

Learning Plan





What is Making Theatre Gaining Skills?

We provide an authentic work experience based around the production of a short play for children presented in a specially designed pop-up theatre. Participants work together supported by a team of professional practitioners using team-work, problem-solving and creative skills to build the theatre, devise a story, design and make the set, props and costumes and create lighting and sound effects.

The intensive schedule, combined with highly experienced leadership, offers the learners technical training, combined with transferable personal learning & thinking skills such as time management, effective communication and resourcefulness.



Find out more on our Youtube channel

Sketches, plays,
trailers and more



Click here



Our Aims and Objectives

- * To provide an innovative response to the general challenge of **up-skilling unemployed people** with no qualifications
- * To **reduce economic inactivity** by helping more long-term unemployed people achieve basic skills in literacy and numeracy
- * To encourage people from disadvantaged areas to be more confident and **pursue a wider range of career options**, apprenticeships or further learning
- * To establish a proven and cost-effective new way of **delivering basic skills** that can be rolled out across the country
- * To support the particular training needs of people with learning difficulties to enable them to move towards employment

The benefits for participants are wide ranging including:



Our Courses

Since 2011 we have run 36 successful courses. We have worked with over 320 participants in 15 different locations. Our partnership with Aldingbourne Trust in running the Bognor Makerspace has enabled us to expand our range. Alongside the intensive Making Theatre Gaining Skills programme we also offer:

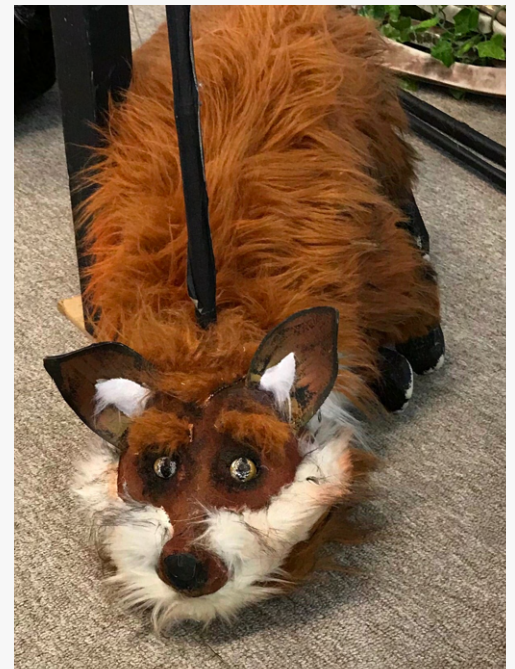
- * A pop-up community cafe
- * A community based comedy group - The Bognor Insitute of Laughter, run by local volunteers, working to give a platform to anyone with comedy bones
- * The Bognor Puppet Festival - showcasing plays, workshops and street theatre to entertain and delight families, featuring some of the UK's most talented puppeteers
- * Cookery classes - teaching techniques used in a wide variety of hospitality settings that give participants the skills, confidence and qualifications to apply for many different jobs



A range of tasters, workshops, open days, short courses and events are designed to encourage participation from reluctant learners and also provide a progression route as their confidence builds. Working closely with referral agencies, we can identify areas of interest that will link to future programmes.

Recent and future projects include:

- * Carpentry workshops
- * Comedy writing and performances
- * Heritage sound effects
- * Art and craft club



How Do We Measure Our Success?



Michael Ginsburg and Madeline Denny are occupational therapy students on the University of Brighton MSc programme. They joined MTGS from 13th -17th June 2022 to observe a one-week course in action. Here are some of their observations:

There were 6 participants on this course, most had participated in a previous course. Most were not in employment and had severe and enduring mental health conditions, one had a learning disability. The week was structured around preparing all aspects of a short puppetry performance aimed at infant children.

We ran two 20 minute focus groups. One reflected on the ways in which the course has contributed to wellbeing, the second on how particular activities contribute to better mental health. We also conducted two informal 1:1 interviews. We have grouped the responses into six themes:

The environment



Participants found the physical aspects of the Makerspace helpful, the sense of it being a theatre; they did not feel enclosed or clinical. They like how the space is set up to welcome people, giving them the autonomy to make tea and coffee.



Achieving and feeling valued



Participants found that the course promoted a sense of achievement and that each person was valued as an individual.



If you've been unemployed, you feel like a problem, a problem to your advisor, a problem to society, this can be the first time you feel valued, it makes you think 'I can do that'.



