

SDCC
Children's
and Early
Years Arts
Strategy
2020-
2025

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*SDCC Early Years and Children's Strategy
2020 – 2025*

Any creative or interpretive expression (whether traditional or contemporary) in whatever form. The Arts include, in particular, visual arts, theatre, literature, music, dance, opera, film, circus and architecture.

The Arts Act 2003

The meaning and desirability of the arts depends on the uses to which the arts are put. 'When is art?' is a key question to ask because time and timing are central to both art-making and art-engagement.

*Ciaran Benson
The Benson Report, 1979*

The arts are organised expressions of ideas, feelings and experiences in images, in music, in language, in gesture and in movement. They provide for sensory, emotional, intellectual and creative enrichment and contribute to the child's holistic development.

Primary School Curriculum

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Introduction

South Dublin County Council recognises the transformative power that meaningful Access to the Arts can have in the life of a Child and that in accordance with Article 31 of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** that every child has the right to rest and to engage in leisure, play and recreational activities and to participate in cultural and artistic activities.

Meaningful access to the Arts can include a child experiencing a range of activities across the art forms of visual arts, music, drama, dance and literature. Participation in high quality arts experiences for a child can take place across a range of contexts. Homes, Pre-schools, Classrooms, Libraries, Community Centres, Parks, Arts Organisations and Cultural Institutions. All of these contexts have the capability to provide arts experiences for the child that can significantly contribute to their sense of well-being, personal development and cultural ethos.

Meaningful engagement for the Children in the Arts are implicit within a number of significant national policies in recent years including *Better Outcomes – Brighter Futures* –National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (2014 – 2020), *The Arts in Education Charter* (2013) Curriculum Developments from *Aistear* (2009), the *First Five Strategy* (2018), The Creative Ireland Programme (2017 – 2022) and *Making Great Art Work* - Arts Council Strategy (2016 – 2025).

While each experience for the child may vary significantly, they will have one thing in common. The Adults that inhabit that child's immediate and local environment will have contributed in some way to him/her accessing and receiving that particular arts experience.

Maybe it's the parent who is reading their child a bed time story or bringing the child to an arts event. Maybe it's the worker who has programmed an event or the artist who has many spent days developing a workshop and years honing his/her craft. Maybe it's the Theatre Company whose work has been in development for months or the youth worker who is taking a chance trying to deliver their first arts workshop. Or maybe it's the Teacher or Early Childhood Educator who is constantly developing his/her practice because they know that *experience of* and *participation in* the arts can play a significant role in a child's holistic development and that sometimes even a small intervention can make a big difference.

Because the Arts are so diverse and each child is so unique, The Arts Office of South County Dublin recognises that engagement for children in the Arts can happen in many different ways.

The Early Years and Children's Arts Policy for South Dublin County Council is seeking to support the work of those who value arts participation and engagement for children across the county. It recognises the need to acknowledge the richness and diversity of Arts practice both *for* and *with* Children that is currently taking place and to encourage the further development of Children's engagement in the Arts across a range of contexts.

Who is the Audience for this Strategy?

It is envisaged that there will be a diverse Audience for this strategy; some are policy makers who will support its implementation, some are programmers who will begin to work or will continue to work in partnership with the Arts Office of South Dublin County Council and hopefully some will be Artists, Educators and Guardians - people who will read this strategy and consider what it means for their local context and explore how they can support a partnership initiative that is seeking to provide regular and meaningful access to the Arts for children across the administrative area of South Dublin County Council.

Who was consulted for the Strategy?

Local Arts Organisations, Artists, Early Years Childcare Organisations - Local and National, Community Organisations, Local Youth Work Organisations that engage with Children, Libraries, Local Primary Schools, Primary Schools that cater for Children who may have Special Needs, Arts Organisations, Local Festivals.

It is worth acknowledging that - as with any consultation, some local organisations and individuals chose not to engage with the consultation. The reasons surmised for this include:

- The significant workload of staff within some local organisations.
- The priorities of the individual/organisation.
- The limited opportunities that some organisations/individuals have had to witness the value that meaningful Arts participation can play in the lives of children and Early Years.

What age group does this strategy cover?

This policy document is focused upon creating an Arts Strategy for:

Early Years – Which we have identified as being from 0-6.

Children: Which we have identified as being from 6-12.

SDCC Children's and Early Years Arts Policy Statement 2020 - 2025

South Dublin County Council acknowledges the significant benefits that meaningful and regular access to the arts can play in the lives of children.

South Dublin County Council commits to pro-actively support the provision and development of meaningful access to the arts for all children under twelve who live in the administrative area of South Dublin County Council.

SDCC Children's and Early Years Arts Policy Objectives 2020-2025

To increase investment in Arts Services for Children and Early Years in the administrative area of South Dublin County Council.

To further develop the Children's Arts Service for South Dublin County Council.

To increase access and participation in the Arts for Children and Early Years across the County.

To promote the significant value that meaningful Arts Participation can play in the Life of the Child.

Via networking and professional development opportunities to support organisations and individuals in their delivery of meaningful arts experiences to children.

The Principles that underpin the Early Years and Children's Art Policy Statement for South Dublin County Council are as follows:

1. The Principle of Partnership:

The Arts Office of South Dublin County Council recognises that the development of a meaningful and effective Arts Service for Children and Early Years within the County can only be delivered by effectively working in partnership with the many Organisations and Stakeholders that have a remit and responsibility to deliver appropriate services to Children and Early Years.

2. The Principle of Enhancing Provision:

The Arts Office of South Dublin County Council commits to actively work in partnership with both local and national stakeholders towards supporting the continued development and delivery of High Quality Arts Work for Children and Early Years throughout the County.

3. The Principle of Meaningful Access:

The Arts Office of SDCC recognises that it needs to work in partnership with both local and national stakeholders towards providing Equality of Access to meaningful and inclusive Arts Experiences for **All Children** in the county including but not limited to:

Children who may experience poverty and/or marginalisation.

Children who may experience educational learning difficulties.

Children who may have additional needs.

Children who may have a physical disability.

Children who may have an intellectual, neurological or mental disability.

Children who may have recently arrived in the county from other communities and places.

4. The Principle of Consistency:

The Arts Office of South Dublin County Council recognises the importance of working in partnership towards the provision of **regular access** to the Arts for all children in the county.

5. The Principle of Listening:

The Arts Office of South Dublin County Council recognises the importance of listening to the Voice of the Child and that that all children who participate in the Arts have a right to be heard and listened to regardless of age.

6. The Principle of Support:

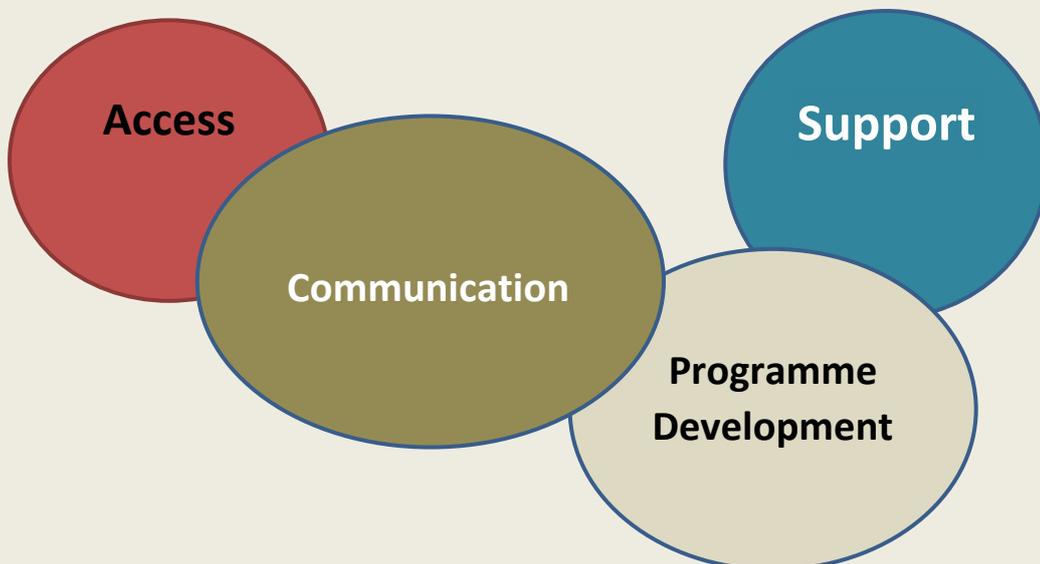
The Arts Office of South Dublin County Council recognises the importance of working in partnership towards the provision of support for artists and adults who

want to provide meaningful engagement with children and early years through the Arts.

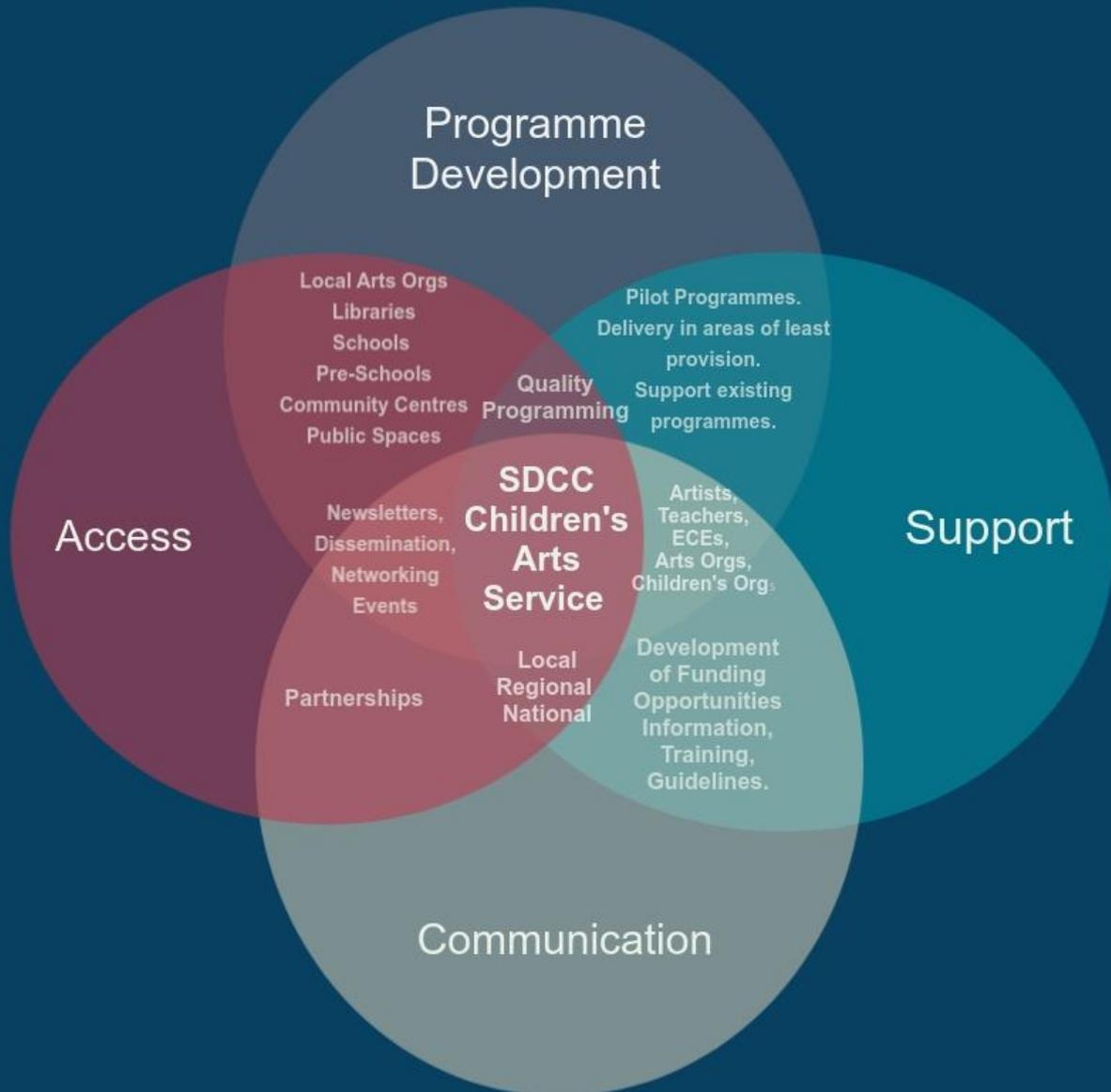
Development of support includes but is not limited to:

- Supporting Early Childhood Educators to confidently and competently deliver creative strands of the Arts that are underpinned by the Aistear framework.
- Supporting Artists to develop their practice in creating work *for* and *by* children.
- Supporting Artists to meaningfully deliver work around the county.
- Supporting Teachers in their delivery of meaningful arts experiences to children.
- Supporting Youth and Community workers in the provision of access to meaningful arts experiences for children.
- Supporting Local Arts Organisations in their continued delivery of the Arts for Children and Early Years.

The four main themes that are implicit within every strand of this Children's and Early Years Art Strategy are:



SDCC Children's Arts Strategy 2020-2025



Summary of Strategy Actions



1. Appointment of Assistant Arts Officer

With responsibility for Participation and Learning

2. Funding Structures

Revise and Implement new Funding Structures for Children's and Early Years Arts Initiatives in the County.



3. Networking and Communication

Pro-actively support the development of cultural partnerships, networking and communication within the county.



4. Early Years Arts Residencies

Create an annual Early Years Arts Residency Programme in partnership with local community pre-schools .



5. Community Arts Programmes

Pilot two long term intensive Community Arts Programmes in two distinct small areas within the county.



6. Existing Programme

Support the development of existing programming initiatives currently being delivered across the county by children's and arts organisations.

Current Provision

Introduction:

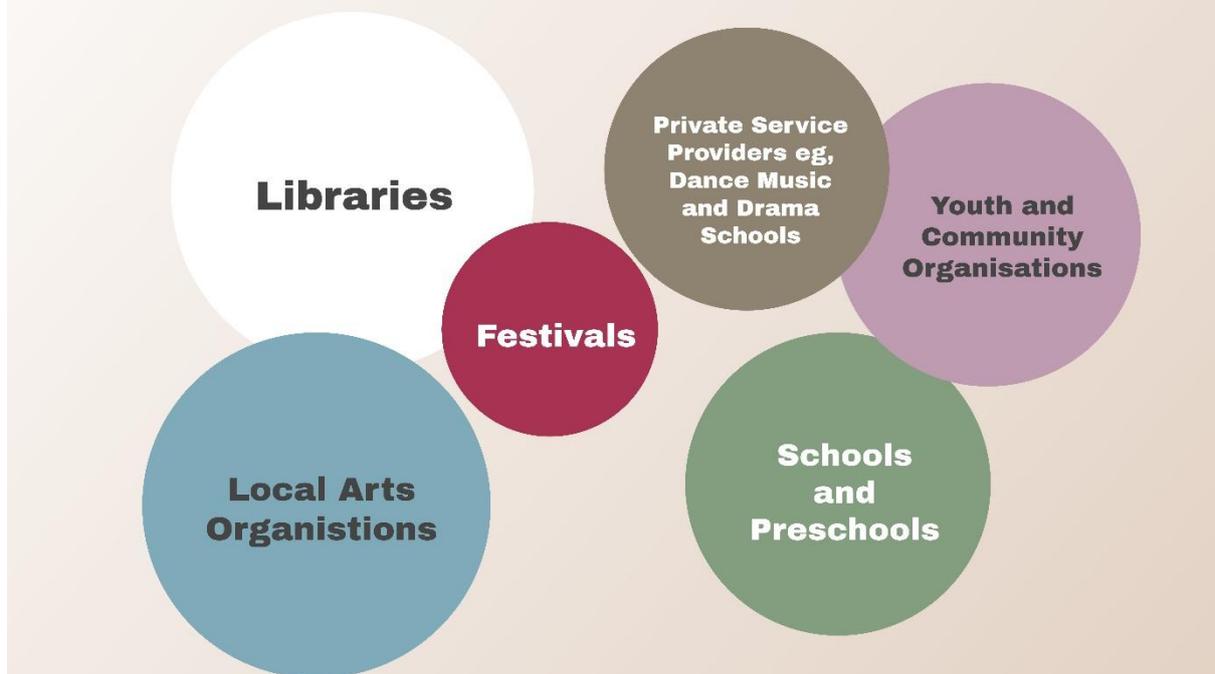
Children across the administrative area of South Dublin County Council, can access the arts in many ways at different times in their lives.

Organisations and Children's Services across the county deliver many high quality, meaningful Arts experiences to children. However, it is important to acknowledge that not all children across the county have the same opportunities to access the arts.

Current factors that can determine a child's ability to regularly access the arts in 2020 include the following:

- Location
- Age
- Gender
- Economic Capacity
- Language Abilities
- If a child experiences educational learning difficulties.
- If a child has special and/or additional needs.
- If a child has a physical disability.

Ways in Which Children Access the Arts in SDCC's Administrative area



The Arts Office of SDDC currently support a range of services for Children and Early Years as identified in the next diagram. This is in addition to the significant work that the Arts Office has delivered within its Youth Arts Strategy, particularly in the Arts forms of Music, Film, Drama and Dance.

Programmes for Children supported by SDCC's Children's Arts Service (CAS)

Local Arts Organisations



CAS supports a range of initiatives annually for children and Early Years that are delivered by Local Arts Organisations.

Festivals



CAS delivers Ruaille Buaille Children's Music Festival, Lucan, supports Ready Steady Show and the Mother Tongues Festival.

Criunniú na n'Óg



CAS delivers SDCC's Cruinniú na nÓg Programme which encourages children and young people's participation in culture and creativity.

Music Generation



Delivers music in schools and communities and includes the following programmes: Early Starters, Ready Steady Sing, Ready Steady Play, Instrument Banks.

Schools



School Cultural Awards
Music Generation Programme
Teacher/Artist Partnership in collaboration with Dublin West Education Centre.

Artists



CPD - Music Generation, Teacher/Artist Training. Individual Artists Bursary Awards, Arts Project awards, Young Artist Development award.

Early Years



Exploring and Thinking - Early Years partnership initiative. Magical Manoeuvres Early Years Dance Programme. Music Generation Programmes.

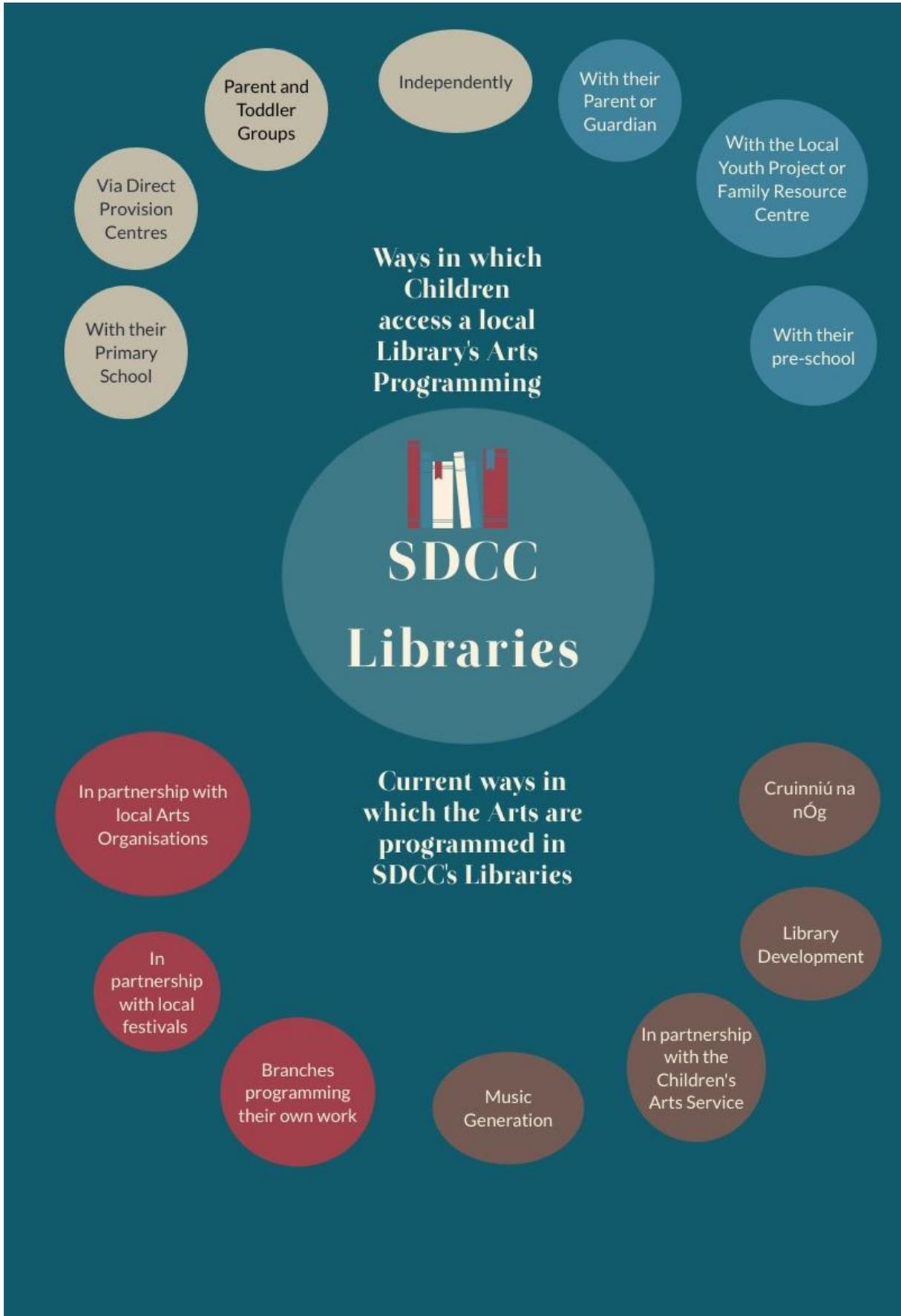
1. Accessing the Arts in SDCC via the Library Service

Of any public building, the local library is probably the most accessible for children and families. A culture of acceptance has grown around this local venue; a belief that you are welcome, that you will receive a quality service and that it is your right to be there.

