

Coram Shakespeare Schools Theatre Festival

Pilot research for a Knowledge Transfer Partnership application



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Coram Shakespeare Schools Theatre Festival

Newcastle University Higher Education Innovation Fund:
Pilot research for KTP application

Background to the research

This pilot research project was the product of discussions between Newcastle University and their collaborative partner - the Coram Foundation – and was linked to their recent MoU, which aims to identify and exploit collaborative opportunities of mutual benefit to the organisations and with the potential for tangible societal impact.

During the discussions, the Coram Foundation identified a particular funding need in relation to one of their flagship, well-respected programmes: The Shakespeare Schools Theatre Festival. Post- pandemic, the number of schools participating in the festival has fallen significantly and the Foundation is keen to reverse this trend. The collaborative discussions between Coram and academics from the School of Education and the School of Speech and Language Sciences established the potential of supporting Coram to undertake an independent evaluation of the Festival that would provide them with evidence that will enable them to attract future funding.

With school curricula becoming narrower, arts subjects given lower priority and school funds more limited, access to creative and cultural learning opportunities is very scarce especially for children in state schools. Third sector organisations, like The Coram Foundation, have acted to fill this gap, yet funding for these initiatives is also scarce and becoming increasingly competitive. Funders, such as the Arts Council, require more evidence of the benefits afforded to children and schools through their participation in these opportunities if they are to support this work. Furthermore, the level of independence and rigour expected in such evaluations is also increasing.

Subsequent meetings between the Head of the Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation and the research team at Newcastle University determined that:

- 1) The evaluation would adopt a novel, rigorous mixed methodology that would focus on understanding the impacts that participation in the festival has on the teachers and children and young people who take part- particularly on their wellbeing. Narrative methods will be adopted to develop a richer description of the benefits of the programme than has previously been possible, centring on the voices and experiences of the children and young people who have recently taken part and eliciting reflections from teachers. The narrative accounts will be integrated in a mixed methods approach with standardised and bespoke quantitative measures relating to self, others, aspirations and opportunities. The narratives will be accessed through stimulated recall generated by photographs, video, scripts, journals and other artefacts. Analysis will focus on relating elements of the narratives, such as critical experiences, episodes and relationships to the quantitative data, which may require individual and/or group interviews, thus crystallising growth points and

trajectories of change. This method is rich, robust and meaningful and triangulates across quantitative and qualitative data with data from one methodology informing choices in the other.

- 2) A Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) application would be explored as means through which to support Coram to undertake the evaluation. The KTP would aim to deliver the independent evaluation Coram require and also develop a methodology that can be used by other Arts and third sector organisations to evaluate cultural learning and social capital initiatives, in a rigorous, valid and meaningful way. This can be significant in protecting the provision of such opportunities within the current landscape of austerity and financial crisis.

In order to support and strengthen the KTP application, funding from the Newcastle University Higher Education Innovation Fund was applied for in order to conduct preliminary work to inform the detail of the evaluation design.

The Coram Foundation's Shakespeare Schools Theatre Festival (CSSF)

The Coram Foundation's Shakespeare Schools Theatre Festival is a cultural education project that supports students in schools to perform abridged Shakespeare plays on professional theatre stages across the UK. Over a period of approximately eight months, the participating students and teachers prepare their production as either part of the school



curriculum or as an after school club. They are supported to do this through additional workshops led by professional actors and directors, the provision of a range of award-winning resources, and teacher CPD. The Coram Shakespeare Schools Theatre Festival is the world's largest youth drama festival and to date over 300, 000 children and young people have taken part. 2025 sees the 25th anniversary of the Festival.

https://www.shakespeareschools.org/festival/shakespeare_theatre_festival

The pilot research:

The pilot research for the KTP application involved a research team made up of academics and researchers from The School of Education and the School of Speech and Language Sciences. The aim was to:

- undertake a literature review to explore potential standardised quantitative measures that are already being used to assess wellbeing with school age children and young people;
- undertake a literature review to explore the impact of drama/theatre on wellbeing;
- explore the potential of narrative as a research method;
- undertake interviews with teachers and students who are currently taking part in/ have taken part in the festival in the past. The interviews would focus on finding out what participation in the festival involved, what impact it had (benefits and challenges), with a particular focus on wellbeing; and

- write a report that will present the findings and draw conclusions that can be used to inform the KTP application and the design of the evaluation methodology.

Ethical approval to undertake the pilot research was approved by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee, Newcastle University on 24th May 2023.

Methodology

Literature reviews

Two literature reviews were undertaken. One focussed on the research that has been carried out that explores the impact of theatre/drama interventions on wellbeing. This built on a review undertaken in 2015 by TSIP (The Social Innovation Partnership) on behalf of the Coram Foundation. The second focussed specifically on identifying existing quantitative wellbeing measures that would be appropriate for children and young people. The reviewing process is outlined below; the results are presented in Appendices 1 and 2.

The TSIP ‘Literature review of Theatre interventions’ was used to identify an initial list of themes / constructs of well-being. A spreadsheet recorded the papers and identified any quantitative measures used in the evaluation that linked to wellbeing and if changes were found on those measures.

The themes/constructs were:

- a. Self-confidence / self-esteem
 - i. Laevers (1994) used well-being scales to find an increase in self-confidence, emotional engagement, and empathy, as a result of art-based interventions.
 - ii. Kennedy (1998) found that students who learned to give solo performances showed improvements in self-esteem (as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RES)). Also found that students who received guitar training, coupled with repeated performance experiences showed improvements in both self-esteem (measured by RES) and musical self-efficacy.
 - iii. CEDAR report (2009) found that the Royal Shakespeare Company programme has a particularly positive effect on the self-esteem of young people and the sense of community belonging (as measured by a subjective well-being measure in answer to the question “how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with your life overall?”).
- b. Self-efficacy and locus of control
 - i. Kennedy (1998) found that students who received guitar training, coupled with repeated performance experiences showed improvements in both self-esteem (measured by RES) and **musical self-efficacy**.
- c. General well-being in school
 - i. Project Oracle (2014) found that art-based interventions are shown to increase **enjoyment of school**.

- d. Tests of creativity / creative thinking.
 - i. Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles (2000) found that children in the top quartile of high exposure to the arts scored higher on the **figural creativity test** subset of the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT).
- e. Peer interactions / group working / relationships.
 - i. Brain et al (2008) conducted an overview of several drama studies promoting peer interaction, social skills, and empowerment. Found that drama interventions **improved team-working skills** in young people.
- f. Ambition / goals.
 - i. The U.S. National Endowment for the Arts (2012) report show that teenagers and young adults who engage in arts in or out of school have **raised future aspirations**.

Search terms were then developed for each of these themes and a list of possible quantitative measures and references on those particular themes was collated. The search was limited to publications after 2015.

Themes/concepts	Search terms: Quantitative OR “quantitative measure” OR questionnaire OR survey OR “pre and post-test”) AND (Children OR young people OR school)	No of papers identified
Self-confidence and / or self-esteem	AND (Self-confidence OR self-esteem OR confidence OR self-assurance OR self-belief OR self-regard)	4
Self-efficacy and locus of control	AND (Self-efficacy OR LOC OR “locus of control” OR successfulness OR success OR self-belief OR efficacy OR self-determination OR “personal agency” OR self-control)	6
General well-being in school	AND (well-being OR wellbeing OR welfare OR happiness OR enjoyment OR “school engagement” OR comfort)	5
Test of creativity / creative thinking	AND (“test of creativity” OR “test of creative thinking” OR “creative thinking” OR creative OR creativity OR imagination OR individuality OR innovation OR creativeness OR imaginative)	3
Peer interactions / group working / relationships.	AND (“peer interactions” OR “group working” OR “peer relationships” OR teamworking OR “peer working” OR coordination OR cooperation OR collaboration OR harmony OR “social interaction” OR “communication” OR friendship)	4
Ambitions / goals	AND (ambitions OR goals OR self-belief OR “future focused” OR “confident about the future” OR aspiration OR intentions OR objective OR determination OR drive OR enthusiasm OR motivation OR ambitiousness OR success)	5

A wider search of the literature on drama and theatre interventions and the impact on wellbeing was conducted, with an initial search using Google Scholar and the search terms ‘drama’ intervention’, ‘theatre’ and ‘wellbeing’. The search was limited to the last 10 years

in order to gather a recent overview of the current working theories and practices. From these studies, their citations were followed up in order to find other papers on similar themes. As part of this search, an article was identified that discussed a number of reports about the benefits of drama and theatre education (21 Evidence-Based Benefits of Drama and Theatre Education – WeTheParents).