Routine and motivation



Outside of the course, participants struggled with being motivated. They felt the course helped them learn about the importance of structure and practice. Participants also felt they had learned enough to 'pass on knowledge'.



I most look forward to the routine, having something to get up for.

Activity



Participants found that being absorbed in a particular activity meant that they were distracted from challenges they face. They found that repetitive activities are good because they are mindful.



Feeling nervous about something and challenging yourself, and then the sense of satisfaction after doing it can make you feel good.

Connection



Participants felt that the course helped them build a sense of connections to others. They also talked about the importance of a non-judgemental space, a feeling that everyone in the group had mental health challenges and their mental health condition would not be stigmatised here.

Professional theatre



Participants are aware that the end result - the show - isn't the only reason for attending - they do find that working towards something specific adds a sense of purpose to the tasks.

Being able to create a performance for children enables the participants to utilise their talents for the benefit of the local community.

Case Studies

1. Participant A

Participant A was referred by the Littlehampton Job Centre. She had a number of health issues and had very poor self-esteem. Her progress was good and she worked hard, especially during the tour. In group discussion she revealed how depressed she was at being out of work and that her life seemed meaningless.

The other participants encouraged her to join support groups and she was much more relaxed by the end of the course. Participant A has now been offered paid care work.

2. Participant B

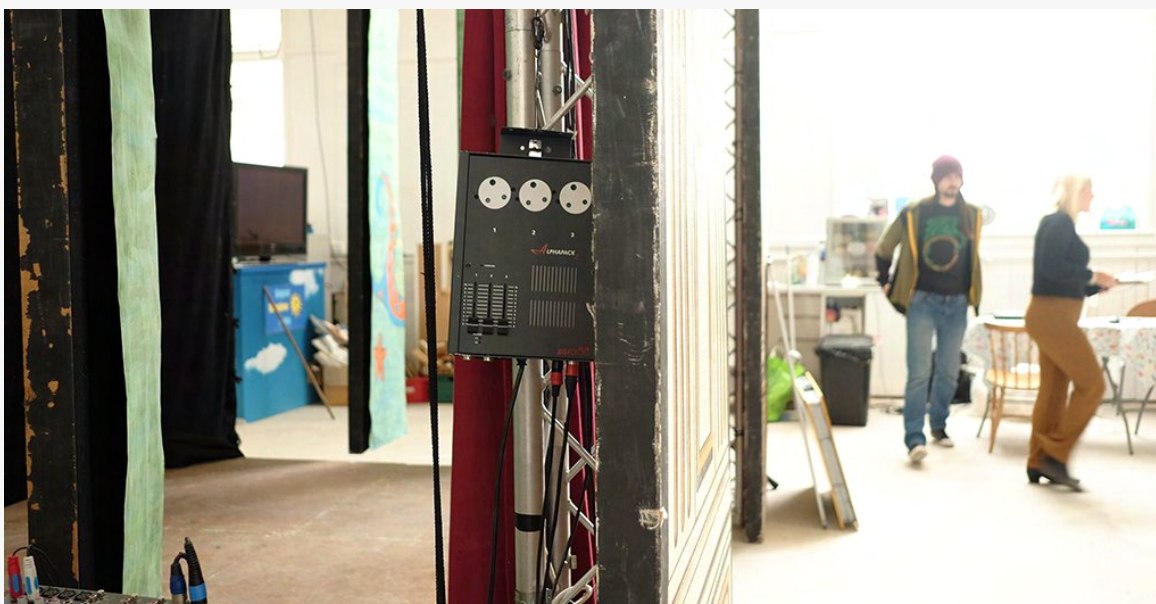
Participant B was a very bright and creative individual who suffered a major breakdown some months ago and had related health problems.

He was a little reluctant to engage to start with but became more relaxed and enjoyed the group discussion. At the end of the programme he was called for an interview at a specialist warehousing company and seemed much more positive about his future.

3. Participant C

Participant C was a young man who had a bad experience when he lost his apprenticeship and became depressed. He was an excellent worker and really enjoyed the theatre work.

Having been committed to electrical work, he decided to apply to join a full-time technical theatre course at Chichester College. He has also secured a full-time job at Butlins which he hopes to continue until he starts his course in September.



Thoughts, Experiences and Feedback



“ I was put in the set construction team and we built the set from the plan given to us by the stage manager. I’ve never done anything like this before. it’s the best thing I’ve ever done.



Participant



From our participants!



