



CULTURAL EDUCATION  
STRATEGY

2021-2023

**March 2021**

MAKE is supported by:



## OVERVIEW

### History

MAKE is a Milton Keynes-based partnership of over 60 schools and arts and heritage organisations that works towards better cultural education provision for children and young people (0-18 years – up to 25 for special education needs). It was established in 2015 (then known as the Milton Keynes Cultural Education Partnership or CEP), and it is one of ten CEPs in the South East. CEPs were developed in response to the Arts Council England's (ACE) Cultural Education Challenge, and in the South East they are supported by Artswork, an ACE Bridge organisation. A branding project funded by Artswork in 2019 that included 130 school children developed the MAKE brand name and logo. MAKE stands for Milton Keynes Arts Education.

### Structure

MAKE has an executive group of 14 members made up of teachers, education officers from arts and heritage organisations, and other arts and heritage specialists. The MAKE Executive meets four times a year, usually a week before the larger partnership meeting, which also occurs four times a year. At these meetings current and future projects are discussed, as well as fundraising and strategy for building new partnerships. Pre-Covid, regular MAKE partnership meetings took place in schools and venue around Milton Keynes, however Covid restrictions have meant they have moved online. Feedback has shown that online sessions are preferable for a lot of teachers.

MAKE is overseen by the Arts and Heritage Alliance Milton Keynes (AHA-MK), whose Programme Manager works as the Manager for MAKE. When funding is allocated from bids prepared by AHA-MK it takes responsibility and accountability. AHA-MK (already a partnership organisation) incorporates MAKE into its overall strategy, and runs this alongside another major strand of its activity which is cultural inclusion and diversity. AHA-MK uses the evidence, knowledge and expertise gained in its inclusion and diversity work to inform MAKE, and uses its work with children and young people through MAKE to inform the development of its inclusion and diversity strand. Two AHA-MK trustees sit on the MAKE executive group, and the MAKE strategy is regularly reviewed by the AHA-MK board.

### MAKE Partners

MAKE partners can include any individual or organisation with an interest in cultural education, and these partners can have diverse spheres of influence such as teachers, CEOs, local policy makers, local council, and children and young people themselves. It is free to join MAKE. A report commissioned by Artswork and written by Ben Sandbrook in 2019 *Cultural Education Partnerships in the South East* shows that partners attend meetings for two reasons: 1. if they believe in the fundamental CEP concept of working together for children and young people's arts and cultural opportunities; 2. if they get something out of it. It is MAKE's challenge to remain effective in itself and for its partners by identifying opportunities for working together. Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations (there are three in Milton Keynes) are required to connect and work with Cultural Education Partnerships. MAKE has undertaken a strong commitment to include the voices of children and young people in decision making processes in the areas of programming and project design. Milton Keynes Council have supported MAKE's core costs for 2019, 2020 and 2021.

### The Need

In 2019 The Durham Commission report was published by Arts Council England and Durham University. The Commission was convened to look at how the education system and wider system of

learning can grow capacity for creativity, as creativity drives change and major innovations in science, technology and the arts. It argues that the pace at which environmental, economic and social currents are heightened through the constant connectivity provided by the internet means that England needs creativity 'urgently'. Indeed, in a post-Covid world, the expectations for digital will increase, and we will have an increasingly hybrid way (digital and face-to-face) of experiencing the world. The Durham Commission states that creativity 'can be developed by good teaching', but while other countries have prioritised creativity-focussed education systems to 'future-proof their prosperity', England has 'not yet given creativity the priority that is required to meet our future needs, or indeed given children the opportunities they deserve'. Therefore, it is for the successful future of the nation that Cultural Education Partnerships are needed, to drive forward the case for a creativity-focussed curriculum and encourage lateral thinking across all subjects and areas of children's learning.

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/creativitycommission/report/>

### **MAKE's major achievements so far**

Since 2016 MAKE has brought in over £250,000 worth of funding to cultural education in Milton Keynes, and worked with over 2000 children and young people.

