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educating through culture

**Nurturing Through Arts Project Report**  
Nottingham Trent University Research Report



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## Executive summary

This research sought to explore the added-value of a multi-arts immersive intervention to 3 North Nottinghamshire Primary School's Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)'s work.

Nurturing through Arts was a pilot study designed to support 'Creative and Nurturing Approaches in Schools & Libraries' across Ashfield and Mansfield. Consulting with partners and stakeholders to deliver creative work with schools in the Flying High Trust specifically in Mansfield and Ashfield. Nottingham Trent University (NTU) were partners in the research and required evaluation, working with teachers and school staff trained in the ELSA approach.

Nurturing through the Arts was based on demand and located in areas of low cultural infrastructure where children have the greatest need. Nonsuch were commissioned to deliver sessions in schools and explore a creative nurturing framework that has high artistic values. The resulting 'intervention' enabled six 1 hour sessions within three Primary Schools.

Since running this project Captivate has shared the outcomes at a Captivate Meets CPD event and secured further funding to develop this programme.

NTU conducted semi-structured interviews with staff across all three participating schools and the project facilitator. Two sessions were also observed. Using the research question we interrogated our observations and interview data to develop a set of findings and recommendations.

Our work has identified nine findings and supporting recommendations based on our interviews and observations of the sessions. These are intended to support further development of future projects between Captivate, arts organisations and primary schools and their staff. This report will outline each of the nine findings and recommendations within this report which will be supported by direct quotes from the key project stakeholders.



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**Finding 1: There were 5 key elements that schools identified, which enabled this project to be 'completely different' to the ELSA approach.**

**Finding 2: There were 5 key similarities between the project and the current ELSA work.**

**Finding 3: ELSA is just one approach that schools use to provide emotional and social skills support to children.**

**Finding 4: All schools currently use the arts alongside their ELSA work.**

**Finding 5: The duration of the project posed the biggest challenge.**

**Finding 6: Schools would like to be involved more collaboratively in the planning stages.**

**Finding 7: Limited schools' data on student wellbeing was a challenge.**

**Finding 8: There are opportunities for the development of resources for the ELSA website from the project.**

**Finding 9: Creating space for observation and reflection can improve the practice of everyone**

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In summary, Nurture through Arts has highlighted commonalities and differences between the ELSA approach and the project as delivered across the target schools. The arts in a variety of methods and approaches were used across all Schools to connect and support wider engagement, but the particular approach adopted here was different, and offered a different way of engaging and providing opportunities for dialogue and support. All our interviews highlighted the time constraints to develop and deliver with young people and future projects need to recognise this challenge.

Additional mapping to current provision and further research into targeted approaches will only enhance the project to connect to and support the holistic engagement staff have with young people they engage with. This approach has positively challenged staff and deliver partners to consider how best to support young people and use artistic practice to develop relationships, take alternative approaches and observe a different model.

## Scope and Approach

The Research Question for this project was: **How does an arts intervention add value to the current ELSA approach?**

This question was generated following planning meetings with Captivate, Nonsuch Theatre Company and the three schools involved in the project: Asquith Primary School in Mansfield, Greenwood Primary School and Leamington Primary School, both in Kirkby in Ashfield.

The Project Facilitator for Nonsuch, described the aim of the project as:

*...providing an alternative to the ELSA approach in providing an arts-based approach and that it was highly participatory, narrative-led and immersive at times. The intentions were to develop emotional language, teamwork, group cohesion as well as focusing on the individual. We looked at a degree of different things like communication, confidence, relationships, managing*



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*feelings, resilience, team building and planning and problem solving. The pupil-centered focus of it was developed through the interactive activities.*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with staff across all three participating schools. These interviews gleaned qualitative data on contextual information about the schools, the Nurture groups, current arts interventions and existing wellbeing data, as well as exploring the arts intervention. Due to the scale and scope of this pilot project, the research did not generate data from the children themselves and instead focused on adult perspectives. Key themes from this first round of interviews, such as children's imagination, relationships and the balance of time, were then triangulated in an interview with the project facilitator. Two sessions were also observed prior to the thematic analysis. We interrogated our observations and interview data to develop a set of findings and recommendations, which are set out below.