As a result of this second literature search ‘emotional regulation’ was identified as an additional theme / construct of well-being to measure. Goldstein et al (2013) had found that young actors are familiarised with a range of emotions when performing that they learn to leave their feelings at the door – therefore improving their emotional self-regulation. The literature was searched to identify quantitative measures that fit under this theme.

Themes/concepts	Search terms: Quantitative OR “quantitative measure” OR questionnaire OR survey OR “pre and post-test”) AND (Children OR young people OR school)	No of papers identified
Emotional self-regulation	AND (“emotional regulation” OR “emotional self-regulation” OR “positive relationships” OR “cognitive reappraisal” OR “expressive suppression” OR “regulate emotions”)	3

Finally as a result of this literature search the terms peer interactions / group working / relationships were revised to ‘social inclusion’ and how the child feels socially. The literature was searched to identify quantitative measures that fit under this theme.

Themes/concepts	Search terms: Quantitative OR “quantitative measure” OR questionnaire OR survey OR “pre and post-test”) AND (Children OR young people OR school)	No of papers identified
Social inclusion	AND (“social inclusion” OR “social support” OR “social security” OR “welfare provision”)	3

A list of all the quantitative measures found under all themes was collated and was then revised to identify the most relevant measures for the purpose of the evaluation e.g. the number of items, age of participants and accessibility.

Of the final list of measures, 4 were selected to discuss with the students during the interviews. The selection criteria were based on the age range of the students in the focus groups and the relevance of the questions/statements in relation to the Shakespeare Schools Festival experience.

These were:

- The Stirling Wellbeing Measure (see p. 34 and p.40)
- How I feel about my school (HIFAMS) (see p.32 and p. 37)
- Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) (see p.31 and p.36)
- Self-efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C) (see p.32 and p.38)

Narrative as a research method

We give some profile in this report to narrative methodology, partly because the teacher interviews allowed them the opportunity to provide an account, with story qualities, that had some significance for them (Goodson, 2012) and partly because we believe that narrative should be a medium that can be developed to explain the fuller meaning of Shakespeare Schools Festival (CSSF) for participants to a number of audiences, including trustees, funders, policy makers and school leaders. Narratives offer insights about peoples' experience of the world and are considered to have three common features (Goodson & Gill, 2011):

- temporality – a sequence of events,
- meaning – personal significance and meaning is externalised through the telling of lived experiences,
- social encounter – all narratives are told to someone/an audience therefore shaped by the relationship of teller to listener.

Given the importance of audience, narratives of CSSF will need careful crafting. In this report the interview data has been analysed thematically to provide a particular structure, but this slightly obscures the full meaning expressed by the teachers as they responded to questions. They conveyed the importance of SSF to their identity and practice as teachers as they saw their students respond and develop in ways rarely achieved in the rest of the curriculum. There was strong resonance with their human values and beliefs about education. For an audience the prospect is narrative cognition (Bruner, 2009), which does not rely on logic and evidence (as in paradigmatic cognition) but an appeal to the causality embedded in story.

The interviews with teachers and students

For the purpose of the pilot, the sample of schools to be approached was limited to the North East of England and London. A total of 14 schools was identified. The initial contact asking schools to participate in the research was brokered by staff in Coram that have the personal links with the schools. This initial brokerage was then followed up by the research team at Newcastle University. The emails resulted in 5 schools agreeing to participate (teachers and students).

School	School type	Teacher n=	Students n=	Year group/s in focus group
1.Belsay Primary School, Northumberland	Primary	1	10 (3 focus groups)	4,5,6
2.West Jesmond Primary School, Newcastle	Primary	1	10 (2 focus groups)	6
3.Billingham South Primary School, Cleveland	Primary	2	13 (1 focus group)	4,5 and 6
4.Hadrian School, Newcastle	Special school (primary)	1	5 (undertaken by teacher)	KS2
5.Gosforth Central Middle School, Newcastle	Middle	1	8 (1 focus group)	7
Totals		6	46	

Interview schedules were developed that aimed to discover:

Teachers:

- the rationale for taking part;
- their observations of the impacts on the students (individual, group, school community). Specific examples were asked for;
- the impact on the students' wellbeing; and
- how wellbeing is discussed/monitored in their school.

After the first interview with a teacher took place, an additional question was inserted into the schedule that focussed on the impact on staff wellbeing.

Students:

- the experience of taking part- rationale and favourite memories
- the benefits
- the challenges
- parent/carer response
- impacts on the future
- their views of the quantitative measures

The aim of the interviews with the children and young people was to enable us to understand not only the impacts of participation in the festival, but also the language used by them to describe their experiences and emotions/wellbeing.

The interviews with the teachers took place on a 1-1 basis over Teams or in-person. These were recorded and transcribed. The student interviews in four of the schools took the form of focus groups ranging in size from 2-13 participants. These were undertaken by two of the research team, with one researcher asking the questions and one making notes. Where relevant, verbatim quotes were transcribed. Discussions with the teacher in the Special School led to the decision that he would speak to a sample of students based on his knowledge of the best way to communicate and phrase the questions. He recorded these in writing and sent them to the research team.

The interview transcripts were thematically analysed by three of the researchers. The process began with one transcript which was discussed in order to ensure common understanding of the themes and the terms used to describe them.

Limitations of the pilot study

The sample size of schools i.e. the number of teachers and students interviewed, was small and the findings presented are caveated on this. Additionally, whilst we were able to speak to students from Years 4- 7 who had either participated in CSSF this year or within the last 2 years, we were unable to follow up any alumni of the festival. The sampling of schools and interview participants needs to be carefully considered for the KTP.

Findings:

The findings section presents the data from the interviews relating to **all** of the themes that emerged from the analysis, on the understanding that this may be of interest to/of use for the Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation. There is limited commentary to accompany the themes, rather the actual words of the teachers and students are used to exemplify and evidence them.

Teacher interviews

Impact of the training on the teachers

All of the teachers mentioned the quality of the training and the impact it had on them. The workshops were described as inspirational and motivational, building confidence and providing them with new ideas:

The teacher workshops that I went on in that first September were just fantastic. Even, you know, nine years on, they're still so inspirational. You know, the work with the directors and the school liaison people and everything like that. And we go and we meet other people in the same situation from the schools in the region. We spend all day usually it's at the northern stage in one of the sort of smaller stage areas we we've also been to Dance City and other places. We've got veterans like myself. Then you've got other first years you've got second, third, however many, but everyone comes away with something. Everyone comes away with inspiration, with confidence, with new ideas. They're constantly giving us new things to try with the children. Um, so that that was in the early days, a real boost for me just to be like, right. Actually, I can do this, you know.

What was also clear from the interviews was the importance of the relationships that develop between the teachers from all of the different schools, creating a sense of community. The enjoyment is such, that one teacher described how at the end of the workshop *'we think, forget the children, let's put on a play ourselves. We all want to carry on what we've done all day. You're so motivated'*.

For those that had attended many times they considered the training workshops so valuable that they would offer the opportunity to other staff who would then support the workshop delivery in school.

CSSF and inclusion

Four out of the five schools introduced the Shakespeare workshops as an extra-curricular activity, in each case running them twice weekly. One of the four schools had only recently adopted this model, having included as part of the curriculum in previous years. The special school included it within the curriculum and this was *'non-negotiable'*. Where the model was embedded in normal teaching time, it was considered by those who had done this, to be more inclusive, encouraging children and young people to participate who would otherwise not consider drama/theatre:

You get a lot of very nervous children, who at the beginning would never do the sort of thing if you give them a choice. I don't want to be stereotypical, but some of the boys, for example, would say, 'no, I'm not really going to take part in that; if it was a football club I might, but they take part in it and then at the end they are buzzing.

Whilst all of the teachers that ran the Shakespeare project as an extra-curricular activity encouraged children and young people to attend that they thought would benefit, one school very specifically targeted the more disadvantaged students- Looked After Children (LAC), students in receipt of pupil premium and SEND students. Conversations took place between the teachers and data was analysed, with 60 letters then sent out to the selected students. 80% responded to the invitation and took part. The remaining places were offered to the rest of the year group. A second school opened up the after-school club to children from their special needs class made up of children with 'cognition and learning difficulties'.