“ I have enjoyed the entire course from start to finish. It has given me such an amazing opportunity to try new things. push myself out of my comfort zone and to meet new people.



Participant

“ It’s been good – I’ve enjoyed it. I’m now a lot more confident – talking in group discussion. meeting new people. working in teams and trying new things. That’s surprised me.



Participant

“ It was a challenge but I managed to get through it and I’ve learnt new skills. I’ve enjoyed watching it all come together! It’s helped me to consider other work options including apprenticeships.



Participant



From our partners and sponsors!



“ You have supported over 100 of our most vulnerable claimants, many of whom did not consider themselves in any way ready to consider work and were socially isolated. Every single programme resulted in voluntary work options and job starts for some participants! For me though, the greatest significance was the commitment you gained from the individuals to complete the programme with over 90% staying the course.



Emma Wareham
County Partnership Manager
Department for Work & Pensions



“ The Pathfinder team in Bognor have introduced many clients to the Making Theatre Gaining Skills project and all the clients have greatly benefited from gaining a resource of skills, creativity and social opportunity. The team have a unique ability to identify the need in the individual and the project enables them to work on this, perhaps reinforcing old skills, increasing self-confidence, strengthening self-esteem, practising communication skills, and providing a life line of introducing a purpose to life and setting small targets that enable the client to see the colour in life and enjoy living again. The projects have enabled skills to be gained that help the client to feel more confident about career pathways and training courses, and have introduced clients to opportunities that they never knew existed.



Suzanne Cumming
Pathfinder Clinician, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust



“ This was undoubtedly a team accomplishment. The young people, who had never met each other or worked together before, had really embraced the opportunities for learning with professional experts and demonstrated creative ingenuity and skill, real team work, great communication skills and problem solving abilities.

The Q and A session after the performance showed that not only had they got a huge amount out of their participation, but that they had grown in confidence and self worth, they had developed real leadership skills and that they had a huge sense of respect for each other and for the creative professionals that they had worked alongside with. There was also a thirst for more.



Jane Bryant
Former CEO of Artswork



From some of our audiences!

“ We like our children to experience live performances whenever possible, and would be very happy to welcome future visits. We think it's a great project and as well as being pleased that our children benefit we are pleased to give the opportunity for the theatre group to come to us, as think it is important that there are these opportunities for young people.



St Mary's School
Bognor Regis



“ The Children were very engaged and it was pitched just right.

I loved the show, it was like the Panto you would see on CBBC.



Miss. L Hotston
Teacher



A Transferable Learning Experience

The Bognor Makerspace provides unique production facilities that can be made available to schools, professional theatre companies, art therapists and employers. We offer:

- * Short courses of variable length and full-time programmes
- * Cookery courses
- * The Bognor Institute of Laughter
- * Puppet Festivals and development of a Puppet Making Apprenticeship programme

Supporting you in your own Space

The programme can be adapted to run in a range of spaces. Previously courses have taken place in theatres, school halls, community centres, a railway station and a military museum.



We can facilitate the course at your venue or enable you, with training and support, to run the course with your own team of practitioners.

Find out more on the Makerspace website

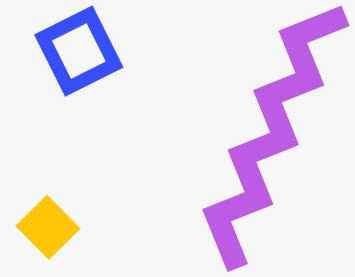


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bognormake.co.uk



Three Case Studies: An Adaptable Programme



1. Greenwich BTEC Students

In 2013 The MTGS team travelled to Greenwich to work with a group of full time BTEC students. The course was adapted to enable separate level three units to be delivered to a group of BTEC students, studying variously Stage Management, Musical Theatre and Events Management, plus a group of Level 2 students. The final performance was presented to local primary school pupils in the school hall.

2. Think Family Theatre Training

MTGS organised a three week course which was funded by Think Family with some additional support from Awards for All and the WSCC Community Initiative Fund. We recruited a group of adults from key areas of Bognor and Littlehampton who would participate in the technical theatre training programme, produce a short play to be toured to local schools and help organise a Family Arts Day on the final day. Participants were mainly ESA claimants with two JSA claimants.

Follow-up work was undertaken with the main group of participants to ensure that they maximised all the opportunities on offer. This included support with job applications, customer service workshops, interview technique practice and one-to-one advice and guidance.

