



Living Here Project

EVALUATION REPORT
Oval House Theatre
Living Here Project
for young refugees
and asylum seekers

by Mary Ryan

ABOUT OVAL HOUSE THEATRE

Oval House Theatre has a long history of using drama and associated participatory arts to involve some of the most excluded and marginalised young people in South London. The Theatre Arts in Education team at Oval House Theatre is committed to providing exciting and challenging arts opportunities for children and young people in and out of schools and supporting the adults who work with them. The team has a history of working in partnership with schools and other agencies to develop creative strategies for the curriculum and for personal development.

Find out more about Oval House Theatre at: www.ovalhouse.com

Oval House Theatre
52-54 Oval Kennington
London
SE11 5SW

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This evaluation report has been made possible by the many people who have given their time, honest reflections and enthusiasm to it – this includes the Living Here Project Tutor Team who recorded their sessions and welcomed the evaluator as an observer, partners in schools, stakeholders and of course the many young people participating in the Project who were the most enthusiastic contributors.

The report was written by Mary Ryan.

All images by Living Here participants 2006-8.

The Baring Foundation

Diana
Princess of Wales Memorial Fund
THE WORK CONTINUES


Lambeth

CONTENTS

Click on title to go to relevant page

	<i>Page</i>
Executive Summary	4
Recommendations	6
Evaluation Methodology	9
The Living Here Project	10
Background	10
What the Project provides	11
Project aims	12
Ethos of the Living Here Project	13
The Young People	18
Evaluation Findings	
Evaluation Summary	20
Evaluation of achievement of Project aims:	
1. Provide a safe and secure space for young people to be creative.	21
2. Provide non-threatening arts processes to enable them to make sense of their new circumstances.	24
3. Offer artistic approaches that do not rely on fluency in English or literacy or a common language.	26
4. Offer opportunities for young people to develop their fluency in English through a creative approach.	28
5. Use creativity to build young peoples confidence and self-esteem.	31
6. Give young people a voice through the arts and offer opportunities for them to express themselves to their peers and the wider community.	37
7. Provide an enjoyable and uplifting experience for young people whose lives are complicated by challenges such as bureaucracy and poverty.	39
8. Find creative ways of building new social networks between young people in similar circumstances and young people from more established communities.	42
9. Give young people valuable opportunities to take on leadership roles and influence the development of the Project.	44

CONTENTS *continued*

	<i>Page</i>
10. Build close relationships with existing and new Project partners such as schools and social services to establish a joined up approach and provide young people with a wider network of opportunities.	46
Conclusion	51
Appendices	
List of documents reviewed and informants for the evaluation	Appendix 1
Project activity 2005-2008	Appendix 2
Living Here Project Team	Appendix 3
Young People's Questionnaire	Appendix 4
Findings of the Young People Interviews	Appendix 5
Every Child Matters Outcomes Mapping	Appendix 6
SEAL Skills Mapping	Appendix 7
Resilience Factors Mapping	Appendix 8
Self Confidence Descriptors template	Appendix 9



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation found strong evidence that the Living Here Project is successfully meeting its aims with young refugees and asylum seekers and is making good progress towards achieving its three intended outcomes, which are:

1. Young refugees participating in the Project will be less isolated and experience better social and educational inclusion because of their participation in creative projects.
2. Adults, who work with young refugees and asylum seekers, including those in partner schools, will be better equipped to use participatory arts methods.
3. Documentation that supports participatory arts in this field will be available nationally and there will be better links between different organisations developing similar work.

The Living Here Project has developed an ethos and methodology that uses creative processes to enable young refugees and asylum seekers, who come from different parts of the world, don't share a common language or culture, and have different educational experiences and expectations to work together. In doing so the young people have demonstrated that they are:

- developing and practicing social and communication skills
- making friends and developing a support network
- improving their English language skills
- growing in confidence and awareness of themselves as young Londoners, and
- participating in high quality creative experiences that are enjoyable and stimulating.

This report provides evidence of the success of the methodology and makes a number of recommendations to build on the good practice so far and support the Project in its next phase of development.

The Living Here Project has entered its third year and now needs to focus more on strengthening its partnership arrangements, to consider the potential for new partnerships and to disseminate further the learning from the work. It is a time of change for many organisations working with children and young people – including

schools and colleges – and the Project is aware of the need to adapt to changing priorities and systems. The Project may need to consider new kinds of partnerships, new groups of young people – as it has developed considerable expertise in working with vulnerable and excluded young people – and it may also be timely to consider new arrangements for delivering the work. The Project team are clearly ready to meet this challenge and are confident in their skills and abilities to deliver the work.

A perennial problem for many community and voluntary sector projects is the continual round of stop-start funding and the assumption that successful projects will somehow be absorbed by ‘mainstream’ funding – this undermines long term planning and stability and often results in the loss of expertise acquired over many years. A key concern for the future of the Living Here Project is the uncertainty of funding for the work once the current grant funding comes to an end in December 2008, this is being addressed by the Project but must also be considered with equal urgency by partners and stakeholders.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Involve funders, stakeholders and partners, such as schools, in opportunities for consultation about how the work may be funded post December 2008 and new and more sustainable funding streams secured.

Recommendation 2

Explore how best to continue the work of the Project and adapt to the changing environment and educational priorities of schools, this may for example include developing an accredited course.

Recommendation 3

The Project should review the potential to use its methodology with new target groups such as looked after young people. This may require a pilot partnership project to test the feasibility of this and to determine potential funding to support it.

Recommendation 4

Develop a communications strategy for the Living Here Project to disseminate learning about the Project, devise information about the Project for future and existing partners and create more opportunities to share the young people's creative work with wider audiences.

Partnership Development Recommendations

Recommendation 5

Organise a review and consultation to bring together all of the partners involved in the Project to:

- discuss the learning so far from the perspective of all partners
- identify and discuss successes and difficulties
- devise strategies for working together and strengthening partnership arrangements
- plan for the future.

Recommendation 6

Be aware and prepared to develop new partnerships with other services concerned with newly arrived young people and other young people vulnerable to social exclusion in Lambeth and neighbouring boroughs.

Project Delivery Recommendations

Recommendation 7

Investigate how the Living Here Project can contribute to young people achieving more accreditation for their arts related work building on the experience to date of young people achieving Arts Awards and using their experiences at the Project to contribute to other accreditation.

Recommendation 8

Continue to ensure the Project tutor team is both highly qualified artistically and experienced in working with vulnerable young people to support their social and emotional development and resilience.

Recommendation 9

Continue to monitor the development of young people's competencies in communication and negotiation skills and find appropriate ways to feed this back to young people.

Recommendation 10

Review the negotiated individual learning plan currently being trialled with the Lilian Baylis Technology School Groups at the end of this academic year and include feedback from young people about how useful it has been. Use the learning from this to design an individual learning plan for Living Here Project young people taking part in future groups.

Student Participation Recommendations

Recommendation 11

Review the workshops on offer to the young people to incorporate more music and dance related activities as suggested by the young people contributing to the evaluation.

Recommendation 12

Continue to organise and provide inclusive arts based activities and events for the Living Here Project young people and young people from more established communities as this contributes to the social inclusion aims of the Living Here Project and contributes to community cohesion.

Recommendation 13

Continue to provide opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills by providing young apprenticeship, young assistant and peer researcher type roles within the Project. Consider how the Project may define and support these roles to contribute to the

future development of the Project and investigate how to accredit these roles and link with other young leadership programmes.

Recommendation 14

Continue to actively promote opportunities for young people to be involved in inclusive activities and investigate developing links with organisations such as the Lambeth Youth Council and the Lambeth Young Mayor and other young people's organisations and groups.

Recommendation 15

Consult annually with the young people participating in the programme to find out what they think about the Project, monitor how they think it is helping them and gather their ideas for future development. Formalise the role of the peer researchers and involve them in planning the annual consultation.

Project Dissemination Recommendations

Recommendation 16

Disseminate the learning from the Project to a wider audience including those in neighbouring boroughs, strategic leads in Children's Services and the wider audience of those interested in participatory arts work with refugee and asylum seeking young people and other young people who are excluded or vulnerable.

Recommendation 17

Produce an information guide for partner schools and others about the Living Here Project to describe the aims and ethos of the work and how the Project works. This could include more detailed information about roles and responsibilities of partners.

Recommendation 18

Continue to deliver a flexible training programme about the aims and ethos of the Living Here Project and the benefits of this work for refugee and asylum seeking young people. Future courses could include tasters of some of the methodology used by the Project and even be delivered in schools. Explore opportunities to deliver the training more widely in schools and for other professional groups such as youth workers, social workers and foster carers.

THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

An independent evaluator – Mary Ryan – was appointed in July 2007 to carry out the evaluation, the evaluator has knowledge and experience of evaluation, arts related projects to promote health and well-being, partnership development and particular knowledge of the health and well-being needs of looked after and other vulnerable children and young people. The evaluation fieldwork was carried out between October 2007 and February 2008.

The evaluation has been informed by:

- Review of project documentation including mid-project self-evaluations by the Living Here Project Manager for the two main funders.
- Interviews – face to face or on the telephone – with Project partners at the three schools the Project works with.
- Interviews with other key partners and potential stakeholders.
- Meetings with the tutor team to review progress and identify learning to date.
- Development of a session recording form for tutors to record progress and methods used to work towards achievement of the aims.
- Observation of six group sessions during the 2007 autumn term – two from each school, one near the beginning of term and one near the end.
- Face to face interviews with four young people from the 2007 intake.
- Review of a template to monitor young people's demonstration of competency and confidence in communication skills.
- Training a team of student peer researchers to interview past and present young people about their perceptions of the Project and reviewing responses from 31 completed interviews.

The documentation reviewed and a list of those interviewed for the evaluation can be found in Appendix 1.

THE LIVING HERE PROJECT

Background

The Living Here Project at Oval House Theatre is a three-year participatory arts project developed for young refugees and asylum seekers in partnership with the London Borough of Lambeth – Ethnic Minority Achievement Department. The Project aims to prove that participatory arts can be an effective tool for supporting the social and educational inclusion of young refugees and asylum seekers. It began in November 2005 and funding for the Project ends in December 2008. The Project succeeded in securing funding from The Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund – £155,000 – and The Baring Foundation – £75,000 – for the three years of the Project. The Project benefits from the considerable management support and resources of Oval House Theatre and expertise in working with vulnerable young people gained over many years.

The Living Here Project identified three outcomes to be achieved:

1. Young refugees participating in the Project will be less isolated and experience better social and educational inclusion because of their participation in creative projects.
2. Adult, who work with young refugees and asylum seekers, including those in partner schools, will be better equipped to use participatory arts methods.
3. Documentation that supports participatory arts in this field will be available nationally and there will be better links between different organisations developing similar work.

The current phase of the Project began in November 2005 and was developed from a pilot project at Stockwell Park School; Appendix 2 describes a timeline of the Project activity up to the current date. However the methodology of the Living Here Project really began in the late 1990s when Stella Barnes and others, including some of the current tutor team, started to use participatory arts work with young refugees and asylum seekers as part of the Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre. This work has developed and been refined over the last ten years during which time the tutor team have acquired considerable expertise and reflected on their practice resulting in an ethical framework upon which they base their practice, this is described in more detail on page 16.

What the Living Here Project provides

The Project is currently working with young people from three schools in Lambeth:

Charles Edward Brooke C of E Girls School – the Neptune Group for refugee and asylum seekers. The Project provides a weekly drama and arts based session for two groups from the school and held at Oval House Theatre.

Lilian Baylis Technology School. The Project provides a weekly drama and arts based session for two groups from the school, which are held at Oval House Theatre.

Turney School – a special school for 5 to 16 year olds. The Project provides a weekly drama based group for years 7-10 young people selected because they need extra support around English as an additional language. The group takes place in the school.

In addition the Project provides arts based activities such as workshops, one off exhibitions, performances and events for the young people during half-terms and holidays. Some of these activities include young people who are from more established communities in Lambeth thus providing opportunities for the young people of the Living Here Project to develop networks with other young people.

The Project is managed by Stella Barnes, Head of Education at Oval House Theatre, and a team of 10 professional artists makes up the tutor team plus four young apprentices who have participated in Living Here Project groups at the Project. A list of the Living Here Project staff team and brief information about their experience and expertise can be found in Appendix 3. The tutor team have many years of experience between them and all believe it is important to make a long term commitment to this Project – they intend, if possible, to be with the Project for its lifetime rather than for just a term or even a year.