In terms of the project design itself, the teachers identified two ways in which it is inclusive:

- 1) It is made up of activities that allow all children to participate, but especially those who do not succeed as well in the 'normal' classroom environment:

I think just giving them a chance to take away the limiting factors of a pen or a pencil or a chair or a table. I think it just creates a different environment for exploring different opportunities.

- 2) The casting process enables the teachers to provide opportunities for specific children and young people to thrive, encouraging those who they know would benefit:

I'm thinking of Friar Lawrence in Romeo and Juliet last year, a boy that I taught, this would never be his thing, and he would never have done it. And that was a medium part. I knew he could do it, and it gave him that confidence, and he absolutely loved it. And he said, that was one of the best experiences he's ever had, and he got off stage, and he was buzzing, and he said I want to go back on stage and do it again.

Curriculum/learning

The teacher interviews evidenced that learning the Shakespeare play impacted on some students' interest in their English/drama lessons, their language and writing as well as their understanding of and interest in Shakespeare more specifically:

You'll see them looking for Shakespeare in the library. You see them coming in and talking about oh I saw this film on the internet about this Shakespeare adaptation or something like that. And we've watched CBBC adaptations of plays and you know they just live and breathe it for quite a few months, which is lovely.

They really love all the different language and the vocabulary that they are introduced to. Oh yeah. They love asking us oh what does this mean and why are we saying this? And they love the humour behind Shakespeare. They love the insults. I mean that goes on that goes on

for a while afterwards. So the use of language definitely carries on and they get they get quite caught up in the language. Which is funny because it really does start off as a barrier.

It certainly impacts on the ideas that they bring to some of their literacy.

It definitely impacts on their choice of reading because you do have children while you're doing it come and they've found aversion of it or and then it quite often leads to a version of something else that they've read. I mean, for example, after you finish they will reel off suggestions for what they want to do next, and we haven't done that with them, so they've clearly started to piece that together.

There were also comments that participation improves the students' speaking and listening and ability to follow instructions.

Benefits/impacts on students- as observed by the teachers

As part of the interviews the teachers were asked what they considered to be the benefits of participation on the students, in particular their wellbeing. Across the interviews the following themes emerged:

- Understanding emotions

Drama 'gives them an understanding of their emotions because we are breaking it down to this character is happy, can we walk around like we are happy. This character is sad, what happens when we are sad, can anyone tell me what makes them sad? Really the basic foundational emotions, what does that look like? Doing a drama project highlights this.'

- Risk taking/thinking positively

We talk a lot here about taking the risks and not, you know, not just staying in the in the comfort zone, but taking a step out. And, you know, so you, you know, metaphorically fall over, you know, you pick yourself up, you think, right. What made me fall over that time? How can I put that right and how am I not gonna let that put me off in future. What can I take from it as a positive? Even if the outcome wasn't wholly positive, the fact that I put myself in that situation, there's a positive. So it's always trying to find, you know, the bright side of whatever might happen and thinking, how can we make it even brighter next time?

The girl in particular I'm thinking of, what she finds difficult is self-belief. And it just to be able to have extra ammunition to be like, you know remember, in rehearsals last week, you didn't think you'd be able to do that. But you know, you got there and you did that silly skit in front of other everybody else. And we all loved it. And you know, you can see the smile on your face, you know, remember, you can take those risks, and you're gonna be alright.

- The benefit of seeing children from other schools perform

I think for them to see, you know, other schools of children with different backgrounds, different challenges. I think the awe on their faces is, you know, I always want to take almost photos of them watching it because just to see them, you know, really respect and value what the Hadrian School and the other schools like that that we've seen, you know, that's worth that's worth all the hours as well.

Having Benfield School on the same night as well, to think, you know, in a few years' time at secondary school, you could be doing this again.

Performing at the Northern Stage, performing with a range of different types of schools like Hadrian like Benfield, all of the secondary schools as well. I just think it's really important that the children get into the wider community and to see Shakespeare and different children from different contexts and different backgrounds.

There's some nice interactions with other schools. I mean, they were talking to each other about their parts and, you know, they get to watch each other's dress rehearsal.

- Confidence, self-belief, self-esteem, doing things they perhaps didn't think they could do

There's been a massive impact on some real key individuals who might have had a tricky start to the year, but you really see them growing confidence and of course we can't say it was solely Shakespeare, but I certainly think it must be a contributing factor to that.

You see their eyes light up when you see them bowing and taking that applause. There's not many ways you can replicate that, and for me just to see their chests and shoulders all coming out and just seeing that self-belief that they have and the spring in their step is just fantastic.

It's the confidence, the chest up, walking around. It's the physical, behavioural.

The Shakespeare performance is really like a snap shot of what these kids are working on now plus a little bit extra you didn't know they could do this.

- Resilience

You know, people make mistakes, but no one minds. They pick themselves up and they just go again and it's really nice to see that trust.

When they rehearse they are totally they're totally thrown off by making mistakes, but on the night, if they're making mistakes, they just sail through it. Which is a mark of resilience and courage and they're dead proud of themselves afterwards, they know they have done that.

So coming back at the school afterwards, if you're really struggling with something, you can always refer back to it and say, 'Look what you did in Shakespeare', you know you were

fearful. It's that growth mindset, you know which we always talk about in primary schools, and if you're feeling really worried or anxious or the nervous like with the Year 6s having the SATs this week, you can say that you felt that in the green room at the back of the Northern Stage. You were panicking. You were upset. You were worried, but look at what you did, you know, and I think it really does get the children to think about how they can overcome things.

- Friendships, community, social inclusion

They were from all three classes, so that another real advantage of it in that it widens their social circle.

And just the general strengthening of those social bonds as well. Seeing them interact with people that they wouldn't have necessarily interacted with before that they just would never have crossed paths with in the yard because some might have been playing football, whereas others might have been in the corner chatting. They would never have used to interact but put them in a room now and they'll chat away because they've had this shared experience.

They support each other and children that wouldn't normally spend time together would learn lines on the playground and make little groups.

- Happiness, enjoyment



So you just see the wonder in their faces when you're in our tech rehearsal and you got the spotlights coming on or you're showing them the dressing rooms or all the things backstage, you know, it's just amazing to see the excitement.

And the beaming faces, you know they come off stage, and you can't stop smiling. I wish I could bottle it and say it to the children when you're feeling a little bit low, have a bit of this.

All of those kids would say they were enormously happy after they performed - even though they will have had moments where they were frustrated or worried or, you know that. It is like you have given them two bags of sugar right, on the evening. And this is why they are always better than you think because you forget the endorphins and adrenaline being released must be huge. For example, they prompt each other and they don't do that on any other night but on that night they do.

- The importance of cultural capital

All of the teachers commented on the value of performing in an actual theatre:

Then you've got the trip to the theatre, and quite often it's the first experience for the children of certainly being on stage, but also just being in a professional real life theatre, not just in an assembly or anything like that. So you just see the wonder in their faces when

you're in our tech rehearsal and you got the spotlights coming on or you're showing them the dressing rooms or all the things backstage, you know, it's just amazing to see the excitement and as much as much as I love teaching. I wouldn't say maths and English gives that same excitement.

When you've got the lights on you something changes, it does make a difference being in the actual theatre because they're in the changing rooms with the bulbs around the mirrors. And then backstage they're in these really special places that they don't normally get to be. It's amazing cultural capital.

Our pupil premium offer, which is, you know, the additional money we get for disadvantaged pupils, one of the big portions of that is cultural capital. And giving our children opportunities that the children may not get automatically and so again this ticks that box too.

One school used the opportunity to look around the university grounds and go into Newcastle city centre:

They loved the day. We took them into Newcastle for Kentucky Fried Chicken and they loved that and they loved being in the university grounds. Yeah, they absolutely adored that. And they loved the dressing room. The lights around the dressing room. I mean, the minute they arrived, they wanted to be on the stage.

- Behaviour

Their confidence skyrockets and they know that they've now got to listen. It spills over into the classroom. So whereas before they might have struggled with sitting still, now they are slightly better at sitting still.

Relationships and community

What was clear in all of the interviews with the teachers, was that working together as a group over the weeks of the rehearsals had a significant impact on the relationships between the staff and the children and the staff with each other. These were all described very positively.