3. Young Carers DVD

MTGS was commissioned to produce a short film which highlighted the needs of young carers in school. The project had two aims: to produce a thought-provoking film with original songs that could be shared in school assemblies, and also to involve young carers living near Bognor in both the development of the script and the actual production. The production week offered the young people an insight into theatre production and camera work led by an experienced community film-maker. The completed learning pack with DVD was distributed to all secondary schools in West Sussex.

Family Arts Day

Family Arts Day was designed as a community event which included several local arts groups attracting attendance from families living in key Bersted areas. The organisers focused on providing a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere plus encouraging take-up of arts opportunities in the area.



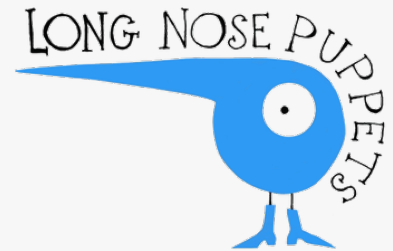
Developing Puppetry

Since 2011 Making Theatre Gaining Skills has incorporated puppets into their programmes. The participants design and make puppets, from very simple hand puppets to more complex animatronics which are incorporated into the performances.

More recently MTGS has developed a focus on puppetry. The first Bognor Puppet Festival was held in 2021 bringing together professional companies to showcase their work as well as creating a performance platform for the piece of theatre created by MTGS. Companies included:

- * Smoking Apples Theatre
- * Dread Falls Theatre
- * Long Nose Puppets
- * Norwich Puppet Theatre
- * Touched Theatre
- * Splodge Designs

Arts Council funding has enabled the company to develop partnerships with existing puppet makers and applied theatre practitioners to expand the scope of work that can be delivered and provide participants with new opportunities to create puppets, develop puppeteering skills and perform in a safe environment.



Click here to watch the trailer!



Detailed Programme of Delivery

The timescale for the programme is flexible. The following plan is divided into sections which can be delivered as whole sessions or as brief introductions depending on resources, venue and timescale.

Rationale/Description



The aim of this programme is to give learners experience of working together on the creation of a new theatre piece for children utilising a specially-designed mini theatre. The participants will gain technical and craft skills in set construction, prop and costume making, lighting, sound design and stage management.

Prior Experience



Participants don't need to have any prior theatre or arts experience as the focus is on transferable employment skills such as task management, problem solving, effective communication and resourcefulness.

Aims



To focus on the transferable soft skills that employers need, ensuring that the participants gain a real understanding of the career pathways on offer. To provide unemployed people with real, transferable employment skills that will help them get work. To build participants' confidence.

Progression



Participants will be advised and encouraged to explore a range of career options, apprenticeships and further learning. Participants will have the opportunity to become independent enquirers, creative thinkers, reflective learners, self-managers and team-players.

Resources



This course requires that a performance can be rehearsed and presented to an audience. The space should have adequate health and safety procedures and technical facilities. A budget to cover the cost of construction or hire of transport, any set, costume, props and effects may be required. Adequate facilitators and staff should be available to ensure thorough delivery.

Learning Objectives	Activities	Resources	Success Criteria	Soft skills
To introduce the course and explain rules To make participants aware of health & safety issues To introduce scale plans and basic model To set up the theatre	Introduction to the unit Give out stationary etc Draw out the areas of the stage Practical exercises to instil information Look at scale (practical work sheet) Look at model boxes Build/set up theatre	Scale work sheets Model box examples Mini Theatre	All Will have understanding of basic H&S Will have attempted a scale drawing Will have contributed to building the theatre Some Will be able to realise scale drawings Will have a clear understanding of H & S	Team work Ability to take instructions
To explore notion of budget To introduce creative ideas	What is a budget / Petty cash / Budget exercise Creative workshop: Story/script Production ideas Divide into teams: scripting, design, costume, props etc. Develop up to three ideas Present ideas and best is selected	Budget worksheet Stories	All Will have an understanding of budget Will be aware of the creative process Some Will have a clear understanding of budget Will have contributed to the creative process	Team work Creativity Organisation
To establish groups and sub groups To work on the production	Groups could include: Script: Story Board Design: Set and props Marketing: Images for Posters/leaflet Costume: Ideas/design	Relevant Equipment Practitioners	All Will have been placed in a team Some Will have committed to a team and started planning	Listening/Speaking Creativity Collaboration
To introduce participants to design and how to go from page to stage To introduce custom design To continue to work in sub groups	Design workshop for whole group Make card model box with scale characters for a famous scene Look at a piece of script and offer ideas for costume Using materials realise ideas on paper Groups continue with design/ script/casting	Relevant practitioners card Materials and fabric	All Will have created a set and costume design Some Will have an understanding of how designers fit into the creative process Will have independently created a set and costume design	Creativity Organisation Following instructions
To introduce marketing and Front of House To show how lighting and sound effects a show	Share/ Research ideas for marketing ideas Create company blog Demonstrate venue equipment Show examples of effective lighting/ sound Create sound effects	Equipment Video examples Recording equipment	All Will have researched marketing ideas Will have created a sound effect Some Will have contributed to creating a blog Will have independently created sound effects	Working as a team IT skills Independent enquirers

