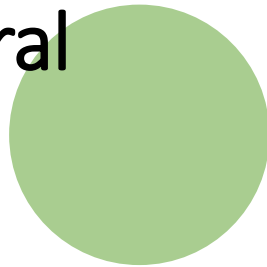


What role can the  
**National Network of Bridge  
Organisations**  
play in supporting  
**Creative and Cultural  
Education**  
in the **Early Years?**



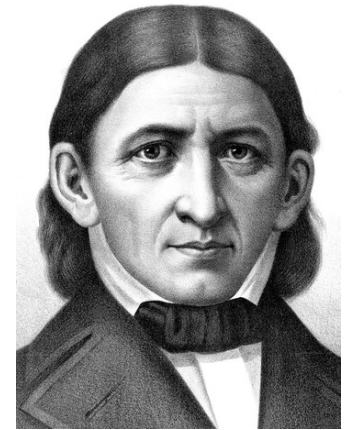
A background map of Stevenage, Hertfordshire, showing streets, parks, and landmarks. The word 'STEVENAGE' is visible in large letters across the map. A large, semi-transparent watermark of a stylized 'S' is overlaid on the map.

# Woolenwick Infant and Nursery is based in Stevenage in Hertfordshire.

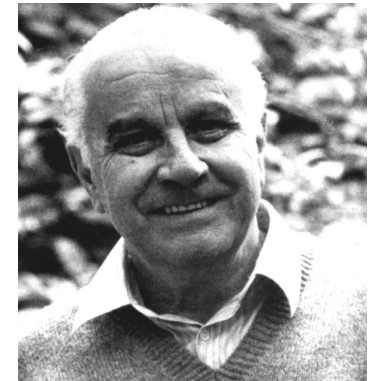
- Outstanding (Ofsted, October 2017)
- IQM Centre of Excellence (since 2019)
- EY Quality Mark Gold (since 2018)
- Eco Schools Green Flag School (since 2009)
- Lead school for the Stevenage Creative Network
- Headteacher is a Local Leader in Education
- Deputy Head is an Ofsted Inspector
- Assistant Head is an Specialist Leader in Education
- Inclusion Leader is a Specialist Leader in Cultural Education
- The Science Lead leads EY science CPD through the University of Hertfordshire
- Other Educators are SLEs and Specialist Practitioners

**Key principles of our pedagogy**, standing on the shoulders of educational philosophers Froebel and Malaguzzi (Reggio Emilia):

- The children's questions, curiosities and 'big ideas' shape or curriculum offer.
- Recognising the child as creative and competent, capable of constructing their own theories with agency over their own learning
- Democracy and the importance of pupil voice
- Educators as Co-Learners and Researchers to facilitate deeper thinking
- Parents as Learning Partners and the First Educator
- Environment as the Third Teacher in a child's learning
- Documentation and making learning visible
- Reflection