Teacher relationships- staff

You know we can all laugh at each other a little bit or with each other I should say in rehearsals because generally I will say something a little bit stupid or silly and then. Someone else will, and then you laugh with it afterwards and it just means that we're not just talking about maths and English and marking and planning and all of that. It's something else entirely and it just strengthens that bond between the six of us.

Teacher relationships- children

This was described in terms of:

- I. the bonds formed:

I don't want this to sound cheesy, but you really get this this culture of being there for each other.

- II. the fact that the relationships are completely different from the normal teacher-student relationships

And you know they love it when you know I pretend to be Juliet or something like that and, you know, prancing around the stage and being really, really silly.

But it's the opportunity you get to spend with the children in a slightly different way, you know, at 3:30, my, teacher hat comes off and suddenly I'm, you know, I'm still Mr X. But, you know, I'm being a little bit sillier than I might be in the classroom. And I do those silly things. It's a chance for us to play as well as the children and to build up those relationships in different ways.

- III. It provides an opportunity to get to know the children better in a more relaxed environment which benefits the relationships back in the classroom

But there's a couple of children in my class that were in the cast, and since we started I've really got to know them better and that sort of built up that relationship, that trust a little bit more. I mean one of the girls in my class, she really does find the academic side of school really difficult. For us to have those two afternoons on a Monday and Tuesday where, you know we can, we can leave maths and English behind and all the other subjects and we can just focus on her being silly, but because suddenly it's like she's allowed to be silly, and it's encouraged, and it's just to see them show their personality in a slightly different way, in the sort of outside the classroom is just really nice.

We know the children better in in different ways. So we get more invested in in them if you like.

For the head teacher and deputy head who ran the project in one school it provided them with the opportunity to have 'direct contact with the children', which they typically didn't get the chance to do on this scale.

Teacher wellbeing

What became clear during every interview was the impact that the project had on the wellbeing of the teachers. This was articulated in a variety of ways. Firstly, all of the teachers expressed the opinion that doing the project was one of the highlights of their year- that it was fun and enjoyable. The fact that they have all been doing it for so many years (despite what many described as an additional heavy workload) would suggest that the benefits for the teachers are pronounced.

School	Number of years the teachers have taken part
1	5 (Silver award)
2	9 (Gold award)
3	5 (Silver award)
4	8 (Gold award)
5	7 (Gold award)

It's the absolute highlight of my year or certainly one of them. So I've now directed and produced nine of them, nine annual productions.

It's my favourite part of the school year. For me personally it's a lot of work but it's a labour of love. It brings together the three things I'm passionate about, working here, music and English literature, story'.

I find it really fun, it's the fun part of my job. It's wellbeing for me. It is stressful but it's only you that puts pressure on yourself.

Secondly, the teachers described how taking part in the project developed their confidence and risk-taking, particularly the longer they took part. They talked about this in relation to their own confidence

I certainly think it's really helped me settle in at the school. It's made my confidence, you know, really come on I was quite a nervous NQT; now I don't think anyone would accuse me of being nervous.

as well as in relation to the staff they worked with:

For example, [name], she's a learning support assistant in Year 6. She is a huge Shakespeare fan. We're pretty much a duo now and she really takes it on. She's rewritten parts of it for us and written in new characters and she's very much the organisation against my perhaps she's the one that keeps my feet on the ground. But to see the impact it's had on her relationship with some of the children, they really look up to her because of her expertise with Shakespeare and her involvement. And to see her confidence since she joined the school.

Thirdly they described the emotional impact of the experience, using powerful vocabulary:

*When they get that applause and you just see them light up. **I always, always get that lump in my throat.** They've never, ever sort of fallen short of expectations. They've always, always blown them out the water. They always raise the game on the night, and it's just incredible. And then the feedback that we get after the performance has always very, very nice and very **humbling.***

*It is really **heart-warming** when they turn round to say I don't know how you do that or I don't know how you got my son to do that or I don't know how you got my daughter to do that.*

*When we've gone to get our stuff and then we bring the children out and send them back to their parents. They've been in the audience and you know the number of them that you can see have been crying or are just beaming with pride, you know, that is **such a special moment for me as well.***

*The **pride** that we get and seeing that journey and in seeing that moment when they just see the audience beaming back at them and like, you know, especially when they get the standing ovation.*

Student case study narratives

During the interviews with the teachers, they were each asked to consider what they considered to be the benefits of participation in the festival for the students and select a child/young person to exemplify these. The following are the narratives they provided:

There was one lad who was in one of my colleague's classes, who at the beginning of Year 6 was having panic attacks in the morning and often was sat out in the corridor and just not able to interact with the lessons. Over the autumn term he made so much progress. I mean, like I could see, and [the class teacher] could see because she came along to her nearly every rehearsal as well, his class teacher. But just see him growing in confidence and I think that that goes for quite a few of the children. But it was particularly obvious with him. I was driving home on Thursday and he was crossing the road in front of me and he literally saw me and said hello there. And you know he wouldn't have done that at all at the start of the year. And just the fact that he was happy to do that in front of his friends, things like say Hello to his teacher and you know we've really seen a massive boost in his confidence and self-esteem. He's got such a spring and a step, and I think academically I think his confidence has grown as well.

There was also a girl in my class who got the part of Malvolio. I don't know if you remember the yellow stockings. Um, very, very academic, you know, quite high ability, but maybe not the most outgoing. I think she loved the role and she I know she read a lot about it. She really looked into it. She watched a couple of versions, but there was always a part of her that was a bit reserved. She held back a little bit. You know, we really worked on the silly walk and the you know, the the silly faces at the audience and the you know, the the teddy bear come out of the jacket. Just those little touches that I mean that was her idea. And it's just for her to really step out of that academic mould that she was in before and you know. Part way through rehearsals I was talking to her Year 4 teacher who's still a colleague here and he was running through some of his old Year 4 students and I said this girl's in it and as whatever, and you know, his jaw nearly hit the ground at the thought of her wanting to step out and do this in front of everyone. But you know, for me personally she was one of the show stealers - a real stand out from a progress point of view.

The girl who played Desdemona wasn't originally going to be her, but then she was so good at something else we thought why not and we built that part around her. She was amazing. She's quite a quiet child, and so to see her come out of her shell, I mean I had never heard her speak and now she doesn't stop speaking. Now she speaks in the corridor to me.

We have a male student in Year 7 he struggles with behaviour, really being appropriate, making the right choices. He's pupil premium. He was totally focussed the whole way through. He came to rehearsals. We are doing a Macbeth Unit in Y7 now and he was able to tell me how Macbeth has influenced. He's able to be focussed. We've noticed an improvement in his behaviour.

I'm thinking of Friar Lawrence in Romeo and Juliet last year, a boy that I taught this would never be his thing, and he would never have done it. And that was a medium part, I knew he could do it, and I gave them that confidence, and he absolutely loved it. And he said, that was one of the best experiences he's ever had, and he got off stage, and he was buzzing, and he said I want to go back on stage and do it again. And now that's a child who would never normally take part in something like this, and the boost and confidence, that's what it's about, really, it's that boosting confidence for the children.

One of the things we did this year is one of the former pupils who did Romeo and Juliet. In fact, no, she would have done Romeo and Juliet, and a Midsummer Night's Dream. That's right, she was Titania, and then she played the Prince in Romeo and Juliet. She came back to us from January to March to actually help run this club because she was so inspired by it. And she was doing a Duke of Edinburgh award.

We've got one boy who's got a stammer and quite marked. He went from the first four or five rehearsals, whether sometimes not turning up or crying when he was asked to do anything even though he'd volunteered for it right to, and by the end you know, that was massive resilience. So by the end he did stand on the stage. He delivered a couple of short lines, but it meant everything to him. And his family are taking him on a theatre trip to London in the summer because he so much wants to see somebody else.