Learning Objectives	Activities	Resources	Success Criteria	Soft skills
To emphasise budget To source costume and props To finish script To cast the show	Hold a production meeting Team research prices etc Design team go shopping with cash Budget Creative team finish and print script Make props and paint set Make Puppets Run first rehearsal	Petty cash Completed designs	All Costumes sourced and purchased Script printed Construction and sourcing underway Some Will have reviewed expenditure and reflected on importance of budget	Team work IT skills Ability to take instructions Decision making
To market the show To start rehearsals	Hold a production meeting Sub group works on poster copy Design and organise printing Rehearsal with performers, blocking Rest of group complete work on set Costume fittings	Appropriate materials IT access Printing facilities	All Will have contributed to the projects showing team work Some Will have contributed to the projects showing team work, creativity, independent enquiry and decision making	Creativity Organisation IT skills
To complete all tasks To run a technical rehearsal To finalise FOH arrangements	Hold a production meeting Check all tasks complete Run through the piece allocating tasks for all participants Set lighting and sound cues Decide on the Front of House team and allocate roles - Looking after the audience	As necessary	All Will have completed tasks including recruiting audience (local schools?) Run a successful technical rehearsal Some Will have an understanding of the process Will work independently on the show and collaborated with others	Speaking and listening Team work Ability to adapt and take criticism
To run a dress rehearsal To prepare for production	Hold a production meeting Finish off last minute changes Tidy up and pack away materials Run two dress rehearsals Debriefing to discuss any alterations needed	As necessary	All Will have successfully completed their allocated tasks Run a successful dress rehearsal Some Will have worked independently, collaborated with and supported others	Team work Organisation Ability to adapt
To successfully run a public performance To strike the set and theatre if necessary To hold a post show meeting	Production meeting Ensure everyone knows their role Performance Take down set and theatre Return/store costumes and props Post show meeting with learners De-brief with tutors	Programmes? Refreshments?	All Will have achieved most of the aims of the programme - Gained some confidence and have some sense of achievement Some Will have achieved all of the aims of the programme - Gained confidence and have a positive sense of achievement	All Personal Learning and Teaching Skills

Incorporating Formal Qualifications



All learners will complete an initial assessment, usually at the interview stage, before the start of the course. The results of these assessment will inform the learner's Individual Learning Plan and ensure the tutor's delivery is set at the correct level for each learner.

If learners do not have existing English and/or maths qualifications at their desired levels and lack the confidence or motivation to enrol on a stand alone functional skills (FS) course leading to externally set tests, functional skills can be embedded in the course. It is made clear to learners that the course contains opportunities to expand their skills in English and/or maths.



Although learners are encouraged to take up this learning, it is not a mandatory element of the course. Micro teaching sessions are placed in the course plan to deliver skills that are relevant to the practical activity being undertaken. Each learner's FS progress is tracked to ensure full coverage of the FS curriculum or to inform any future learning required.

Learners can progress onto a stand alone FS course leading to externally set tests or enrol with NCFE to take the Functional Skills test after successfully passing two practice tests.

Functional Skills course leading to externally set tests



Some learners present with the stated aim of gaining better English and/or maths qualifications. These learners are encouraged to complete the Basic Skills Agency's Diagnostic Assessment in their chosen subject.

This informs a detailed Individual Learning Plan that focuses on the learner's skills gaps, is used to track the learner's progress and is updated regularly by the tutor and learner. Tuition is delivered in a variety of ways including small groups, individual tuition, remote learning and blended learning which may incorporate all these modes of delivery. When learners are confident in their skills they will complete practice tests. Once they are successful in at least two practice tests they will be entered for the NCFE national FS test.