Friedrich Froebel  
1782 - 1852



Loris Malaguzzi  
1920 -1994

## Challenge for many EY settings:

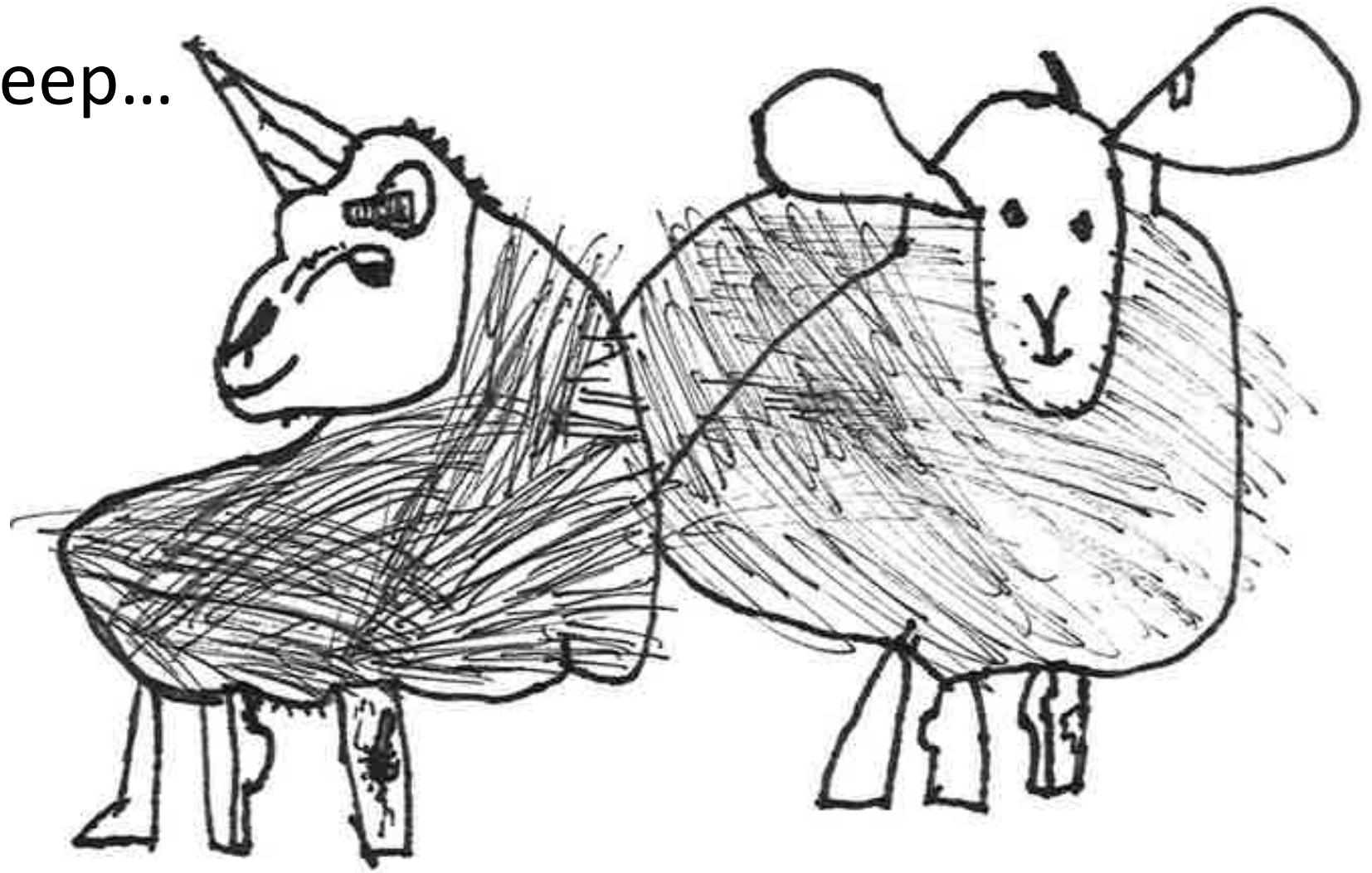
- **Lack of leaders** who understand the **value of the arts** and how they **improve outcomes**
- **Lack of opportunities** from large scale cultural providers and/or opportunities are **not effectively communicated**
- **Excluded** from opportunities because of **lower age restrictions**
- **Funding**



## How we overcome this at Woolenwick Infant and Nursery School:

- **The Headteacher and Inclusion Leader actively scan the landscape** for local and national opportunities that could be woven into practice to enrich how we explore children's theories and feed into multiple areas of the curriculum.
- **The HT and IL network** with like-minded professionals which brings opportunities.
- **We fundraise and apply for grants** to cover costs.
- We have taken part in numerous local and national initiatives, including **collaborative projects and exhibitions devised and lead by our school.**
- **We devise and deliver bespoke workshops for parents/child and professionals.** *E.g. Woodworking in the Early Years, Paper Making, Making Artist's Charcoal, Clay in the Early Years, Forest School and Science through Stories.*
- **We employ artists in residence** in appropriate disciplines to provide expertise, including CPD for educators and working directly with the children.

# Once There Were Sheep...



## Curriculum links:

- History – Woolenwick is an Anglo-Saxon word for sheep farm
- Science – changing materials; observations classification of animals; growth, decay and changes over time
- Art – exploring textures, exploring colours and how they can be changed - colour mixing using natural dyes



The scientific process of changing raw sheep's fleece into felt.