The young people attend weekly drama sessions during term time and choose from a range of workshops such as drama, puppetry, and photography etc, each workshop lasts for one half term. All groups are staffed by two professional artists who have experience in working with vulnerable young people, every group has a male and female tutor and the groups are staffed consistently – it will always be the same tutors.

THE LIVING HERE PROJECT

The Living Here Project aims to work with young refugees and asylum seekers to:

1. Provide a safe and secure space for young people to be creative.
2. Provide non-threatening arts processes to enable them to make sense of their new circumstances.
3. Offer artistic approaches that do not rely on fluency in English or literacy or a common language.
4. Offer opportunities for young people to develop their fluency in English through a creative approach.
5. Use creativity to build young people's confidence and self-esteem.
6. Give young people a voice through the arts and offer opportunities for them to express themselves to their peers and the wider community.
7. Provide an enjoyable and uplifting experience for young people whose lives are complicated by challenges such as bureaucracy and poverty.
8. Find creative ways of building new social networks between young people in similar circumstances and young people from more established communities.
9. Give young people valuable opportunities to take on leadership roles and influence the development of the Project.

And in addition the Living Here Project aims to:

10. Build close relationships with existing and new Project partners such as schools and social services to establish a joined up approach and provide young people with a wider network of opportunities.

The young people who attend the groups are aged between 15 and 18 years, many will be very newly arrived in the UK and speak no English. Foster carers look after a significant number of the young people and some are living alone in bed and breakfast accommodation or hostels. Young people come from all parts of the world and speak over eighteen different languages.

ETHOS OF THE PARTICIPATORY ARTS WORK

The Arts in Education Team at Oval House Theatre has developed an ethos that underpins the way they work with young refugees and asylum seekers.

It focuses on the here and now of *'living here'*.

This ethos shapes a shared philosophy and approach to the participatory arts practice with the young people involved in the Project. The team has found that this approach is very accessible for groups of young people who may not share a language, a common culture or background, and may be newly arrived in the UK. The approach has also proved to be successful with other groups of young people in schools and with those who may be excluded or marginalised for a number of reasons.

This approach to work with young refugees and asylum seekers may be considered by some to be unusual because it does not focus on the young people's past lives, traumas they may have experienced, their journey to the UK and reason for it, or what they may have left behind. Many make the assumption that creative work with refugees and asylum seekers will be about the refugee experience in some way – the work of the Living Here Project challenges this and concentrates instead on what life is like now and in the future.¹

The team believe it is very important that young people should not be asked or expected to draw on their experience of being a refugee or asylum seeker. This enables each young person to be treated with respect and to experience being a person who is part of the group rather than a refugee who is part of the group. It creates a safe environment for all the young people to engage in the participatory arts activities offered. The table on page 17 summarises the ethos.

It is worth noting that while arts therapy approaches are used very successfully to help people deal with trauma and are often seen as more accessible therapies for children and young people, it must be remembered that such work is done by trained and experienced therapists with the support of other therapies and services. The team at Oval House Theatre are very clear that they are not offering a therapeutic experience but rather an artistic and educational one.

¹ There has been a body of arts practice with refugees and asylum seekers that focuses on themes of journeys, flight, trauma and loss – the work of the Living Here Project has deliberately chosen not to focus on themes of this nature and, for example, would not explore stories or themes that involved families being separated, torture, war and violence and escape etc.

This ethos has led the team to develop a method of working that includes:

1. Ensuring all sessions have two consistent tutors for each group – usually one male and one female tutor. This means tutors get to know the young people and can make sure all group members get enough support to be able to participate. The ideal group size is 10 young people.
2. Where appropriate and possible including exiled artists in the tutor group and tutors who can speak a range of languages.
3. Planning their work carefully – tutors are continually mindful not to use or create scenarios or stories that could lead young people to focus on their past life stories. Instead the focus is on issues of interest to the young people now – for example getting lost in London, falling out with a friend etc. Young people have also engaged in universal stories of interest to young people such as ‘Romeo and Juliet’.
4. Structuring sessions to help create a sense of security and safety for young people – they know what to expect and what will happen. Setting ground rules and revisiting them every session. Paying attention to the beginning and ending of sessions.
5. Use metaphor and stories and ‘make believe’ to explore and create issues and ideas in the creative work – this avoids drawing directly on personal stories and creates a safe distance. Tutors also take care to make sure that young people know it is ‘make believe’ and leave it behind at the end of the session as, just because they don’t draw on young peoples past experiences, it doesn’t mean that difficult issues are not raised or are not personally resonant for the young people.
6. Using creative activities that develop the groups’ ability to work together as well as develop artistic work. The tutors continually build in opportunities for young people to communicate in different and enjoyable ways so that not only language skills are practised and developed but also skills such as negotiation, listening, putting forward a point of view, and challenging views.
7. Welcoming young people to Oval House Theatre and getting ready to start the session. Every session always begins with some social time – tutors and young people say hello and share a snack, greetings are warm and welcoming with tutors

shaking hands, or gently touching the arm and making eye contact with each young person. It leads to the group feeling they have 'arrived', are welcome and valued, and that leads to them being ready to start work. Sessions always begin with sharing some food and drink so that everyone sits together to eat and talk – the tutors see this as important in helping students develop and practice social skills. It is interesting to note that in the young people's evaluations this is a part of the project that they really valued.

8. Tutors continually 'modelling' acceptable behaviour for the young people for example showing respect for each other, taking turns listening, challenging issues such as gender bias, racism and xenophobia – gently but firmly etc. Tutors also take care to set clear physical boundaries so for example a handshake is a way of welcoming and greeting that is warm but also safe.
9. Tutors meeting at least termly to review their practice, address problems, share learning and plan future sessions. Key learning or important issues are also recorded by tutors after each session using a structured evaluation form and tutors always have a de-brief discussion following each session.
10. Tutors asking schools and others involved with the young people to not share the young person's history with them unless it is relevant or necessary. This happened at the beginning of the project and tutors found it objectified the young people so that they were defined by what had happened to them. Tutors have found they can work more effectively without this information – having such information does not help the work. Tutors are clear that, for example, they do not need to know that a young person was a child soldier but they would need to know if a young person had epilepsy or has just moved to independent housing.
11. Taking a long term view of the work – each group may meet for one academic year but young people are welcome to return to Oval House Theatre for events and activities and are encouraged to get involved in other activities for young people. Many young people visit Oval House Theatre – using the cafe, popping in to talk to tutors and other students and attending events – it has become part of their social experience and network.

The tutor team have written a statement about their ethical framework:

At Oval House Theatre we have developed a strong ethical framework for our work with young refugees. We have made a clear choice not to focus on 'refugee-ness' or to frame the young participants with an identity that they have not chosen. We have found it especially valuable to acknowledge the young people as who they are now – young Londoners – who have a potentially positive future here and something to offer. When planning our work we focus strongly on five elements:

- Choice
- Respect
- Equality
- Safety
- Tutor competence.

Our concern for the young people's emotional and psychological safety means that we carefully assess our work in terms of the creative and personal risks that we might be asking young people to take. We never require participants to draw on past experiences as material for the arts process. We prefer to focus on the present or future if the work is related to reality or on metaphor, symbolism, folk tale etc. as a way of protecting young people from accessing potentially painful memories. We are acutely aware that our project is an arts project not therapy and ensure that the delivery team understand this distinction. We do however acknowledge the positive therapeutic results of the work we do.

The Living Here Project ethos is ...

RESPECTFUL of the young person's past, memories and life story, because this does not become public property to be exposed to a group the young person may not know and even go beyond the group.

EQUAL because it values the young person as they are now and starts with where they are now. It is not dependent on their past, their language or literacy skills, educational or cultural experience, everyone can participate and contribute as much or as little as they wish.

CREATIVE because it engages, stimulates and celebrates the young people's artistic experience and skills. It uses artistic forms that don't rely on language – mask and model making, puppetry, physical theatre and dance, photography etc. The teaching uses methods such as demonstrating, modelling and working in role to explain activities.

INCLUSIVE because young people get to know others in the group and make friends, learn relationship skills, learn the norms of behaviour for young people – what is ok and what's not, engage in and explore the world around them and practise speaking English while having fun.

SAFE because the groups do not re-visit traumatic or past events in the young peoples' lives. A participatory arts group is not a safe or therapeutic setting to raise issues to do with young people's past trauma. This should always be done sensitively, with clear support for the young person afterwards, trained therapeutic intervention if needed, and clear boundaries about issues such as confidentiality.

SAFE because group members do not hear or witness other groups members distress about traumatic parts of their peers lives. It diminishes the risk of group members' own anxieties or memories being re-awakened. It makes the group a safe space for all the of the group members.

SAFE because young people know the boundaries of the group – they will not be expected to reveal anything about their past and will be protected from the consequences of inadvertently revealing parts of their life story to others in a public setting.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE

The young people who have participated in the Living Here Project were very keen to contribute their views to the evaluation process and their views have informed the evaluation findings in the next section of this report. The four peer researchers who were trained to deliver a semi structured questionnaire to other participants also helped to devise the questions to be asked and were very good at encouraging their peers to be more specific about what they liked and disliked, found useful or not; it was invaluable to be able to carry out some of these interviews in the young person's first language as they could be more fluent and comfortable. The full questionnaire and the collated results can be found in Appendices 4 and 5.

In addition a number of young people have provided some first person accounts of their experiences as participants in the Living Here Project and these describe the Project from a unique point of view – the newly arrived young person – and over a period of time when their lives are going through incredible change.

SHAMAN is 18; she came to live in Lambeth, South London from Somalia in 2005 when she was 15. She lives with her mother, brothers and sisters and a cousin who has also been involved in the project. She started working with Oval House Theatre when she was a student at The Virtual School – now OLIVE – where she took part in one school term of workshops. She has continued for almost two school years since while she has been in the Neptune group at Charles Edward Brooke Girls School.

'I have done drama, art and photography at Oval House. It was an experience that made me feel more confident, especially drama. When you are doing a performance in front of your group or an audience, you have to be serious, especially when it's a big audience.

When you make a drama it's like you're building something creative. It makes me feel happy because it's something I really want to do. I feel like I never want to stop doing it. Each time I make a drama I want to make it better.

When I first started doing drama with Oval House I was embarrassed because I didn't speak English, I had only been in London for one month! I worked with a group of people from

different countries. The people from Oval House did mask work and drama with lots of actions. It was a good way to learn English. It wasn't too much talking, that could make it confusing.

When I did drama at the beginning I was in a small group then in the second year I was in a bigger group in my school. In the first group I didn't make many friends but in the second year we were doing drama together – teamwork – and we started to trust each other by doing drama and we had fun together. This made it easier to make friends. It would be more difficult to make friends without drama. If we didn't have drama people would just talk to people from their own country. At Oval House we work together across cultures and share our imagination. You work with a person you wouldn't normally work with. You don't always need to speak the same language to make drama.

When I was a peer researcher at Oval House I was interviewing people to find out their ideas about the project. I learnt how to keep a confidence and how to be really professional. It was like a serious job. I learnt to interview people, to make them feel comfortable to talk to me. I'm going to put it on my CV because I think it will help me to get a job.

Oval House has helped me to be more part of London. We did some drama about life in London, like the one about the man who was lost and the woman from another country who needed a job. In those stories we were the Londoners. It made me think about different people's lives. It made me think: I want to get a good job and do better in my life. I want to be successful in London. If you get a job in London and a good future you can really be a Londoner.

The most important thing about my time at Oval House has been meeting really good people, like our workshop leaders. They are not like other people, they are interested in us and they help us. People at Oval House want us to be successful and strong. They want us to have a good future.

I would like to keep coming to Oval House if I can. I would like to help them with the new people who need to learn English and how to fit in to London.

I want to thank the people who gave the money for Oval House for keeping the group together. I want this project to keep going because Oval House is still helping new people coming from other countries.'

EVALUATION FINDINGS

The Living Here Project identified three overall outcomes and ten specific aims to be achieved by the Project and the evaluation has focussed on describing how the Project is meeting these aims and the progress made in achieving them.