#### Main Achievements:

- In 2017, with Artswork investment, MAKE delivered a range of pilot activity focussing on mental health and wellbeing and reaching SEN and challenged children and young people. This work also delivered Artsmark, Arts Award training and over 200 Arts Award accreditations for children and young people. It resulted in MK SNAP delivering its first ever Arts Award accreditations presented to SEND learners by HRH the Duke of Kent. It also commissioned Artis to produce the *You, Me, Together* project film which asked the question 'how do young people talk about Mental Health?' and won a Creative Learning Guild Award in March 2019: <https://aha-mk.org/develop/mkcep/you-me-together/>
- MK Gallery have led on the Artswork Schools Network investment project, Space to Re:place, which addressed what children and young people think and feel about place-making also resulting in a film. <https://www.mkgallery.org/whats-on/space-replace/> Funded by MK Community Foundation.
- MAKE developed and secured funding for a Young Creatives project (£100k investment from Artswork and Milton Keynes Council S106 Skills) – a youth-led programme with a focus on developing confidence, resilience and skills needed for transition and progression into FE/HE and work. Worked with Flow Evaluators to deliver a Theory of Change.
- Developed a youth-led design project with MK Gallery resulting in the MAKE brand and logo with investment from Artswork.
- Secured Schools Connect investment from Artswork to fund the Artis Foundation to deliver a CPD programme for teachers based on the *You, Me, Together* programme – programme will offer 20 teachers from 10 schools development and mentoring opportunities.
- Secured Transition Fund investment from Artswork in 2019 to develop fundraising and commissioning opportunities for MAKE and develop fundraising skills across the partnership. These sessions were run by Adapt for Arts who delivered an evaluation report and presented at the MAKE October 2020 meeting.

- Secured Milton Keynes Council funding towards the development of MAKE in financial years 2019/20 and 2020/21.
- Employed a Schools Relationship Manager in 2019/2020 to create new and stronger connections with schools. Delivered two group sessions for teachers to discuss collective cultural education needs, one Arts Award training session, and a Theory of Change evaluation.
- During the lockdown of 2020 MAKE ran a project called The Big MAKE funded by Artswork and Engage. MAKE engaged over 800 children and young people from 13 local schools and beyond in creativity. It worked with artist Johnny Clapham to create 120 quest boxes for year 6 students who were in isolation that explored the theme of transition and change. MAKE was awarded an Arts Council England grant to develop The Big MAKE #2, which will be led by children and young people.
- Organised a Cultural Education Symposium in October 2020 to promote cultural education and create new pathways between schools and arts and heritage organisations.

### **Covid-19**

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented many challenges to cultural education. Schools have experienced part closure, meaning the delivery of online classes as well as live classes for children of key workers, those in digital poverty and SEND children. There is relentless pressure on head teachers and teachers since March 2020 to ensure the wellbeing of pupils, as well as continuing a valuable educational experience. Funders who may have supported cultural education have redirected money to support immediate needs for equipment, digital etc. Artists and arts and heritage organisations, hitherto available for and active in arts education work, were severely hit by the lockdown, with venues closing temporarily. Some key personnel in education and learning in arts and heritage organisations have been furloughed, on reduced hours, or made redundant. This has had a significant impact on the accessibility and availability of cultural education opportunities in Milton Keynes. As it moves forward with this strategy, MAKE is aware that the pandemic has changed the landscape for the way in which cultural education can be and will be delivered, and all ambitions must be viewed within this context. It has also opened the opportunity to develop a digital offer to support schools and families doing home schooling.

