

Message from the Director

I am delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of The Link newsletter, my first as Director of Education and Cultural Services.

It is an important time for both culture and education in Scotland. The draft Culture Bill will be presented in December and the national implications for cultural entitlement and the 'talent escalator' will be available in greater detail for us to understand at local level.

In parallel Education and Cultural Services is beginning to get to grips with how and where the arts, culture and creativity can support the Curriculum for Excellence. As these two paths converge the opportunities for consolidating existing schemes and investigating new ones opens up for schools, children and families in West Dunbartonshire.

As always with the Arts and Education Links Programme, our schools benefit from a range of creative projects that are supported by many sponsors and funders both within and outwith the authority. The newsletter details some of the forthcoming highlights as well as celebrates the achievements of pupils, artists and teachers involved in projects last term.

I wish the Arts and Education Links Programme team well for this academic year and urge schools to use this creative resource to its fullest capacity.

Liz McGinlay
Director of Education and Cultural Services

www.creativelinks-wdc.org.uk
www.thepulse-wd.com

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Pixies Win Award

West Dunbartonshire's 'Their Past Your Future' WWII celebrations, co-ordinated by Cultural Services, has been awarded a Bronze Award in the 'Advancing Community Well-Being' category by COSLA (the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities).

Integral to the programme was Pixie Hats and Wet Duffels, the WWII experiential learning project in West Dunbartonshire schools. So far, Pixie Hats has involved seven primary schools and has secured funding to include another four this autumn.

The awards are used as a way of encouraging local government to look at methods of service delivery that are well planned, focused on what their customers want, are efficiently delivered

and creative. Pixie Hats and Wet Duffels has proven to be a fine example of all these qualities.

The project evacuates primary seven pupils to Balloch Castle for the day; pupils even meet Winston Churchill and Neville Chamberlain along the way. It encourages pupils to gain knowledge of and empathy for the experiences of children during the Blitz. Actors, unusual classes and rooms and even wartime vehicles are used to bring the day to life.

To place your school on the waiting list for Pixie Hats and Wet Duffels, contact the project's creator, Stephen Bullock, Cultural Co-Coordinator for Drama, on 0141 952 7292 or mrbullock@ea.w-dunbarton.sch.uk



The Pulse

The Pulse, an authority-wide sports and arts initiative programmed on Friday nights for 12 to 18 year olds begins again on 1st September. For full details of the urban arts and contemporary sports activity available right across the area please visit the website – www.thepulse-wd.com.

All Change

Warmest congratulations to Links Programme team members Claire Forsyth, Jenny Hunter and Stephen Bullock who all got married this summer. Claire and Jenny are in the process of changing their names so if you get a letter or e-mail from Mrs Claire McTeir or Mrs Jenny Renfrew you'll know who they are.

Space Invaders - Summer Holiday Transition Programme

Space Invaders was back with a bang in summer 2006, allowing primary seven pupils about to start secondary school the opportunity to 'invade' their new school without the presence of teachers and older pupils.

Now with three years experience behind it, the Space Invaders transition programme ran in all six secondary schools this summer. Created and delivered by the Cultural Co-ordinators, Arts Motivators and a range of artists the project gives senior primary pupils about to start high school the chance to explore and transform areas of their new school using art, drama, animation, music and dance. The week of creative activity culminates in a guided tour of fantastical worlds by the children for friends and families.



"Doing Space Invaders has made me feel better about moving school, more confident and excited about high school."

2005 participant

An exhibition of the artwork produced by the pupils can be seen in the Back Door Gallery, Dalmeir from 29 August to 29 September.

Space Invaders sits within an authority-wide co-ordinated package of summer activities for all age ranges. The full programme can be seen at www.thepulse-wd.com/summer

For further information on the Space Invaders initiative please call Stephen Bullock, Cultural Co-ordinator for Drama on 0141 952 7292 or mrbullock@ea.w-dunbarton.sch.uk.



Show Scotland - Arts, drama, history & heritage

This two-day event in Clydebank Museum was funded by the Scottish Museums Council and was organised by Cultural Co-ordinators Stephen Bullock and Jenny Hunter in partnership with Cultural Services.

Pupils from local schools experienced hand stitching, living history and gas mask construction workshops.

In the textile workshops the groups focused on stitching and the historic background of Singer in Clydebank. Participants produced drawings on fabric using three Singer machines as well as created traditional hand stitched pieces. A book of finished work is being pulled together by artist Iselin Cartwright to be presented to the Museum at the end of term.