The Libraries in South Dublin Couth Council deliver a broad range of services to a diverse community of clients both young and old. This service is consistently growing via new initiatives such as 3D Printing, Robotics, Pop-Up Maker Spaces and even Circus Performances!

By delivering a diverse programme of arts initiatives, SDCC's Library Service provides opportunities for children not only to be the industrious creators of their own artwork but also to be receptors; to have the opportunity to watch and listen, to be challenged and stimulated in a way which is thoughtful, private and deeply personal and it's important to recognise that those opportunities are happening locally and free of charge, maximising the potential for children from all backgrounds to access its services.

The Library service of SDCC has set a strong precedent of proving that children can receive a high quality arts experience within the library context and is an extremely valuable resource.



Every Year each Library in SDCC delivers a range of Arts Programming. This Arts Programming can be provided to the Library in a range of ways as the diagram above demonstrates.

Programming can include:

- Theatre Productions
- Storytelling
- Visits from Children’s Authors
- Visual Arts Workshops
- Pop- up maker spaces
- Music workshops and performances

Who delivers the work?

Library Staff

On a weekly basis the staff of Libraries can deliver many different services to children and Early Years. Via conversations with Library staff the arts work that are delivered by Librarians can include:

- Storytelling for Children.
- Storytelling for Parent and Toddler Groups.
- Weekly Visual Art Workshops.
- Seasonal Visual Arts Work –eg. Halloween/Christmas etc.

In addition to this type of work staff can work individually with children to support their creativity

For example:

- Identifying objects for children to print using the venues 3D Printer and supporting this process.
- Supporting children in creatively utilising the resources of the Library. Eg. The use of Robotics.

Artists and Authors:

The Library utilises the services of many different Artists and Authors on an annual basis to deliver some of the type of arts programming that is listed above.

Utilising its own discretionary budget, each Library might choose to programme specific artists and/or companies throughout the year, in addition to this programming, events such as Festivals and Arts Initiatives such as Music Generation offer additional Arts Programming opportunities to Libraries.

Challenges identified for the Library Service in delivering high quality Arts Programmes for Children and Early Years within the County:

- Limited regular Access to information or updates regarding emerging artists or arts programming that may be suitable for the library context.
- Insufficient funding to regularly programme arts activities within the Library context.
- Insufficient documented examples of regular and meaningful long term Arts Programming for children being delivered within the Library context

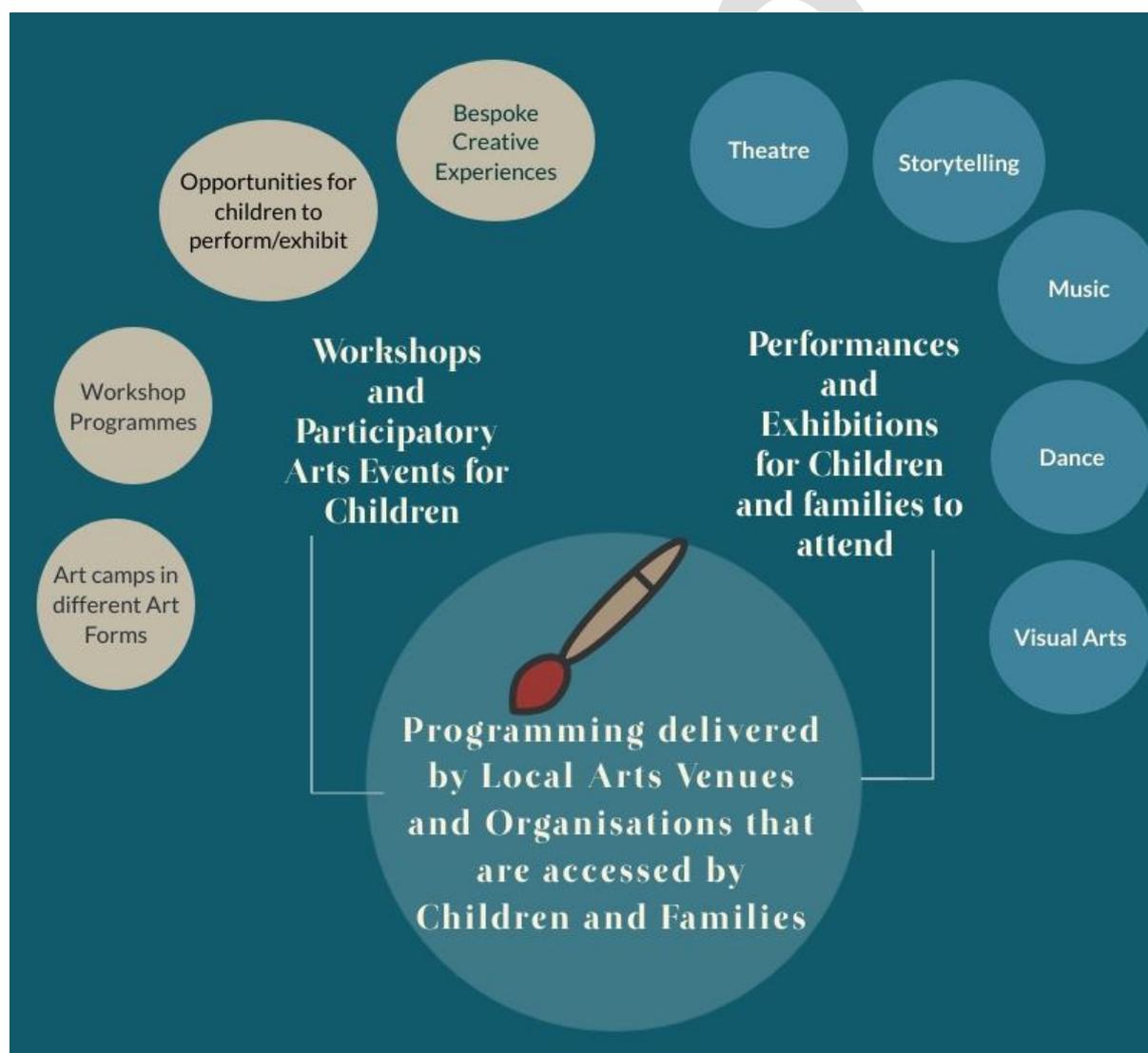
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2. Accessing the Arts in SDCC via Local Arts Venues and Organisations:

Local Arts Venues and Organisations in partnership with artists deliver a broad range of innovative programming across the Art Forms for Children and Early Years within the County.

Via their development of relevant work for Children and Early Years these Organisations and Artists have actively demonstrated the value and importance that they place on delivering high quality programming for Children and Early Years, Schools and Children's Organisations across the county to access their services.

Conversations with a number of key Arts Organisations in SDCC demonstrates their ongoing commitment to the development of Children and Early Years Arts Programming.



Challenges for Local Arts Organisation in delivering high quality work for Children and Early Years within the County:

- Lack of appropriate regular funding streams to support the development of new work.
- Dearth of work presently available for audiences of Children and Early Years due to the current limited number of professional Children's and Early Years Theatre and Arts Companies in existence.
- Lack of appropriate funding streams to support the regular delivery of access programming initiatives to Children living in other parts of the county.
- Funding for Children's and Early Years Arts Programming is usually derived from accessing support from a number of different funding sources - which can be time consuming.
- Many Children and Early Years Providers who are not within walking distance of an Arts Venue are unable to access their programming initiatives.
- Due to the workloads of many local arts organisations, finding the time to develop partnership initiatives with other organisations can prove challenging.
- Little or no income is derived by a venue in the programming of work for Early Years.

Note: It is important to recognise that local Arts Organisations demonstrated a strong understanding that cost can be a strong deterrent to children and families accessing their services and many organisations endeavour to keep ticket prices as low as possible. Some have also developed initiatives to support children's access to their programming, an example of this is *The Inspire Programme* – Delivered by the Civic Theatre in Tallaght which enables some children from the locality to access the work that is presented in the Civic Theatre for free.

Artists

Many committed Artists work with local Arts and Children's Organisations to support the delivery of meaningful Arts Programming to children in the administrative area of SDCC.

Conversations with Artists who base a significant amount of their practice in the SDCC administrative area identified the following challenges in relation to the development of their practice and work as artists:

- Artists identified that there were currently limited opportunities to Network with other artists, children's organisations and arts organisations locally.
- Artists identified that there were currently limited opportunities to see new work for Children and Early Years and that it was sometimes difficult to know when and where new work was taking place.
- Artists identified that they would like to see more regular opportunities to regularly deliver work with local children's organisations and services.
- Artists identified that there were limited opportunities to receive feedback regarding their work and practice.
- Artists identified that the opportunities to deliver work in the longer term with children's and arts organisations were limited.
- Artists recognised the need for more promotion locally of the benefits that meaningful Arts Participation can play in the lives of children.
- Artists identified the need for support in helping them to access information regarding funding and professional development opportunities.
- Artists felt that there was a need to discuss and promote fair rates of pay for artists amongst local organisations that would utilise the services of an artist.

3. Accessing the Arts via Youth and Community Organisations:

Youth and Community Organisations deliver a wide range of services to children and families though-out the county.

The size and diversity of the county means that different areas can experience different challenges in relation to children accessing the Arts.

Conversations with youth and community workers indicate that these organisations usually engage with the Arts in the following ways:

- By bringing children to an Arts event that is being held in a local or regional venue.
- By workers delivering an arts programme themselves in a local in community setting.
- By the youth and community organisation engaging an artist to deliver a programme for a specific period of time.

Challenges for Youth and Community Groups in in supporting the children that they work with to access meaningful Arts experiences within the County:

- Lack of regular Access to information or updates regarding emerging artists or arts programming that may be suitable for the local community context.
- No regular access to transport to bring children to Arts Events.
- Insufficient local expertise to identify the appropriate artists that could deliver a programme of work with the children in a community.
- Lack of appropriate opportunities for workers to upskill in order to practically deliver or develop an arts programme locally themselves.
- Limited local experience of Arts Participation in some areas.
- A lack of confidence amongst some parents and/or workers in accessing arts venues.

Accessing the Arts in Primary School

Introduction:

South Dublin County Council is a diverse county and that diversity is reflected in its primary schools.

During the consultation the Principals of eighty-eight schools were written to separately and asked to provide feedback on their experiences of the Arts and also to identify what they felt was required to support the development of meaningful Arts Engagement for children in their school.

Overviews were also provided by other arts and children's organisations and artists who engage on a regular basis with local schools.

It is acknowledged by the Consultation that meaningful engagement of Primary Schools with SDCC's Children's Arts service will need a considerable amount of relationship building and that supporting the development of the Arts In schools locally will need a significant level of partnership development with both local and national organisations that have a remit to support the meaningful implementation of the Arts within the context of primary Schools.