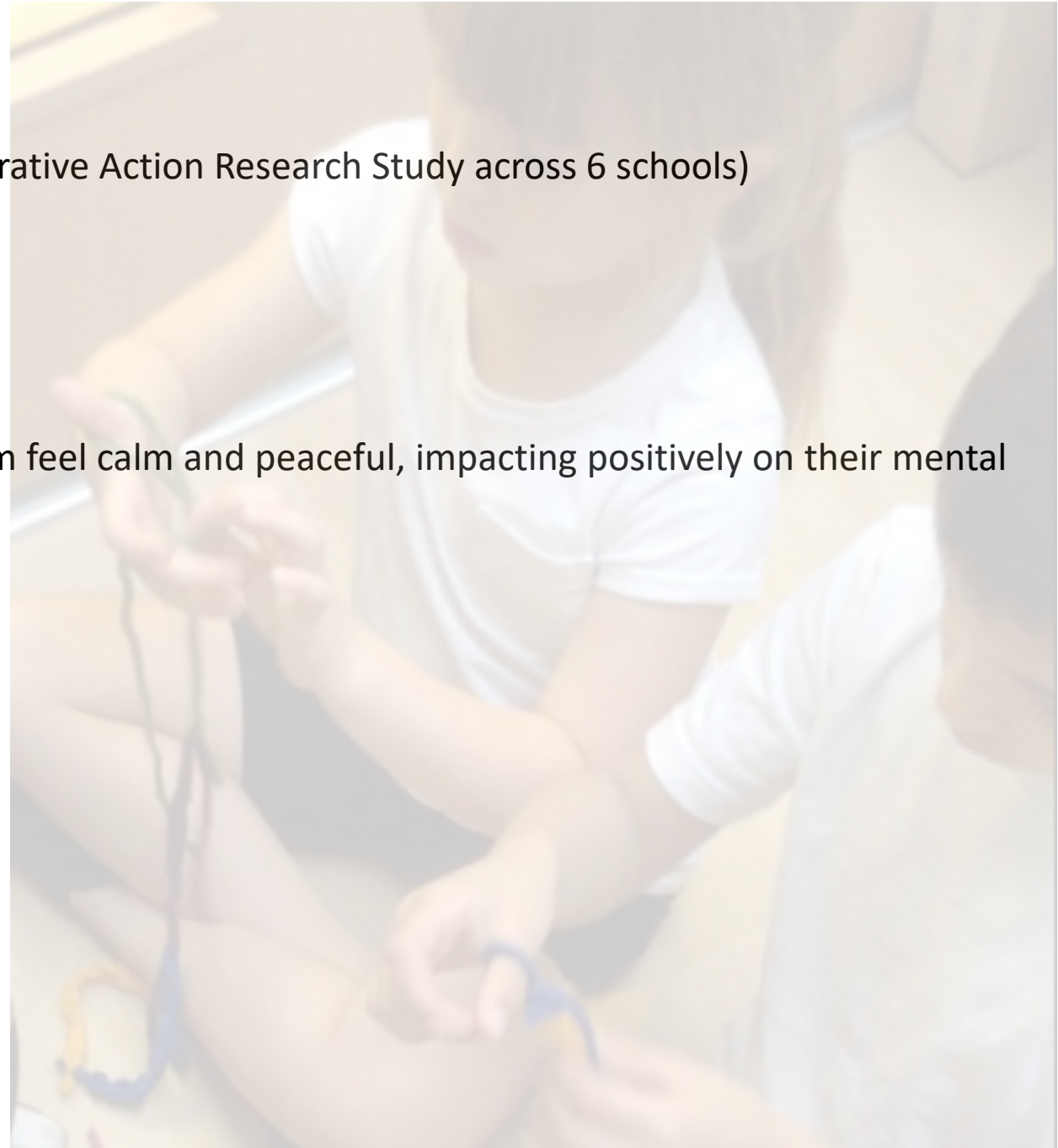
# All You Knit is Love

## Curriculum links:

- Literacy: Increased vocabulary (as part of a funded, collaborative Action Research Study across 6 schools)

## Other benefits observed and documented:

- Increased concentration
- Increased resilience
- Improved finger strength impacting on neater handwriting
- The children noticed in themselves how knitting made them feel calm and peaceful, impacting positively on their mental health