Meanwhile, an actor brought the Blitz experience to life by manning the 1940s shop in character as Mr Clyde Bank, a local air raid warden and shop keeper. Children learnt how to use a stirrup pump and heard stories of the Clydebank Blitz.

Scottish Academy of Asian Arts

This holiday saw the Links Programme once again team up with many of our partner agencies to work with some of the more socially and culturally excluded young people in West Dunbartonshire.

In conjunction with the Scottish Academy of Asian Arts, Cultural Co-ordinator Lorne Cowieson organised a four-day Asian arts school. The project involved young people from the Intermediate Treatment Unit, Group Work and Family Support, The Tulloch Trust and the Braidfield and Clydebank Drama Clubs. Each day participants were treated to three workshops in yoga, henna body art and pinhole photography.

Beam!

The Dance and Music Motivators and Cultural Co-ordinator for visual art, will be working together on a fantastic October holiday project called Beam. Using the technology of Sound Beam equipment they will help young people develop their knowledge of dance, music and film.

Experimenting with the alteration, sampling and triggering of sound waves using the body in movement, this project will enhance awareness of new technology, develop skills in dance and sound as well as focus on decision making, group work and spatial awareness. The project will explore the topic of phones old and new and include all the various noises and ring tones now associated with a phone, from a basic ring ring to the latest Top 40 artist.

The young people's ideas and creativity will be edited into a dance for the camera show-reel. The project will take place at The STAND, Clydebank, to make use of the purpose built dance studio and its dance for the camera facilities.

The STAND

The new dance studio at St Andrew's High School is now open for business to both the school and the community. This Big Lottery Fund project will enable affordable community classes as well as opportunities to gain new qualifications in dance. The full autumn programme can be downloaded from www.creativelinks-wdc.org.uk/thestand



Dance Festival 2006

A versatile and eclectic mix of dance reached the stage of St Andrew's High School in this year's annual Dance Festival. Street dance, break dance, disco and contemporary styles were favoured by the young people and made a fantastic showcase of talent and skill.

This year's Dance Festival saw eight schools involved with a total of 100 young people participating.

Each primary school worked with Rowan Gillespie, Dance Motivator or Lindsay MacNeill, Active Schools Co-ordinator. Some of the schools also received input from other dance specialists and musicians. The secondary schools' work was led by Marjory MacDonald, PE teacher at St Columba's High and Wullie Ennis, a professional break-dancer.

Two evening performances were programmed to highlight the hard work and enthusiasm of the young people. These were well attended and raised £354.96 through donations for Able2Sail, a local charity that supports disabled people becoming involved in sailing.

Project W

Project W is West Dunbartonshire's new youth dance company; it will be resident at The STAND in Clydebank.

The company aims to develop skills and techniques with young people who might be considering a career in dance, using the Project W experience to meet other dancers, work with visiting choreographers and create performances together.

This is a worthwhile initiative that will make great use of the new dance facility and ensure that young people have a platform through which they can express their creativity.

The company will meet every Monday evening from Monday 28 August 2006; weekly workshops will take place from 6 to 7pm in The STAND.

For further information on the next round of auditions please contact Rowan Gillespie, Dance Motivator on 0141 952 9409.

THE STAND

Dance Visits

Over the spring and summer the number of opportunities to go and see professional companies at work has increased as a result of our Big Lottery Fund support.

Rowan Gillespie, our Dance Motivator has taken West Dunbartonshire pupils to see a range of quality performances as well as taken part in associated workshops. These have included Monkey by Scottish Dance Theatre and Dundee Rep Ensemble, Middle Sex Gorge by Scottish Ballet, Dancing Queen, the Abba musical and again Scottish Dance Theatre.

We also took our Project W dancers to see the new national youth dance company, Project Y at GOMA in Glasgow. Congratulations to Niall Smith of St Columba's High School for being one of just 20 young Scots invited to take part in this first national residency and tour.

These performance opportunities provide fantastic experiences as well as helping pupils develop more dance awareness and knowledge and see a range of approaches and styles.

Two-thousand Feet

Two-thousand Feet is a fully funded dance project between Active Schools and the Arts and Education Links Programme.

After-school dance sessions for each primary and secondary school in West Dunbartonshire will be available from October 2006. Using capoeira and street dance, this project aims to give pupils new skills and techniques, gain confidence and encourage creativity while living a healthy active lifestyle.

In the hope of increasing physical activity levels, in particular with girls and young women, this project has been designed to target P6/7 and S1/2 pupils who may benefit from such a project opportunity.

