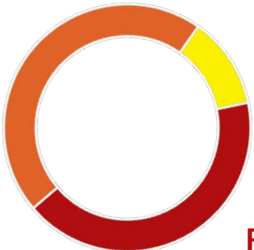
Anne, Teacher-Director, Guiseley School, Leeds



# WHO WE WORK WITH

Across 2023-24 we worked with young people in all four nations of the UK and in five other countries.

Secondary schools - 48%



SEND or SEMH schools - 9%

Primary schools - 43%

Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation’s ethos. We want to reach more students from ethnic minority backgrounds, more students with EAL (English as an additional language) and children who are eligible for free school meals. You can help us achieve this - find out how on page 35.

Of the students who participated in our Theatre Festival:

34%



244

were from an ethnic minority background

26%



85

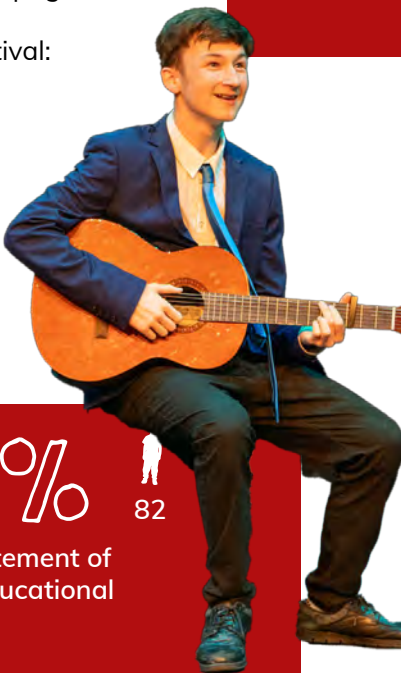
speak English as an additional language

23%



82

had a statement of special educational needs



REACH



## ADITI'S STORY

The Ursuline Academy Ilford

In spring 2024, a cast of secondary school students from The Ursuline Academy Ilford brought their adaptation of *The Tempest* to the Kenneth More Theatre. Isabel Milne, their Teacher-Director, takes the lead on various productions throughout the school year, but on this occasion she found herself receiving an unexpected yet very welcome helping hand from a cast member.

As Isabel began to stage the play, together with her co-director Mary Cooper, she told the cast that she may need their help to remember all the blocking. One young student in particular, Aditi, took this request very seriously. Paying close attention at every rehearsal, she was often at Isabel's side and always ready to whisper to her when someone needed help remembering their entrance or if someone missed a piece of blocking.

Aditi joined the school just seven months before their Festival performance day, having emigrated from India with her family, and was cast as one of the island's magical spirits.

**"Taking part in the Festival was Aditi's first taste of drama. The experience has sparked her love of the performing arts and exploring Shakespeare in this way has really brought it to life for her."**

It was during parents' evening that Isabel came to realise the full extent of the Festival's impact on Aditi.

**"Her parents explained how she used to be a shy girl, but that she was so happy to be a part of the school's cast in the Festival and that it had helped her make friends. She said it felt like a family to her."**

On the night of the performance, Aditi's parents were both in the front row.

For Aditi, being part of the Theare Festival helped her develop skills beyond performing. She discovered Shakespeare in a new light, found out what it's like to perform in a professional theatre and became a blocking whizz. It also gave her a sense of belonging in a place that had only recently become her home.

The cast of The Ursuline Academy Ilford will be putting on their performance of *The Tempest* at school in the coming months so they will be back in the rehearsal room soon, ready to recreate the magic of the colourful Caribbean island where they set their version of the play under Isabel's stellar direction.

**"Many of the things I learnt from the Teacher-Director workshops I continue to use in my work now. The Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation facilitator who delivered our in-school workshop was fantastic."**

No doubt Aditi will play a crucial role in making sure the cast remembers all their blocking!





# OUR YEAR IN MOMENTS

From the start of our programming year in April 2023, through two Festivals, hundreds of performances and a West End gala, we were proud to bring the magic of Shakespeare to thousands of young people.