It is clear that the Project has made considerable progress in achieving its first intended outcome as demonstrated in the discussion of the Projects aims in this report. This has also been mapped against the Every Child Matters outcomes for all children – see Appendix 6.

Outcome 1

Young refugees participating in the Project will be less isolated and experience better social and educational inclusion because of their participation in creative projects.

It has also made good progress in achieving its second intended outcome:

Outcome 2

Adults, who work with young refugees and asylum seekers, including those in partner schools, will be better equipped to use participatory arts methods.

The Living Here Project has developed a sound base of knowledge and experience upon which to develop training and other support for adults working with young refugees and asylum seekers. The Project is recognised as a leader in the arts sector working with young refugees and asylum seekers as demonstrated by frequent requests to present learning from the project at conferences and training events. Oval House Theatre also established a Refugee Youth Arts Network (RYAN) in 2007 – a peer led network for artists and organisations working with young refugees.

The Living Here Project is also on track to achieve its third outcome:

Outcome 3

Documentation that supports participatory arts in this field will be available nationally and there will be better links between different organisations developing similar work.

This evaluation report, other associated documents, and the Refugee Youth Arts Network will contribute to the achievement of this outcome, as will a focus on dissemination of learning from the Project during the coming year.

However the success of the Project is ultimately measured by the young people who participate and this quote from a young person about a collage created by the group eloquently describes the high quality artistic work created at the Living Here Project and the hopefulness of these new young Londoners:

- My picture is related to this country, which has a soothing atmosphere and land.
- If you look deeply at this picture that was made by my friends, you will see this place has given security to people whose lives are in danger.
- A part of the heart is bleeding.
- Wherever we are we should take each other by the hand and have solidarity.

AIM 1

Provide a safe and secure space for young people to be creative

The group sessions for the young people are always carefully planned in advance. Tutors use inclusive activities to create a familiar structure within the group and help the group to learn how to work together. Particular attention is paid to activities that start and finish the group sessions and these activities are often repeated at each session to provide routine and familiarity.

The way tutors organise the group sessions is as important as the activities themselves, the tutors always:

- acknowledge everyone's presence and contribution at every session
- seek to include everyone
- focus on the concept of 'respect' – explaining and demonstrating this throughout the life of the group
- constantly offer choices so that no one **has** to do something

- never ask or expect young people to reveal information about themselves or each other
- consistently re-iterate and uphold ground rules at every session.

This all contributes to making the group a safe place to be as young people gradually learn what to expect and experience the ritual and routine of familiar but fun activities.

In addition every group session based at Oval House Theatre begins with some social time in the theatre's cafe area. Young people and tutors meet to say hello and share a snack, tutors make a point of welcoming every student and asking how they are. Initially young people are shy about this part of the programme but after a few weeks they are enthusiastically using this time and space to catch up with each other and tell tutors what is going on in their lives. In the student evaluations they rated this particularly highly and observation of this part of the programme showed that the young people felt comfortable in the space and made an effort to welcome new young people themselves. The tutors are acutely aware that there are few places young refugees and asylum seekers can socialise comfortably; at school they may be wary because of the sometimes hostile attitudes of young people from more established communities and they may not live in an environment where they can invite friends home or visit others at home.

Young people at Turney School don't have the social meeting time at the beginning of their session as the group takes place in the school and during the school timetable. However the tutors still observe the ritual of welcoming every student by name and making eye contact with them, they use familiar games to start each session and make sure the games include everyone. They use demonstration and modelling behaviour to show the group how to be respectful of each other and work closely with the school staff that also attend the session to maintain the boundaries and rules of the group.

Table: AIM 1	
Provide a safe and secure space for young people to be creative	
Young People's Comments	<p>I felt safe when I was playing games.</p> <p>I felt safe because the teacher sorted out problems.</p> <p>I feel safe because everybody is like a friend.</p> <p>You can choose what you do.</p> <p>No one bullies you or is nasty.</p> <p>Having food together is like family.</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>Begin by offering simple choices and gradually build this up as the young person's understanding develops.</p> <p>In group contribution sessions provide a 'pass' option so that young people don't have to speak if they don't want to.</p> <p>Make a contract with the group and review it as the project goes along.</p> <p>We model and explicitly teach them about being a respectful, supportive and constructive audience for each other.</p> <p>There are always adults in view during the social time in the cafe but don't interfere or mediate unless it is necessary. For young refugees and asylum seekers this opportunity for a social life is precious and they often turn up early to make the most of it.</p>
Teachers' Comments	<p>They seem to own the place when they are at Oval House, they are not like that here. We like them to go to Oval House rather than do the group at school because it makes it more their space and a bit special, they feel safe I think.</p> <p>Teacher, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School</p> <p>Our young people are really comfortable with them [the Living Here tutors]. I like the way they encourage the existing members of the group to be welcoming to new members.</p> <p>Teaching Assistant, Turney Road Special School</p>

AIM 2

Provide non-threatening arts processes to enable them to make sense of their new circumstances

The young people who attend the groups all have very different experiences and expectations of education, including their experience of the arts. For many of the young people this is the first time they have engaged in arts activities at all so it may be very new for them. Added to this they are starting a new life in a new school and new city, some are with family but many are looked after by the local authority.

The activities provided by the Living Here Project are a mix of:

- interactive group games
- drama
- story telling
- puppetry
- music and dance
- photography and video
- animation
- model making
- drawing with sand
- collage making
- mask making and drama with masks.

Young people may choose to do a different arts activity every half term. This 'taster' introduces young people to the arts activity and helps young people to build up knowledge and experience of different artistic processes. It also provides the opportunity to work with a different group of young people and tutors but the group process will be the same with a focus on choice and respect for everyone in the group.

Tutors deliberately select themes that are likely to be of interest to the young people and encourage the young people to choose which themes to work on, this leads to the young people developing and directing the artistic work themselves to reflect and include the issues important to them. For example:

Romeo and Juliet was a theme some groups worked on – it is a story with universal appeal to young people and many young people were also studying it at school. The young people wove many issues into this including gang cultures, dealing with the police and parents’ responsibility for their children’s behaviour.

A project about London involved a group creating a collage from a range of different visual artwork produced by the young people – this is reproduced on the front cover of this report. The young people researched the images for the collage by visiting and photographing places and images they thought were important and then debating and selecting the right image to portray their perceptions of London.

Dealing with trouble on the streets of London was another theme explored by the groups – how to deal with being ‘troubled’ by other young people on the streets. The group used photography and made a photo story as a starting point for a drama, they discussed body language and eye contact with others you don’t know, how different things are in London, and how to avoid difficulties that all young people face daily as they travel around the city.

The Deer Wife – a Nigerian folk tale, and **The Overcoat** by Gogol – were other stories that the young people explored using drama and devised different endings. **The Deer Wife** was performed at a World Arts Day event for an external audience.

Table: AIM 2	
Provide non-threatening arts processes to enable them to make sense of their new circumstances.	
Young People’s Comments	<p>Doing drama is a good way to get to know people. I liked playing the games; it helped me get to know people from other countries.</p> <p>When I first came I had never been in a room with a boy I didn’t know if my family were not with me, there were boys in my class and I didn’t know what to do, I was so shy. But drama helps you say what you think and now I will answer questions in class first, I don’t care what the boys think! But some are my friends now too!</p>
<i>Table continued ...</i>	

Table: AIM 2 continued ...	
Provide non-threatening arts processes to enable them to make sense of their new circumstances.	
Young People's Comments continued ...	My first time it was the drama about the girl who came to the school from another country she thought it was the same school, like in her country, but it was different. She couldn't speak because she was scared. She had never seen these kinds of people maybe. And when it's lunchtime, maybe she thinks the school is closed. I love that drama!
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	Make sure most of the work is devised by the young people. We set up activities in which they will succeed so that they see and experience the value of what is created. Drama is a safe way to explore what is happening in their lives. The fiction gives it some distance and safety so they can be objective.
Teachers' Comments	It really helps them to work together as a group. When they first come they don't know each other or what to expect. The students are really developing and I can see they are bonding together. Teacher, Lilian Baylis School

AIM 3

Offer artistic approaches that do not rely on fluency in English or literacy or a common language

The Living Here Project has been very successful at communicating with young people without using a common language or written communication. This is essential, as when the young people first arrive they may have no English at all – and young people do arrive throughout the school year. The Living Here Project tutors have developed an expertise and confidence in communicating about complex and sophisticated concepts and ideas – it is possible that this confidence about how to communicate ideas without spoken words also rubs off on the young people and encourages them to be more adventurous communicators too.

Tutors use a range of artistic approaches including:

- Modelling behaviour and concepts – for example taking turns, treating men and women as equals, smiling a welcome etc
- Facial expression and body language – for example using a word with an accompanying facial expression and gesture – ‘he is puzzled’, ‘she is happy’ etc
- Masks, puppets etc – making them and using them to take on a role /tell a story that is non language led
- Games that involve the whole group so every one contributes to the whole activity and experiences belonging – games such as check in/check out, lines and chains of different activities
- Story telling and dramas that are acted out rather than spoken and can be shaped by the young people in the group
- Pictures and drawings used to convey concepts, ideas and feelings
- Photography to explore feelings and identity
- Repeating key words throughout sessions and finding different words to explain things.

Emotion Faces is an activity that involves showing young people a series of simply drawn faces with a range of emotions and asking them to mirror the expression in their own face. Then a simple improvised story is developed – for example someone gives a letter to someone else, this is repeated with different ‘faces’. This is a good way to introduce drama without language and can explore concepts such as pretend/imagination, characters, relationships and emotions in a light hearted and fun way. The young people can develop the work into more sophisticated narratives and characters as they begin to understand and experience what drama is – and there is no need to share a spoken language to do it.

Non verbal approaches are often used, for example using eye contact and physical actions to develop a character or part of the plot – tutors may model this perhaps acting someone horrified by reading a letter or delighted at what they have read – and encourage the young people to improvise with their eye contact, facial expressions and physical movements – again there is no need to share a spoken language to do it.

Table: AIM 3	
Offer artistic approaches that do not rely on fluency in English or literacy or a common language	
Young People's Comments	<p>Sometimes it's crazy and so funny I can't act seriously because of all the funny things people are doing.</p> <p>We are relaxed at Oval House and not shy of anything.</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>Don't plan sessions that rely on language or any text based sessions!</p> <p>Don't assume you know what the group has understood or not – test it out.</p> <p>We play a game that involves young people singing their names and then everyone in the group sings it too. We had found that often they didn't know each others names or how to pronounce them. We wanted them to know it is important to get everyone's name right – and they do.</p> <p>Not using language can have benefits too because it helps young people explore, be playful and try things out.</p> <p>Use play and metaphor rather than literal stories or experiences – work from non-verbal starting points.</p> <p>We are adapting games to be non-verbal and focusing on making the stimulus visual. Many of the group use Maketon sign language so we are learning some of the signs too – they are really good for drama as they are physical gestures.</p> <p>Living Here Project Tutors, Turney Road Special School Group</p>

AIM 4

Offer opportunities for young people to develop their fluency in English through a creative approach

This aim is one of those most successfully achieved by the Living Here Project as reported by the young people and their teachers at school. The nature of the artistic work the young people participate in such as story telling and drama provide tremendous opportunities for young people to develop fluency in English and practice communication skills.

The creative activities offered help young people to:

- listen
- practice speaking English in social situations (such as the welcome session at the beginning of groups)
- speak in a group
- explain their ideas
- expand their vocabulary
- understand and communicate about concepts such as respect
- plan and negotiate
- enjoy communicating in English
- experience success in speaking English.

The observation of several sessions for the evaluation and the young people' evaluations showed that young people wanted to communicate in English and did so spontaneously without worrying about having exactly the right words or grammar; they often looked to tutors to help provide the right word and would repeat it to check the pronunciation. The young people were clearly enjoying speaking and listening in English – it was fun.

Of the 31 Charles Edward Brookes young people who were interviewed by peer researchers 29 said it had helped improve their English.

This aim is very important as it significantly contributes to the young people's future social inclusion – they need to be able to communicate in English confidently and competently, it will affect their future education and employment chances and touch every part of their lives in the UK. The tutor team believe that language can be the most significant and excluding barrier for the young people.

The staff of Turney Road Special School are very clear that the creative activities help young people develop their language skills as well as improve confidence in communication. They are so convinced of this that they are now using some of the drama techniques and games used by the Living Here Project in the school as part of their every day teaching, for example a game that involves passing a balloon around the group and miming and speaking about a heavy, sticky, or light balloon.