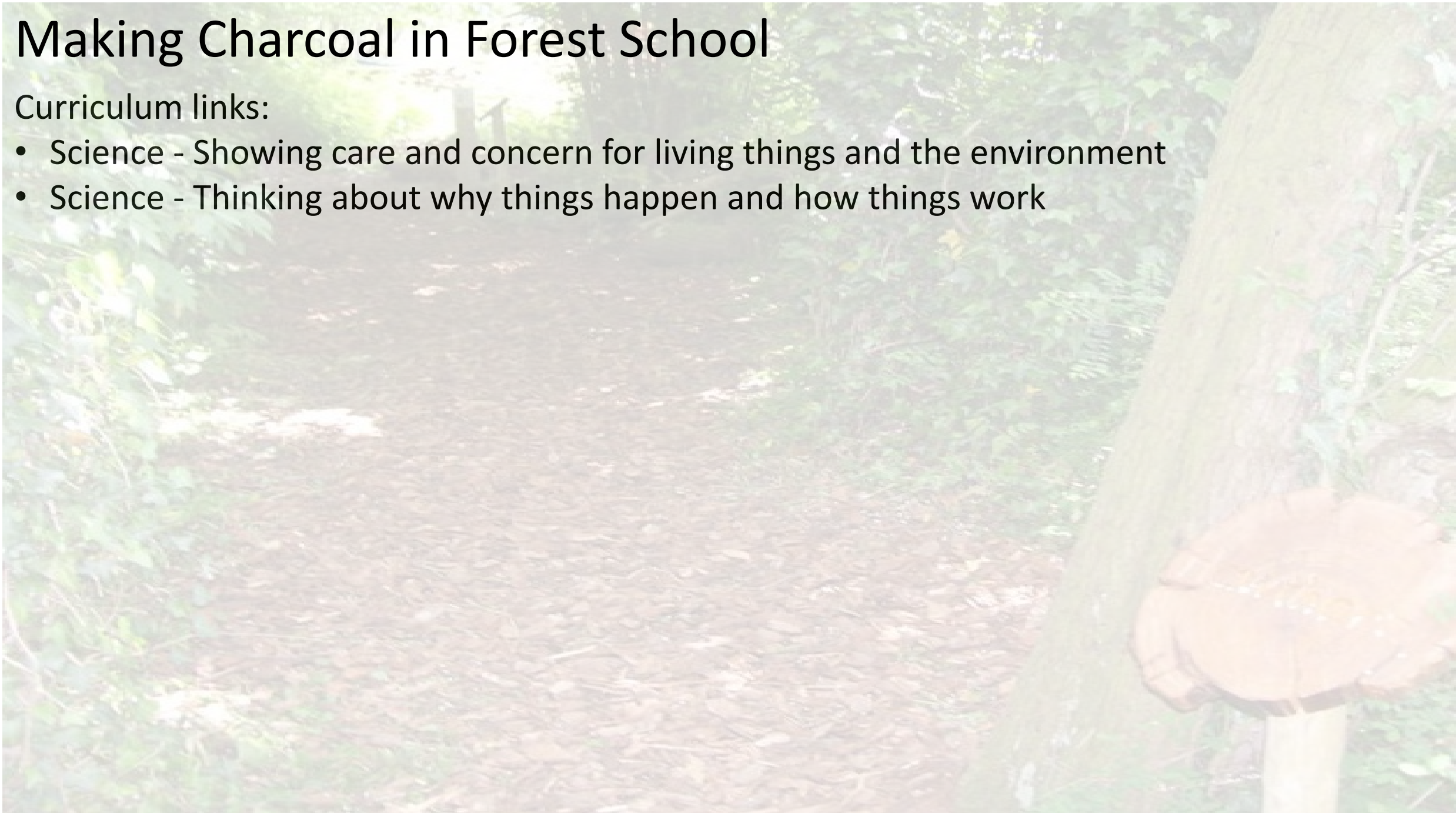
# Finger knitting



# Making Charcoal in Forest School

Curriculum links:

- Science - Showing care and concern for living things and the environment
- Science - Thinking about why things happen and how things work





Exploring what happens when wood burns: Making artist's charcoal.



# The Great Big Art Exhibition (Firstsite, National Galleries, Artists)



Artist Sonya Boyce has nominated the next theme in the *Great Big Art Exhibition: Portraits*

You can read more about Sonia here <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/sonia-boyce-obe-794>

You can create your portrait in any media, perhaps using resources from around your home or from nature.