Unfortunately, there was no consistent or coherent approach to measuring student wellbeing data by the schools that could be drawn upon as part of this research. Nonsuch, as part of their own project evaluation, asked participants to undertake a wellbeing survey at the start and end of the project and creative stars impact scale each session. We will not draw on this data as part of this report but would suggest that largescale reviews of future projects explore how to track and measure longer term impacts for both young people and school staff.

## Findings

Our work has identified nine findings and supporting recommendations based on our interviews and observations of the sessions. These are intended to support further development of future projects between Captivate, arts organisations and primary schools and their staff.



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## Finding One

**There were 5 key elements that schools identified, which enabled this project to be ‘completely different’ to the ELSA approach.** These included multi-arts activities, narrative role play, using imagination, changing the layout / use of space and presentation through an external practitioner.

### Multi-arts activities

The use of a multi-arts offer provided a key point of difference during this project which allowed for participants and staff to see a different way of working.

*The difference is, it was multi arts, but there was a huge interactive element of it. So, it was to provide a stark contrast to that kind of worksheet element. It was interactive in that there was a narrative that all the children follow in role. There was sort of an escape room element to it as well, and was something that was completely different to the way the sessions normally run, but that still looked at similar pupil-centered outcomes. I wanted it to be a departure from a regular lesson in as many ways as it could be, and hence why we had the sort of physical interactive bits. Also, I wanted them to be ‘in role’ and not call me Miss or anything like that. So, they could call me [Name] or they could call me Professor, or anything like that.*

(Project Facilitator)

### Narrative Role Play

Narrative Role Play enabled the immersion of the participants into an imaginary world, which held their attention and stimulated their imaginations. For that hour each week, participants were able to imagine themselves in other roles and spaces across the world, which were exciting and engaging.

*The warm-up section, in the first week, that was a little bit longer and that kind of introduced the whole narrative of the project that they were all in role as Professors of Archaeology. They were part of the Great Guild of Archaeologists. And we introduced that sort of premise and we were all professors in our own right, and that I had discovered this artifact in ancient Egyptian.*



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*As the Professors and being in role, I needed their help. That was the main overarching thing, that I'd need their help to solve this mystery. So, it was very much like they had a bit of responsibility and there was empowerment there. I think it was more than just their participation. They also had a role to play themselves.*

(Project Facilitator)

## Using Imagination

The dramatic techniques of immersive theatre practice and role play encouraged young people to use their imaginations. The element of journey, which was developed each week that young people attended, was important for their expressive and exploratory development. The sense of 'letting themselves go' was also reported positively by staff involved.

*I think the experience for some of our children's things that they'll have never thought never had the chance to do by imagining themselves in lather and running. And you know, I would say a quite a lot. There's not a lot of drama that that goes off in our school. So I think experience in having to put their imagination into action and rare and working around their imagination. And then because of that the experience could either be amazing, or a bit borrowed if they weren't prepared to put themselves totally into it. Yeah. How many of those young people have let themselves let themselves go is not the right term but it fully engaged or immersed themselves in how many do you think have been reticent?*

*I do like when the go through the forest and you know, getting them up and doing stuff and imagine. I do love that because I keep thinking I'm going to do that with a group. Take them on a journey to get somewhere. Yeah, I like it like that a lot. Yeah. They've been fascinated by the fact that the Professor's that's totally fascinated then that there's been professors that have come to lamented see the mean added height that up a bit, but you just want a bit of aspiration in that at least people are the fastest and the quick see is how we look.*

(School 2)

## Changing room layout

Something as simple as removing desk and chairs and altering the room space was able to evoke a different atmosphere in the classrooms. As the warm up



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element of the sessions involved movement games, circle time and the journey, freedom of movement, without obstruction was important. This contributed to a freedom to explore different senses, emotions and a sense of 'doing things differently'.