Table: AIM 4

Offer opportunities for young people to develop their fluency in English through a creative approach	
Young People's Comments	<p>Oval House helped me to listen to English, everyone has different accents and I couldn't work out the words they were saying. In drama they speak slowly and everyone takes a turn.</p> <p>The first time I came I could not speak any English and I just nodded yes at whatever they said. They speak so fast but they smile, smile all the time so I smiled too!</p> <p>At school it is so hard because you are thinking all the time 'Is it the right word?' But at Oval House you just say it and you talk, talk so much. It is very good for helping my English.</p> <p>When people talked to me I listen to them, and when I am talking to them they listen to me.</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>One student has been saying 'shoe' this week and pointing to his shoe. This followed the drama session last week that involved talking about shoes. His teachers are really pleased as he doesn't use language very much.</p> <p>Tutor of the Turney Road Special School Group.</p> <p>Drama provides the imperative to speak, to communicate with each other. It is not a demand or a requirement it is a choice, but a choice they make because they are motivated – they want to plan their drama and make it exciting.</p> <p>Tutor, Lilian Baylis School Group</p> <p>Even when English fluency is not required the young people want to communicate with each other in planning their artistic work – they are motivated.</p> <p>Tutor, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School</p>
Teachers' Comments	<p>I have noticed a more rapid increase in the speaking and listening strand of the curriculum.</p> <p>Deputy Head, Turney Road Special School</p> <p>Among regular attenders their English has definitely improved. We measure fluency on a termly basis using the Hester Scale.</p> <p>Deputy Head, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School</p> <p>Last year we had student with a stutter, being part of the group really helped his confidence in speaking. Now he is putting up his hand in class and asking questions.</p> <p>Teacher, Lilian Baylis School</p>

AIM 5

Use creativity to build young people's confidence and self-esteem

The Living Here Project has demonstrated particular success in achieving this aim.

The concepts of confidence and self-esteem can be difficult to define and hard to measure but much work has been done on this nationally and internationally resulting in more robust definitions for these concepts and in identifying the skills that children and young people need to acquire in order to develop good self esteem, and the factors associated with promoting good mental and emotional well-being. The Government's '*Aiming high for young people: A ten year strategy for positive activities*' (2007) has identified the development of social and emotional skills as key to supporting children and young people to achieve their potential.

For the purposes of this evaluation the work of the Living Here Project was considered in terms of how far it has provided opportunities for young people to develop and practice the skills identified within the England wide SEAL programme and promoted the key factors associated with the development of resilience in young people as described in a Scottish Executive review of international research. Both are described in more detail below.

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning

The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning² programme – known as SEAL – is being rolled out in all schools in England. SEAL is about helping children and young people to develop skills to manage the social and emotional aspects of life.

²Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007) *Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning for Secondary Schools. Guidance booklet*. Secondary National Strategy.

http://bandapilot.org.uk/secondary/resources/welcome_page/sns_ssealguidance0004307.pdf

The social and emotional aspects of learning

Social and emotional skills are the skills of making positive relationships with other people, of understanding and managing ourselves and our own emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. If people have these skills they can then understand and respond to the emotions and behaviour of others, in ways that are in the best long-term interest of themselves and others. When people have good skills in these areas they are more likely to:

- be effective and successful learners;
- be self-motivated;
- make and sustain friendships;
- deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly;
- solve problems with others or by themselves;
- manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety;
- be able to promote calm and optimistic states that promote the achievement of goals;
- recover from setbacks and persist in the face of difficulties;
- work cooperatively;
- recognise and stand up for their own rights and the rights of others;
- understand and value differences and commonalities between people, respecting the right of others to have beliefs and values different from their own.

From: Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning for Secondary Schools. Guidance booklet. (pp 4 2007) Secondary National Strategy. Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Resilience

In the field of and children and young people's mental health and well being, resilience is often referred to as an attribute that enables children and young person to overcome difficulties and succeed. A review carried out by Barnardo's for The Scottish Executive identified a number of key factors that promotes resilience in children and young people. See table below. It described resilient children as ...

'better equipped to resist stress and adversity, cope with change and uncertainty, and to recover faster and more completely from traumatic events or episodes'.³

This description is particularly relevant when applied to young people who are refugees and asylum seekers and many of whom are unaccompanied by parents or family.

Factors that promote resilience

Children and young people who are best equipped to overcome adversities, especially those which occur during periods of transition, will have, or be helped to have:

1. Strong social support networks.
2. The presence of at least one unconditionally supportive parent or parent substitute.
3. A committed mentor or other person from outside the family.
4. Positive school experiences.
5. A sense of mastery and a belief that one's own efforts can make a difference.
6. A range of extra-curricular activities that promote the learning of competencies and emotional maturity.
7. The capacity to re-frame adversities so that the beneficial as well as the damaging effects are recognised.
8. The ability – or opportunity – to 'make a difference' by, for example, helping others through volunteering, or undertaking part time work.
9. Exposure to challenging situations which provide opportunities to develop both problem-solving abilities and emotional coping skills.

From: Newman, T and Blackburn, S (2002) *'Transitions in the Lives of Children and Young People: Resilience Factors'*, Interchange No 78. Scottish Executive Education Department.

³ *'Transitions in the Lives of Children and Young People: Resilience Factors'*, Newman, T and Blackburn S (2002) Interchange No 78. Scottish Executive Education Department.

<http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ic78.pdf>

It is clear that the Living Here Project uses creativity to focus on the social and emotional learning of its young people and provide them with opportunities to develop resilience. How the Project has done this is listed in Appendices 7 and 8.

The tutors of the Living Here Project have been keen to monitor the development of the young peoples social skills and confidence in communication. They devised a list of communication skills that they expected young people to demonstrate during their time at the Project including a scale of competency in using the skill. These skills fit very well with the SEAL aims and resilience factors. The tutors ensure that the creative activities they offer provide non-threatening and fun opportunities for young people to develop and practice these skills:

- Making eye contact
- Interacting with new peers
- Taking risks
- Managing differences of opinion
- Encouraging and supporting others
- Open body language
- Willingness to take part and contribute
- Interacting with adults
- Listening/respecting the ideas of others
- Presenting a reasoned argument
- Expressing an opinion or idea
- Asking questions

Each skill has a scale of 1 to 5 that demonstrates increasing confidence in using the skill, so for example the making eye contact scale is as follows:

Making eye contact:

1. Makes little or no eye contact
2. Makes occasional eye contact when engaged by an adult
3. Makes spontaneous eye contact some of the time
4. Makes good spontaneous eye contact most of the time
5. Makes excellent eye contact in all communication

Tutors monitor young people monthly to review progress and while they cannot claim the work done in the group definitively helps the student develop these skills they can show that young people are demonstrating an increasing competency with many of the skills during the lifetime of the group. Tutors have also found that this helps to sharpen their focus on building in appropriate opportunities for individual young people. Tutors have noted in their monthly monitoring that young people attending regularly have increased their scores consistently – the score is achievement of levels of competence in each skill – but students with less regular attendance do not make such rapid progress. The monitoring is ongoing and a copy of the skills and associated scales can be found in Appendix 9.

Living Here Project also provides an opportunity for young people to learn about ‘how things work here’. The norms that most children and young people would take for granted may be unknown or very challenging for newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers. They may not have had an education that values diversity and equality and may not have lived in a multi-racial society. Yet if these young people are to be socially included, to benefit from education and lead successful lives then they must learn a lot about these norms very quickly. Hand in hand with this is the need for all young people to be skilled and confident in communication, able to get one with others and manage their own feelings and behaviour. Projects such as the Living Here Project provides a unique experience for young people to explore their lives now and learn, in a safe environment, about concepts such as anti-racism and gender equality and the everyday business of being a young person in London.



Table: AIM 5	
Use creativity to build young people's confidence and self-esteem	
Young People's Comments	<p>Oval House is a nice place – it's good to go there and find new friends and get experience for the future.</p> <p>I have made friends with people from lots of different countries.</p> <p>Every time we went there they were friendly and always there if we needed help.</p> <p>I made friends with boys and girls.</p> <p>I made friends and it changed me to be friendly.</p> <p>It helped me how to work as a group in putting together a performance.</p> <p>Some people in the school, they don't talk to no one, but when they come in the drama lesson, they have to talk to someone – it's a game you have to play!</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>It is not uncommon to hear young people use racial slurs when they fall out with others but we have to remember they don't have the experience of a multi-cultural education and don't know that it's unacceptable. We explain why, if we can, or we demonstrate how we behave respectfully to each other, racial slurs are disrespectful. It can be quite a steep learning curve for them but a vital one.</p>
Teachers' & Stakeholders' Comments	<p>It helps to develop a network in the community for our young people. One Columbian tutor helped a Columbian student to connect up with Columbian groups in London – we couldn't have done that, we don't have the networks but it was great for the student.</p> <p>Teacher, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School</p> <p>It helps them a lot with just learning how to 'be' here. It gives them confidence and drama is good for breaking down pre-conceptions and prejudice.</p> <p>Deputy Head, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School</p> <p>The young people who were the young ambassadors at Refugee Week and gave performances at primary schools around the borough had a real sense of presentation skills and how to work with their audience. I was very impressed.</p> <p>Mus Begum, Secondary Consultant, Ethnic Minority Achievement Team</p>
<i>Table continued ...</i>	

Table: AIM 5 continued ...	
Use creativity to build young people's confidence and self-esteem	
Teachers' & Stakeholders' Comments continued ...	<p>I know from attending the performance on Friday and from teaching many of the participants what a difference the Living Here project has made. All of the students have become more confident and have started to take a fuller part in lessons. The students I have been working with have been extremely positive about the workshops. They look forward to them and I regularly catch them talking about them when they should be 'working' in my lessons!</p> <p>Headteacher of Lilian Baylis School</p>

AIM 6

Give young people a voice through the arts and offer opportunities for them to express themselves to their peers and the wider community

The young people involved in the Living Here Project have produced a range of arts related work that shows their friends, family and carers, teachers and others what interests them and how they view the world around them now.

The image on the front cover of this report was produced by a 2007 group of young people – it was a project that focused on visual imagery, the group decided the theme would be London through their eyes. It is a challenging, complex and uplifting image and one that many Londoners would find interesting but probably be surprised to discover it was produced by a group of young people very newly arrived in London.

Other examples of creative work produced by young people and shared with a wider audience includes:

- An exhibition of the Living Here Project young people's work which ran for a month at Oval House Theatre in 2007 and to which young people invited family, carers, friends, teachers, and others including local authority councillors and funders

- Young people work who take part in World Arts Day events – which happen three times a year, up to 100 young people take part in a variety of workshops and the day ends with a sharing of dance, drama, music and visual arts to celebrate the achievements of the day.
- 42 young people took part in travelling workshops and an exhibition for Lambeth Schools about Somali Arts and gave performances in five primary schools.

Table: AIM 6

Give young people a voice through the arts and offer opportunities for them to express themselves to their peers and the wider community	
Young People's Comments	<p>I liked the World Arts Day because we were able to act and dance and do music and games.</p> <p>World Arts Day 2007 participant</p> <p>In the beginning I didn't want to do the play, it was scary. I thought people wouldn't like it. When I got on stage I felt scared but then after a bit it was easier and I started to enjoy it a bit. Then people said it was good and funny and I felt very proud of what we did. We worked really well together and we don't usually do that!</p> <p>World Arts Day 2007 participant</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>My best memory of the group is seeing the young people with special needs showing their work with groups from other schools and feeling they have something to contribute, beginning to see that they can be accepted and welcomed.</p> <p>Tutor at a World Arts Day 2007</p> <p>On the day of the private view several of the young people volunteered to show Lambeth councillors and project funders around the exhibition and all the young people were visibly proud to see their work receive such a positive reception. Having the chance to interact with adults outside of their school in a social environment really raised their confidence and contributed to their feeling of being valued both here at Oval House and in London itself.</p> <p>Living Here Project Exhibition 2007</p>

Table continued ...

