

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 10 October 2023**

### **Groundbreaking Arts education pilot for Hastings schools**

#### **Clore Duffield Foundation funding to support cultural learning hub in Ark schools across Hastings**

The Clore Duffield Foundation is delighted to support a pilot project with four schools in Hastings, to develop a new approach to arts education. Over the next year, the schools will work with local and national artists and arts organisations to give all pupils the chance to develop their creativity.

The pilot is led by education charity Ark, across all four of their Hastings schools: Ark Alexandra Academy, Ark Blacklands Primary Academy, Ark Castledown Primary Academy and Ark Little Ridge Primary Academy.

The work kicked-off last week with a dedicated inset day for staff from all four schools. Staff worked with trainers from national, regional and local arts organisations to get new insights into the way they can bring arts into all parts of the curriculum.

Punch Drunk Enrichment, a national organisation that grew out of the world's leading immersive theatre company, South East Dance and Hastings art collective, Radiator Arts, orchestrated an inspiring day of training for the 40 teachers involved in the project.

The school teams also met Sam Ayre for the first time. Ayre is an artist and documentarian will work with the schools throughout this project to capture their experiences.

**Kate Bellamy, Director of the Clore Duffield Foundation said:**

"We believe that an excellent arts education is essential for children, young people and the creative industries to thrive. The Foundation has spent the past twenty years supporting cultural institutions to create Clore Learning Spaces for arts education. But not all schools and families can easily access these. So, we are partnering with Ark Schools to explore how Multi Academy Trusts can develop inspiring arts education programmes, ensuring all their pupils benefit. We chose to work with Ark Schools since they have a strong track record for music education, excellent leadership and national reach."

**Margaret O'Shea, Head of Creative and Extended Curriculum at Ark said:**

"Too often we see arts education as a 'nice to have' but for us it is an absolute essential for every child. We want all our students to have the opportunity to be creative and to express themselves boldly as the arts so powerfully allow. This project is an exciting opportunity to take a genuinely new approach. Connecting schools with arts organisations is not a new idea, but we are going to these organisations and asking them to shift completely to the school's perspective and asking them to find ways to bring their creativity – whether it is theatre, dance, music or the visual arts – into the classroom."

The project will see a range of arts initiatives and partnerships trialled over the school year, culminating in an arts festival in Hastings in July. If you can support or want to find out more, please contact [pressteam@arkonline.org](mailto:pressteam@arkonline.org)

-----ENDS

Notes for editors:

To arrange a visit to one of the participating schools or set up an interview please contact

**Jessica Clinkett**

+44 (0)20 3116 7111

[jessica.clinkett@arkonline.org](mailto:jessica.clinkett@arkonline.org)

**The Clore Duffield Foundation**

The Foundation was established by Sir Charles Clore in 1964 and is now chaired by his daughter, Dame Vivien Duffield. It supports UK charities working in the arts, education, social welfare and health. The Foundation enhances Jewish cultural life through support for JW3, the Jewish arts and community centre in London.

The Foundation's work remains rooted in the charitable commitments of Sir Charles Clore and his daughter, Dame Vivien Duffield. Including:

- Developing programmes and partnerships to create opportunities for people through art, culture and heritage in the UK. Artistic talent should be nurtured and supported wherever it exists and careers in the cultural sector should be open to all.
- Supporting new and existing Clore Learning Spaces to ensure children and young people, in particular, have the chance to benefit from art, culture and heritage and the inspiration, knowledge, joy and wellbeing they bring.
- Ensuring the important organisations created by the Foundation continue to be strong, impactful and resilient, including JW3, the Clore Cultural Leadership Programme and Eureka!

**Ark**

Ark is an education charity that exists to make sure that all children, regardless of their background, have access to a great education and real choices in life. Starting with just one school in 2006, Ark has since grown into a network of 39 schools in the UK, and is now recognised as one of the highest achieving academy groups in the country.

Ark only works in the communities where they can make the biggest difference to children's lives. All their schools are non-selective and their student cohort has double the national average proportion of children in receipt of free school meals.