Student focus groups

Rationale for taking part

The students identified a range of reasons for wanting to take part in the Shakespeare project. The following are representative of the responses:

- The opportunity to be in school but in an environment where their personality could be properly expressed and where they could shine:

I'm loud and I want to use it without getting told off. (Year 6 student)

When I was younger I was really scared to go on stage, so thought this was a good chance to go on stage and to show off. It was my moment. (KS2 student)

- Enjoying drama:

I want to be an actor when I'm older (KS2 student)

- Having seen siblings take part:

My brother had done it and I really wanted to do it. I really wanted to talk on stage in front of loads of people. (Year 4 student)

- Parental encouragement:

My parents thought it would be good because I struggle to find words. (KS2 student)

Favourite memories

When asked to describe their favourite memories, there were three main themes that emerged:

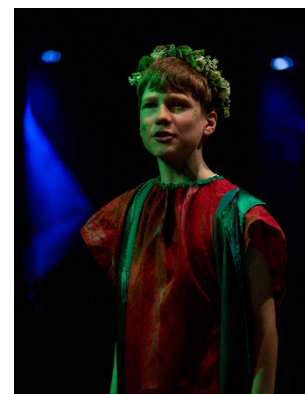
I. Being on stage

The majority of the children and young people talked about the performance in the theatre and the opportunity to experience what it is like to be a "proper actor". They described being on stage, waiting nervously in the wings, the backstage experience in the dressing rooms and the applause from the audience.

The ten minutes before the show, waiting to go on. The build-up was very exciting. (Year 6 student)

The end, the clapping and bowing, we worked so hard and got a standing ovation, we could see that people enjoyed it. It was a nice way to end it. (Year 6 student)

The lights and everything, I had the first line on the stage and that was really exciting. (Key Stage 2 student)



Being on stage and seeing my parents. My dad was happy. (Year 4 student)

Dancing, acting, waving. (Special school KS2 student)

II. Friendships and community

The students talked about the sense of community, the bonds they shared, making new friends and being with old friends. They talked of the trust that developed, the shared jokes and their happiness. These feelings were particularly expressed in relation to the days when the after-school clubs were held.

We all helped each other when we made mistakes because everybody made a mistake. (KS2 student)

I became better friends with everyone and made new friends too. (KS2 student)

On a Thursday I would feel so happy in my head that I had Shakespeare that day. (KS2 student)

What didn't the students enjoy?

When asked what they didn't enjoy, interestingly the most typical comments referred to the end of the project:

When the show stopped (but I still had friends afterwards). (KS2 student)

I was sad when it was over, it was kind of shocking. I kept forgetting it was over. (Year 7 student)

When it finished, I wasn't busy anymore and I had nothing to do on a Thursday evening. (KS2 student)

Any negative comments referred to nerves or workload e.g. learning lines, although these were usually qualified:

It was hard putting so much work in, but worth it in the end. (Special school KS2 student)

or were about aspects of the process e.g. not enough main parts in the play, *the 'sitting around'* during the dress rehearsals and not being able to see all of the plays.

The impacts on the students

Feeling included

The interviews highlighted that the approach itself is inclusive allowing children and young people to participate whatever their confidence levels, special needs, reading levels etc. It was also clear from the interviews that the students themselves were able to recognise and articulate this:

I have got dyslexia so it's a bit harder to read the lines (Key Stage 2 student)

(My) parents thought would be good for me because I struggle to find the words (Key Stage 2 student with a stammer)

I stepped out of my comfort zone. It made me feel I could do more. (Year 6 student)

Creating relationships, a sense of community

The children and young people interviewed talked about the importance of the bonds and relationships formed over the weeks over the rehearsals. This included friendships with their peers but also new types of relationships with the teachers running the clubs:

- Teacher-students

They felt like they were friends. (Year 6 student)

We got more friendly with the teachers. It was a different kind of conversation, more jokey, laughing. (Year 6 student)

- Student-student

I made some really good friends along the way. (Year 7 student)

I didn't have that much friends and when we started I made more friends. (Key Stage 2 student)

We helped each other when we made mistakes because everybody made mistakes. (Key Stage 2 student)

Everyone was nervous at first, but we were all joking by the end. (Year 6 student)

Just before we went on stage, we were all nervous. We were on the stage the whole time so couldn't do anything because everyone could see. I looked around and saw my friends and I knew it would be ok. (Year 7 student)

Improved confidence

The majority of the students interviewed described improvements in confidence.

I think that I've been really good at the play. I liked performing for my mam. (Key Stage 2 student- special school)

I was quite shy before but it made me more confident. (Year 7 student)

I was happy I spoke all of my lines. I used to be a very shy little boy but now feel more confident. (Year 7 student)

Improved resilience

The students described the various challenges they faced and had to overcome: their nerves, learning lines, being loud, being shy etc.

I was really scared talking in front of people, but I did it. (Year 6 student)

I hated doing things in front of other people but after doing it twice a week I got used to it. (Year 6 student)

Expressions of happiness and enjoyment

During the interviews, it was clear that the experience of participating in the Shakespeare festival had made the children and young people very happy. All of the researchers conducting the interviews commented on how much the students laughed and smiled during the focus groups. Their enthusiasm was very infectious.

I felt happy. (Year 6 student)

I couldn't stop smiling when I came off stage. (Year 5 student)

It was a good feeling. (Year 5 student)

It was so fun. (Key Stage 2 student)

The response of family and friends

When asked if they talked to family and friends about the rehearsals etc., the response was mixed. Many stated they did not. Of those that did, some said this was in response to a direct questions from their parent/carer, but others described real enthusiasm about talking about it at home:

My parents were probably sick of me talking about it. I was talking more to them. (Year 6 student)

I told a lot of my friends and I told my mum and she told the entire world. (Key Stage 2 student)

Several children talked about the interest displayed by their extended family members:

My grandad does English so he was really interested and called me every weekend. (Year 6 student)

My gran bought the book and came down from Scotland to see it. She wrote a letter to the school. (Year 6 student)

I spoke to my nana and cousins. (Special school KS2 student)

Several students also commented on how their family responded to seeing them on stage and how surprised they often were:

My brother was surprised how good I was. (Year 6 student)

I didn't think I was that good but my mum said I was great- how loud I was. (Year 6 student)

Discussion

Two metaphors of learning

Anna Sfard (1998) published a notable and much referenced paper 'On Two Metaphors for Learning and the Dangers of Choosing Just One'. The two metaphors were acquisition and participation. Although learning is almost certainly more nuanced than these two archetypes, they signify an important distinction and a means of evaluating contemporary schooling. In the former, knowledge is a commodity, and the goal of the individual learner is to acquire and possess it for personal benefit. By contrast the participation metaphor stresses the importance of experience and involvement geared towards becoming part of a community or building community. Current DfE policy propels schools towards building curriculum aligned with the acquisition metaphor and school systems are designed to track individual achievement in single subjects for which they are held accountable. The development of wider outcomes as reflected in 'Personal Development' are often a matter of considerable concern to schools and will be the focus of PSHE (and other pseudonyms) and periodic interventions are used to deal with individual pupils (or groups) exhibiting behaviour problems. Extra-curriculum activities are the other main vehicle for other PD. However Personal Development does remain a poor relation of subject attainment and Ofsted does not investigate impact of schools' implementation.

We suggest two reasons why experience through participation may gain greater traction in curriculum development. The first relates to character education:

'Character is ... defined as the set of psychological characteristics that motivate and enable the individual to function as a competent moral agent, that is, to do "good" in the world' (Berkowitz, 2011, p. 153)

In addition to moral agency, character education (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004, p. 75) is also linked with an impressive list including academic motivation and aspirations, academic achievement, prosocial behaviour, bonding to school, prosocial and democratic values, conflict resolution skills, moral reasoning maturity, responsibility, respect, self-efficacy, self-control, self-esteem, social skills, and trust in and respect for teachers. This is a tantalising list and maps across well to the positive outcomes reported earlier derived from CSSF. If character education, via critical and creative community participation can put young people on the front foot, then the same opportunities can also act as a protective factor for some of the pernicious C21st social ills, generally classified as vulnerabilities.

The second reason why a more participatory curriculum may prove more compelling is the need to combat vulnerabilities. These are caused predominantly by environmental factors, including living in households with domestic abuse, parental mental health and substance abuse, exploitation by others and by a failure to recognise and intervene at an early stage (Asmussen et al. 2020). There are an estimated 2.3 million vulnerable children in England with about two-thirds in receipt of support or are known to services, but one-third are 'invisible' to services (House of Lords). Education is an important protective factor which can minimise or break the cycles of harm, which requires strong relationships with teachers and social interactions with trusted adults. Participation in arts and cultural activities, such as CSSF, and other extra-curricular activities such as sports are fundamental in disrupting cycles of damage and providing an antidote to some adverse childhood experiences.