The consultation identified that local primary schools engage with the Arts in the following ways:

- Trips to Galleries and National Cultural Institutions.
- Trips to local Arts Venues and accessing their performances/ exhibitions/programmes.
- Attending an Arts Programme in the Local Library.
- Participating in an Arts Event as part of Criunniú na n'Óg or a local Festival.
- Arts Programmes delivered by teachers as part of the Aistear framework and National Curriculum.
- Artists delivering Programmes in schools as part of the Culture Ireland Funding Initiative.
- Artists delivering programmes in schools as part of the TAP (Teacher/Artist Partnership Programme with the Dublin West Education Centre.
- Working with local Arts Organisations eg. *The Great Rope Project* delivered by Tallaght Community Arts.

Challenges schools encounter to regular engagement with the Arts included:

- The cost of transport to venues – particularly for schools located in areas which may experience social and economic disadvantage and/or marginalisation.
- The lack of time that teachers have to engage in CPD.
- The feeling of “burn-out” experienced by some teachers at the end of the school year that deters them from participating in Summer Courses.
- The lack of opportunities for teachers to witness how the arts are delivered practically in the classroom.
- The cost of bringing quality Arts Programmes into primary schools.

- The lack of Arts Programmes available to schools for children who may experience Special Needs and/or be on the Autism Spectrum.

Ways Local Schools could further develop their engagement with the Arts were identified as being:

- More Arts Programming created that can be accessible for children with autism and Special Needs
 - More Arts Programming created that explores the Cultural Diversity present in the schools of South Dublin County Council's Administrative area.
 - Support for Schools in delivering strands of the Aistear programme.
 - More opportunities for schools to engage with local artists.
 - More opportunities for schools to attend local arts events.
 - More dissemination locally of the learning from Arts Programmes that schools within the SDCC administrative area have experienced.
 - CPD for training teachers
 - Practical ideas for delivering arts programming in the classroom.
 - Opportunities for teachers to witness Artists delivering work in the classroom.
 - Training for interested parents to deliver After-schools activities with children.
-

Accessing the Arts for Early Years

Introduction

Meaningful Arts Education can provide infants, toddlers and young children with the creative opportunities that can encourage learning while also contributing to their overall holistic development.

Participating in the arts; whether in dance, music, drama or visual art can be beneficial to infants, toddlers and young children in a variety of ways; including influencing and increasing their cognitive, physical, social and emotional skills simultaneously, in addition to helping them to cultivate their artistic abilities and knowledge.

Giving children a range of artistic experiences and opportunities is essential as arts education is a primary resource for their overall learning and development (Burrill, 2005;).

The early years have also been identified as a key life-stage during which future health trajectories are determined and where high quality interventions can have the greatest impact.



Points to note:

- Early Years Arts is an emerging sector within Arts Practice for children within Ireland.
- The quality of programmes delivered in the Early Years Arts Sector can vary significantly.
- There is very little regular and consistent Early Years Arts Programmes in the SDCC administrative area.
- No medium – long term Early Years Arts Residencies in Pre-schools within the administrative area of South Dublin County Council were identified.
- Parents’ ability to access an Early Years Arts Service or Programme depends significantly upon:
 - (a) The Geographical Location of the Early Years Arts Programme or Service.
 - (b) The comfort levels and confidence of parents in being able to access certain buildings or services.

Challenges to the Development of Early Years Arts Provision in the Administrative area of SDCC:

- Limited funding opportunities restricts the abilities of local arts organisations to deliver regular Early Years Arts Programming.
- Early Years Arts Programming delivered by Arts Organisations generates little or no income.
- The development time for artists to create meaningful work for Early Years is significant.
- There is currently no regular CPD in Early Years Arts for Early Childhood Educators in South County Dublin.
- There are limited opportunities for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) to witness high quality Early Years Arts Programming.
- Many pre-schools still depend upon the template structure when delivering Early Years Visual arts activities.
- There are very few opportunities locally for ECEs and artists to meet and Network.

- There are very few opportunities for ECEs and artists to work together in partnership and learn from one another.
- Funding for Early Years Arts Programming is inconsistent.
- It can be challenging for ECEs to access training if it is not located in a central venue.
- Many ECEs would need the support of a professional development worker to access an Early Years Arts CPD Programme/Workshop.
- The role of an Early Childhood Educator has many demands and their time is limited.
- Early Years Arts Residencies are an effective way to embed a culture of the Arts within schools and pre-schools.
- Meaningful Arts Programmes that can be accessed independently by vulnerable families need to be supported by development workers from appropriate organisations.

SDCC's Children's Arts Service (CAS)

Strategy 1

Development of SDCC's Children's Arts Service

1.1 Introduction:

Conversations with organisations around the county whether with individuals, Children's Services or Arts Organisations, clearly indicated a desire on behalf of organisations to have a greater knowledge of the Children's Arts Programming that is taking place across the county. The rationale for this included:

- Seeing new work will help to raise standards of practice.
- Hearing about other work taking place will provide an opportunity to Network with other organisations.
- *It's only when you know something is taking place that you can attend it.*
- Hearing about things happening in other communities can encourage you to develop work in your own area.
- The sharing of information can support the development of partnerships.
- *If you're clear about what work is taking place you can also identify where the gaps are.*
- Some groups identified the desire to further develop children's Arts partnership programming with other groups in the area.
- Opportunities to network and meet other groups and hear about work that was taking place was identified as being an important priority for many Arts and Children's Organisations.

In addition to the need for a co-ordinated approach to the sharing of information, many local arts and children's organisations identified the need to develop **strong cultural partnerships** locally to support the development of Children's and Early Years Arts within the SDCC Administrative area.

Challenges to the development of effective cultural partnerships that were identified by local organisations included the following:

- The time capacity of staff within organisations to regularly create and organise networking opportunities.
- The lack of regular opportunities to meet other groups.
- The lack of regular information regarding what other groups in the SDCC Administrative area were doing.
- The time capacity of staff within organisations to initiate and develop meaningful partnership opportunities.

1.2 Objectives

In response to the findings above, the Objectives of Strategy 1 of the Early Years and Children's Arts Strategy have been identified as the following:

- To improve the delivery of information to Schools, Pre-schools, Libraries, Children's Services and Arts Organisations throughout the county regarding Children's Arts Programming.
- To support the creation of opportunities for Local Arts Organisations, Children's Organisations, Schools, Pre-Schools, Artists, Teachers Early Childhood Educators and other Professionals who work with children to Network.
- To support the development of strategic local and national cultural partnerships.
- To promote the value of the Arts in the lives of children.
- To support the creation of appropriate mechanisms that enable children within SDCC to influence the Children's Arts Programming that is taking place.

1.3 Current staffing structure of SDCC's Children's Arts Service

SDCC's Children's Arts Service delivers a range of services to children across the county. This service is currently managed by the County Arts Officer with one Administrative Assistant.

In addition to these posts, personnel are contracted to deliver strands of the SDCC's Arts Offices programming during the year eg. co-ordination of the Criunniú na n'Óg annual programme for children and the Noise Moves Dance Festival for young people are delivered by external experienced contractors appointed by the Arts Office.

The Music Generation Programme located in the Arts Office of SDCC is managed by South Dublin Music Education Partnership, led by South Dublin County Council in partnership with Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board, South Dublin County Libraries and Dublin West Education Centre. This programme is co-ordinated by a Programme Officer with one Communications/Administrative Assistant.

1.4

Recommendation:

It is recommended that SDCC's Children's Arts Service increases its capacity to develop its Children's Arts and Information Service.

This development would include the following:

- Publication of the CAS Strategy and Principles that underpin the strategy.
- Development of SDCC's Children's Arts Service Brand (CAS) brand by implementing the following:
 - Creation of a distinctive LOGO for the SDCC Children's Arts Service. (CAS)
 - Regularly collate the arts programming for children and early years that is taking place through-out the county and communicate this programming via social media and a regular newsletter to all local children's and arts organisations – including schools and pre-schools, arts organisations, libraries and youth services.
- Pro-actively support the development of local cultural partnerships for children and early years via the provision of appropriate administrative, communication and co-ordination services.

Including but not limited to:

- Providing an information service to members of the local cultural partnership.

- Supporting the scheduling and documenting of meetings between partner organisations.
- Supporting the delivery of cultural partnership initiatives for Children and Early Years via communications with local communities.
- Providing a service of administrative support re: the development of a Cultural Quarter in Tallaght.
- Promoting the work of the local cultural partnerships both within and outside the SDCC Administrative area.
- Creation of an independent Advisory Group that supports the delivery and development of the CAS Strategy.

➤ **Libraries**

Regularly provide SDCC's Library Service with the following information:

- Emerging Arts Initiatives for Children and Early Years that can be programmed in Library Spaces.
- Artists or Arts Programmes that would complement the Library context (potentially such artists could be encouraged to apply for the Libraries' Facilitators Panel).
- Training Opportunities that may emerge within the Arts or Education Sector that may be of interest to staff within Libraries – such training opportunities as identified could include but are not limited to:
 - Training in enhancing storytelling techniques
 - Training in delivering Storytelling for Silent Books.
 - Training in the delivery of Visual Arts Workshops.

➤ **Community and Local Organisations who work with Children and Early Years**

Regularly Provide the following services:

- Where relevant -communicate arts events that may be of relevance to all local community and youth organisations who deliver work to children and early years.
- Provide regular opportunities to the workers of local community and youth organisations who deliver arts programming to children and early years to witness examples best practice.
- Provide regular networking opportunities to the workers of local community and youth organisations who deliver arts programming to children and early years.

➤ **Schools**

Regularly provide the following services:

- Regularly collate the arts programming for children and early years that is taking place through-out the county and communicate this programming via social media and a regular newsletter to all primary schools in the SDCC Administrative Area.

- Where relevant -communicate arts events that may be of relevance to local primary schools.
- Provide an annual local Networking Event for Schools and Artists that highlights and discusses best practice and identifies needs.

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1.5 Implementation

How can we implement this strategy?

It is envisaged that effective delivery of this service could significantly support the development of Children's Arts within the Administrative area of SDCC. However, successful implementation of this strategy is dependent upon the correct personnel being in place to pro-actively deliver this service.

It is recommended that the post of a full-time Assistant Arts Officer with responsibility for Participation and Learning be created to deliver the main objectives of the Service, this role would include the following:

1. Creation of a recognisable brand for SDCC's CAS.
2. Build and strengthen relationships between CAS and local Preschools, Schools, Community and Arts Organisations.
3. Promote the value of Meaningful Arts Experiences for children within the administrative area of SDCC.
4. Support the development of Initiatives for Children's and Early Years Arts as outlined in this strategy.
5. Enable more Children to access the Arts.
6. Support where appropriate the delivery of SDCC's Youth Arts Strategy
7. Support where appropriate SDCC's Arts Plan in relation to Participation and Learning.

Note: Given the current staffing structure within the SDCC Arts Office, one additional full time staff member is recommended. However it is acknowledged that in order to sufficiently deliver the strategy and the other roles required by the Arts Office the post of Assistant Arts Officer with responsibility for Participation and Learning should be reviewed after 18 months and additional measures taken to increase staffing support if required.