Here is 2023-24 in a few key moments.



April '23  
Our Year Begins



June '23 – September '23  
Digital Film Festival Workshops



December 2023  
Film Festival Showcase



June '23 – November '23  
Teacher Workshops



September '23 – March '24  
In-School Workshops



November '23  
What You Will Gala



November '23 – April '24  
Theatre Festival Performances



September '23 – October '23  
Inclusive Teacher Workshops

Want to read more about our programmes and how they fit within your school calendar? Head to:

<https://www.shakespeareschools.org>

# THE NEED FOR THIS WORK

## ACCESS TO THE ARTS

We know that an arts-rich education sets young people up for success, and that such opportunities are vanishing from classrooms across the country. There was a 40% fall in entries for GCSE arts subjects between 2010 and 2022<sup>1</sup> and a reduction of one fifth in the total number of expressive arts teachers employed in mainstream schools.<sup>2</sup>

We believe that Shakespeare is for everyone. Our programmes provide the opportunity for schools to keep arts at the heart of learning in school. They reach young people from every walk of life and immerse them in experiences where they engage with drama and Shakespeare in an active, meaningful and collaborative way. In 2023 we challenged young people to make something new and write a 'new' Shakespeare speech; a reflection of a pedagogy which centres on young people and harnesses their skills and interests to create art that is real and vital and relevant to them through our programmes they see that they can make Shakespeare their own.

## DEVELOPING ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND ORACY

Research by the Skills Builder Partnership finds that high-level essential skills boost earnings, job and life satisfaction, and halve the likelihood of being out of work or training. Staging a performance requires much more than standing on stage and reciting lines. Our young people must learn to collaborate as an ensemble, wrangle with complicated concepts, deal with problems and setbacks and express their ideas and opinions. To speak up onstage, they must learn to speak up in the rehearsal room, developing oracy and essential skills that will serve them across all area of their academic and personal lives.

**99% of teachers said their students were better able to work in a team, having taken part in our Theatre Festival**

This year we became a Skills Builder Impact Organisation, with a focus on four of their eight essential skills: Creativity, Teamwork, Staying Positive and Aiming High, which we see in abundance across our Festival.

## WELLBEING

Young people and teachers alike are under huge amounts of pressure in countless aspects of their lives. Participating in high-quality arts experiences allows young people to explore emotions and express their identities, particularly helpful for children who are struggling with their wellbeing.<sup>3</sup> Through our programmes, young people have fun and step outside their typical roles in the classroom.

**97% of teachers said their students were more resilient, after the Theatre Festival**

Where schools struggle with persistent absence and teacher retention, our programmes give every child a chance to shine, and to be seen in a new light. Our Teacher-Directors tell us stories of young people who develop a sense of belonging, forge connections in their school community and find a new reason to make it through the school gates in the morning. We ask young people and teachers to reimagine themselves as a company, and they emerge from it stronger.

View our Theory of Change at:  
[www.shakespeareschools.org](http://www.shakespeareschools.org).

### Sources

- 1 'Performing Arts' Hansard Lords Volume 829: debated on Thursday 30 March 2023
- 2 'Securing access to performing arts education for all: Building a stronger future', Council for Drama, Dance and Musical Theatre [CDMT] (May 2024)
- 3 'Arts in Schools: Foundations for the Future - Purposes, principles and practice', Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and A New Direction (2023)





# SHAKESPEARE SCHOOLS FESTIVAL AT MAGDALEN COLLEGE

The third year of our collaborative outreach project with Magdalen College Oxford was a huge success. Through this programme, 50 young people from socially deprived areas of the country visited the college for a three-day residential where they ate in the college's dining halls, attended workshops in the college's library (which houses a copy of Shakespeare's Fourth Folio), participated in discussion sessions with a leading Shakespeare academic, and performed their own Shakespeare productions in the college's auditorium.

For the first time ever Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation worked with a virtual school, a body which exists specifically to support young people in care. A cast of seven care-experienced young people joined the programme, having worked with practitioners from the Curve Theatre on their metatheatrical production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.