CSSF and student wellbeing/personal development

The impact of CSSF on the wellbeing of the students was evidenced during all of the interviews and focus groups. It was articulated in a variety of ways:

- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- The development of resilience and risk-taking
- The development of community, friendship and social bonds. Importantly this includes peer to peer (teacher-teacher, student-student) but is extended to teacher-student
- The development of trust and respect
- Inclusion – allowing all to thrive
- Emotional regulation- talking about and regulating emotions in a safe environment.

The schools involved in the pilot had all adopted the Social Emotional Learning Curriculum and Regulation Program 'Zones of Regulation' as a way in which to support their students to understand, talk about and address their emotions. <https://zonesofregulation.com/> Whilst the teachers interviewed all stated that student wellbeing had been a focus prior to the pandemic, they also all commented that this had taken on extra importance since the students returned to school after the lockdowns. One teacher described how the pandemic had '*knocked the confidence for a lot of children and certainly their independence as well*'.

The Durham Commission on Creativity and Education (2021) explored the impact that the Covid 19 pandemic had on children and young people. Their research highlighted that school leaders considered participation in collective arts and cultural events to be 'vital in

restoring the wellbeing of pupils' (p.17) and that creative and cultural activities should be 'intrinsic to a recovery curriculum'(p.9).

The pilot findings would suggest that CSSF had positive impacts on the students' mental health and wellbeing. Further exploration of this impact from a larger data set would be an interesting focus for the KTP.

Additionally in persuading schools to engage with CSSF, reference to Personal Development (PD) will be invaluable because it is one of the categories in the Ofsted inspection framework. Schools are subject to intense scrutiny from Ofsted. Such accountability is internalised as schools adopt Ofsted language as part of the discourse governing their operation and Ofsted processes are adopted, such as 'deep dives' in a process known as 'mirroring'. Furthermore, internally teachers and senior leaders may need to argue that CSSF makes an outstanding contribution to PD. The most relevant sections of the framework are outlined below and it is anticipated that the KTP process will give PD some attention.

Schools are expected to develop:

- Responsible, respectful and active citizens who are able to play their part and become actively involved in public life as adults
- Pupils' character, which Ofsted defines as a set of positive personal traits, dispositions and virtues that informs their motivation and guides their conduct so that they reflect wisely, learn eagerly, behave with integrity and cooperate consistently well with others
- Pupils' confidence, resilience and knowledge so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy
- Equality of opportunity so that all pupils can thrive together, understanding that difference is a positive, not a negative, and that individual characteristics make people unique
- An inclusive environment that meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation

Pupils develop

- A range of social skills in different contexts – for example, working and socialising with other pupils, including those from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- Willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively

Cultural Development

- Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others
- Ability to recognise, and value, the things we share in common across cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities
- Willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities

CSSF and academic achievement

Whilst the possible impact of participation in CSSF on academic achievement was not a focus of the pilot and it is extremely difficult to evidence the effects of any one intervention taking place in a school, the interviews with the teachers and students, did highlight anecdotal evidence of:

- increased interest in reading,
- the development of speaking and listening,
- better understanding when studying Shakespeare in English/drama lessons.
- improved behaviour/emotional regulation
- improved resilience that impacts on learning in the classroom
- improved relationships with teachers that impacts on learning in the classroom

This has the potential to be explored as part of the KTP.

CSSF and teacher wellbeing

The impact of participation in CSSF on teacher wellbeing was also not an initial focus of the pilot research, but it became apparent during the first interview that its impact was similarly significant. As with the children and young people, wellbeing took the form of:

- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- The development of resilience and risk-taking
- The development of community, friendship and social bonds. Importantly this includes peer to peer (teacher-teacher, student-student) but is extended to teacher-student
- The development of trust and respect

It also became clear that schools are beginning to address staff wellbeing much more consciously and systematically. For example, one school had established a Wellbeing Committee solely focussed on supporting the staff.

It was interesting to note that the teachers who were interviewed, had all been involved in CSSF for many years (minimum 5, maximum 9 years). Again, this is an aspect of the pilot findings that could be further explored in the KTP as teacher retention continues to remain problematic (Long, R. and Danechi, S. (2021) and senior leaders are keen to address this.

In a large scale survey undertaken by Perryman and Graham (2020) the authors found that 'accountability pressures and the performativity culture in education are the major factor in teachers wanting to leave the profession. 'Work-life balance' and 'pay' were additionally identified in a more recent survey undertaken by The Commission on Teacher Retention (Public First, 2023, p.18). Perryman and Graham proposed that the primary reason for this exodus is that current teaching has moved away from 'the more individualistic and creative aspects of the job. (P.10). CSSF would appear to enable the teachers involved to follow their passions, express their creativity and increase agency.

The quantitative measures – what next?

The findings from the focus groups and interviews with children and staff aligned well with the findings from the literature review in terms of which aspects of wellbeing are most impacted by participation in the Shakespeare School Festival. There were consistent reports of impacts on self-confidence and self-esteem, peer and teacher relationships and general happiness in school. In focus groups, the children were able to discuss questions from the selected wellbeing measures in a way that showed they understood what they were being asked, although on all measures there were some questions where they were unsure of the purpose or thought the questions 'strange'. Ultimately, these seem to be appropriate measures to use with children in this age range to assess individual aspects of wellbeing.

However, it was also clear that no individual measure captured all of the dimensions of wellbeing that were of particular importance to children and staff in relation to the Shakespeare School Festival. One possible way forwards through the KTP is to design a bespoke measure that includes questions from all of the most relevant dimensions and run a small validation study. This bespoke measure could be used to capture changes in children's wellbeing before and after participation in the Festival. Alternatively, the evaluation team could select one of the existing measures of wellbeing that we trialled, focussing on a particular dimension of wellbeing that was of interest. The findings of this pilot research would support either course of action. The KTP could also explore the possibilities of using data already collected by schools to evidence impact of the CSSF e.g. children's attainment and attendance and to enable impacts on particular groups to be evidenced e.g. children in receipt of pupil premium or those with SEND.

The potential focus of a KTP

Experiential learning is vital for wider educational outcomes reflecting identity, well-being, employment, citizenship and aspiration. However, it is often difficult to justify such experiential learning (catalysed by the arts, sport, travel and making things). It is important to develop methods that do capture the benefits of such experiences (including life transformations) so that they are valued by all stakeholders

Organisations often conduct standard evaluations, one size fits all. Here methods will be co-produced with schools/teachers to meet their specific interests and motivation for engaging in the Shakespeare Schools Festival. Thus, schools have the option of gathering data that meets their needs whilst providing evidence to Coram about the varied impact.

Possible activities for KTP Associate:

1. Desk study of evaluations of experiential/cultural learning – informed by literature and discussion with Coram staff and similar organisations.
2. A series of evaluation placements in schools (carefully sampled) working with teaching staff to design and trial evaluation methods and packages that both focus on the capabilities and traits that the school is interested in AND are practical within the constraint of staff capacity. The methods will include those that focus on individuals (generally qualitative) and those that cater for whole groups (generally quantitative) and are also designed to meet the needs of schools' external

accountabilities (Ofsted, governors, parents). (This might also include some measures pertaining to well-being of staff and the impact on motivation)

3. Production of both case studies of schools and also a repertoire of 'road tested' evaluation methods that suit a variety of contexts (age, pupil needs, implementation model, school context and needs, staff capacity etc.) such that schools can craft/calibrate their own evaluation with limited guidance from Coram.
4. The model/repertoire is trialled at the teacher workshops and followed up in a sample of schools and refined thereafter.

Academic Challenges:

1. Finding/developing a range of methods that reflect all the beneficial outcomes of CSSF;
2. Calibrating these with schools' interests and accountabilities;
3. Developing ways of working for teachers that accommodate evaluation aims and methods that do not substantially compromise their work on the play.