Table: AIM 6 continued ...	
Give young people a voice through the arts and offer opportunities for them to express themselves to their peers and the wider community	
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments continued ...	Visitors particularly noted that seeing the young people's art made them see London in a different way. Many people said they expected the work to present negative aspects of London and were surprised that the young people chose to present positive images of London. Living Here Project Exhibition 2007
Teachers' & Stakeholders' Comments	Drama is really good at breaking down barriers between young people especially when they may have completely different life experiences. Deputy Head, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School We need more of this kind of work. It is good for us to meet other Somali parents and share things and it's important for our children to feel positive about who they are. It is a really good day. Somali parent commenting on the touring Somali Arts workshops and exhibition at Lambeth Schools.

AIM 7

Provide an enjoyable and uplifting experience for young people whose lives are complicated by challenges such as bureaucracy and poverty

There is strong evidence that the Living Here Project is an enjoyable and uplifting experience for the young people who attend.

This is demonstrated by:

- Attendance figures are consistently good – although young people may miss sessions this is usually because their lives are punctuated by meetings with social workers, immigration issues and medical appointments.
- Celebration events at the end of groups and performances are enthusiastically prepared for and young people rate them highly.
- Young people who contributed to the evaluation rated the

welcome session at the beginning of each group as very important and enjoyable,

- Young people voluntarily attending holiday projects and one off events.
- Teachers at the young peoples schools saying most young people enjoy attending.
- Tutors reporting that young people become increasingly more playful, joyful and spontaneous throughout the life of the group – laughter is commonly heard in the group sessions.
- Organised visits to free arts events and venues in London such as the South Bank and Tate Modern to introduce young people to arts and cultural activities they can access independently

Young people said that if they had to describe the Project to a new student they would say it was a place to have fun and make new friends.

However some young people do find the sessions difficult in the beginning. The tutors think this is often because young people have no experience of this kind of education and cannot see the value of it. For some young people taking part in drama and group games is not something they are culturally familiar with and they are puzzled to be asked to do it. They think education should be formal and serious. They don't expect school to be fun!

The tutors experience is that it is worth persevering as eventually young people begin to find they enjoy the activities and enjoy being with their peers as they get to know each other better. Groups that do not know each other well – as is often the case at the beginning of the school year – will obviously not work well together in the beginning. The tutors estimate that it takes approximately 8 sessions to build trust and get a group working cooperatively together.

Tutors have found that offering a choice of activities is helpful; and young people reported in the evaluation that they would like to have the opportunity for more dance and music related activities. The tutor team are aware that some young people attending the groups are deeply troubled and there is liaison with relevant school staff if there is particular concern about a young person's mental or physical condition.

Table: AIM 7

Provide an enjoyable and uplifting experience for young people whose lives are complicated by challenges such as bureaucracy and poverty.	
Young People's Comments	<p>I felt good inside my heart to go to Oval House. Drama is very funny, I like it very much It's fun, friendly and a good place to be. When I am at Oval House I laugh so much! We are relaxed at Oval House and not shy of anything Sometimes it is like a holiday! I enjoyed Oval House – I loved the activities. This is really cool! You're my family, that's right. At Oval house I always just feel happy to be here and that makes me happy to be in London.</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>A real high point was when M..... came into the class and everyone was pleased to see him – his face lit up! One student, who was suffering a lot of distress, was quite disruptive and had a negative influence on the others; he said he thought drama was silly. He has gradually shifted his perspective and has begun to take part much more fully. Despite his initial opinion he has begun to laugh and smile and 'enjoy' himself. It is as if he has given himself permission to have fun and he seems much happier.</p>
Teachers' & Stakeholders' Comments	<p>They seem to be very happy to attend and when I attended World Arts Day I could see how interested and happy they were to be there. It is good for the young people to have other places to go that they enjoy. Teacher, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School We had one student who we didn't expect to like it, she was very withdrawn but she has absolutely thrived on it. She was really pleased to be able to go to the half term project and said she enjoyed it. Teacher, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School At the beginning some of them said they were bored and didn't like it. But the performances at the end of term were amazing and they are so proud of it, they have worked so hard. They want to come back next term! Teacher, Lilian Baylis Technology School</p>

AIM 8

Find creative ways of building new social networks between young people in similar circumstances and young people from more established communities

The evaluation found good evidence that the Living Here Project is building new social networks between the young people who attend the Project and young people from more established communities. The Project has developed a range of activities and events to help this happen and has linked with other arts projects in the area to extend the young peoples range of experiences and contact with other young people. This includes:

- The involvement of the Living Here Project young people in projects at Oval House Theatre for young people such as the MIX it UP event and holiday projects.
- Young people have taken part in several World Arts Days and shown their work alongside work by young people from more established communities.
- An exhibition of the Living Here Project young people's work which ran for a month and to which young people invited family, carers, friends, teachers and others.
- Providing work experience at Oval House Theatre for two young people enabling them to meet and be involved with a range of adults and young people and providing leadership opportunities for four young people.
- Young people from all of the groups attending professional public performances at Oval House Theatre.
- Young people participating in travelling arts workshops and an exhibition on Somali Arts for Lambeth schools.

The Living Here Project is helping to build community cohesion in a practical way by actively developing opportunities for newly arrived young people and those who are more established to meet, get to know one another in a non-threatening environment and share experiences. It has resulted in many new friendships, challenged misconceptions and allayed fears in both groups of young people who have found they have a lot in common as young

people who are living in London and involved in creative activities. It is also helping the new arrivals to view themselves as citizens who have responsibilities as well as rights and who should be tolerant and respectful of others views and way of life – important lessons for all young people.

Table: AIM 8	
Find creative ways of building new social networks between young people in similar circumstances and young people from more established communities	
Young People's Comments	<p>I have made friends with people from many different countries.</p> <p>I asked people to speak slower so I could understand and I made an effort to speak English and not talk in my language so people would understand me. I think people respected each other a lot.</p> <p>I was surprised there were people from my school. I never saw them before at school but now I can say hello at school.</p> <p>I liked working with people who speak different languages and have different cultures. I learnt a lot.</p> <p>At the beginning I didn't like some of the other students but Oval house changed our attitude to each other and now I have lots of new friends.</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>At first it was giving opportunities to the new arrivals to be part of the group of young people from more established communities, but as the sessions went on I realised this was an opportunity for more established young people to experience the new arrivals. Both groups had to shift and move towards each other.</p> <p>When the group performed at the end of the half term inclusive project an audience member said "I couldn't tell which ones were your refugee group and which ones were the main stream young people." That made me laugh but also feel proud because that was the point – for young people to be themselves without a label!</p> <p>Many friendships were forged across the groups and young people took safe creative risks in the sessions that were a direct result of their growing confidence and sense of security in a space they have come to know so well.</p>
<i>Table continued ...</i>	

Table: AIM 8 continued ...	
Teachers' & Stakeholders' Comments	<p>At World Arts Day at Oval House one of our young people did a performance – I was amazed, he really showed us he could transfer the skills he had learnt in the drama sessions at school. Our young people were doing drama and mime with the other young people and you almost couldn't tell the difference!</p> <p>Teaching Assistant, Turney Road Special School</p> <p>It helps the young people be part of the community. We know that when we visit Oval House they will be welcomed, there is always someone to meet and greet. It's a good opportunity for our young people to interact with other young people. We would like to do more of it.</p> <p>Deputy Head, Turney Road Special School</p>

AIM 9

Give young people valuable opportunities to take on leadership roles and influence the development of the project

The Living Here Project has supported a number of young people from the groups to take on leadership roles within and outside the Project and this has helped to shape the Project's development. To date the Project has:

- Taken on four young apprentices. All have gone on to secure other placements and paid employment opportunities such as providing football training, and videoing an event for a refugee arts organisation.
- Encouraged the apprentices to take part in planning and debriefing sessions with tutors and to contribute ideas for sessions. Apprentices also lead some games and activities with groups and assist with translation for some young people. Where young people and apprentices share a language they often feed back the views of young people or explain issues of concern for young people – such as the need to find time to pray during Ramadan.
- Provided two long-term work experience placements for young people at Oval House Theatre. One young person is helping tutors run the Living Here Project course and the other is helping

Oval House Theatre staff to set up for public performances. Young refugees and asylum seekers who are not fluent in English often find it hard to get work experience placements.

- Trained four young people as peer researchers. The young people took part in a training session on research and interviewing skills, helped devise the young people's questionnaire and carried out face to face interviews with 31 past and present young people; most interviews were carried out in the young people's own languages and responses interpreted back into English.

This part of the Project is proving to be successful and is planned to be developed further as outlined in Recommendations 13 and 14 on pages seven and eight. The Project should seek to refine and develop the roles of young people in the Project to support their increased involvement in shaping the Project and its future direction. The Project should also seek opportunities to link these emerging young leaders with related young leadership projects in the area.

Table: AIM 9	
Give young people valuable opportunities to take on leadership roles and influence the development of the project.	
Young People's Comments	<p>It was quite hard to do some of the interviews, one of the older boys said 'Who are you asking all these questions, the Home Office or something?'</p> <p>Peer Researcher</p> <p>Sometimes they ask me things they don't like to ask the tutors or I can do something in the group like an activity to show them it is OK.</p> <p>Young Apprentice</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>Several young people have said that they would like to work at Oval House. They see it as a stepping stone, a supportive environment where they can gain valuable experience for the future. We plan to consider this further in the coming year and build on the apprenticeship model.</p> <p>Stella Barnes, Living Here Project Leader</p>
Teachers' & Stakeholders' Comments	<p>The young people who were peer researchers took on the roles very responsibly, it's good experience for them and they can add it to their CVs and it's good that they are getting a certificate for it too.</p> <p>Teacher, Charles Edward Brookes Girls School</p>

AIM 10

Build close relationships with existing and new project partners such as schools and social services to establish a joined up approach and provide young people with a wider network of opportunities

This aim is more difficult to achieve but successfully achieving this aim will help the Project to sustain and develop its work in the future. It is timely for the Project to focus on developing and strengthening its existing partnerships and investing in reaching potentially new partners. The Project now has an established base from which to grow and significant practical experience of how to make the Project work.

The challenges of partnership working

Partnership working requires a lot of time from all of the partners, and takes place against a background of changing priorities, re-organisations, staff changes and usually shifting budgets. The Living Here Project has forged good working partnerships with the three schools and the Lambeth Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. This is partly to do with good relationships between the manager of the Living Here Project and the other partners and partly regular communication between the schools and the Project, clarity about roles and expectations and the ability to be flexible when the need arises.

There have been challenges at times for the Project and the first year was characterised by partnerships that did not always work well. For example the group at the Open Learning Centre worked well for a term but ended prematurely half way through the next term, the Centre had had difficulty meeting its side of the agreement due to staffing problems and an internal re-organisation. However this led to the Project exploring partnerships with schools as it seemed they would be in a better position to offer opportunities to work with young people on creative projects, and schools tend to have an understanding and experience of the practicalities of working with other organisations.

Schools are unique organisations and operate under very particular pressures – the school timetable, a national curriculum, a political environment that measures success by exam achievement, inspections and monitoring etc. Also refugee and asylum seeking

pupils will arrive throughout the academic year and must be accommodated – schools cannot always predict how many refugee and asylum seeking young people they will have and most of their needs are unknown until they arrive and can be assessed. At times the groups at the Living Here Project have suffered from too many young people in groups and this can happen quite quickly when a sudden influx of new young people arrives in a school. The Project has tried to accommodate this so that young people are not left out but it has resulted in staffing difficulties and unexpected pressures on budgets.

Strengthening the partnerships

The three schools that contributed to the evaluation are interested in developing a stronger partnership. They all value the work of the project and would like it to continue. A useful and timely next step may be to hold a meeting of all project partners to:

- discuss the learning so far from the perspective of all partners
- identify and discuss successes and difficulties
- devise strategies for working together and strengthening partnership arrangements
- plan for the future.

It may also be timely for the Project to develop some new information materials for schools and others about how the Project works describing its ethos and methodology, and expectations of partners and young people. Currently there is a 2 page Project agreement document – which should continue. It describes the responsibilities of the school and the Project and tends to be used by the senior manager at the school rather than the school staff team, but it doesn't describe the nature of the work. It would be worth investing in some information materials that could also be shared with other school staff and with potential partners to describe and promote the Project.