*I genuinely think it's changing around the classroom, that getting up and moving about and saying things and using silly voices as a change from what they normally do.*

(School 2)

## Engaging with an External Practitioner

Previous research (Thomson et al. 2012) has demonstrated the impact of visiting Artists and External practitioners as a special and exciting 'event' for young people. Bringing new ways of working, presenting and elements of challenge, there is clear value in Arts Practitioners working with young people in schools.

*I think they were talking about the presentation of it. So, whether that's clearing away the tables as we did in one space and moving around, and the physicality of it. I suppose in each in each school, we would change the normal lesson layout of each of the spaces to create this area where there could be more playful activity and running around. I know when I was at school, if they changed the room, it was so exciting.*

*I think, creating that departure from what would be regular and that wouldn't be an external practitioner coming in a normal classroom setting. It was that departure from that and it was very much taking applied arts concepts and applying that to an education setting rather than trying to match the school kind of thing. So, I think that's how it was different, and the value that I feel it added.*

(Project Facilitator)



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## Recommendations for Finding One

**Schools should explore how they can build on these 'added-value' elements going forward.** The use of multi-arts imaginative activities delivered by somebody new played a role in changing the angle of engagement for these groups. Our findings support recent research on the benefits of Arts and Design Education in schools in relation to aesthetic learning, inclusion and wellbeing (Thomson & Maloy, 2021). Whilst we haven't recorded the difference for young people the feedback from TAs highlights that this style of activity may warrant further development.

## Finding Two

**There were 5 key similarities between the project and the current ELSA work.** These included a similar structure to sessions: warm up activity, circle time / social aspect, focus time for discussion or making. In addition, TAs reported on the benefits of activities for confidence, relationship-building, problem-solving and talking about emotions or emotional literacy, which are all elements of their work.

### Session structure

Keeping a similar structure each week which incorporated a range of differing activities was a valuable experience for the young people. This enabled familiarity and growing confidence during interactive elements of the journey, but also enabled bursts of energy at some points and quieter slowing down at other. The structure responded to the needs of the participants in exploring their emotions in the present and future.

*In terms of how today's session went, that sort of structure was very effective. It's been the same every week, so I think the children have known what to expect after the first week when they came, they were nervous and after that, they've come in very willingly because they knew what was and what it was going to be like.*

*So, that's the structure of some fun activities to begin with, sort of a warm up and get the kids talking and chatting has been lovely, and that's been there every week with those sort of imaginative games, you know, imagine you're in the forest or crossing the lava and on the ship.*

(School 1)



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## Confidence

TAs and other staff involved in the project overwhelmingly reported on increases in participants confidence. This sometimes manifested in very small interactions, such as volunteering to lead an activity for the first time, or feeling able to speak up in front of peers.

*And just the difference in them in here that first week they came in. They were all a little bit quiet and calm and didn't quite know what to expect, and obviously I didn't either because it was something new to me. But the way they've all jumped into it, and the buzz, they're all quite happy to come and join in and get involved. So, I think the aim of this from our point of view, was for that particular group to have a confidence boost and I think they have.*

(School 1)

## Relationship building

Building positive and nurturing relationships are key aims of the work of the TAs and Pastoral Support Staff in schools. Our research found that this intervention helped to further support relationship building and also enable young people to think more deeply about the relationships that are important to them.

*I think that generally as an approach, (the project) helped build relationships and but in terms of activities, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> week, maybe even 4th week, we looked at sharing safe spaces and we looked at relationships and what it means to be a good friend. And when we might find it difficult to do that ourselves, and when we may be experienced others not being good friends and vice versa and we shared that as a group.*

*The pyramid of friendship activities was in both worksheet format and then 3D. So, there was always an element, where they could grasp the concept, but I think that one was a good one and there were examples such as 'be loyal' and 'stand by their side' and then that prompted questions about why. And discussions around what you need when you're feeling lonely and things like that, which was lovely.*

(Project Facilitator)



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## Problem solving

Elements of challenge and problem solving were part of the project design from the outset. Being able to solve problems on a journey together, or to work as a group to encounter a challenge such as the decoding of emotions wheel, supported ELSA work.