MTGS is an accredited examination centre with NCFE. We can deliver a range of formal learning units enabling participants to gain essential qualifications. The programme can offer a range of qualifications depending on the starting level of the learners, the guided learning hours available and whether the group needs to focus on the vocational component or developing employment skills.

Although qualifications are not mandatory, since 2011 approximately 113 participants have achieved an accredited qualification. Currently on offer:

NCFE Level 1 Award and Certificate in Employability skills

- * Unit 01 Understanding mind-set (J/506/7234)
- * Unit 07 Managing your time (K/502/3596)
- * Unit 11 Problem solving at work (A/502/3585)
- * Unit 12 Creative thinking (A/502/3599)
- * Unit 14 Taking part in a project (K/502/3601)
- * Unit 17 Following instructions (F/502/3605) Unit 17 Following instructions (F/502/3605)
- * Unit 19 Tackling number problems (R/502/3608)
- * Unit 20 Working in a team (F/502/3586)
- * Unit 30 Being safe and healthy at work (M/502/3616)



NCFE Level 1 Health and Safety Awareness

- * This is a stand alone qualification



How Can We Support You?

At MTGS our experienced staff can offer a range of support including advice and guidance, worksheets and practitioners. We offer training sessions on delivery, recruitment, functional skills, incorporating qualifications and assessment.

- * As a **NCFE Accredited Centre** we can work in partnership with you to take on the role of centre for qualifications
- * We support the **Train the Trainer model** in the workplace - we train the facilitator and at the same time teach them to train others with the aim of optimising and professionalising their current method
- * We offer a **consultation service** to support you in developing your own strategies for delivery
- * **Technical support** is also available to assist you in creating your own pop up theatre or adapting your space to accommodate the programme
- * In addition we have a range of resources that we could make available to you such as worksheets and learning mats on a variety of topics such as: scale drawing, budget, evaluation, functional skills
- * We also have a wide range of scripts

We will support in any way we can to ensure that the unique principles and delivery of the Making Theatre Gaining Skills programme is extended to reach as many learners as possible

Our Team

The MTGS Learning & Education team includes experienced advisors across primary, secondary, further and adult education with particular knowledge of the arts sector and working with reluctant learners, and learners with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues.



Charles Freeman

Director of Charles Freeman projects and previously Quality Place Delivery Manager for the Partnership of Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). He has experience in delivering projects spanning traditional sector boundaries and has a track record of securing partner commitment and funding for new initiatives. Wide knowledge of the Culture, Economic Development, and Skills Sectors.



Janis Gadd

Janis is passionate about enabling learning. Throughout her distinguished career she has developed expertise in supporting people who have not achieved their potential through the traditional schooling system. She has designed and delivered bespoke learning packages to meet the needs of learners: trained and mentored teachers and learning assistants and widened her classroom base to include vocational and workplace settings. Janis has a Diploma of Theatre Arts in Education (Dartington College of Arts), and an MA in Advanced Educational Practice (University of Portsmouth). Currently Janis is offering flexible, individualised tuition in English, Maths and ICT to adults who wish to improve their skills.



Shirley Sewell

Shirley has over 20 years' experience as a senior teacher and department head. As Head of the Performing Arts Specialism at Plumstead Manor School, London, Shirley was responsible for the raising of standards in performing arts subject areas across disciplines, the school and the Borough of Greenwich. She led on the introduction and delivery of the Greenwich Musical Theatre Academy, the Young Apprenticeship Programme in Performing Arts and the 14 – 19 Creative and Media Diploma. Shirley's experience in curriculum development includes: the development of a vocational route for students including work related learning and whole school initiatives in Literacy, Formative marking and Display for learning. She currently works with students with mild to moderate speech, language and communication difficulties and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.



Hilary Strong

Hilary created the Making Theatre Gaining Skills learning concept and has delivered the programme across West Sussex and Hampshire since 2011. Her extensive experience and contacts in the creative sector combined with a background in large-scale learning delivery is key to the future success of the enterprise. Her consultancy work includes developing learning strategies for New Theatre Royal Portsmouth, Youth Music Theatre UK, Cherwell District Council and Natural Theatre Company. Hilary served as member of Arts Council England.



Quartet
Community
Foundation



Contact

For more information, contact Hilary Strong
(Director) on 01243 345239 or 07808 481221

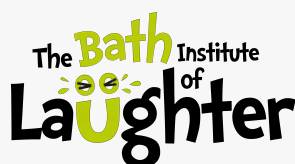
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