School staff interviewed for the evaluation were interested to hear about the ethos of the work, the role of the welcome sessions and social time at the beginning of the groups etc and said they would like to know more about the work and to meet the tutors. Some teachers were interested in more feedback than they currently get such as a brief overview of what young people did in the session that week so that they could follow-up language development at school – for example: the session involved a story about the

rainforest etc. One teacher stated that this information helped to record young people's work for an accredited course – she said she sometimes couldn't get a coherent picture of what they had done because the discussion it provoked was often animated as young people re-lived parts of the session for her benefit!

Staff at Turney Road Special School on the other hand thought they were very well informed about the sessions – this was partly because teaching assistants participate in the sessions and sessions are held on the school premises. They said they really enjoyed the sessions, got lots of ideas for different ways of communicating with young people from them, and were also surprised at times by how much young people were able to participate and contribute.

Supporting professional development

The Project has also engaged in providing a number of training sessions for teachers and others interested in developing their practice with refugee and asylum seeking children and young people and contributing learning from the work at conferences and events locally, nationally and internationally. This has included:

- Awareness training for newly qualified teachers in Lambeth – training teachers working in schools with high numbers of refugees and asylums seekers for the Lambeth Ethnic Minority Achievement Team, this included examples of how to work with young people using creative methods. May 2006
- Training for the Central School of Speech and Drama – a half-day training in using drama with young refugees and asylum seekers for Applied Theatre undergraduates and postgraduate students. June 2006
- Training Days for BA and MA students at the Central School of Speech and Drama, London and Goldsmith's University, London
- Four one-day training days 2007 on methodology and ethics in using the arts with young refugees.
- A Workshop at the 2006 Lambeth Ethnic Minority Achievement Conference – for EMA teachers about using drama with young refugees and asylum seekers and contributing to a seminar sharing the outcomes of a primary school project.
- Information Centre on Asylum Seekers and Refugees (ICAR) – dissemination workshop about the work of the Living Here

Project and putting its ethos into practice. This national event was attended by local authorities and national voluntary sector organisations.

- League of Profession Women in Theatre – New York and London 2007– a panel discussion about working with marginalised young people.
- Museum of London 2007 – an ‘in conversation’ event as part of the ‘Belongings’ exhibition at the Museum. The Living Here Project discussed working with young refugees and ethics in working with vulnerable young people.
- Presentation on the work and ethics of the Living Here Project at a 2007 international conference: Performance and Asylum, held at Royal Holloway University, London
- Workshop at Refugee Week 2007 on the risks and ethics of creative work with young refugees
- Advisor to the Mixit Project, New Zealand – Stella Barnes has been advising on the development of this project, which is similar to the Living Here Project.
- Training for the British Council in Athens as part of a conference about young refugees and migrants.
- Workshop on mime and mask work with young refugees – two day course for practitioners

It is worth noting that the Project regularly receives more requests to provide training and contribute to conferences than it can satisfy – others are very interested to learn about the work and ethos of the Project.

The Project has also been instrumental in establishing the Refugee Youth Arts Network – RYAN – a peer led network for artists and organisations who work with young refugees and asylum seekers. The network has been meeting quarterly since 2007 and has been well attended with between 12 and 20 people at each meeting. Recently Oval House Theatre led on a piece of work with the network resulting in a document about how the arts deliver Every Child Matter outcomes for young refugees. The document was submitted as part of the consultation on London Enriched the Greater London Authority draft strategy for refugee integration. RYAN has also begun to map the provision of arts projects for young refugees in London and members have shared practice and explored issues of concern in the work.

Table: AIM 10	
Build close relationships with existing and new project partners such as schools and social services to establish a joined up approach and provide young people with a wider network of opportunities.	
Comments From Participants Attending Training	<p>I wanted to learn about how you work with the participants in practice and I have the impression that you opened a door for me. The discussion about ethics and risk was really inspiring. It is very likely that I will use the games in my work, especially the penguin one and the emotion faces is really good as well.</p> <p>An excellent mix of practical activities and discussion of issues. All of it has been most useful. Highlights have probably been the personal and creative risk planning framework, the practical exercises, and hearing how you run specific projects at Oval House. The grid of personal/creative risk – high/low – was massively useful for planning and evaluation. It was also great to have a visual tool for grasping ethical implications of exercises and judging which direction you might take the general discussion of working in this kind of environment.</p> <p>The training made me think about the value of non-language led starting points even if groups do speak English.</p>
Living Here Project Tutors' Comments	<p>Sometimes it is clear that we have different agendas from the schools. We are more focussed on social development because we are not subject to the same target driven pressures. However, there is a lot of respect for each others' practice and concerns and when our agendas conflict, we usually find a satisfactory way forward.</p> <p>Stella Barnes, Living Here Project Leader</p> <p>I think it is very useful if we work with teachers from time to time but we have to be clear that the workshops are not the same as teaching a class in school; we have to be more relaxed and flexible but it doesn't mean we don't have boundaries and rules – they are just a bit different from school but every bit as important.</p>
<i>Table continued ...</i>	

Table: AIM 10 continued ...

Teachers' & Stakeholders' Comments	We really like being part of the session with the young people and it is great not knowing quite what the session will be, we don't want to know the session plan in advance – we are as excited as the young people! Teaching Assistant, Turney Road Special School
---	--

CONCLUSION

The Living Here Project has proved that it can make a difference to young people who are among the most disadvantaged and excluded young people in our community. The final year of this phase of the Project presents many challenges about how to continue to be able to provide young people with the opportunity to benefit from the Living Here Project. Partners, funders both past and present and other stakeholders will need to focus sharply on this in order to sustain the Project and share more widely the learning from the work.



APPENDIX ONE

Documents reviewed as part of the evaluation.

- Living Here Project application to The Diana Fund 2006.
- Living Here Project application to the Baring Foundation 2005.
- Living Here Project self appraisals for the Baring Foundation 2006-7 and 2005-6.
- End of year project reports to The Diana Fund 2006 and 2007.
- Internal staff appraisals of all groups and World Arts Day events 2006 and 2007.
- Tutors weekly recordings of groups for the autumn term 2007.
- Notes from team meetings and termly tutor reviews 2006 and 2007.
- Living Here Project agreements with schools.
- A selection of session plans for groups taking place in the autumn term 2007.
- Individual learning plan template (being tested with the Lilian Baylis groups).
- Oval House Arts in Education Self confidence descriptors (see Appendix 9).
- Letters of thanks from the schools about project.
- Evaluation and feedback comments from Training Days for professionals.
- Working through the arts with young refugees and asylum seekers: Ethics and responsibilities – a draft paper by Living Here Project Team.
- Conference Presentation at Royal Holloway University on ethics 2007.
- Evaluation Informants.
- Stella Barnes, Head of Arts in Education, Oval House Theatre.
- The Living Here Project Team – tutors and young apprentices.

Mus Bagum, Secondary Consultant, Ethnic Minority Achievement Team, Lambeth.

Laurie Johnstone, Deputy Head, Charles Edward Brooke Girls School.

Kerima Mohideen, Head of the Neptune Group and Teacher, Charles Edward Brooke Girls School.

Gary Phillips, Head Teacher, Lilian Baylis Technology School.

Andrew Marsh, Deputy Head, Lilian Baylis Technology School.

Wanda Jarrett, Teacher, Lilian Baylis Technology School.

John Jukes, Head of English and Drama, Turney Road Special School.

Roelof Stander, Teaching Assistant, Turney Road Special School.

Karen Taylor, Social Exclusion Officer, Arts Council England.

31 past and present students completed a questionnaire about the project (see Appendix 5).

APPENDIX TWO

Timeline of Living Here Project Activity 2004–2008

Project Phase	Work with young people	Work with adults	Events
<p>2004-5 Preparatory Work</p>	<p>Pilot Project with Stockwell Park School (2005) 10 week project – developing methodology and consulting with young refugees – helped develop ideas for the project</p>	<p>New Beginnings Conference 2004 Established contact with Lambeth Education</p>	
<p>2006 Year 1 Establishing the Project</p>	<p>Pilot Project with the Open Learning Centre (formerly the Virtual School) – 10 week project Anchor Project 6 weeks of drama workshops with a local voluntary children’s refugee project Open Learning Centre – workshops provided at the Centre but ceased following difficulties at the centre with staffing, cancelled sessions etc. Charles Edward Brooke School – Neptune project. 2 groups per week at Oval House Theatre</p>	<p>Lambeth EMA training for newly qualified teachers Training workshop at Central School of Speech and Drama 2 day workshop on mime and mask work with young refugees Contributed to Lambeth EMA (Ethnic Minority Achievement) conference</p>	<p>3 day Summer Arts Project Mix it up Day – Inclusive Event 1st World Arts Day at Oval House – Inclusive event Two Half-term Projects: Art workshops plus a sharing event for family and friends</p>

<p>2007 Year 2 Project Delivery</p>	<p>Charles Edward Brooke Girls School – Neptune project 2 groups per week at Oval House Theatre Turney Road Special School – one group per week based at the school Lilian Baylis Technology School – three groups per week at Oval House Theatre Somali Arts Workshops and Travelling Exhibition – young people help provide workshops in primary schools Apprenticeships established</p>	<p>Training Day at Oval House Theatre Exploring Safety and Risk in Arts Practice with Young Refugees and Asylum Seekers Training workshop at Central School of Speech and Drama and Goldsmith’s University Refugee Youth Arts Network established Contribute to the London Enriched draft strategy Presentations at national and international conferences and events on the work of the Living Here Project and ethos of the work</p>	<p>3 x World Arts Days at Oval House – inclusive events Living Here Project Exhibition at Oval House Theatre – ran for a month and visited by family, friends, carers, local councillors and stakeholders. Two Half-term Projects: Art workshops plus a sharing event for family and friends Refugee Arts Day at Oval House Theatre</p>
<p>2008 Year 3 Project Delivery</p>	<p>Charles Edward Brooke School – 2 groups per week at Oval House Theatre Turney Road Special School – one group per week based at the school Lilian Baylis Technology School – one group per week at Oval House Theatre Saturday workshops planned October - December 2008 One Thousand Hands visual arts project planned – May to June 2008</p>	<p>Consultation event on refugee arts with young refugees planned June 2008 Lambeth EMA (Ethnic Minority Achievement) conference planned July 2008 Publication of essays on arts with young refugees planned Summer 2008</p>	<p>2 x World Arts Day at Oval House Theatre – inclusive events One Thousand Hands – Refugee Week exhibition planned June 2008 Visit to Kew Gardens planned for July 2008</p>

APPENDIX THREE

Living Here Project for Young Refugees and Asylum Seekers

STAFF TEAM

Stella Barnes, Head of Arts in Education and Living Here Project Leader.

Stella Barnes has worked in the arts in London for over twenty years, specialising in working with young people. Stella's expertise is in Participatory Arts, Theatre for Development and Theatre in Education. She is an experienced trainer and arts facilitator and has presented her work at conferences and seminars in the UK and internationally.

Since 2004 Stella has been Head of Arts in Education at Oval House Theatre where she develops partnerships with non arts sector agencies to deliver arts projects with marginalised young people and set up the Living Here Project. Before this she spent five years pioneering participatory arts work with young exiles in Greenwich and Lewisham. Stella is a founder member of Refugees and the Arts Initiative, a London-wide network for exiled artists. She was commissioned by Artswork to write a guidance document for using the arts with young refugees and asylum seekers and delivers national training in using the arts with young refugees and asylum seekers for Artswork.

In 2001 Stella created Flight Paths, a London-wide arts-in-education training programme for exiled artists. She has produced two award winning short films with young refugees and in 2004 organised New Beginnings the first youth-led conference about young people, the arts and exile. She is an advisor to 'Mixit' an arts project for young refugees in Auckland, New Zealand and is working with the British Council in Southern Africa and the UK on the Identity Project that trained twenty young people to be social action facilitators using the arts.

TUTOR TEAM

Theo Bryer

Theo is a trained drama teacher and drama facilitator and runs her own refugee arts project in south London schools.

Colin Fancy

Colin is a drama tutor with over 20 years experience and specialises in working with young people with special needs and disabilities.

Hannah Griffiths

Hannah is a drama movement specialist with over 15 years experience of working with young people and works on three projects with young refugees and asylum seekers in London.

Anil Iltas – Project Assistant

Anil is trained in visual arts and has worked for a number of arts organisations in London.

Clea McIlraith

Clea is a drama practitioner and a drama therapist.