**"A young person [...] showed visible progress in reaching her potential and expanding her horizons. School reports improved behaviour and attendance while her carer reports improved confidence, attitude and willingness to try new things. For her the experience has been very clearly life-changing."**

Liz, Teacher, Leicestershire Virtual School



## YOUTH BOARD

Over the summer of 2023, we sought out a passionate, creative and dynamic group of young people eager to contribute to our mission. By September, we had assembled our nine board members, who meet monthly, with each meeting designed to be a space for creative dialogue and collaboration. A cornerstone of meetings is the "creative challenge," where members are invited to reflect on a particular aspect of the charity—be it marketing, social media presence, or merchandise—and propose ideas for innovation.

Each Youth Board member also receives individual mentoring, during which they identify personal goals and receive tailored guidance. These sessions often involve connecting board members with artistic mentors who can provide industry-specific advice and support.

The establishment of the Youth Board has already begun to invigorate Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation with new energy and perspective, ensuring that our projects continue to resonate with our beneficiaries.

## LETTER TO SECRETARIES OF STATE

As part of their work on our Youth Board, we asked participants to write a letter to the new Secretaries of State for Education, and Culture, Media and Sport, outlining the value of arts in education. Here's what Rose, a teenage Festival participant, said.

**"The arts in education are so important for so many reasons, but they often go uncredited. They give young people an opportunity to learn how to cooperate and come together with others to produce a final outcome - a key skill in almost any career - whilst still having fun and enjoying learning. They can also play a huge role in increasing young people's confidence, allowing them to grow as people and reach their full potential in the future, with less anxiety holding them back from their dreams and aspirations."**

Rose, Youth Board Member





## WHAT YOU WILL

In celebration of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's First Folio, Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation launched the *What You Will* competition where young people were invited to create the speech that Shakespeare 'forgot' to write.

We received hundreds of entries in which young people used speech, song, stand-up, BSL, videography, voiceover and artwork to tell us what some of Shakespeare's characters (and some characters of their own invention!) might have said, had they had the chance. They were inspired by a library of example entries from some famous friends of the charity and demonstrated an infinite variety of approaches and perspectives.

Our finalists performed at a star-studded gala in the West End's Criterion Theatre to an audience of special guests and supporters on the 27 November, a fabulous showcase for our first year of our *Season of Reimagining*.



## ANNABELLE'S ENTRY

Annabelle Francis-Baker is a 16-year-old from Buckinghamshire who wanted to examine the comic value of the Porter in *Macbeth* – and rail against it! Her entry won the 12-16 category at last year's *What You Will* gala.

Knock, knock. Remember the porter, once again showing up after the slaughter? Yeah. Never did I see such a melon-looking thing as *Macbeth's* head when it did hit the battleground floor, cleft in twain like a melon on a hot summer's day...

Knock, knock. It's the porter, here to make you smile after the slaughter. Crack a few jokes to lighten the mood. Distract from the killings. They won't keep down their food. Go on, then. Porter. Say something funny. Make us all laugh. Earn that money. Stand in front of the curtain while we clean up the muck. Well, some of these days I don't give a... monkey's.

The other day, I was called out to a funeral; a bloke who died of acute pancreatitis. I said, "there's one more angle in Heaven." He said, "Can you tell the one about the genius that couldn't hear the voices of idiots." I said, "Pardon?" Not really... It just made me think. No one ever expected *Macbeth* to tell a joke. No one ever made him go and learn how to juggle. And that's harder than being king, I reckon.

Knock, knock. It's the porter, who doesn't get to be brave, or noble, or vain, or king. He's just some simple half-and-half thing who's wasted his life telling the first half of a bad joke.

Knock, knock. Who's there? Porter. Porter who?

Sorry, that just sounded a bit like *Portaloo*. That wasn't a joke that I said. Pray you, remember the porter.



# THEATRE FESTIVAL

Shakespeare Schools Festival is our charity's flagship project. From every type of school, and every nation and region of the UK, children take on the challenge of performing an abridged Shakespeare play using the original language. Weeks of hard work culminate in an exhilarating performance on a professional theatre stage in front of an audience of family and friends.

