



Centre: Work in Progress Arts Ltd Arts Award Good Practice Centre 2015-16

Context

Work in Progress (WiP) is a Birmingham-based arts organisation delivering arts, heritage and cultural activity with, for and by children and young people. They have delivered Arts Award for over three years with one of their advisers, Vicki Taylor, a successful Arts Award achiever at Silver and Gold through the same centre.

WiP works with a diverse range of young people across all levels of Arts Award, and alongside The Drum in Birmingham, have developed a successful Arts Award club.

Approach

WiP has worked in various ways to deliver Arts Award including one-to-one, small group work, Arts Award clubs in settings and online clubs. WiP champions a young person-centred approach to their work with, for and by children and young people. They deliver work where young people are at the heart of the process from planning, delivery to review, and young people are engaged as leaders and experts in their own right.

The club model developed at The Drum has been a real success, creating an approach where young people take the lead at all levels. The Drum Arts Club evolved according to young people's needs. To begin with, their Saturday sessions were poorly attended as they clashed with sessions being offered alongside Arts Award, and longer summer school activities were often unproductive. Advisers began to tailor these longer Arts Award sessions around young people's suggestions, becoming more about reflecting on the day and other sessions they had been involved with. Through word of mouth Arts Award became more popular until attendance at the Saturday Club picked up and eventually weekday sessions were also introduced.

Advisers ran a 'mock moderation' well in advance of their real moderation date, both to encourage young people to complete their work and allow advisers enough time to assess it. This meant that young people could gather momentum and avoided a rush to fill any evidence gaps in the days before their moderation. In May 2015, 34 young people spread across all five levels successfully completed their Arts Award. WiP expect over 80 young people to complete their awards as part of their new cohort, again across all levels.

WiP work with professional artists from all disciplines, including a lot of emerging artists, and believe strongly in peer-to-peer working. Anyone

working with WiP will be supporting the delivery of Arts Award as it is a key strand of their work. Artists are interviewed by young people, offering feedback and support for their planning and delivery. For young people, they get the chance to view artists' work, support sessions and take the lead in activities.

Impact

For one young person they worked with, Arts Award was the only qualification he had ever achieved. The evidence of this achievement and a personal statement about his participation helped him to avoid sentencing during a court appearance. It meant a lot to him to know he was capable of achieving something positive in his life.

Arts Award has had a huge impact on confidence, self-esteem, development of direct and transferable skills, development of planning and communication skills, and wider awareness of arts, heritage and culture including places, people and professions.

For another young person who worked with WiP who was not very confident and didn't know what he wanted, or was capable of, creatively and professionally, being able to achieve a Gold Arts Award over the course of one year made a huge difference to his sense of self-worth, confidence and purpose. As a result of his work experience and Arts Award journey he is now embarking on a career as a professional photographer.

Comments

'I started my Arts Award journey in 2006 when I began working towards my Silver Arts Award. In 2011 I achieved my Gold Award. From this point I started supporting my adviser, Ruth, helping other people to achieve an Arts Award as I had gained a lot of knowledge through participating myself. In 2013 I was trained to deliver Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. I went on to become an Arts Award adviser at WiP. I now support Ruth and WiP at all levels.'

'I really believe and advocate for Arts Award. It provides young people with the opportunity to gain a formal qualification no matter what their ability, background, or skills. Arts Award up-skills young people through the development of their leadership, arts activity, creativity, communication, and research. These are all skills that will benefit young people in their future careers, no matter what sector they work in.'

Vicki Taylor, Arts Award Adviser, Work in Progress Arts Ltd.

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