John Morales

John is an exiled artist from Columbia, a trainer further education teacher and works on three projects with young refugees and asylum seekers in London.

Zory Shahrokhi

Zory is a practising visual artist and arts facilitator and originates from Iran.

Stanislaw Smagala

Stanislaw is a physical theatre, mime and mask specialist and runs his own programmes with young refugees and asylum seekers.

Poppy Szajbo

Poppy is a participatory photographic specialist, is experienced in working with traveller and Roma communities and works on a number of arts projects with refugees and asylum seekers in London.

Vishni Velada-Billson

Vishni is a trained teacher, a theatre director and workshop leader, she has over 15 years experience of working with marginalised young people.

Young Apprentices

Saleh Ahmed
Daniel Luzolo Lwanzamoi

Volunteers

Sofia Nure

Peer Researchers

Shamhan Ashoor
Mohammed Fazli
Daniel Luzolo Lwanzamoi
Cai Mei Weng

APPENDIX FOUR

What young people think about Oval House Theatre

Can you help us to find out what young people think is good and not so good about Oval House Theatre?

This will help Stella and the tutors make the project better for students in the future.

Your answers are private – we don't need to know your name.

Thank you for your help!

1	Are you:	Male	2	How old are you?	
		Female			
3	How long have you been in the UK?				
4	Where do you come from?				
5	What languages do you speak?	1			
		2			
		3			
		4			
		5			
6	Which school did you come from?	Lillian Baylis	Charles Edward Brookes		
7	When did you first come to Oval House Theatre?				

8	When you first came to Oval House Theatre what did you think it was for?		
9	Can you tell me 3 things you liked about Oval House Theatre?		
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
10	How do you think Oval House Theatre has helped you?		
11	Was there anything you found difficult at Oval House Theatre?		
12	Do you think Oval House Theatre helped you to make friends?		
	No	Yes	Not sure
	Can you tell me a bit more about that?		
13	Has Oval House Theatre helped you at school?		
	No	Yes	Not sure
	Can you tell me a bit more about that?		

14	Did you feel welcome and respected at Oval House Theatre? Can you tell me why?			
	No	Yes	Don't know	
	Because ...			
15	Please choose 3 words and tell me about when you experienced this at Oval House Theatre.			
	Leadership	Decision making	Choice	Respect
	Imagination	Safe	Belonging	Enjoy
	Friendship	Talking and listening	Welcome	A word you would suggest
1				
2				
3				

16	Is there anything you think we could change in the future to make Oval House Theatre better for students?		
17	How would you describe Oval House Theatre to a new student?		
18	Do you think it would be good for students to go to Oval House Theatre for more than one year?		
	No	Yes	Not sure
	Why is that?		
19	Have you, or would you like to come to Oval House Theatre at other times?		
	No	Yes	Not sure
20	Is there anything else you would like to say about Oval House Theatre?		

Thank you for your help

This will help us to make Oval House Theatre better for future students

APPENDIX FIVE

What young people think about the Living Here Project at Oval House Theatre

This Appendix describes the findings of the young people's questionnaire, which was carried out in December 2007 with 31 students at Charles Edwards Brookes School, who were either current or past members of the Living Here Project. It also included a few students who had left school and started at Further Education College.

Four peer researchers selected from the current group of students because they had a good command of English and were fairly confident communicators carried out the interviews. They received training from the external evaluator, which covered interviewing techniques, listening skills, being objective, confidentiality and how to encourage interviewees to be specific rather than general.

Some interviews were carried out in the young person's first language and answers reported in English. The peer researchers said the interviewing was a bit harder than they thought it would be and some people were hard to interview but they persevered and all thought it a useful exercise that should be repeated. They reported that many young people were surprised but pleased to be asked their views.

The Lilian Baylis group undertook the questionnaire at school as a whole group and the comments were very similar but it was not possible to count the responses as it was not clear how many were in the group and who responded to which question.

About the young people who took part in the Evaluation					
No. of young people interviewed	31	Male	17	Female	14
Young people's age	15 years = 1 16 years = 10 17 years = 12 18 years = 7 19 years = 1	How long the young people have been in the UK		0-6 months = 1 6-12 months = 5 Over 1 year = 11 Over 2 years = 8 Over 3 years = 4 Over 4 years = 2	
Where the young people come from	Afghanistan = 7 China = 4 Congo = 2 Eritrea = 8 Iran = 1	Ivory Coast = 1 Somalia = 5 Vietnam = 1 Nb – 2 uncoded			
Languages spoken by the young people excluding English	Amharic Arabic Bete Dari Djula Eritrean	Farsi French Geez Kiswahili Lingala Mandarin	Persian Pashto Somali Tigreña Urdu Vietnamese		
No. of languages spoken by the young people excluding English	1 language = 19 2 languages = 8 3 languages = 3 4 languages = 1				
Date the young people first attended the Project	Sept 05 = 4 Jan 06 = 1 Sept 06 = 15 Nov 06 = 2	Dec 06 = 2 March 07 = 2 April 07 = 2 Sept 07 = 3			

What young people thought Oval House Theatre was about when they first attended

Helping people
 I thought it was like school = 4
 Helping young people = 4
 People to help our English
 Just for playing games
 It was for young people to help them improve their English experience
 When I came to Oval House I was so happy and enjoyed myself
 For learning = 5
 It was good
 I was nervous
 For fun
 I didn't know what it was about
 Somewhere to meet and do school work
 I thought it was somewhere I would come for lessons
 I thought it was where people were working
 I thought it was like a community for refugees
 A place to meet and learn English
 I thought it was community service
 To promote English
 A place to chat together
 Very good because I think Oval House is a theatre and I can see shows there
 A place to watch plays
 A place to study and make friends

What young people like Oval House Theatre – young people could list 3 things

The following were mentioned more than once:

Drama = 17
 Food = 16
 Dance = 14
 Games = 10
 Photoshop
 Photography = 6
 Art = 4
 People = 3
 Drawing/painting pictures = 3
 Help from the teachers = 3
 Trips out = 2
 Theatre performances = 2
 Meeting people = 2
 Making friends = 2

The following were mentioned once:

Activities
 Having fun
 Lessons
 Music
 People are very kind to us
 Relaxing
 Respect
 Talk with people
 Watch films
 Working with the team
 1 student said he didn't like drama

How young people think Oval House Theatre has helped them	
Improving English = 19 Learn new things = 3 Developed confidence = 2 Helped me (not more specific) = 2 Helped me to try drama = 2 Make friends = 2 People work together and respect each other = 2	The following were mentioned once: Being creative Enjoyable Learnt about dance Meet new people Sociable
Some examples of what the young people said	
<p>I couldn't speak English very well in the first days and now I've learned lots from there.</p> <p>Oval House helped me to forget about bad things by doing the workshops.</p> <p>I made friends and it changed me to be friendly.</p>	
How young people think Oval House Theatre has helped them at school	
To be nice to people/polite = 3 To pay attention to everything Developed my confidence = 5 Improved my English = 12 Helped me to talk in front of other people = 2	Helped me to make friends = 3 Didn't help = 4 But these 4 all cited improved English skills from attending elsewhere in the Questionnaire.
Helping young people make friends	
<p>29 young people said they thought Oval House Theatre had helped them make friends</p> <p>1 student was not sure</p> <p>1 new student said it had not helped make friends because the student could not speak English.</p> <p>A sample of comments include:</p> <p>I have made friends with people from lots of different countries.</p> <p>I have learnt about other countries cultures.</p> <p>We talk together and learn together.</p> <p>You don't know about other countries but at Oval House you have the chance to meet people.</p> <p>Doing drama is good way to get to know people.</p> <p>Working in a group you become friends.</p> <p>Every time we went there they were friendly and always there if we needed help.</p> <p>I made friends with boys and girls.</p>	

What young people found difficult	What young people would change
<p>Most young people said they didn't find anything difficult but comments about difficulties were:</p> <p>To understand English = 4</p> <p>I don't like drama = 2</p> <p>At first I found it difficult like the dance and 7UP (a drama activity) = 1</p> <p>I found art difficult = 1</p> <p>Some workshops were difficult = 1</p> <p>At first meeting people = 1</p>	<p>Most young people said they wouldn't change anything; suggestions put forward were:</p> <p>Teach more dance = 7</p> <p>More music = 3</p> <p>Wider choice of activities = 2</p> <p>Go out on more trips = 2</p> <p>Let people know everywhere about Oval House Theatre = 1</p> <p>Teach people about computers = 1</p> <p>See more theatre performances = 1</p> <p>Some sport activities = 1</p>
How young people would describe Oval House Theatre to new young people	
<p>It is very good and interesting and people can help you with your English.</p> <p>Go – you will enjoy it!</p> <p>You can play a lot of games and make a lot of friends.</p> <p>It is a very good place to learn and practice English by talking to other people.</p> <p>Oval House is somewhere you can learn more English and they help people know more about London.</p> <p>They will show you respect and help you learn English.</p> <p>It's fun, friendly and a good place to be.</p> <p>Oval House is a nice place – it's good to go there and find new friends and get experience for the future.</p> <p>This place is very good with lots of activities and it makes your English improve.</p>	

Other Comments About Oval House Theatre

The teachers are very friendly.

The teachers are very friendly and when I came there I felt more freedom than at school.

I enjoyed Oval House – I loved the activities.

The people are always smiling at Oval House.

I would like to do activities at Oval House in the summer.

Sometimes when I have nothing to do I would like to go there and talk to the teachers and have some fun.

People are very polite.

Thank your for helping us x 9

When I am in Oval House I laugh a lot.

Yes I am going to come to Oval House again, I like it so much and I can see my friends.

Keep going with the fun and new games and art.

I like the people.

Keep working with young people like us!

I would like to come to Oval House again and say hello to the teachers and thank you!

Sometimes it is like a holiday!

I learned a lot of things last year.

I felt good inside my heart to go to Oval House.

APPENDIX SIX

Every Child Matters Outcomes Mapping

Every Child Matters Outcomes		How the Living Here Project helps achieve the ECM outcomes
Be Healthy	Children and young people are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physically healthy • mentally and emotionally healthy • sexually healthy • have healthy lifestyles, and • choose not to take illegal drugs. 	<p>Supporting young people with physical or mental health difficulties through liaison with schools and referral to CAMHS and other agencies as appropriate.</p> <p>Developing young people’s confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>Developing young people’s skills in communication, negotiation, decision making and managing relationships.</p> <p>Opportunities for physical activity such as dance and movement, singing etc.</p> <p>Focus on healthy eating through sharing healthy food together, discussing how to eat healthily and its importance, especially with young people living in independent accommodation.</p> <p>Gives the young people a sense of being nurtured – the tutors are interested in the young people and the groups are encouraged to make friends and support each other.</p>
	Children and young people are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation • safe from accidental injury and death 	<p>Providing a safe, secure and stable learning environment for young people with clear boundaries and consistent, experienced staffing.</p> <p>Encouraging and modelling appropriate behaviour, especially in social situations that may be unfamiliar or different for newly arrived young people.</p> <p>Challenging discrimination and bullying and explaining why it is unacceptable, dealing with cultural confusion and misunderstandings – especially important for young people who may come from parts of the world where racism, intolerance, violence and war have been part of everyday life.</p>
Stay Safe		

<p>Stay Safe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe from bullying and discrimination • safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school, and • have security, stability and are cared for. 	<p>Equipping young people with the confidence, social and relationship skills to be able to resist negative pressures and make more positive choices.</p> <p>Regular liaison with school staff regarding young people's progress and any concerns.</p> <p>Opportunity to help young people develop resilience by focusing on factors known to promote resilience.</p>
<p>Enjoy and Achieve</p>	<p>Children and young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are ready for school • attend and enjoy school • achieve stretching national educational standards at school • achieve personal development and enjoy recreation. 	<p>Young people are supported to develop their speaking and listening skills in English which enhances their ability to make use of educational opportunities.</p> <p>Supports young people to develop the skills identified within the SEAL programme which contributes to their social and emotional learning and ability to learn at school and in other settings.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for and support for young people to achieve accreditation for their work through (Arts Awards and ASDAN awards).</p> <p>Provides opportunities to explore and enjoy creative activities which are not reliant on language skills or educational attainment.</p> <p>The arts based work is designed to be fun, so enjoyment is built in from the start and encourages young people to participate.</p> <p>Provides a safe respite from what can be a confusing and demanding schedule for young people attending a new school in a new country without friends and often without family support.</p>