**22** Teacher Workshops  
**67** Theatres  
**130** Performance Nights  
**351** Schools  
**8,775** Young People  
**ONE** Festival



Want to read more on how our work has transformed young lives?  
Visit our website to see our case studies:

[https://www.shakespeareschools.org/about\\_us/impact\\_success](https://www.shakespeareschools.org/about_us/impact_success)



## TEACHER WORKSHOPS

We delivered 22 Teacher Workshops in eight UK cities, and online. 233 teachers attended our mainstream Teacher Workshops, and 20 teachers attended our Inclusive Teacher Workshops, for days of fun, experiential CPD with other practitioners from their area.

## IN-SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

Our brilliant team of freelance facilitators travelled across the country to work with young people and teachers in 345 schools. Teachers received 1:1 mentoring from professional theatre practitioners and young people experienced a workshop for their whole company.

## PERFORMANCE DAYS

Almost 9,000 young people took to 67 stages all over the country to share their reimagined Shakespeare productions with their friends, family and supporters. From Glasgow to Guildford; from Southampton to Sunderland, we saw the varied and incredible results when young people are given a chance to shine.





## MEASURING THE IMPACT

At the end of each Festival, we ask Teacher-Directors to tell us how they, and their young people, have changed through the project. As a result of the latest Festival, our teachers told us:

100%  149

of teachers told us their students had pride in themselves

100%  149

of teachers reported their students were confident

99%  149

of teachers said their students were able to work effectively as a team

97%  149

of teachers said they now have a stronger relationship with their students

95%  149

of teachers felt their students were more ambitious

80%  149

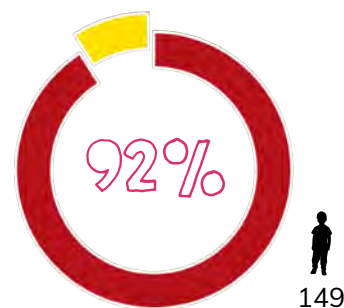
of teachers say their students academic attainment has improved through the Festival

**"One student in Year 7 feels the Festival has been the best thing they've done all year and it has really helped their transition to secondary school."**

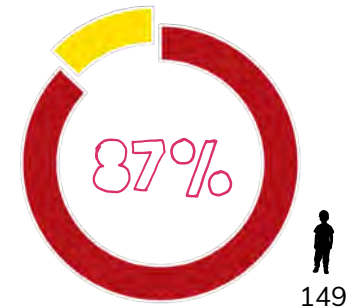
Francesca, Teacher-Director, Carrington School, Surrey

**"We have a non binary student who is very isolated and suffers from anxiety. During this process they have improved in confidence and made friends. They would wear ear defenders in class and struggled with noises but now they speak on stage and don't use the ear defenders anymore."**

Michaela, Teacher-Director, Priory Ruskin Academy, Grantham



of teachers say they are more confident working with Shakespeare thanks to the Theatre Festival.



of teachers say their teaching practice has improved through the Theatre Festival.

**"Our student technician was close to school refusing. Through the project he has found his people. He has been given a role of responsibility and has risen to the challenge, creating a wonderful sound design for Richard III. What an incredibly valuable experience for him to work with industry professionals."**

Max, Teacher-Director, Fallibroome Academy, Manchester











## HOLLIE'S STORY

Coleg y Cymoedd • South Wales

Coleg y Cymoedd, a Further and Higher Education college with several sites in south Wales, are one of our Gold schools, which means that they have participated in the Theatre Festival for more than seven consecutive years. Their Entry Level 3 and Level 1 Performing Arts students performed *Romeo and Juliet* at The Riverfront in Newport as part of the 2023/24 Festival.