In summer 2020, MAKE's response to lockdown was The Big MAKE (see achievements section for more information). The success of The Big MAKE inspired us to make it a flagship project. In 2021 The Big MAKE received support from an Arts Council England grant, which has enabled its second iteration. The Big MAKE #2 will be youth-led with a committee of eight young people. Working as a team, they will volunteer for different roles to lead on The Big MAKE #2, thereby gaining experience in fundraising, curation and event management, and become young experts in cultural delivery. The committee will advise MAKE on the issues that young people are currently facing and find creative solutions that enable other children and young people to take part.

## **VISION, MISSION, AIMS, EMPHASIS**

### **Vision**

Working in partnership to enhance the lives of children and young people in Milton Keynes through outstanding and inclusive cultural education and creative enrichment. Milton Keynes.

## Mission

Through strategic partnership working MAKE identifies gaps in local cultural education provision. It focuses available resources and seeks new resources to meet needs and requirements. We position cultural education as a catalyst for children and young people in Milton Keynes to gain emotional resilience, transferable skills and creative thinking. By creating inclusive cultural education provision in Milton Keynes, future generations of children and young people from diverse backgrounds can develop confidence, ambition and wellbeing, and mature with imaginative and critical judgement as workers and leaders for the evolving digital and human workplace. Sustainable and greener cultural education is also vital to the longevity of future generations. MAKE works towards greener cultural education practices, links with partners interested in sustainability, and where appropriate, aims to highlight environmental issues through its work. Covid-19 has exposed societal health inequalities, meaning systematic, avoidable and unjust differences in health and wellbeing between different groups of people. It is now more important than ever to address the health and wellbeing of children and young people, using cultural education as an equaliser.

## Aims and Emphasis

MAKE will:

- Increase and diversify the number of children and young people who are included creating, participating in and influencing all areas of arts and culture;
- Seek out safe local spaces (schools, community centres, cultural organisations), to create opportunities for more inclusive co-production and children and young people led commissioning;
- Improve access to information, training and work experience in the cultural sector for young people from different backgrounds in Milton Keynes, increase their options for career progression and prepare a greener cultural workforce of the future;
- Work across education, youth, health, business, tech and cultural sectors to create a better understanding of needs and requirements of different children and young people;
- Develop self-expression, confidence, self-esteem, positivity and motivation to support wellbeing through creative and cultural participation;
- Work towards greener, more sustainable creative education practices.

MAKE's emphasis will be on promoting inclusive access, and working towards greener cultural education. Specifically, any projects MAKE promotes must:

- Support happier and healthier children and young people;
- Support children and young peoples' ability to discover their own creativity;
- Support the development of careers, skills, and opportunities in the creative and cultural sector.

## ACTION PLAN

Capacity building:	Success is: a well financially-resourced CEP, that has a strong sense of partnership working, and a brand name that is recognisable to all
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	<b>schools, arts and heritage organisations, and children and young people in Milton Keynes.</b>
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Short Term (March 2021-March 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Core Action Team and a work programme (May); fund raising/capacity scoped by July; new sources identified (September); one successful new bid (December/January);</li> <li>Develop The Big MAKE fundraiser with The Big MAKE team (Offset and young person's consultation group) and the Core Action Team to raise £3000 in 2021 for 2022;</li> <li>Review governance arrangements by July; new terms of reference produced, job and role descriptions etc. by August; new people in new roles including more diverse voices by February 2022.</li> <li>Increase the number of children and young people engaged in decision making for MAKE's programming and consultation work to 30.</li> </ul>
Medium Term (2022-2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the input from schools and teachers, and work with them on potential bids;</li> <li>Build better communication and strategies for working with arts and heritage education officers and NPOs;</li> <li>Continue to develop communication tools and advocacy events for cultural education.</li> </ul>
Long Term (2023-2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a full-time manager of MAKE, employed by AHA-MK.</li> <li>Become recognised as a brand by all schools in MK.</li> </ul>