1.6 Timeline for the Development of SDCC's Children's Arts Service

Recommendation:	Task	Timeline
Supporting Communication and Information	Identifying the funding for and recruitment of Children's post of a full-time Assistant Arts Officer with responsibility for Participation and Learning.	Spring 2020 – Summer 2020
	Children's and Early Years Arts Development Officer Recruitment (Note - it is envisaged that this role is a permanent position within the structure of SDCC's Arts Office.)	Summer 2020
Networking	Local Early Years Networking and Dissemination Event (could be included as part of the <i>Ready Steady Show</i> Festival)	Autumn 2020
	Local Schools Networking and Dissemination Event	Spring 2021
	Pilot of Communications Strategy	January 2021- June 2021
	Review of Post and identification of additional supports required.	June 2021
	Implementation of additional supports.	January 2022 onwards

SDCC's Children's Arts Service (CAS)

Strategy 2

Supporting the Delivery of Meaningful Arts Experiences

2.1 Introduction

Strategy Two of the Children's and Early Years Arts Strategy proposes that SDCC's Children's Arts Service (CAS) continues to work in partnership with local Children's and Early Years Services and Arts Organisations to ensure that all children throughout the county regardless of circumstance have the opportunity to access regular and meaningful arts experiences.

2.2

The Objectives of Strategy 2 of the Early Years and Children's Arts Strategy have been identified as the following:

- To improve access that children in the SDCC Administrative area have to the Arts by supporting the *development of programming*.
- To improve access that children in the SDCC Administrative area have to the Arts by supporting the *delivery of programming* in both formal and non-formal public Arts spaces.
- To further support the staff of schools and pre-schools across the county to deliver meaningful Arts experiences to the Children that they work with.

2.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that CAS implements these objectives by:

- Working in partnership with local organisations to develop programming that provides high quality arts experiences for children and/or Early Years.
- Working in partnership with local organisations to identify programming opportunities that Provide Teachers and/or Early Childhood Educators with an opportunity for CPD.
- Providing an opportunity for the high quality arts experiences to be programmed in both formal and non- formal venues eg. Libraries and Schools.

Recommendations for working with SDCC's Library Service:

Working in partnership with SDCC Libraries to develop more regular Arts Programming in its branches that can be accessed by local Children and Communities:

Recommendations include:

1. Newly appointed Assistant Arts Officer with responsibility for Participation and Learning works in partnership with individual branches to identify and explore Children's and Early Years Arts Programmes that appropriately reflect each Library's specific context and capacity.

(This can include working with Libraries to identify Creative Programmes that will further utilise the current resources and Cultural Offering of the Library. Eg. developing a Creative Programme around the utilisation of 3D Printers and/or Robotics.)

2. In partnership with branch staff develop an appropriate and bespoke Arts Programme for each library that can be implemented at the discretion of individual branches with the support of the Assistant Arts Officer.

3. Local Cultural and Arts Organisations can be actively encouraged and incentivised to develop meaningful work that can be delivered in non-formal Arts contexts such as Libraries.
4. Library Pilot Projects: It is recommended that CAS Partnership with SDCC Libraries service explores and pilots a strong model of regular Arts Practice within the soon to be built Ronanstown Library for Children and Early Years.

This objectives of this initiative would include:

- Meaningfully strengthening the links between the new library and the local community.
- Providing Children and Early Years within the area with access to high quality Arts Experiences.
- Supporting regeneration within a small area of North Clondalkin.
- Creating a model of practice that could be recreated in other contexts.

Recommendations for working with Local Arts Organisations:

Practical measures to support Local Arts Organisation in the development of their Access Programming for Children and Early Years:

Recommendations Include:

1. Supporting Schools, Community and Children's Organisations to bring Children to their local Arts Venues:

It is recommended that a *Pilot Transport Initiative* is explored that can support children from across the county to access arts venues that are delivering age appropriate high quality programming for children.

Strands of the scheme could include the following:

- A rolling grant scheme with a straight forward application process that Schools and Pre-Schools can apply for to support their accessing Age Appropriate Arts Programming within the County.
- In tandem with the CAS grant scheme it is recommended that a partnership initiative is explored by CAS with local organisations that would encourage philanthropic support from local and national transport companies.

2. Supporting Local Artists and Arts Organisations in the creation of work for Children and Early Years.

- To ensure that work is created for both the 0-6 and 6-12 age groups it is recommended that **two distinct annual** funds are created by CAS that will support the development of new work regularly for both age groups locally.

3. Supporting Local Arts Organisations in the Development of their Work for Children and Early Years.

It is recommended that the Children's Arts Service (CAS) Works in partnership with Local Organisations to support the strategic development of some of the new work that they are creating for Children and Early Years and to assist children across the county in accessing this work across a range of community and educational contexts.

Current initiatives identified by the Children and Early Years Arts Consultation that have the potential to be developed in partnership with Local Arts organisations in 2019/2020 include:

Ready Steady Show - Working partnership with The Civic Theatre in Tallaght to develop a second phase of the *Ready Steady Show* initiative.

It is recommended that subsequent to the initial phase of the *Ready Steady Show* Programme, a mechanism is created to financially and practically support some Artists to further develop their work appropriately in a second phase of the programme.

Once Phase Two of the Ready steady Show Programme is completed it is recommended that CAS and The Civic work in partnership to bring the developed work for children and/or early years to other areas of the county.

Glitch Maker Boxes: – a unique initiative developed by Rua Red that seeks to deliver high quality Visual Arts Programming to local schools. It is recommended that CAS works in partnership with Rua Red to support the delivery of this initiative to schools throughout the county.

Note:

These two impressive programmes have been identified as they contain significant development potential and could be delivered county-wide with the appropriate resources in place. In addition to these programmes it is recommended that the Children’s Arts Service continues to work with a range of Arts Organisations across the county to identify other existing programmes that are in early stages of development that may contain similar development potential.

4. Regular Touring Grants: - Supporting Artists and Arts Organisations to deliver Arts Programming for Children and Early Years across the County.

It is envisioned that appropriate touring grants would provide incentives for Organisations that have developed Children’s and Early Years Arts Programming to deliver this work in a variety of contexts across the county.

This initiative could incentivise artists and arts organisations to focus on the development of work for children and early years that can be delivered across a range of contexts including non-formal arts venues, schools and pre-schools. .

Rationale for developing this initiative:

- Children across the county will have increased opportunities to access the Arts within a range of local community and educational contexts.
- The number of children accessing the programme of local venues can increase significantly.
- Artists are supported in further developing their practice.

Recommendation to develop the current work of SDCC's Children's Arts Service:

SDCC's Arts Service has developed particular expertise across specific art forms over the past 10 years. In particular the service has supported the development of Music, Film and Dance with seminal programming taking place within the *Noise Moves* Festival and the *Tallaght Young Film-Makers* programmes.

To further support the development of these programmes within the service and to create progression pathways for children it is recommended that CAS explores the following:

Recommendations Include:

- Complete an audit of the film and dance programmes to date that have been delivered by SDCC's Arts Service.
- Explore the feasibility of creating Junior Versions of these successful programmes that could take place in different parts of the county.
- Pilot appropriate junior versions of Noise Moves and Tallaght Young-Film-makers in areas within SDCC's administrative area that have limited access to arts Programming for children.

Recommendations for working with Local Schools:

Providing opportunities for high quality Arts Experiences to be programmed in partnership with Local schools by piloting the following initiatives:

Recommendations Include:

- **Providing opportunities for teachers to witness artists working with children within classroom context by delivering the following:**
 - ❖ Supporting touring grants of different local Artists and Arts initiatives that can travel to schools or to local venues that can be accessed by schools eg. Libraries. Also encourage artists and organisations in receipt of touring grants to develop resource materials for teachers.
 - ❖ Explore the possibility of CAS partnering local Education Centres to create a more substantial schools residency as part of the TAP (Teacher Artist Partnership) initiative.
 - ❖ Provide funding opportunities to support the documentation of the Teacher/Artist Partnerships and local schools Initiatives Funded by Creative Ireland and disseminate this to local schools.
- **In partnership with local schools pilot creative workshops for parents who wish to deliver creative after-schools activities to further develop their skills.**

2.4

Criteria for Partnership with CAS:

It is recommended that all Children's and Arts Organisations who wish to secure funding from CAS for a Children's or Early Years Arts Initiative are required to provide a *Three Year Strategic Arts Plan* for engaging with Children and/or Early Years that includes details of the following:

- The organisation's priorities for the next three years.
- The resources that the organisation can contribute to their proposed initiative(s).
- The funding requirements of the organisation's plan.
- The audiences/participants that the organisation hopes to engage with.
- The geographical locations around the county where the organisation hopes to work.
- The partners that the organisation will hope to work with over three years.
- Identify the ways in which the organisation will consult and evaluate with children during the lifetime of their plan.
- Identify how the organisation will endeavour to network and communicate with other local groups/organisations during the period of their plan.
- Identify the potential outcomes that it is hoped will emerge from the organisation's *Three Year Strategic Arts Plan for Children and/or Early Years*.

2.5 Timeline for the Development of SDCC’s Strategy to support the delivery of meaningful Arts Experiences:

Recommendation:	Task	Timeline
Work in partnership with SDCC Libraries to develop more regular Arts Programming	Appointment of Assistant Arts Officer with responsibility for Participation and Learning.	Ongoing from Summer 2020
Exploring Recommended Funding Structures identified in Strategy:	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separating funding for new work for 0-6 and 6-12 age groups. • Identifying funding stream for phase 2 of Ready Steady Show • Identifying funding stream for touring Children’s and Early Years Arts Programmes County Wide to schools pre-schools, Libraries and community centres. • Identifying Funding for rolling Transport Initiative that can be utilised by schools and pre-schools and community children’s groups. • Identification of arts documentation grants for schools, pre-schools and community children’s groups. 	Autumn 2020 - Autumn 2021
Supporting the development of Progression Pathways for SDCC’s Youth Arts Programming	Conduct Audit Identify Expertise	Autumn 2020 Spring 2021

	Explore the feasibility of creating Junior Versions.	
	Pilot appropriate junior versions	Autumn 2021
	Review Pilot Programmes	Spring 2022
Announcement of Funding Strategies	Via Communications Network Plus Local Early Years Networking Event Plus Local Schools Networking Event	Autumn 2020 – Spring 2021
Increasing Capacity in schools	Select one school site to Pilot creative workshops for parents to deliver after schools arts programming.	2021
	Work in partnership with Education Centres to create a more substantial TAP Programme.	January 2021 onwards.
Funding	Review of funding programme initiatives. Mainstream funding programme initiatives	Autumn 2020 – Autumn 2021 2022-2025

SDCC's Children's Arts Service (CAS)

Strategy 3

Supporting the Development of an Early Years Arts Service for SDCC

3.1 Introduction:

The Children's and Early Years Arts strategy acknowledges that Early Years Arts Practice is at a preliminary stage in its development within the administrative area of South Dublin. Via a number of specific initiatives the strategy will seek to support the development of high quality arts programming across the county in tandem with creating strong models of Early Years Arts practice.