Hollie, who played Benvolio, showed remarkable resilience and tenacity during the programme. As a young carer, she has a lot of responsibility outside of college, more so than many of her peers. Taking part in the Theatre Festival has allowed her to develop her creative thinking skills and take up space as a young artist. Here, she reflects on the experience of creating a modern interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* during our Season of Reimagining:

**"Because I am a young carer, I sometimes find it hard to attend college and arrive on time. Over the years, acting has really helped with my anxiety and confidence levels, and I love my performing arts lessons. It was great to work on *Romeo and Juliet* for the Theatre Festival; the story has a special place in my heart from when I was homeschooled before joining Coleg y Cymoedd."**

**"When I was cast as Benvolio, I only had a rough idea of who the character was, but by being playful in rehearsals I found something that clicked, and I made him into a real heartthrob! It was really fun to have free reign to build on this week by week and make the character my own. We were supported with this during our in-school workshop, too. I loved how we were able to put our own comedy spin on what is usually a very serious story. Benvolio has really made me who I am today!"**

**"As a company, we really pushed ourselves to learn and understand the Shakespearean language. This was challenging, but I really enjoyed it. I'd love to do more Shakespeare in the future – maybe even a one-woman show!"**

Hollie's teachers have expressed great admiration for her positive, willing attitude during the rehearsal process, and how she became a brilliant role model for her peers. The *Romeo and Juliet* company had a fantastic, supportive rapport throughout the project, highlighting to the college Senior Leadership Team how valuable it is for Performing Arts students to participate in the Festival year on year.





# FILM FESTIVAL

The third year of Shakespeare Schools Film Festival was its most international yet. Joining schools from the UK, we saw submissions from Spain, China and Belgium in our Festival showcase in December.

- 4** Countries
- 100** Primary School Students
- 325** Secondary School Students
- 125** SEND School Students
- ONE** Festival



"I really enjoyed getting to see everything come together from start to finish. I found it challenging to interact with the other characters and look at the camera at the same time. I've learned that you have to be very patient – it takes time to get every little thing right – even the smallest thing. When we started, I had a little passion for acting but now I have done it, I have a BIG passion! I would definitely like to make more films – I would like to try making a comedy."

Zara, Student, Fulwell Junior School, Sunderland

## SUMMER MASTERCLASS

We kicked off the 2023 Film Festival with a special three-hour summer masterclass where our new cohort of Film Festival came together to share ideas, get excited and explore the potential of Shakespeare on film.

## AUTUMN CPD WORKSHOPS

Schools shot and edited their Festival submissions through the autumn term with support from additional CPD workshops from CSSF and our partners at Into Film.

## GUEST MASTERCLASS

We welcomed BAFTA-winning and Oscar-nominated screenwriter Peter Straughan to deliver a special masterclass on adapting famous texts for TV and film.

## FESTIVAL WEEK AND BEST OF THE FEST

We celebrated all our schools' hard work and achievements in our Festival showcase, with some messages from CSSF supporters and patrons.

Watch the Film Festival now at: [shakespeareschoolsfilmfestival.org](https://shakespeareschoolsfilmfestival.org)





## WORKSHOPS

We run a variety of workshops and projects all year round from our Unlocking Shakespeare workshop, which is rooted in GCSE examination objectives and allows participants to form their own critical opinion of a Shakespearean text, to our award winning CPD for teachers.

We work with schools to ensure our workshops respond to their specific needs, providing the best support to allow teachers and students to flourish.

<b>30</b>	Workshops
<b>188</b>	Schools
<b>231</b>	Teachers Trained
<b>899</b>	Students



**"I can see how these approaches fit into my teaching practice... The facilitator was an excellent trainer; very knowledgeable and engaging."**

Helen, Teacher, Keystone Academy Trust, Bourne



**"I'd hoped for our children to gain confidence, new skills, an appreciation of Shakespeare - and how it can be fun after all! I wanted my children to find self-belief and a passion for performance; to feel proud and to find their voices. I also wanted them to see their creativity can manifest in many forms - be that acting, stage direction, props or technical prowess."**

**I can honestly say we achieved this ten-fold. It was amazing. Exhausting at times, but amazing. The skills we learned through the CPD was also fantastic and certainly helped support learning across the curriculum. I would wholly advocate this programme to anyone who asked."**

Julia, Off Grid Shakespeare Teacher-Participant, Embsay Primary School, North Yorkshire

### OFF-GRID SHAKESPEARE

Off-Grid Shakespeare was designed to offer our workshops at a subsidised cost to rural schools that aren't otherwise able to take part in our Theatre Festival, due to their size and location. The project was designed to improve essential skills, including teamwork, communication and resilience, while also developing cultural capital among pupils who may not otherwise encounter Shakespeare until secondary school.