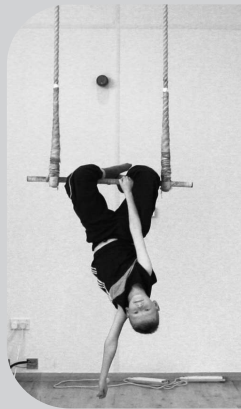
For more information about the Two-thousand Feet dance initiative please contact Rowan Gillespie, Dance Motivator on 0141 952 9409.

Summer Dance Programme

This summer saw a full range of dance activities come to life in the new dance studio, The STAND.

Aerial performance, street dance, capoeira, parkour, hip hop and break-dance residencies ensured that there was something for all tastes.

Fifty young people from across the authority signed up for the programme and had a wonderful time learning new skills and making new friends - not to mention having somewhere over the holidays to hang out!



Dance Leadership Award

New qualifications for young people ...

The national organisation, Sports Leaders UK, offers a wide range of courses with recognised qualifications in sport, expedition and dance.

The Dance Leadership Award develops vital, transferable skills in teamwork, communication and organisation, helping to build confident and motivated young people. The Award course is practical, fun and open to everyone, whatever their background, experience or qualifications. Employability, further education and training are all areas to which the Dance Leadership Award can contribute

Due to secured funding from the Proceeds of Crime Act via the Scottish Executive's Safer Scotland/Drug Dealers Don't Care campaign we are able to offer a one-year pilot project in both St Andrew's High and Clydebank High School.

If you would like more information about the Dance Leadership Award, please contact Rowan Gillespie, Dance Motivator on 0141 952 9409.

Music Motivators - Progressing towards 2008

Following the success of the three Music Motivators' sessions with school children throughout all 34 of the primary schools, it has been decided it would be even more beneficial for our pupils if the team worked together from August onwards. This seems like a logical and natural progression and the Motivators are looking forward to combining their varied skills to offer West Dunbartonshire's children a fun, inventive and educational music programme.

The new programme will run over two years, with half the primary schools taking advantage of this specialist input in academic year one and the other half in academic year two. This work will begin generally but as the year advances the work will become more challenging. In the summer term the Motivators will bring all the project strands together and put on an unforgettable performance with staff and pupils. The performance will encompass all that the children have learned in the academic year and will include material they have composed themselves.

Richard Creasey, our Digital Music Motivator has visited most primary schools with his Class-in-a-Box iBooks. The new music created by pupils will soon be available to all participants on a CD compilation.

The Noodle programme especially was a great hit with everyone, with many young people now downloading it at home. Very little explanation is necessary before Noodling can begin, so results are almost immediate.

The new Garageband music produced leans heavily towards dance and hip hop styles with some imaginative mixing of traditional European and Eastern instruments and genres. The concept of fusion has been well and truly explored within this pilot. And who knows, the next Fat Boy Slim, Missy Elliot or Mylo may be from Duntocher, Balloch or Bowling.

Sing!

Just before the summer break forty young singers from thirteen of West Dunbartonshire's primary schools and one secondary school took to the stage at the Denny Civic Theatre to perform to a full house.

The singers worked extremely hard to prepare for this event and this commitment and dedication was certainly obvious to the thrilled audience.

The programme was wide and varied and included a number of songs in 2 and 3 parts - quite a challenge for an adult choir let alone 10 and 11 year olds. In addition there were also four very brave soloists, each with their own unique style who all sang beautifully.

The children involved performed exceptionally well, having come such a long way from the small group who performed at the same event last year. We are sure this high standard will continue as the choir is opened up to the children going into P6 after the summer break.

A huge well done to all involved.



The Pulse Gigs

The Pulse recently added a new string to its bow with the launch of the Pulse Gigs. Local musician Ross Clark, who has previously featured in The Link, opened the first unplugged night in the theatre of St Andrew's High School in Clydebank.

The following week saw Clydebank band, Acrylic Iqon perform at a plugged event in Unit 23, the skate park in Dumbarton. The headline band for both nights was Glasgow-based El Dog. Tickets for the gigs were free, available to secondary school pupils throughout West Dunbartonshire via the school Music Departments.

The next Pulse Gig will be in the Vale of Leven; details to be confirmed. For more information about the Pulse Gigs, and about the new Cre8 Digital Music Studio (to open in October), contact **Simon Fullarton on 0141 951 2483.**

simon.fullarton@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

www.myspace.com/cre8studio

Ross Clark - www.myspace.com/electricpolyester

Acrylic Iqon - www.myspace.com/acryliciqon

El Dog - www.myspace.com/eldogmusic



Further Out West

The latest CD from the Cultural Co-ordinator team is called Further Out West and is now available free of charge from Lorne Cowieson on 0141 952 7292.