*On the emotional side as well, part of what we do is trying to problem-solve. So, when you're feeling like that, what can you do? Who can you go to, or what can you do to try and solve a problem? so hopefully they get something like that out of it and awareness of how they feel with certain emotions. That sort of body map of: What does it feel like inside? What might your fists be doing? What might your face be showing?*

(School 1)

## Talking about emotions

The imagined sanctuary space within the project was an important space for talking about emotions. Upon entry young people were asked to share one word to describe how they felt at that present time and upon exiting the sanctuary, they were encouraged to think positively about the forthcoming day or week.

*On entering the sanctuary and naming emotions, the way we got to that originally was that they decoded a couple of words and the stepping stones actually spell out the word emotions, so they worked out the password. Then they would decode some of the words and some of the words were sad, happy. And then we have to say our emotions so they've sort of solved that.*

*So, each week to enter the sanctuary, children have to check in with how they're feeling, so that's just a different way of getting them to say another feeling. And then exiting, I picked something that was positive to promote that sort of positive thinking and areas of potentially gratitude and excitement. So, things that we're thankful for, but something that had a positive spin for exiting the sanctuary.*

(Project Facilitator)



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## Recommendations for Finding Two

**This project should continue to develop its approach to align with the ELSA approach to wellbeing support to ensure integration and connection to wider work offered in the schools.** These alignments could link to resilience, problem-solving working together, respect, anger, and how we feel in our bodies which would help the project to connect to wider work in the schools and help reinforce messages and actions suggested by TAs. In addition, TAs suggested that more time, or a different approach, was needed to understand the concept of the sanctuary and how it could be used by young people.

*It'd be nice to have it on different themes. This one obviously was that emotional side, but you could do something on a social theme or on an anxiety or negative feelings theme maybe. Again, it would just need about thinking about and a bit of putting in place but I think it could be done.*

*Resilience would be another good one. You could theme it through, different resilience activities where they've got to problem solve and work together on something that they've not seen. You know, come in and there's something on the table that needs to be solved that that would work really well.*

(School 1)

*The thinking about a sanctuary about a safe place. And again, I think more could be made of that: what that means to you as a person, with your feelings and I think in this project it was very much thought of it as a physical place, whereas it needs to come across as more of a conceptual thing. So, if you're feeling lonely, what would your safe place? What would your sanctuary be if you're feeling fearful? What could you have in your sanctuary to help you out?*

*It's things that would help, you know, it's almost like a tool. But that's difficult, though, isn't it? Earlier on in the weeks they were thinking about, you know who might be in your sanctuary to help you and they were coming out with some good ideas.*

*Yes, I thought that was lovely but I'd like to make that more direct rather than an accidental thing that may have cemented it. So, I think if I was doing this myself, I would really make those things much more specific. And then that sanctuary idea*



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*then becomes something useful to them. And it may be that they create a bookmark with a list of bullet points for what to do if you're feeling anxious, and that's your sanctuary for feeling anxious. Or if you're feeling lonely at playtime, you know here's a picture that you made that reminds you what you can do. So, that the thing moves you inside your sanctuary.*

(School 1)

### Finding Three

#### **ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) is just one approach that schools use to provide emotional and social skills support to children.**

Other approaches are used as part of a broad pastoral work programme with and for children. ELSAs are trained Teaching Assistants who do one-to-one and group work based on the needs of the child. ELSAs have a dedicated role within the school, regularly attend support meetings with Educational Psychologists and have access to the resources and networks on the ELSA website but our engagement across the three schools highlighted a variety of approaches and methods.

*ELSA is just one of many approaches you draw upon. So, you tailor it. And the answer is a big umbrella and also basically means your emotional literacy support system, which covers a myriad of different approaches that you can have. And it has an expectation in terms of sort of line management with supervision and all of that, you know it's a use within that. It's a very specific thing I think that's what we're looking at.*

(School 3)

### Recommendations for Finding Three

**Clarification of terms for the project going forward.** More focus on a specific approach could avoid conflation of terminology between schools and partners seeking to engage. Whilst we recognise time, is short the development of shared understanding on terminology can only enhance the engagement of projects such as these.