<b>Develop partnerships:</b>	<b>Success is: a strengthened capacity for cost-effective cultural education projects and services in Milton Keynes that engage city-wide cross sector stakeholders and achieve shared objectives.</b>
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Short Term (2021-2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate the impact of including children and young peoples' views in MAKE's plans, starting by comparing The Big MAKE #1 and #2 (September);</li> <li>Build relationships with Milton Keynes Council Councillors and officers in culture, education, youth services, and health and wellbeing; SEMLEP committees; Protospace and high-tech SMEs; and MK Music Hub; NPOs and identify shared objectives to create joint plans (October);</li> <li>Measure attendance at partnership meetings and MAKE advocacy events;</li> <li>Create a calendar of education events (June) and document MAKE's attendance and input at other local and regional networking meetings for cultural education (February);</li> <li>Identify schools that are interested in partnership working and make contact with heads and governors (December);</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of direct teaching contacts to 80 schools by February 2022 (currently personal email addresses from teachers representing 56 schools on MAKE's mailing list) (February);</li> <li>• Review our use of online platforms for a more blended way of communicating and participating (September);</li> <li>• Develop regional and national relationships within the CEP National Leadership Programme making direct links with at least 5 CEPs in the South East region and 10 CEPs nationwide (January);</li> <li>• Increase Artsmark schools to 30 (currently 22 schools in MK) and increase Arts Award take up.</li> </ul>
Medium Term (2022-2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the impact cultural education has on wider sectors such as health, environmental, and tech and connect with these industries;</li> <li>• Bring guest speakers from the above sectors to present at partnership meetings.</li> </ul>
Long Term (2023-2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain open to new opportunities.</li> </ul>

<b>Project delivery:</b>	<b>Success is a systematic, realistic programme of delivery that meets MAKE's aims and priorities for children and young people, promotes partnership working, and advocates for the network.</b>
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Short Term (2021-2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish existing projects effectively (Young Creatives and Schools Connect) (October);</li> <li>• Develop the next stage for Young Creatives (February 2022);</li> <li>• Create projects that address post-Covid recovery for children and young people (August);</li> <li>• Build up The Big MAKE as an annual flagship project for the network and foreground the voices of children and young people while doing so (September);</li> <li>• Based on identifying shared objectives of partners (see above section) create projects collaboratively (February);</li> <li>• Promote greener cultural education methods and practices and create projects that inform and educate on environmental issues (February).</li> </ul>
Medium Term (2022-2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a bid with Cranfield University for a STEM-STEAM pilot project, exploring new arts-based pedagogical approaches to STEM subjects pioneered by MK schools;</li> <li>• Seek new ideas from partnership and children and young people that are consistent with MAKE's aims.</li> </ul>
Long Term (2023-2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraise for projects in a networked way.</li> </ul>

<b>Support schools, teachers and the arts and heritage sector:</b>	<b>Success is: better pathways for communication between teachers and arts and heritage organisations; teachers and schools feeling more confident and resourced to deliver high quality cultural education; and a sector with well-staffed learning teams.</b>
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Short Term (2021-2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide brief for key partners on impact Covid-19 has had on the sector's learning programmes and departments (July);</li> <li>• Establish a creative and cultural teachers network connected to MAKE, organising 2 sessions per term, and measuring impact (May);</li> <li>• Establish the attendance of MK Council Education Team at MAKE meetings (September);</li> <li>• Continue to distribute MAKE bulletin twice termly.</li> </ul>
Medium Term (2022-2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a cultural education resource hub for teachers;</li> <li>• Conduct audit of schools active in the delivery of cultural education;</li> <li>• Create an annual advocacy event where teachers can meet the cultural sector;</li> <li>• Develop the MAKE bulletin further.</li> </ul>
Long Term (2023-2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help 50% of MK schools achieve Arts Mark/Arts Award</li> </ul>

#### **Review and monitoring:**

Commitments in the action plan will be reviewed at quarterly meetings of the MAKE Executive. Progress will be converted into a chart to present to the MAKE Executive and the AHA-MK board.