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Appendix 1

Quantitative Measures of Children’s and Adolescent’s Well-being

1. **Generic Children’s Quality of Life Measure (GCQ)**

Facet of well-being measured	Quality of life.
Age of participants designed for	6-14 years.
Number of items	25.
Scoring	<p>Likert scale with 5 options (always, often, sometimes, hardly ever, never).</p> <p>Child asked to relate to the responses of the children in the story, first ticking the child they feel is most like themselves, then later ticking the child they would most like to be. This produces the perceived-self score and the preferred-self score. Discrepancy between the 2 scores provides the quality of life score. Discrepancy totals are transformed in order for high scores to indicate a high quality of life.</p>
Training required	No
Accessibility	Free
Link	Download the GCQ – Generic Children's Quality of Life measure (GCQ) (gcqmeasure.co.uk)

2. **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE)**

Facet of well-being measured	Global self-esteem.
Age of participants designed for	12 + (not validated for children under 12).
Number of items	10.
Scoring	<p>Low self-esteem = disagree / strongly disagree on items 1,3,4,7 and 10 AND strongly agree / agree on items 2,5,6,8 and 9.</p> <p>2 or 3 out of 3 correct responses to items 3,7 and 9 = 1 item.</p> <p>1 or 2 correct responses to items 4 and 5 = 1 item.</p> <p>Items 1, 8 and 10 = individual items.</p>

	1 or 2 out of 2 for items 2 and 6 = 1 item. OR scale can also be scored by totalling the individual 4-point items after reverse-scoring the negatively worded items.
Training required	No
Accessibility	Free
Link	Measures Package (apa.org)

3. How I Feel About My School (HIFAMS)

Facet of well-being measured	General well-being in school
Age of participants designed for	4-8 years.
Number of items	7.
Scoring	3-point Likert scale – sad (0), ok (1) and happy (2) Total score is calculated as the sum of the individual items (possible score ranging from 0 to 14) Higher scores = greater happiness.
Training required	No
Accessibility	Free
Link	‘How I Feel About My School’: The construction and validation of a measure of wellbeing at school for primary school children (sagepub.com)

4. Self-efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C)

Facet of well-being measured	Self-efficacy
Age of participants designed for	9-18 years.
Number of items	24.
Scoring	5 point Likert scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very well). Lower child’s SEQ-C score = higher level of depression.
Training required	No
Accessibility	Free
Link	https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/a:1010961119608

5. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MPSS)

Facet of well-being measured	Social Support
Age of participants designed for	Adolescent (13-17 years) (also suitable for adults).
Number of items	12.
Scoring	Likert scale 1 (very strongly) to 7 (very strongly agree). To calculate mean scores: Significant Other Subscale: Sum across items 1, 2, 5, & 10, then divide by 4. Family Subscale: Sum across items 3, 4, 8, & 11, then divide by 4. Friends Subscale: Sum across items 6, 7, 9, & 12, then divide by 4. Total Scale: Sum across all 12 items, then divide by 12.
Training required	No
Accessibility	Free
Link	Psychometric properties of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support in youth - ScienceDirect http://media.wix.com/ugd/5119f9_2f88fadcd382463daf5821e8af94a865.pdf

6. Emotion Regulation Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents (ERQ-CA)

Facet of well-being measured	Emotional Regulation
Age of participants designed for	10-18 years.
Number of items	10
Scoring	5 point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Higher scores = greater use of the corresponding emotional regulation strategy (reappraisal = items 1,3,5,7,8,10 and suppression = items 2,4,6,9)
Training required	No
Accessibility	Free
Link	The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents (ERQ-CA): A psychometric evaluation. (apa.org)

7. Perceived Social Inclusion Scale

Facet of well-being measured	Social Inclusion										
Age of participants designed for	Tested with students aged 11-16.										
Number of items	13 items										
Scoring	<p>3 sections.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relations with teachers. (5 items) 2. Being bullied (4 items) 3. Relations with peers (4 items) <p>Each items have a 4 point scoring format. Students marked agreement with the statement.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Section 1 and 3</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Section 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>'YES' = 1</td> <td>'never' = 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>'yes' = 2</td> <td>'once in a while' = 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>'no' = 3</td> <td>'every week' = 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>'NO' = 4</td> <td>'every day' = 4</td> </tr> </table>	Section 1 and 3	Section 2	'YES' = 1	'never' = 1	'yes' = 2	'once in a while' = 2	'no' = 3	'every week' = 3	'NO' = 4	'every day' = 4
Section 1 and 3	Section 2										
'YES' = 1	'never' = 1										
'yes' = 2	'once in a while' = 2										
'no' = 3	'every week' = 3										
'NO' = 4	'every day' = 4										
Training required	No										
Accessibility	Free										
Link	https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/00313830903301994?needAccess=true&role=button										

8. Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale

Facet of well-being measured	Emotional and psychological wellbeing
Age of participants designed for	8-15 years.
Number of items	15
Scoring	Never Not much of the time Some of the time Quite a lot of the time All of the time
Training required	No
Accessibility	Free
Link	https://www.bouncetogether.co.uk/resources/stirling-childrens-wellbeing-scale

1. Generic Children's Quality of Life Measure (GCQ)

Appendix

1. How often they have fun
2. How often they are happy and smiling
3. How often they worry about things*
4. How often they spend time with friends
5. How often they have enough friends
6. How much of the time other people understood how they felt

Appendix (Continued)

7. How much of the time they are picked on*
 8. How often they help others
 9. How often they hurt other people*
 10. How often they get upset*
 11. How often they feel bored*
 12. How often they can go to someone if they have a problem
 13. How much of the time they like their parents
 14. How much of the time they think their parents love them
 15. How often they are told off (at home)*
 16. How often they are allowed to choose for themselves
 17. How much of the time they feel happy with their life
 18. How often they are really ill*
 19. How often this stops them from doing things that they want to do*
 20. How happy they are about the way they look
 21. How often they feel different from other children*
 22. How often they try hard with their work
 23. How often they are told off by the teacher*
 24. How often they feel more clever than other children
 25. How often they are good at sport
-

* Scoring reversed for these items.

2. Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSE)

RSE

Please record the appropriate answer for each item, depending on whether you Strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.

- 1 = Strongly agree
- 2 = Agree
- 3 = Disagree
- 4 = Strongly disagree

- _____ 1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- _____ 2. At times I think I am no good at all.
- _____ 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- _____ 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
- _____ 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
- _____ 6. I certainly feel useless at times.
- _____ 7. I feel that I'm a person of worth.
- _____ 8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
- _____ 9. All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.
- _____ 10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.






















3. How I feel about my school (HIFAMS)

Appendix 1

Name.....

How I feel about my school

Please put a circle around the face that shows how you feel

	Happy	OK	Sad
On my way to school I feel ...			
When I am in the classroom I feel ...			
When I am doing my work I feel ...			
When I am in the playground I feel ...			
When I think about the other children at school I feel ...			
When I think about my teacher I feel ...			
When I think about school I feel ...			

Thank you very much for doing this



4. Self-efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C)

Academic self-efficacy

- How well can you get teachers to help you when you get stuck on schoolwork? (1)
- How well can you study when there are other interesting things to do? (4)
- How well can you study a chapter for a test? (7)
- How well do you succeed in finishing all your homework every day? (10)
- How well can you pay attention during every class? (13)
- How well do you succeed in passing all subjects? (16)
- How well do you succeed in satisfying your parents with your schoolwork? (19)
- How well do you succeed in passing a test? (22)

Social self-efficacy

- How well can you express your opinions when other classmates disagree with you? (2)
- How well can you become friends with other children? (6)
- How well can you have a chat with an unfamiliar person? (8)
- How well can you work in harmony with your classmates? (11)
- How well can you tell other children that they are doing something that you don't like? (14)
- How well can you tell a funny event to a group of children? (17)
- How well do you succeed in staying friends with other children? (20)
- How well do you succeed in preventing quarrels with other children? (23)

Emotional self-efficacy

- How well do you succeed in cheering yourself up when an unpleasant event has happened? (3)
- How well do you succeed in becoming calm again when you are very scared? (5)
- How well can you prevent to become nervous? (9)
- How well can you control your feelings? (12)
- How well can you give yourself a pep talk when you feel low? (15)
- How well can you tell a friend that you don't feel well? (18)
- How well do you succeed in suppressing unpleasant thoughts? (21)
- How well do you succeed in not worrying about things that might happen? (24)

5. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MPSS)

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. There is a special person who is around when I am in need. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 SO |
| 2. There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 SO |
| 3. My family really tries to help me. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fam |
| 4. I get the emotional help and support I need from my family. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fam |
| 5. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 SO |
| 6. My friends really try to help me. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fri |
| 7. I can count on my friends when things go wrong. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fri |
| 8. I can talk about my problems with my family. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fam |
| 9. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fri |
| 10. There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 SO |
| 11. My family is willing to help me make decisions. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fam |
| 12. I can talk about my problems with my friends. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fri |

6. Emotional Regulation Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents (ERQ-CA)

Questions -

1. When I want to feel happier, I think about something different.
2. I keep my feelings to myself.
3. When I want to feel less bad (e.g. sad, angry or worried), I think about something different.
4. When I am feeling happy, I am careful not to show it.
5. When I am worried about something, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me feel better.
6. I control my feelings by not showing them.
7. When I want to feel happier about something, I change the way I'm thinking about it
8. I control my feelings about things by changing the way I think about them.
9. When I'm feeling bad (e.g. sad, angry or worried), I am careful not to show it.
10. When I want to feel less bad (e.g. sad, angry or worried) about something, I change the way I'm thinking about it.