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## Finding Four

**All schools currently use the arts alongside their ELSA work.** These include specific interventions or engagement activities such as Lego Therapy and Draw and Talk, which are highly regarded, but also their own craft-based / baking activities. In addition, TAs reported that the ELSA website was a useful resource for downloading arts activities to use in their work.

*And we've done arty things, particularly with the more nurture-based groups where it's not necessarily about emotions, it's just about having a positive experience. So, made pompons and painting, coloring and when it's near Christmas, creating crafting things for Christmas. We do also have an "Eggspressions" activity, it's called, which is a baking and its emotions, and that's every week you bake something and within it you talk about something related to it.*

(School 1)

*I do live on the ELSA resource page. So I have a lot of things downloaded from there that I can do with different children. I read if it's a group activity online, I might modify it to do it individually, and things like that are like the Tom Percival books and I'll use that as a theme to clown something around that book or therapeutic book.*

(School 2)

## Recommendations for Finding Four

**Explore the development of resources from this project to bolster and broaden artistic work with young people.** This project has highlighted that arts-based engagement is used in differing ways by all the schools. However, we would suggest that they also seek to explore new media resources that support more interactive and imagination-based drama-based activities alongside these more traditional arts engagements. For example, Parry and Taylor (2021) refer to 'playful tinkering' to recognize the value of children's engagements with digital media.



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## Finding Five

**The duration of the project posed the biggest challenge.** All parties involved in the research agreed that short-term projects do not have a lasting impact on the children involved. In addition, children may be facing issues that are not 'fixable' by an arts project. The short duration of the project, only 6 weeks, meant that some schools did not complete the final element of the project of making the 'sanctuary boxes' or creating work for display. This prompted discussion on whether the intention of the project was to create an interactive and discursive experience, or to create an end product. All parties agreed that 6 weeks was not long enough to achieve both of these aims and create a 'high quality' end product.

*I mean, there have been times when they've just not got finished and I've had them in over a dinner time and said, let's get this coloring finished or let's get those blocks done. We worked on those little pyramid blocks one week but I think time wise it probably could have done with a bit longer per session or just a little bit tightening up on the beginning and a bit more work on the emotional side of it as well. But that's the thing of the pilot, isn't it?*

*More weeks, but without more stuff to do I think. Because it the worksheets they did that related to the pyramid activity, they really needed two weeks online and there just wasn't time.*

(School 1)

*From it being, we're going on a journey and then we're doing some art. It seemed to be there's more about this journey that kind of took over, so we didn't get the art that was expected at the end of the sessions. It was kind of a rushed part at the end, maybe 10 / 20 minutes at most. I just felt like it was, the art making, which was last, was rushed. So, they didn't seem to take pride in that, and for me that was the big thing they should.*

*So, in the planning they were very keen on what seemed to be about transforming a space, which I did think was ambitious. Even then, I did say so and I did say we'd be happy with something to display. Which we didn't get in six weeks.*

(School 3)



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*I think it would have been nice having potentially had more time, we could focus a little bit more on that craft, that upskilling and actually making something of quality. But because of the time constraints, I generally was happy using them more as a prompt for those that sharing in that platform.  
But I do think it would have been lovely to have an upskilling element to it. But with everything else going on in the project, that was the thing that I was happy enough to not place as much importance on.*  
(Project Facilitator)

## Recommendations for Finding Five

**Offer schools two options for the project going forward** – either keep the 6-week timeframe and focus on the children’s narrative, journey and discussion, or extend the timeframe to incorporate the creating activities towards the end. This should be part of the planning process with future schools to explore expectations and outputs.

*The biggest thing I think would be time. Either if it was going to be on the same time constraints - an hour a week for half a term, I would strip it way back. It would still have a few visual and arts elements, but it would be much, much simpler. However, if it was ran over a whole term, then I think what I was trying to achieve would be more achievable and in relation to both the end product and the process.*  
(Project Facilitator)

## Finding Six

**Schools would like to be involved more collaboratively in the planning stages.** All of the schools commented that their involvement in the planning of the project had been minimal. The Project Facilitator agreed that they had created a scheme of work, that was then delivered in the schools. TAs felt that the project could have been tailored to the school and children’s needs, which would include selecting the most appropriate group for the project.