The project, delivered with support from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, ran between 2021 and 2023, with seven rural primary schools taking part in North Yorkshire and Lancashire.

By the end of the project in 2023, we'd:

- Delivered 47 student workshops to 432 young people
- Led 17 CPD (Continuing Professional Development) sessions to 56 teachers
- Collaborated with four local artistic companies who delivered 15 additional workshops
- Supported young people from the participating schools to perform to a combined audience of 625 family members, friends and peers.



## GIGI'S STORY

BASIS International School Guangzhou • China

Our International Film Festival has seen the joy of Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation's programmes spread to classrooms around the world. BASIS International School Guangzhou are an American international school based in Huangpo Science City, Guangzhou, China. Their high school students took on the project for the first time this year, tackling Shakespeare's 'King Lear' on the silver screen.

The school require all students in grades 9-12 to take on one fine art elective as part of their curriculum. Gigi, a grade 12 student, originally took on the drama elective but within a couple of days asked to swap to the art elective as he felt uncomfortable standing up in front of his peers.

When his school took on the Film Festival, Gigi was Head of the student film club. His teacher, noticing an opportunity for collaboration across the curriculum, invited the group to become part of the production team. The group of students involved in the club found a new direction working on 'King Lear'. Having previously been focussed on watching and discussing cinema, the project offered them a new opportunity to practically apply their learnings,

developing passion and understanding for the behind the scenes process. None more so than Gigi...

His teacher said he saw a student who was once 'shy and retiring', take 'a sense of control over the project'. 'It was like the camera was a mask, or his own costume which, once he had on, he was able to take control, be authoritative and lead'. Gigi took initiative, informing his actors on the best camera angles for each shot and even pushing his school to invest in a new green screen that would allow him to shoot the long shots that he wanted. In his new role, directing the shoot from behind the camera, Gigi garnered a sense of respect from his peers, in turn encouraging him to open up and become a part of the group. His teacher spoke fondly of a particular day where, on entering the classroom Gigi stated simply 'I need your teacher's chair' before proceeding to use the wheeled chair as a runner, instructing his team on when and where to push him and helping to increase the action and drama of the film.

At BASIS Guangzhou's premiere, where they came together to celebrate and watch their film, Gigi was fully involved as part of the team. His teacher reflected that the project had hugely increased Gigi's self-esteem, taking him 'from a student who, at the beginning of the year lasted only two days on the drama elective before deciding "drama's not for me", to finding himself in a leadership role that gave him focus and direction.' Whilst always a high flier, being part of, and leading a team 'gave him a strong sense of worth and credibility within his peers' that allowed him to access and enjoy a sense of camaraderie and have his successes celebrated. Gigi's school are looking forward to taking part in the Film Festival again this year and to continuing to involve students in all aspects of their production.









# THANK YOU

Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation's work wouldn't be possible without the extraordinary generosity of a passionate and committed group of individuals and organisations across the UK. We want to say a huge thank you to all those who help transform lives through the unique power of Shakespeare.

- Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund
- Old Possum's Practical Trust
- The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust
- The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- The Victoria Wood Foundation
- Belacqua Charitable Trust
- Maria Björnson Memorial Fund
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- Big Give
- The Childhood Trust
- The Stevenson Family's Charitable Trust
- Teale Charitable Trust
  
- Addleshaw Goddard
- Business Traveller

## CORAM SHAKESPEARE SCHOOLS FOUNDATION'S TRUSTEES

- |                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
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| - Guy Davies (Treasurer) | - Jill Pay      |
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