This latest production features the singing and song-writing talents of senior pupils from West Dunbartonshire secondary schools and from The Choices Programme.

Living Willow at St Peter's

In early summer Jenny Hunter worked outdoors with Primary 7 mentors and children from all classes of the school to create living willow play structures in the grounds of St. Peter's Primary. The children planted and weaved the lengths of willow into the ground, and at the end of the project we had built 3 sculptures - a long snaky tunnel, an arbour/tunnel and a teepee. The structures are all quite robust and the children can play and tumble through the willow at breaks and playtime. In the intervening weeks the living willow have grown foliage and during the summer were covered in leaves, creating dens and shelters for the young people. The follow up project for 2007 is under discussion as is a similar scheme along the Forth and Clyde Canal at Whitecreek.

Poles Apart

On June 23 young people from St Columba's High School in Clydebank flew out to Warsaw to take part in a digital arts exchange project with 16 young people from the Polish town of Wolomin.

During their ten-day spell together the combined group took part in daily filmmaking sessions, making short animations to connect the various experiences of their journey. This included documentary footage of the local Corpus Christi Procession, a visit to the bison park near the Belarus border, a day down the famous salt mine at Wieliczka near Krakow with its incredible cathedral and a visit to Auschwitz.

I think that all the pupils who took part in this exchange from Poland and Scotland will agree that it has been an incredibly enriching experience. Working closely together to create these short digital notations, the young people have had a unique opportunity to hone both their communication and filmmaking skills.

'A Journey through Poland' will be available for viewing from the end of September.

For further details contact Gillian Steel, Cultural Co-ordinator for Visual Art on 0141 952 7292.

Animating the Canal with Clydebank Rebuilt

Over the next two years there will be an extensive schools programme of events to run alongside the regeneration of the Clyde and Forth Canal running through Clydebank and Dalmuir.

Some of the workshops will be managed and delivered by Cultural Co-ordinators Jenny Hunter and Gillian Steel. Proposals soon to be circulated to schools include creating goldfish lanterns using willow and tissue, inspired by the stories told surrounding the presence of goldfish in the canal in Dalmuir; creating paper boats to float on the canal inspired by a Festival of Light. Artists will work with schools to create these pieces, which will culminate in a winter lights procession along the banks of the canal.

Geomatrix - Crafts Residency 2006/07

Geomatrix is a textile residency funded by the Scottish Arts Council in partnership with the Council. It will take place from August 06 to March 07 in Vale of Leven Academy and Christie Park Primary School. The crafts person, Annie Ferguson will work half a day per week with each of the groups and will also create her own work in conjunction with the young people.

In Christie Park, the Primary 7s have just completed a Best Turkey Red textile project inspired by the world famous Turkey Red dyeing industry in Alexandria. This has prompted an interest in textiles in both staff and children and the idea of a textile residency will further enhance this interest and foster a creative crafts culture within the school.

In Vale of Leven Academy, the art department is also keen to equip itself with technology to be used in the creative process and has purchased a heat press. Part of the project will be to visit local industrial buildings that have had links with the motor and torpedo industries and complement the theme and title, Geomatrix.

The residency will culminate in an exhibition during spring 2007.

For further information contact Jenny Hunter, Cultural Co-ordinator for Visual Art on 0141 952 7292.

Drama Toolbox

Based upon extensive discussion with teachers and basic drama workshop training Stephen Bullock, Cultural Co-ordinator for Drama will be delivering a set of four CPD sessions to help put the fun back into teaching drama.

Aimed at all primary teachers who either teach drama or would like to use elements in their approaches to other lessons, the training will focus on four core elements of drama:

- Get them Showing** – statues, space, staging and bodies
- Get them Moving** – movement and mime
- Get them Being** – characters, emotions and physicality
- Get them Telling** – improvisation, speech and story

Teachers are invited to attend all four workshops if they can and by the end will have the tools to feel confident delivering effective drama lessons that are flexible and allow pupils to explore the topics they are learning in other classes.

Tuesday evenings – 3.45 – 5.30pm
Training Suite 2, Braidfield High School
12th, 19th, 26th September & 3rd October 2006

The training is available on the CPD catalogue and places are limited so book now.

STOP PRESS... These CPD sessions are now fully booked.
To reserve a place on the waiting list please contact Stephen Bullock on 0141 952 7292.

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