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*It probably would have been helpful to know more beforehand what was coming. Every week I've spoken to (Workshop Leader) about if there is anything I need for next week. You know, can you get some glue ready or that kind of thing, but to have known what to expect a little bit more beforehand might have been helpful.*

(School 1)

*Being involved in element of matching and connecting, talking before about theming. Yeah, knowing a bit more about the focus. So, if I were to do it again, I could pick the kids that would get the most form it.*

(School 2)

*So, I think Group Dynamics was a challenge in a lot of settings. To try and really reach all of the children, as well as some of the ones that were very good at masking as being perfectly fine, just would coast, and because you're managing a lot of children and some of them that demand more attention. The group setting maybe isn't for them. They potentially need maybe more of 1 to one or a smaller group, or be in a group of everyone being the same referral.*

(Project Facilitator)

## Recommendations for Finding Six

**Dedicated sessions for the Project Facilitator to meet with schools and TAs prior to the commencement of the project to shape the collaboration.** Time was needed to ensure TAs could be involved in planning and feedback sessions. This may need to be funded time to create that space to build the scaffolding for the activities to come. This would enable discussion around focus, choice of activities, desired duration and outcomes for children, manage expectations and inform the selection of participants.



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## Finding Seven

**Limited data on student wellbeing was a challenge.** Schools held limited data on individual student wellbeing. This ranged for behaviour points reporting systems to staff keeping personal logs of incidents or observations, much of which was built upon TAs knowledge and relationships and confined by limited time. Our interviews highlighted that a unified model/system to track and understand wellbeing of participants to support identification and distance travelled for them would be beneficial for all parties.

In addition, the measurable outcomes tools, devised by Nonsuch - Creative Impact Stars and Sterling Wellbeing Scale had limited utility in these settings. For example, TAs reported that asking the children to sit down and complete forms at the beginning and end of session, detracted from the experience despite a desire to track the possible impact of the engagement.

*The difficulties questionnaires we do before we start, and so I've got an idea of what intervention I need to use or what we're aiming at. And then it's normally a term afterwards we'll do another strength and difficulties to see whether it has an impact. 'cause sometimes it will trigger things and for a few weeks you might find specially withdrawing talked. It might actually escalate their behaviors, but so we try and leave out term and then do the strengths and difficulties again to see if it's made.*  
(School 3)

*I think reviewing the measurable outcomes, so that they're more accessible across the board would be good because some groups grasped the creative impact stars and the sterling well being scale more than other groups, so it doesn't render the data as effective as it could be. I think we'll be looking at either simplifying or a different way of measuring the outcomes.*  
(Project Facilitator)



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## Recommendations for Finding Seven

**Review the measurable outcomes for children used in the pilot.** Use the next phase of the research to develop these measures and consider the use of longer-term measures from school systems to ensure the engagement is tested robustly. Devised measurements should seek to make minimal impacts upon the interactivity of the sessions. Further alignment with schools' monitoring / measurement processes, where possible. Further insight may also be gleaned from developments within other research – for example Oman's (2021) work on Understanding Wellbeing data.

## Finding Eight

**Opportunities for the development of resources for the ELSA website from the project.** TA's feedback positively on the 'emotional language wheel' and the 'pyramid of friendship' activity. In addition, limitations of the ELSA website were noted as lacking multi-media resources, which could promote more interactive activities.