3.2 Objectives of SDCC's Early Years Arts Strategy:

- To support the development and delivery of meaningful Early Year arts services in local pre-schools:
- To promote the significant value that meaningful Early Childhood Arts experiences can play in a child's holistic development.
- To support Early Years Setting in building their Capacity to deliver Arts Programming.
- To support the development of conversations in the Early Years and Early Years Arts Sector in relation to how the arts can be embedded within Early Years Settings.
- To support the Creation and Delivery of Arts Work for Early Years that can be accessed by Pre-schools and Families across the administrative area of SDCC.
- To encourage and develop partnership and skills exchanges between Artists and ECEs.
- To support the local delivery of appropriate CPD for Early Childhood Educators.
- To create a multiplier effect.

Supporting the Development of the Arts in Local Pre-schools:

Supporting the development of meaningful arts interventions in local pre-schools offers the most realistic opportunity for very young children across the county to experience the arts on a regular basis.

3.3 Recommendation 1

Development of Early Years Arts Residencies in the South Dublin County Council Administrative area:

It is recommended that this programme of work should begin with two well-resourced Pilot Early Years Arts Residencies to be delivered by CAS in 2020.

These residencies will have the following objectives:

- To provide very young children with the opportunity to receive regular meaningful and high quality Arts Experiences.
- To provide regular and practical CPD to the staff in the Early Years Setting where they are taking place.
- To embed a culture of Early Years Arts in the pre-schools where the residencies are taking place.
- To provide regular opportunities for the parents of children engaged in the programme to participate in meaningful arts experiences with their children.
- To provide appropriate mentorship and support to the artist(s) charged with delivering the residencies.
- To monitor, document and assess the residency programme and its outcomes.
- To build capacity locally by creating a multiplier effect that enables artists and ECEs from the participating residency pre-schools to work in partnership to deliver CPD training to other ECEs in their local area.
- To build capacity locally by disseminating the findings of the residency both regionally and nationally and promoting the value of Early Years Arts Participation.

Recommended Principles that would underpin the residency:

- ❖ That residencies should be viewed by all involved as an opportunity for Artists and Early Childhood Educators to learn from one another.
- ❖ That the learning identified for both Artists and ECEs during the Early Years Arts Residency could be significant and should be disseminated.
- ❖ That Parental Inclusion/Participation in Early Years Arts is embedded within the structure of the residency
- ❖ That the residencies are child led.

Practicalities:

1. It is recommended that CAS identifies a strategic partner with significant experience of supporting the development of Early Years Arts in pre-school settings to ensure the effective delivery of this strand of the programme.

(See *Beag Model of Practice P. 63*)

2. It is recommended that the Early Years Arts Residencies are situated in an area of significant need eg.an area in the SDCC Administrative area that is located in the 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index. (Potentially the Early Years Arts Residencies could be attached to Strategy 4)
3. It is recommended that a third level institution is invited to effectively document and evaluate the outcomes of the Residencies.
4. It is recommended that CPD for ECE's be embedded into any programming. The organisation Recreate in Ballymount have developed significant CPD Visual Art M
5. It is recommended that the work and outcomes of the Residencies are maximised to communicate the work of the SDCC Children's Arts Service and to deliver networking and Early Years Arts information opportunities across the county.

Further Development:

The findings of this pilot residency programme will inform the structure of how this strand of the programme progresses.

Ideally the number of Early Years Arts residencies in collaboration with local pre-schools should grow year on year, however, it is acknowledged that this can only be achieved via the identification of sufficient funding.

However, it is recommended that in order to build capacity in the Early Years Arts sector in SDCC that CAS commits to delivering and documenting at *least* two Early Years Arts Residencies on an annual basis in the SDCC Administrative area for the next five years.

3.4 Recommendation 2:

Supporting Local Arts Organisations ability to further deliver Early Years Arts Programming across the County.

Supporting the further development of one-off performance or workshop type model of Early Years Arts Engagement.

Conversation with Early Childhood Service Providers identified that while one off performance or arts workshop experiences (when of a high calibre) for Early Years are extremely worthwhile, it is important to further support the child's experience of these events by the additional exploration of their themes and ideas.

It is recommended that when delivering these type of programmes - artists/venues/companies are pro-actively encouraged to consider strategies for enabling carers to deepen the experience of the child by supporting the exploration of the work that they have witnessed in an appropriate manner back in their home or pre-school setting.

Ways in which artists/venues/companies can be supported in developing programmes of work around their Early Years Arts experience or event includes:

- CPD workshops for artists
- Networking events that highlight the value of developing post show/post one off workshop strategies.
- Funding opportunities to support artists and organisations who have developed one off Early Years Arts Experiences to create resource materials that will support the exploration of their programmes themes and ideas in a child's home or pre-school.

Partnership

The organisation *Recreate* who are based locally in Ballymount have been identified during the consultation as having developed significant CPD methodologies for Early Childhood Educators and Artists in the area of Visual Arts in addition to successfully delivering Visual Arts Residencies across a range Early Years Settings. It is recommended that the expertise of this organisation is utilised when delivering Early Years Visual Art CPD and that supporting them to disseminate their learning within the county could have a strong multiplier effect in supporting the delivery of meaningful Visual Arts Experiences within the context of Early Years.

Additional recommendations to support the delivery of Early Years Arts Programming are outlined in Strategy 2:

- *Development: Supporting Local Arts Organisations in the creation of work for Children and Early Years.*
- *Regular Touring Grants: - Supporting Artists and Arts Organisations to deliver Arts Programming for Children and Early Years across the County.*

3.5 Recommendation 3

Networking and Communication:

- As outlined in Strategy 1, it is recommended that in partnership with other local organisations that CAS hosts an annual Early Years Arts Networking and Dissemination event for local pre-schools and local arts organisations.

3.6 Summary of Recommendations and Timeline for the Development of Early Years Arts in SDCC.

Recommendation:	Task	Timeline
Exploring Recommended Funding Structures identified in Strategy:	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separating funding for new work for 0-6 and 6-12 age groups. • Identifying funding stream for phase 2 of Ready Steady Show • Identifying funding stream for touring Children’s and Early Years Arts Programmes Countywide. 	Autumn 2020 – Autumn 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying Funding for Transport Initiative 	
Networking	Local Early Years Networking and Dissemination Event (could be included as part of the Ready Steady Show Festival)	Autumn 2020
	Annual Local Early Years Networking and Dissemination Event.	2021-2025
Supporting the Development of the Arts in Local Pre-schools. Development of two Pilot Early Years Arts Residencies in the South Dublin County Council Administrative area:	Identify Funding Stream	Autumn 2020
	Partnership Development	Spring 2021 onwards.
	Identify methodology for delivery of Service. Eg. To be delivered directly by SDCC's CAS. Or To be delivered by CAS in partnership with another Arts Organisation skilled at delivering Early Years Arts Residencies in the context of community pre-schools. Other strategic partners may also be identified.	Spring 2021
	Creation of Residency Advisory Group	Summer 2021
	Selection of community pre-school settings that will participate in the Residency	Summer 2021
	Delivery of Residencies	September 2021 - April 2022
	Dissemination of residency outcomes as part of local Networking Event	September 2022

	Residencies reviewed, developed and delivered annually	2022 - 2025
	National Dissemination Event on SDCC's Early Years Arts Programme	2025

Draft 3

SDCC's Children's Arts Service (CAS)

Strategy 4

Supporting the development of Two Pilot Intensive Community Arts Programmes.

4.1 Introduction

From poverty and unemployment to inclusion, education, health and well-being; many communities face critical challenges that require creative ideas and solutions.

Any of these challenges could use an artist's mind, a creative question or a critical thinker to help those that live there to find their way to a more healthy and just future. Communities who engage with artists over sustained periods of time can grow to appreciate the potential that the arts can have to empower people and transform lives.

However, most communities need better tools to help them begin to engage with the arts and artists in a meaningful way - while artists, need not only an invitation and funding, but the appropriate level of support, to help them to begin to engage meaningfully with the communities that are in most need of their involvement.

In many cases, the spaces in which arts and cultural activity happen can become the focal point of communities. At their best, they are places in which artists can genuinely collaborate with community to nurture creativity and critical thinking. They have the potential to become places where people gather, a sense of identity and inclusion is nurtured and compassion is expanded.

These spaces do not necessarily have to be Arts Specific, the local Library, Community Centre and even pre-school are all places that can provide children and families with increased access to meaningful arts experiences. While art spaces are important in all communities, they can be especially significant in areas that may experience economic and social marginalisation and disadvantage and are striving to improve the quality of life and opportunities for residents helping to create environments that are more sustainable and inclusive.

4.2 Rationale for the Development of this Strategy

The Early Years and Children's Arts Consultation recognises that there are a number of communities within the administrative area of South Dublin County Council that are experiencing many challenges; including social, educational and economic marginalisation and disadvantage.

It also recognises implicitly that many of these communities possess significant human resources within their local populations that will actively support positive initiatives that help to improve outcomes for children and young people.

As the Model of Practice that has been included in the this document demonstrates, participation in intensive, meaningful Arts Programming that is ambitious and long-term can play a significant role in the Regeneration and Development of a small local community.

4.3 Facts:

According to Census 2016 we can ascertain the following facts:

- 3988 or 1.4% of the population of South Dublin Are under one year old.
- There are 21,733 children aged 0 to 4 years residing in South Dublin. This represented 7.8% of the total population in South Dublin.
- There were 34,665 children aged 5 to 12 years residing in South Dublin in 2016, this represents 12.4% of the population.

2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index:

- In 2016 the Pobal HP Deprivation Index classed 18.9% of Small Areas in South Dublin as *Very Disadvantaged, Disadvantaged or Extremely Disadvantaged*.
- The index identified that 38.8% of the population living in *Extremely Disadvantaged, Disadvantaged or Very Disadvantaged* areas in South Dublin were under 25 years of age.
- In total, there are 45 Small Areas that are classed as being *Very Disadvantaged* and they represent 5% of the total Small Areas in South Dublin.
- The most disadvantaged small areas in the South County Dublin Administrative areas are located in Tallaght, Ronanstown and Collinstown.

Information obtained from: South Dublin CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE EVIDENCE BASELINE REPORT, 2017.

4.4 Recommendation

The Children and Early Years Arts Consultation Recommends that the Arts Office **Pilots Two Intensive Community Arts Programmes** with a strong focus on Child and Family Participation in two separate small areas within the administrative area of South Dublin County Council that have been identified in the 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index.

The Objectives of the Strategy would include:

- To deliver *regular and long term* access to meaningful arts experiences for children and young people in a specific area by working in partnership with local communities.
- To work in partnership with local stakeholders to:
 - identify the needs of children and young people within the area.
 - identify appropriate arts programming opportunities for children and young people in the area.

Stakeholders can include but are not limited to: Primary Schools, Community Pre-Schools, Youth Services, Local Family Organisations and Resource Centres.