Every Child Matters Outcomes	How the Living Here Project helps achieve the ECM outcomes
<p>Make a positive contribution</p> <p>Children and young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage in decision making and support the community and environment engage in law abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school develop positive relationships and choose not to bully or discriminate develop self confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges develop enterprising behaviour. 	<p>Supports young people to develop the skills identified within the SEAL programme which contributes to their social and emotional learning and ability to be part of the community and get on well with others.</p> <p>Introduces young people to out of school creative recreation activities and arts provision in London.</p> <p>Supports the integration of newly arrived young people into activities with young people from more established communities.</p> <p>Supports young people from established communities to welcome and make friends with newly arrived young people and challenges perceptions about new arrivals.</p> <p>Challenges discrimination and bullying and explaining why it is unacceptable.</p>

<p>Achieve economic well-being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school • are ready for employment • live in decent homes and sustainable communities • have access to transport and material goods • live in households free from low income. 	<p>Young people are supported to develop their speaking and listening skills in English which enhances their ability to make use of educational opportunities, and increases their future employment prospects.</p> <p>Young people are equipped with the social skills and confidence to get on with others which increases their employment prospects and helps them to be more successful in further education/training.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for young people to experience success and achievement and pride in their creative work – this helps young people to have aspirations and increases their motivation to do well in other spheres including school, college and the world of work.</p> <p>Improves opportunities for future training and employability by providing work experience, young leadership opportunities and evidence of involvement in positive activities to include on CVs.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for young people to reflect on their interests, skills and talents and consider how they might develop these in the future – some young people discover talents and skills they didn't know they had and some consider careers in creative industries.</p>
---	--	---

APPENDIX SEVEN

SEAL Skills Mapping

<p>SEAL helps young people develop skills to:</p>	<p>How the Living Here Project helps young people to meet the SEAL aims</p>
<p>Be effective and successful learners</p>	<p>The Lilian Baylis groups use their work to contribute to their ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, Expressive Arts module.</p> <p>12 young people are being supported to achieve Arts Awards.</p> <p>Participation in the group contributes to the speaking and listening strand targets set for Turney Road Special School young people and this is monitored by teachers. Progress is noted for most young people.</p> <p>Young people’s fluency in English and communication skills has improved while participating in the Project. Teachers at schools have noted this development particularly. Young people report the Project helps them significantly to practise speaking English and listening. Tutors notice that young people become more confident communicators and enjoy speaking.</p> <p>Involvement in the project contributes to the achievement of targets in creative subjects in the curriculum.</p> <p>Four young people have been trained as peer researchers for the evaluation of the project and carried out face-to-face interviews with young people in their own language and interpreted the responses into English.</p>

<p>Be self-motivated</p>	<p>Young people are offered choices about what activities they would like to do – they are encouraged to pursue their interests as well as to try new things.</p> <p>Performances and showing of work is a regular feature of the Project. All young people are encouraged to take part– it may be a support role or a performance role but everybody’s involvement is acknowledged and celebrated.</p> <p>7 young people have taken on young leadership roles within the Project as apprentices, volunteers and peer researchers.</p> <p>Young people from all groups regularly choose to attend one-off events and holiday provision at Oval House Theatre.</p>
<p>Make and sustain friendships.</p>	<p>Activities explicitly provide opportunities for young people to get to know and respect others and develop friendships. Young people report that the Project is very successful at helping them make friends.</p> <p>Teachers from Lilian Baylis and Charles Edward Brookes Schools report that young people attending the Living Here Project work together more effectively as a group.</p>
<p>Deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly.</p>	<p>Drama and other creative processes are used to explore issues of conflict – this is done using ‘make believe’ so distancing difficult issues and allowing the consequences of different actions to be explored safely.</p>
<p>Solve problems with others or by themselves.</p>	<p>When problems emerge the tutors use this as a learning experience for the group and encourage the young people to explore how to resolve them – for example if some group members are not getting on, or behave badly towards each other etc.</p> <p>Tutors establish ground rules with the groups and revisit this regularly.</p> <p>Young people are encouraged and supported to solve problems within the context of drama and to tackle technical problems they encounter for example with stage setting, puppet design etc.</p> <p>A lot of the dramatic stories involve dilemmas - ‘I don’t know what to do’ - the group must work together to explore solutions.</p>

SEAL helps young people develop skills to:	How the Living Here Project helps young people to meet the SEAL aims
<p>Manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety.</p>	<p>The ethos of the Project ensures that the work does not pry into young peoples past experiences but instead focuses on the ‘here and now’ including how to deal with strong feelings and difficult situations.</p> <p>Strong feelings may be raised in the drama and other arts activities but are done so within the relative safety net and distance of ‘make believe’.</p> <p>Tutors liaise with relevant teaching staff regarding any concerns about young people who may need specialist help with mental or emotional difficulties.</p>
<p>Be able to promote calm and optimistic states that promote the achievement of goals.</p>	<p>Young people report feeling happy and relaxed when at the Project.</p> <p>Tutors notice that young people become more playful, laugh more and are more willing to try out different activities and more challenging tasks as they progress through the Project.</p>
<p>Recover from setbacks and persist in the face of difficulties.</p>	<p>Young people are supported to try new arts activities and encouraged to develop and refine their artistic skills through practice, discussion and feedback with tutors and group members.</p>
<p>Work cooperatively.</p>	<p>Group activities focus on building the ability of young people to respect each other and work together.</p> <p>Performances and other group activities provide a focus for young people to work together over a period of time with a tangible product at the end – young people can see and experience the value of cooperative working.</p>

<p>Recognise and stand up for their own rights and the rights of others.</p>	<p>Tutors actively model behaviour that promotes equality and respect for everyone. Inequality and unfairness is challenged. Young people learn about the cultures of other young people from many different parts of the world, tutors demonstrate that everyone's culture should be respected.</p>
<p>Understand and value differences and commonalities between people, respecting the right of others to have beliefs and values different from their own.</p>	<p>Young people learn about the cultures of other young people from many different parts of the world, tutors demonstrate that everyone's culture should be respected. Tutors actively model behaviour that promotes equality and respect for everyone. Inequality and unfairness is challenged. Young people voluntarily attend and enjoy events such as World Arts Day.</p>

APPENDIX EIGHT

Resilience Factors Mapping

Resilience Factors	How the Living Here Project promotes Resilience Factors
Strong social support networks	Young people develop friendships with each other. Young people are introduced to arts activities at Oval House Theatre and elsewhere that they can participate in.
The presence of at least one unconditionally supportive parent or parent substitute.	
A committed mentor or other person from outside the family.	The tutor team actively welcomes all young people every time they attend Oval House Theatre or a group. The Living Here Project tutors act as interested adults outside the young persons family. Tutors regularly enquire about how young people are getting on and encourage young people with their aspirations and to persist in the face of difficulties. The Project has assisted some young people to find work experience placements.
Positive school experiences.	Participation in the project is seen as part of the young persons school experience and the tutor team report back on the groups' progress regularly to the relevant school staff. Senior management at schools frequently attend special events and performances to support young people and acknowledge their success.
A sense of mastery and a belief that one's own efforts can make a difference.	Young people experience some degree of mastery of creative processes that they may never have tried before. Young people are often surprised, and usually satisfied and proud of their achievements.

<p>A range of extra-curricular activities that promote the learning of competencies and emotional maturity.</p>	<p>Young people voluntarily attend and enjoy events such as World Arts Day and holiday arts projects – often working with young people from more established communities.</p>
<p>The capacity to re-frame adversities so that the beneficial as well as the damaging effects are recognised.</p>	<p>Tutors encourage young people to learn from things that don't work and think about how to make it work next time – indeed they encourage young people to see this as a valuable part of the creative process.</p> <p>Creative processes provide a practical way to explore how to get over setbacks.</p>
<p>The ability – or opportunity – to 'make a difference' by, for example, helping others through volunteering, or undertaking part time work.</p>	<p>Four young people have taken on young leadership roles within the Project as apprentices and assistants.</p>
<p>Exposure to challenging situations, which provide opportunities to develop both problem-solving abilities and emotional coping skills.</p>	<p>The ethos of the Project ensures that the work does not pry into young people's past experiences but instead focuses on the 'here and now' including how to deal with strong feelings and difficult situations.</p> <p>When problems emerge the tutors use this as a learning experience for the group and encourage the young people to explore how to resolve them.</p> <p>Drama and other creative processes are used to explore issues of conflict – this is done using 'make believe' so distancing difficult issues and allowing the consequences of different actions to be explored safely.</p>

APPENDIX NINE

Self Confidence Descriptors template

		1	2
1	MAKING EYE CONTACT	Makes little or no eye contact	Makes occasional eye contact when engaged by an adult
2	INTERACTING WITH NEW PEERS	No interaction at all	Low level interaction when instigated by an adult
3	TAKING RISKS	Does no activity that is unfamiliar	Tries some things out when encouraged by adults (low level risk)
4	MANAGING DIFFERENCES OF OPINION	Cannot accept opinions that differ from their own – can result in volatility / aggression towards others	Can occasionally accept opinions that differ from their own
5	ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING OTHERS	Does not support or encourage others in the group	Offers some low level support to others when directed by an adult
6	OPEN BODY LANGUAGE	Body language is closed all the time	Body language is open some of the time
7	WILLINGNESS TO TAKE PART/CONTRIBUTE	Unwilling to take part (refusal, avoidance, observing)	Willing to participate on a low level some of the time
8	INTERACTING WITH ADULTS	Interacts on a low level (one word answer) if directly asked a question. And shows discomfort	Is able to sustain a short conversation with some discomfort
9	LISTENING/ RESPECTING THE IDEAS OF OTHERS	Ignores, interrupts, disregards and or disrespects the ideas of others	Is occasionally able to acknowledge the ideas of others with the support of adults
10	PRESENTING A REASONED ARGUMENT	Is unable to present a reasoned argument	Is able to present an argument when coaxed and supported by an adult
11	EXPRESSING AN OPINION/IDEA	Is unable or unwilling to contribute opinions or ideas	Will sometimes express an opinion or idea if asked
12	ASKING QUESTIONS	Never asks questions except when absolutely necessary	Asks questions occasionally but sometimes inappropriately

3	4	5	
Make spontaneous eye contact some of the time	Makes good spontaneous eye contact most of the time	Makes excellent eye contact in all communication	1
Reasonable spontaneous interaction some of the time	Good interaction without support	Excellent interaction with others all the time	2
Tries things out without encouragement (low level risk)	Tries things out without support or encouragement	Uses own initiative and sets targets for themselves	3
Can mostly accept opinions that differ from their own. Can challenge others opinions respectfully	Can listen to others opinions and is able to defend their own opinion with good reasoning skills	Is able to listen to the opinion of others, values and respects others opinions and accepts compromise	4
Occasionally offers support and encouragement to others	Uses their own initiative to support and encourage others in the group when they require peer support	Has awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of others in the group and proactively uses their own strengths to support and nurture the development of others	5
Body language is open most of the time	Body language is open and expressive all of the time	Confident, animated and expressive use of body language	6
Willing to participate on a reasonable level most of the time	Willing to participate with commitment to the task all of the time	Willing to participate with commitment to the task all of the time and shows leadership skill	7
Will interact comfortably with adults but rarely initiates this	Initiates interactions with adults and is comfortable with this	Initiates and sustains interactions with adults and is relaxed and assertive	8
Is mostly able to acknowledge the ideas of others with the support of adults	Is able to acknowledge and listen to the ideas of others without support	Is able to listen, question, understand and respond respectfully to the ideas of others	9
Is able to present an argument independently and with support most of the time	Is able to present independently a reasoned argument all of the time that they are able to justify	Articulate, reasoned, informed, independent, backed up with additional information	10
Expresses opinions and ideas with and without being asked most of the time	Is able to express ideas and opinions with out support all of the time	Is articulate and proactive in ensuring their ideas and opinions are expressed and heard	11
Asks questions when opportunities are offered but may not make these opportunities themselves	Asks questions that are appropriate to the project or task at appropriate times	Inquisitive and aware of when appropriate to ask questions such as to clarify a task and explore ideas and concepts with others. Uses questioning as a tool for interaction	12