*The decoding of the emotion, which I don't know if you (the wheel) saw close up, that's something that was sort of shown to them at the beginning and they were very excited about it. But then it went away for a bit and then last week and this week it's come back and I think that's a lovely resource and I would have liked more of that. And the building of the pyramid as well, is something that we always talk about with children: if you're not feeling great, you're not going to be able to do this, you're not going to be able to do that, so that's quite a concrete way of showing that. And that was quite nice.*

(School 1)

*The whole aim of the project was that they would help me decode what the artefact means, because it was in hieroglyphics. This is actually an emotional language wheel that we changed into hieroglyphics, so that's kind of the preface of it.*



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*The pyramid is derived from the Diamond 9 Friendship activity, which is, a wellbeing activity for children about prioritizing attributes of relationships and what is important in maintaining good relationships. The pyramid element was to do with the Egypt narrative and I thought about adding the 3D concept because it was quite a big question to ask: What makes a good friend? I thought if there's a solid sort of thing for them to create around that, that would make more sense. The discussions and sharing were part of exploring relationships through that lens and then also the pride of the craft in terms of the wellbeing.*

(Project Facilitator)

## Recommendations for Finding Eight

**Develop resources from the project and include multi-media and project-based resources, such as short film clips.** School staff highlighted the opportunity to learn from and adapt their practice based on this engagement work. We believe there is an opportunity to develop the activities into shareable resources for others helping to enhance the suite of materials available to ELSA trained staff.

*The ELSA website has got tons and tons of stuff on, but it is largely worksheet or discussion based, so it's just thinking a bit creatively then isn't it of how you could turn something into a project rather than each week you come and do a task. Whereas this has built on the previous weeks and there are things where you might be discussing scenarios in terms of behavior. So, you might be discussing, an incident happening in the playground and often they've got little pictures of children in a situation, which you could easily turn into a role play situation.*

(School 1)



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## Finding Nine

**Creating space for observation and reflection can improve the practice of everyone.** It was clear that the project had influenced both TAs ELSA work, and the Project Facilitator's understanding of wellbeing in schools. Some TAs reported being inspired by the 'delivery style' and wanting to emulate elements that in their future work. They also reported the value in having the opportunity (and time) to observe others work with their groups of children. We suggest that further CPD opportunities are explored for both TAs and the project facilitators to create mutually beneficial learning opportunities.

*Well, I like the idea of being that bit more creative with the ELSA stuff that we do. Putting a theme to it and making it a bit more sort of role play. I do like that idea so thank you for having that and offering it to us because that delivery style is something I can think about doing myself now.*

(School 1)

*It's made me think, how much of that I could deliver and that's been really interesting. Being in your room, as an observer. Also, it's your session, because they're your children. But it's that difference.*

*I've asked myself, if I needed to do this with my children, what we're going to focus on. You know, what, what is going to be the target of that kind of group? What do we actually want the success of the group to be at the end? And how it will fit in. How could it marry into what you're doing? I don't know. Maybe I could be trained...*

(School 2)



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## Recommendations for Finding Nine

**The Schools and Project Facilitators should consider the way they learn and draw together alternative approaches to their practice.** CPD for TAs focusing on imaginative and interactive techniques to complement the ELSA approach has the capacity to broaden the offer for young people. Whilst CPD for Arts Project Facilitators on understanding ELSA (and other approaches) and how wellbeing is 'measured' in schools will ensure future projects are more strongly rooted in school-based practice.

## Conclusions

In summary, Nurture through Arts has highlighted commonalities and differences between the ELSA approach and the project as delivered across the target schools. The arts in a variety of methods and approaches were used across all Schools to connect and support wider engagement, but the particular approach adopted here was different, and offered an alternative way of engaging and providing opportunities for dialogue and support. All our interviews highlighted the time constraints to develop and deliver with young people and future projects need to recognise this challenge.

Additional mapping to current provision and further research into targeted approaches will only enhance the project to connect to and support the holistic engagement staff have with young people they engage with. This approach has positively challenged staff and deliver partners to consider how best to support young people and use artistic practice to develop relationships, take alternative approaches and observe a different model.

## What Next?

Captivate are committed to continuing to work with schools and young people in Ashfield and Mansfield to deliver high quality arts experiences that support health and wellbeing. Further funding has been secured to develop this work,



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which aims to build new ways of working, new evaluative frameworks and ultimately evidence of the importance of creativity for children and young people.

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