- To work in partnership with local stakeholders and the broader arts community to identify the appropriate art form(s) and arts programming opportunities that will meet the needs of children and young people in the area.
- To identify a range of appropriate local and national partners that will appropriately support the development of this strategy.
- To create appropriate local structures that will support and advise on the arts programme development and help build programming capacity. Eg. Establishment of an Advisory Group.
- To provide regular opportunities for the community to witness and celebrate the work of the programme.
- To create a programme development strategy that is ambitious and inclusive.
- To measure the success of the strategy across a range of criteria by consistently reviewing and assessing its efficacy.
- To partner an appropriate third level institution to conduct an **independent research study which can look at the impact of the Pilot Programmes on the children and young people who participate in them.**

- To create mechanisms for promoting the work and outcomes of the programme both locally and nationally, further supporting the development of a communities sense of identity and pride in their local area.

Why two pilot programmes?

It is recommended that **two pilot programmes** are selected to provide an opportunity to compare the relevant methodologies and outcomes of the Strategy that are being implemented in two distinct areas of the South Dublin County Council Administrative Area.

This will help to determine the relevant factors and conditions that support the development of relevant Arts Programming and regeneration within a Community context.

The factors that would help to identify the area where the programme could take place could include:

- An areas Inclusion in the 2016 Pobal Deprivation Index.
- A strong Network of community organisations being present in the area.
- A local primary school who express a desire to develop their level of arts provision for local children.
- A community pre-school who express a desire to develop their level of arts provision for local children.
- A public space that can be utilised for Arts activities eg. A local Library or a Community Centre.
- Involvement of a local youth service in the area.
- Potentially an area that includes new developments of social housing by SDCC to support the enhanced integration of new families to an area.

4.5 Methodologies:

Step 1. A feasibility study of potential areas where the pilot programme could be situated is conducted.

The study would include:

- An assessment of need in the area.
- Identification of possible partner organisations present in the area.

- Identification of possible approaches to delivering arts programming for Early Years and Children in the area.
- Identification of a possible network of support for programming on the area.
- Identification of possible regional and or national partners to support the initiative via practical and funding support.
- Identification of a relevant third level institution who will support the research strand of the pilot programme.
- Development of an incremental Programme Plan in consultation with programme partners and the local community.

Step 2: Identifying who will implement the pilot initiative:

A number of different approaches could be utilised to implement the strategy these include:

- (a) A programme manager could be contracted by the Arts Office of South Dublin County Council.

or

- (b) Depending upon the scale of the pilot programme that is determined an independent culture company could be established by SDCC to deliver the initiative(s). eg Exploring how the Dublin City Council Culture Company was established and founded could be explored.

<https://www.dublincitycouncilculturecompany.ie/>

Or

- (c) Organisations already in existence with an understanding and track record of the Arts and Community Development are invited to tender for the first phase of the pilot programme.

Step 3. Implementation of the first programme phase with review and research methodologies in place.

It is envisaged that implementation of the first phase of the programme would include:

- A meaningful Early Years Arts Programme/Residency that would intensively work with Children Under Six and their Families, partnered by local Early Years Services.

- A meaningful Arts Programme that would intensively work with Children under 12 that would be partnered by local schools and other appropriate children's services in the area.

Funding Recommendations:

1. By its nature this strategy must be delivered in partnership both local and national organisations. While it is envisaged that a number of partners would work together to fund and develop such an initiative, it is realistic to propose that South Dublin County Council would be the lead partner in establishing and helping to steer this initiative.

Given the significant number of Social Housing that will be built by South Dublin County Council in the next three years, in addition to other large civic building projects, it is recommended that South Dublin County Council's *Per Cent for Art Scheme* is utilised to deliver the first phase of intensive high quality Arts Programmes for children and young people that is identified in the strategy.

Other departments within the Council with a community development remit may also be persuaded to see the value in contributing practically and financially to the strategy.

2. Funding Partnerships: Local partners such as the South Dublin Partnership and HSC could be approached to fund and support the initiative.
3. In addition to longer term funding. Short Term project strands within the programme work could be funded by :
 - (a) The Arts Council via YPCE or Arts Participation - Schemes and Bursaries
 - (b) Local Creative Ireland Funding

4.6 How Strategy 4 will comply with Relevant Local and National Policy:

Piloting the Delivery of an intensive and sustained Programme of Creativity across the age groups in specific communities experiencing the effects of economic and social marginalisation and disadvantage complies with a number of objectives determined in both Local and National Plans and Strategies.

1. SDCC Arts Plan:

Strategy One of the Children and Early Years Arts Strategy would support the delivery of the following objectives that are identified in SDCC's Local Arts Plan.

- Assist audiences to access a broad range of arts and cultural experiences.
- To provide opportunities for children and young people to explore their creative potential and expand their experience of the arts.
- Work in an integrated way with Council Departments charged with the planning and delivery of capital projects and incorporate cultural provision into Local Area Plans and capital budgets.

2. SDCC County Development Plan

Strategy One of the Children and Early Years Arts Strategy would support the following *Consideration* identified in SDCC's County Development Plan:

(a) Quality of Life, with an emphasis on key economic, environmental, social and cultural indicators;

Social Inclusion, with an emphasis on creating socially and physically inclusive neighbourhoods, taking account of the recommendations of The National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2013-2015 and Inclusion Ireland's Changing Places campaign.

Strategy One of the Children and Early Years Arts Strategy would support the delivery of objective 1 that is identified in SDCC's Housing Policy that is contained in the County Development Plan.

HOUSING (H) Policy 7 Urban Design in Residential Developments

H7 Objective 1: To ensure that residential development contributes to the creation of sustainable communities in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009).

3. SDCC's Creative Ireland Strategy

Strategy One of the Children and Early Years Arts Strategy would support the delivery of the following objectives that are identified in SDCC's Creative Ireland Strategy.

- *Advocate for the role of culture and creativity as a central part of the vision for the regeneration of public and private spaces.*
- *Develop the potential of existing and new arts and creative festivals and events to build creative communities and strengthen the cultural identity, vitality and cohesion of neighbourhoods across the county.*

4. First Five National Strategy:

Strategy One of the Children and Early Years Arts Strategy would support the delivery of the following objectives that are identified in The Department of Youth Affairs *First Five Strategy*.

New developments in child health

First 5 sets out new measures to promote positive health behaviours and the mental health of babies, young children and their families, and to enhance the National Healthy Childhood Programme.

A new model of parenting support led by a new Parenting Unit established by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Accessible, high-quality information and guidance will be made available for parents to promote healthy behaviours, facilitate positive play-based early learning and create the conditions to form and maintain strong parent-child relationships.

5. Supporting the Development of the New Action Plan for Social Inclusion:

Strategy One of the Children and Early Years Arts Strategy would support the delivery of the Community Development objectives that were identified by *the Consultation on the New National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2018 to 2021*, published by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in April 2019.

- Community development work is essential for making progress on persistent poverty and social exclusion and should be an integral part of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion. Outreach work to help communities develop and deliver solutions needs to be recognised and supported. Government departments should use designated staff with experience of community development work in order to operate in partnership with community development groups.

- Funding for community development groups needs to be multi-annual and more flexible. Present funding methods can inhibit groups from working to a long-term vision or testing new initiatives on a small scale.

Draft 3

Conclusion:

It is acknowledged that this is an ambitious strategy for the Council to adopt, however as the Sistema Scotland model demonstrates - long term, ambitious Arts Programming in small communities can have very positive outcomes for residents when they are underpinned by the development of strong relationships and meaningful inter-actions.

The need for creative thinking and significant interventions that will support Community Regeneration within certain small areas within South Dublin County Council's Administrative Area has already been established. This strategy provides a pathway towards supporting that regeneration.

4.7 Timeline for the Development of SDCC's Pilot Intensive Community Arts Strategy:

Recommendation	Task	Timeline
	Create terms of reference for programme.	Spring 2021
	Identify the type of personnel and/or organisation required to develop the programme	Summer 2021
	Identify partner organisation that will document, evaluate and monitor the programmes' progress	Spring – Summer 2021
	Put the programme out to tender	Autumn 2021
	Research and consultation to be carried out by appointed personnel/ organisation into the local communities that could partner the initiative.	Jan – June 2022
	Appointment of the two small local communities that can work in partnership with CAS to deliver the pilot programmes.	June 2022
	Creation of Local Advisory Group	June 2022
	Implement phase 1	Sep 2022 – Sep 2023

	Ongoing review and evaluation of programme	
	Implement phase 2	Sep 2023–Sep 2024
	Disseminate Findings of phase 1	Jan 2024
	Ongoing review and evaluation of programme Continued programme implementation, review, documentation and dissemination	Until 2025

Draft 3

Model of Practice 1

Using the Arts to Support Community Regeneration

Sistema Scotland

<https://makeabignoise.org.uk/sistema-scotland/>

Introduction

Sistema Scotland is a charity that works intensively within specific communities in Scotland that have experienced significant levels of social and economic marginalisation and disadvantage. The organisation uses participation in its **Big Noise** orchestra programmes to support the holistic development of the children and young people taking part.

On their website the organisation states: *this enables the children and young people involved in our programmes to reach their full potential, leading successful and fulfilled lives.* The organisation also articulates its belief that this philosophy has a knock on effect for families and the wider community in general.

What does it do?

Big Noise - is an intensive orchestral programme that takes place in a number of small communities in Scotland and is accessed by both children and young people. The programme uses a variety of innovative music teaching methods that are delivered across a range of time periods including during and after school and during the school holidays. The organisation also programmes regular performances with participants - as a strong objective of the programme is to keep the wider community as involved as possible.

The programme is free of charge – ie. there is no charge for the tuition, instruments, healthy snacks, trips and t-shirts that the children are provided with who participate in the programme.

More than 2,500 children and young people engage regularly with the three established Sistema Scotland centres. In addition to the Big Noise orchestras, Sistema Scotland runs Baby Noise and Adult Noise programmes which enables the organisation to work with many additional participants.

Early Years

As part of its work The Big Noise programme includes an Early Years' intervention programme. As the initiative focuses on long-term delivery and engagement with children - Big Noise centres work with pre-school children in weekly nursery sessions and this develops into twice weekly sessions in Primary 1 and 2. These sessions gradually build on core skills such as listening, concentration, rhythm, rhyme and teamwork whilst also encouraging children to learn to play an instrument in a group.

Children in Primary 3 and beyond have the opportunity to participate in an intensive and immersive programme of after-school and holiday club music teaching and performance all delivered by the Big Noise Programme. Participants can receive up to four after-school sessions of intervention and support a week during term time; and up to four days each week during spring, summer and autumn holidays until they leave school.

Information provided by Sistema Scotland identifies four principles that underpin the work of its Big Noise Programme:

- *Ambition:*
- *Longevity*
- *Intensity*
- *Inclusivity*

Where are they located?

In 2008 Sistema Scotland established their first Big Noise programme in Raploch, a community housing estate in Stirling Scotland –

a community characterised as one of the country's most deprived neighbourhoods, plagued by crime, unemployment, poor health and low opportunity.