7. Perceived Social Inclusion Scale

Social inclusion

Relations with teachers

- I feel that the teachers care about me
- I feel that the teachers like me
- The teachers will help me if I have problems
- The teachers are my friends
- The teachers know what interests I have


Being bullied

- Being teased at school
- Being bullied at school
- Being hit, kicked or pushed at school
- Being ostracized at school

Relations with peers

- Most students in my class are my good friends
 - I like to be with my classmates
 - My classmates like to be with me
 - My classmates help me
-

8. Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale



Name : _____

Class : _____

Year : _____

Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale

In this survey, statements or descriptions about how you might have been feeling or thinking in the last couple of weeks are shown. For each statement, please put a tick in the box underneath the answer which best describes your thoughts or feelings. There are no right or wrong answers!

Statements	Never	Not much of the time	Some of the time	Quite a lot of the time	All of the time
I think good things will happen in my life.					
I have always told the truth.					
I've been able to make choices easily.					
I can find lots of fun things to do.					
I feel that I am good at some things.					
I think lots of people care about me.					
I like everyone I have met.					
I think there are many things I can be proud of.					
I've been feeling calm.					
I've been in a good mood.					
I enjoy what each new day brings.					
I've been getting on well with people.					
I always share my sweets.					
I've been feeling cheerful about things.					
I've been feeling relaxed.					

🌟 Thank you for completing this survey and for your honesty! 🌟

©Liddle, I and Carter, G.F.A. (2015). Emotional and psychological wellbeing in children: the development and validation of the Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 33(2), 174-185.

Appendix 2

Effect of drama/theatre interventions on children and young people

A Step Toward Empirical Evidence: Operationalizing and Uncovering Drama Therapy Change Processes (Armstrong et al, 2016)

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0197455616300818>

This exploratory study examines the development of definitions for ‘dramatic projection’ and ‘embodiment’, and considers how they are facilitated in three different approaches to drama therapy

Relevance: They discuss how preliminary research has shown that drama therapy can benefit under-served clinical populations who experience low success rates in talking therapy.

Expressive Suppression and Acting Classes (Goldstein et al, 2013)

<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2012-28076-001>

This study considered how expressive suppression can damage health and well-being and thus sought to find environments in which individuals would be encouraged to avoid this. They hypothesised that participants in an acting class would be less likely to use expressive regulation.

Key conclusions:

1. The first part of the study showed that high school students majoring in acting used expressive suppression less than students majoring in other subjects.
2. The second part of the study showed that expressive suppression decreased in elementary school-age children after 10 months of acting lessons.

Relevance: Evidence that participating in acting may be linked with a decrease in expressive suppression, therefore benefitting their wellbeing.

Effect of Creative Drama Course on Creative Problem Solving Skills (Incebacak et al, 2015)

<file:///C:/Users/kathe/Downloads/2015-16-Proceding-Vienna-IAC201511017.pdf>

This report looked at the effect of a creative drama course on 18 university students, specifically focussing on how it impacted their creative problem solving skills.

Key conclusions: When presented with a problem, the students who participated in the creative drama course had some initial difficulty in creating new ideas but through group work, they became more creative in their solutions to the problem.

Relevance: This suggests the course aided in team work and creative thinking.

Children Engaging With Drama: An Evaluation of the National Theatre’s Drama Work in Primary Schools 2002-2004 (Turner et al, 2004)

<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/83058.pdf>

This study followed two cohorts of primary school children over three years as they participated in the National Theatre’s drama programmes.

Key conclusions: Children who participated in the programmes reported an increased enjoyment of school and received higher scores in their SATs mathematics.

The children also reported higher self-confidence and self-esteem.

They learnt to speak more clearly and listen more attentively

The children grew to recognise the value of working with other people towards a common goal.

Relevance: Increased self-confidence, self-esteem, attention and enjoyment from school – all linked to wellbeing.

Effectiveness of Drama-Based Intervention in Improving Mental Health and Well-Being: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Post-Pandemic Period (Jiang et al, 2023) <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9032/11/6/839>

This meta-analysis examined the impact of drama interventions on mental health during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. 25 studies, with a total of 797 participants, were included.

Key conclusions: The review showed that drama-based interventions have the potential to improve mental health and wellbeing (e.g. alleviating symptoms of depression) which supports its use as a supplement to mental health care.

Relevance: Improved mental health and wellbeing

'Rolling the DICE'. Introduction to the International Research Project Drama Improves Lisbon Key Competences in Education (Eriksson et al, 2014)

This cross-cultural study investigates the effect of educational drama on a number of key competences in education. It involved 4475 young people from 12 different countries.

Key conclusions: The research demonstrated that educational drama and theatre increase a number of competencies – cultural, linguistic, social, intercultural, civic, entrepreneurial and pedagogical. Students who took part in the educational drama scored higher in these skills than their peers in control groups.

Relevance: Educational drama increases student competency across a range of areas.

- Eriksson et al 2014 - theatre education fosters emotional regulation, empathy and confidence, all of which helps them in processing/dealing with negative emotions

Drama/theatre interventions (highlighted text is specifically linked to measures)

Feniger-Schaal & Orkibi, 2020 -

<https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Faca0000257>

- integrative review that systematically examine empirical studies in drama therapy intervention research. The review suggests that drama therapy research in the last decade has promising results showing that drama therapy may offer effective treatment that can be studied and assessed systematically.

- Studies reviewed were deficient in their reporting of effect size, dropout rate, recruitment and refusal rate, and therapist training and qualification, all of which are valuable markers for assessment of the research quality (Liebherz et al., 2016), and need to be addressed in future studies

- In their article about processes of change in drama therapy, Armstrong and colleagues (2016) claimed that previous research has shown drama therapy to be valuable for underserved clinical populations, who display low success rates in talk therapy. Our results support this claim

- Control groups make it possible to assess whether drama therapy intervention is effective

Somers 2008 - <https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/handle/10036/3128>

- Applied Drama is based on four main principles:
 - That drama involves the modelling of reality through the use of the dramatic medium. Just as the engineer builds a model of a bridge to test its capabilities when built, so in drama we model life and examine its complexities. Like the engineer who can change aspects of the model and its context - stronger side winds, heavier lorries, thicker steel - so variables of the drama model can be changed - this time, the parent is more angry, the amount of money stolen is greater, etc;
 - That our identity can be seen as a personal narrative which is constantly extended and modified by the effect of the many other narratives - global and local - and experiences to which we are exposed;
 - That by entering the fictional world created in the drama, we may gain greater understanding of our own, personal narrative. This is a major source of the claims that attitudes and behaviours can be changed;
 - By knowing that the dramatic experience is not real we can release ourselves safely into it. We are 'in' it enough to care about it, but 'out' of it enough not to fear it and to be able to recognise its distance from reality.⁵ This is also a key factor in attitude and behaviour change.
 - Drama is a social art. It operates at a real social level and at the symbolic level of the dramatic language. These two functions operate in dynamic relationship.
 - Measuring effect of applied theatre is not easy, attitude change is more measurable (he used pre- and post attitude scales to discover changes in students' attitudes (Somers, 1996)) but behaviour change is difficult, can use interviews months later
 - For more on assessment, see Somers, J., 'Measuring the Shadow or Knowing the Bird: evaluation and assessment of Drama in Education', in *Evaluating Creativity*, (2000); Sefton-Green, J. and Sinker, R. (Eds), London, Routledge, pp. 107- 128. Also Henry, M., 'Drama's Ways of Learning' in *Research in Drama Education*, Vol. 5 no. 1 pp. 45-62 Feb 2000, Basingstoke: Routledge.
 - A meta-analysis of existing, published research by James Catterall, for example, found that: Drama helps with understanding social relationships, complex issues and emotions; improves concentrated thought and story comprehension. (Catterall, J, 2002)