Guardian Newspaper 2008

Further Big Noise centres opened in Glasgow's Govanhill (2013) and Aberdeen's Torry (2015).

Research:

A particularly relevant strand of this initiative is that, in tandem with the delivery of its work -Sistema Scotland has been the subject of *four independent research studies* which have looked at the impact that the Big Noise Programmes have had on the children and young people who participate in them.

In March 2019 the Glasgow Centre for Population Health published the report, *People change lives* by authors Chris Harkins and Katie Moore. This work draws upon five years of detailed research and identifies a range of important impacts that participation in *Big Noise* has on children and young people.

It is worth noting that the authors of the report state “our findings are consistent across the Big Noise centres in Glasgow, Stirling and Aberdeen despite different community contexts and participant demographics”.

The report's authors identify the following impacts:

- *Increasing confidence, discipline, pride, and aspiration.*
- *Improved team-working, communication, and leadership.*
- *Enhanced academic skills including listening, concentration, and creativity.*
- *Increased resilience, happiness, sense of belonging and fulfilment.*
- *Strong musical skills development.*
- *Uptake of physical activity and healthy eating, avoidance of damaging behaviours.*
- *Development of positive social groups, peer relationships and cultural engagement.*
- *Respite and protection for vulnerable participants.*

It is also worth noting that a cost benefit analysis of the programme undertaken by Glasgow Caledonian University indicated that Big Noise Govanhill had the potential to generate greater social benefits than the social costs to deliver it. In weighing up the impacts, the result was that for every £1 spent; around £9 of social benefit was generated.

Conclusion:

The *Big Noise* Programmes proves that intensive Arts Programming delivered in small areas that may experience social and economic poverty and/or marginalisation can have significant benefits to not only its participants but to an entire community. This model of practice directly supports the recommendations that are made in Strategy 3 of this document which advocates support for the development of **Two Pilot Intensive Community Arts Programmes**. If developed appropriately this initiative really would have the potential to *change lives* as has been identified in the work of Big Noise.

Model of Practice 2

Beag

Beag explores the endless possibilities of play, imagination, creativity and expression with and for children under three years of age.

Graffiti Theatre Company

BEAG is a unique Early Years Arts programme which began in 2008 and was commissioned and funded by the **HSE South, The Arts Office of Cork City Council** and **Cork County Council**. Since its inception Beag has been hosted by Graffiti Theatre Company.

How did it start?

In 2010, Cork City and County Councils and the HSE formed a steering committee, which included membership from childcare training and education (Cork College of Commerce) and the arts community (Graffiti Theatre Company) with a view to investing strategically in an Early Years Arts Initiative in Cork City and County. A fund of €47,000 was committed by the funding agencies for a pilot Beag Project, with further resources contributed by the host organising partner, Graffiti Theatre Company.

While exploratory initiatives in early years arts had previously taken place in the Cork City and county region, this was the first large-scale research project led by a statutory agencies specifically exploring arts for early years.

Margaret O'Sullivan
Beag Pilot Project Report 2011

These organisations have continued to support this programme on an annual basis until the time of preparing this document - June 2019.

Focus of the Programme:

As described by Graffiti –

BEAG works with a highly skilled team of artists whose work is specifically focused towards developing a body of work to engage with children aged 0-3 years.

BEAG focuses on children from birth to three years, and the work is guided by three core principles:

- the creative voice and experience of the children
- the centrality of the aesthetic quality in artist-led work
- the active engagement of the childcare worker

Beag Pilot Project

The BEAG Pilot Project took place in 2011 and was conceived as a PbR project. As described in the 2011 Beag Pilot Project Report: *PbR is a research methodology that facilitates creative outcomes in the form of new works, alongside the advancement of knowledge about or within a practice. In this process, practice is an integral part of the methodology.*

During the pilot programme, three artists worked together as an integrated team, exploring their practice and developing artistic encounters for children in early childhood settings. These encounters incorporated both participatory and performance dimensions.

The Aims of the Beag Pilot Programme:

The BEAG pilot project was designed to investigate the feasibility and sustainability of an Early Years Arts initiative in Cork, using a range of research objectives.

The overall aim as described in the report was identified as being:

the building of a culture of early years arts engagement among childcare workers, artists, the organising partners and funding agencies and the wide network of international contacts that grew as a result of the process.

Objectives:

The BEAG pilot project's research objectives sought to address questions of practice, capacity building, development and sustainability for the future.

It did this by facilitating analysis of the effectiveness of early years practice and by observing the delivery of arts work in early childhood settings. This approach involved a particular focus on imaginative play, creativity, well-being, collaboration, communication, problem-solving and inquiry.

The programme also ought to actively identify opportunities for the further development of an Early Years Arts Team in Cork and the development and consolidation of links with early years arts practitioners overseas were additional objectives of the project.

Participants

As identified in the report, the participants in this project included 180 children between birth and three years of age, 24 childcare workers in 12 early childhood settings in Cork city and county, the BEAG team of three artists, a Project Director/Researcher, Margaret O’Sullivan, artistic advisers Emelie Fitzgibbon and Síle Ní Bhroin, a research adviser Dr Marion McCarthy, UCC and management support provided by the staff of Graffiti Theatre Company.

Phase one

This was described as the ***Planning and Development*** phase and it took place over the first three months. During this time the focus of the programme was on planning, scheduling, operational aspects and the development of the relationship between all participants, alongside the collaborative training and development of the BEAG team. Twelve early childhood settings, representing a diverse range of contexts, were identified by the HSE and Cork City and County Councils and were invited to participate.

Artist training and development consisted of:

- self-guided collective workshops - three artists sharing their disciplines
- a programme of training by Irish-based and international practitioners
- development of new early years activities in intensive exploratory sessions
- visits to early childhood settings and meetings with childcare workers
- development of and induction in data collection methodologies
- Additional preparations included development of project coordination and tracking methodologies, research material collation and literature reviews, gathering of equipment, schedules, materials and project documentation plans

Phase Two

The Active Engagement Phase in Early Childhood Settings, took place over five months. During this phase both artists and the project director worked with both children and childcare workers to deliver the following:

- Conducting sessions
- Documenting process and feedback
- Developing new work.

Throughout the project a process of ongoing analysis, feedback and the application of a theoretical framework in the context of practice and documented material was ongoing.

Phase Three

The Reporting Phase, dedicated itself to the collation of the significant amount of visual, aural, verbal and written material that had been gathered during the project. This material was then analysed and compiled into a comprehensive report of the pilot process.

Evaluation Methodology

The BEAG pilot project evaluation appears to be rigorous. Work was documented, monitored and evaluated internally throughout the process from planning to delivery of the final report.

The methodologies as identified in the report included:

- Self and peer evaluation perspectives which were applied within the team on an ongoing basis.
- Reflective journals which were maintained by all members of the team.
- Feedback from childcare and other workers was documented.
- Analysis of photographic evidence was conducted with a view to reflecting the engagement of the children.

Evaluation Outcomes

Fundamentally to the development of Early Years Arts Practice in Ireland, The BEAG pilot project demonstrated the feasibility and sustainability that can be achieved within an Early Years Arts initiative when the appropriate supports in place.

As identified in the report specific programme outcomes include:

- A team of artists equipped to deliver early years arts practice
- Twelve childcare settings with experience of engaging with artistic encounters for the very young
- A portfolio of new artistic works for the youngest combining participation and performance in music, theatre, visual arts, storytelling, improvisation and sound
- A desire on the part of many childcare workers to explore their own creativity in practice
- Enhanced structural capacity to manage and plan for further early years development
- Evidence of the effectiveness of the Integrated Arts Team approach
- Demonstrated need and hunger for artistic and creative encounters within the early childhood community
- A rich body of material gathered during the pilot project, and evidence of the potential for further research based on practice in this area
- Solid links with networks of local, national and international practitioners, educationalists and researchers with a strong interest in supporting the development of BEAG

Documentation

Documentation methodologies included:

- Artists' portfolios, statements of practice and learning, journals
- Video and audio recording of exploratory workshops, training sessions, work in settings and of work by guest facilitators
- Semi-formal interviews with childcare workers after each session
- Profiles of participating settings, including photos and written descriptions of space and resources

- Observational notes and personal response journals by artists
- Literature on early childhood arts theory and practice.

Dissemination

The outcomes were documented in a final report of the project, a summary of which was disseminated to all the participants.

This final report was publicly presented at a celebratory event in Crawford Art Gallery and was attended by representatives of the participating early childhood settings and by professionals in the areas of health, education and the arts. Specialists in infant mental health, development psychology, education and curriculum development, children's rights and many other areas attended the event and/or received the summary BEAG document after the event.

Training and Development

There was a strong training and development strand to this project which included full artist team participation in workshops and performances at the annual La Baracca Festival in Bologna, Italy.

The BEAG Artist Development Initiative, under the auspices of Arts Projects Ireland, received a travel and training grant from the Arts Council for a week-long training opportunity with La Baracca – Testoni Ragazzi, the leading early arts development company in the world.

The artist team also attended the Starcatchers Symposium, Edinburgh.

Comments from participants/stakeholders:

'The children really had the time of their lives every single time you arrived with a new adventure for them!:) We feel so lucky having been involved in this project... Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.' Childcare Worker

'I recently went through some of the visual documentation [...] in slideshow format. As I watched each image unfold from the previous one I was so struck by the children's special presence and their simple joyful response. I realised again the importance of giving them these experiences and I feel very privileged and also in a way humbled to be amongst them.'
Artist

Ongoing Delivery of Beag

As stated by Graffiti, since the conclusion of the pilot project, *Beag* has continued to work with Early Childcare settings throughout Cork City and County and had continued to be funded on an annual basis by HSE South, The Arts Office of Cork City Council and Cork County Council.

In 2018 BEAG worked with 15 child-focused groups. These spaces included one Parent & Toddler group and two Direct Provisions. Seven of the childcare spaces were located in RAPID areas and seven were located in the County Cork area, with the remainder based in Cork City. Over 3644 artistic contacts (Introduction contact, Childcare Staff contact, Pre-Session contact, Artist contact and Review contact) with children, their childcare workers and, in some settings, with their parents in Cork County and City were created.

Conclusion

The longevity of this programme demonstrates that *Beag* has developed an Early Years Arts practice and methodology which is of an extremely high standard. Creating a well-supported and researched pilot programme that has the potential to be mainstreamed, is an effective approach to the development of Early Years Arts practice within the SDCC administrative area.

This methodology has the potential to be adapted to other contexts and effectively delivered in partnership with Graffiti.

Beag is now undergoing a Strategic Planning review, which includes exploring the potential of creating a National Beag Programme.

It is recommended that the implementation of the CAS Early Years Arts Strategy in Pre-schools settings within the administrative area of SDCC would be greatly supported if delivered in consultation with Graffiti's Beag Programme.

This summary of the Beag Programme has been informed by the following:

Beag Programme Report 2011 written by Margaret O'Sullivan with additional information provided by the staff of Graffiti Theatre Company.