For artwork to appear on the Firstsite website, post your photos on social media and include the hashtag **#thegreatbigartexhibition2021** and **#yourschoolname**

For full terms and conditions and to view artwork, visit the Firstsite website: <https://firstsite.uk/the-great-big-art-exhibition-gallery/>

The Great Big Art Exhibition a fantastic way to bring the community of Stevenage together to support good mental health and showcase the wealth of creativity in our town.

At Woolenwick, we linked the themes nominated by artists to enquiries in school:

Antony Gormley – Animals – *Take One Author* recovery curriculum

Sonia Boyce – Portraits – Women in STEM focus

Anish Kapoor – Colour – Linked to the Coronavirus and strengthening the immune system by eating fruit and vegetables in the rainbow of colours



Oliver's portrait of scientist, Katherine Johnson

# Junction 7 Creatives Exhibition in the town centre – *A Heart of a Town Lies in its People.*

## Town-Wide Art Exhibition; *The Heart of a Town Lies in its People*



Junction 7 Creatives new premises at 17a Town Square will open with a celebratory exhibition as soon as possible after the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

All residents of Stevenage are invited to submit artworks inspired by the theme *'The Heart of a Town Lies in its People'* – the Stevenage motto.

Whilst the exhibition will primarily comprise visual art forms, J7C are also interested in other art forms e.g. text, spoken word, music, movement.

**Submit your Portrait artwork to the exhibition**  
with your name, age and school name.

*You and your family are part of the Stevenage Community. Together we make a diverse group of people, interconnected in our daily lives.*



Please submit visual artwork via the website:

<https://www.junction7creatives.co.uk/the-heart-of-a-town-stevenage>

Please email to submit any other art form:

[junction7creatives@gmail.com](mailto:junction7creatives@gmail.com)



We are loaning our *Diversity Squared* Installation – The Stevenage Community in Clay, comprised of over 200 narratives as seen through the eyes of children.


# Rainbows



# Arc of Hope





 To find out more about the history of the town, why not visit the museum's website and link to the site [stevenagemuseum.com](http://stevenagemuseum.com)



### Arc of Hope

"Be a rainbow in someone's cloud."  
Maya Angelou

In response to the huge community spirit which emerged during the lockdown, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the message of hope that Rainbows for the NHS brought to the whole country, Arc of Hope is a symbol of hope, of standing together as a community, circumventing isolation.

The digital rainbow is compiled of selfies of families from the community, dressed, draped or painted in one of the colours of the rainbow. This is surrounded by images of rainbows, created in support of all keyworkers.


This collaborative project involved 39 schools, as well as community groups and friends of Stevenage schools, all credited in the border.

An idea from the students, Arc of Hope was submitted to the Royal Academy Young Artists' Summer Show 2020.

**Stevenage**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL







What role can the  
**National Network of Bridge  
Organisations**  
play in supporting  
**Creative and Cultural  
Education**  
in the **Early Years?**

Cultural providers need to **recognise that young children are creative and competent** and remove lower age restrictions.

**! Idea**

Could the Bridge partners advocate for an *Early Years **Arts Award** called **Express**?*  
*How I express myself through the arts – an accredited award for children aged up to 5 years old.*



In order for this to be realised...

- EY settings would need guidance on how to structure and document
- Parents would need to understand the programme and how to access Arts Award Advisors
- Advisors would need training on how to assess

# Leaders, including EY Leaders, need to understand the value of the arts.

## ! Idea

Could Bridge partners approach and convince a nationally renowned and respected arts organisation, to host and endorse the value of the arts in the Early Years, at a **conference** launching a structured programme, potentially **Arts Awards**.

## Key Research Findings

Cultural Learning Alliance,  
Key Research Findings:  
the value of cultural  
learning, 2017

1

Taking part in arts activities can increase cognitive ability by 17%

2

Learning through arts and culture can help children achieve in Maths and English

3

Learning through arts and culture develops skills and behaviour that lead children to do better in school

4

Students who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree

5

The employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment

6

Students who engage in the arts at school are twice as likely to volunteer

7

Students who engage in the arts at school are 20% more likely to vote as young adults

8

The arts can help young people to turn their lives around: young offenders who take part in arts activities are 18% less likely to re-offend

9

Children who take part in arts activities at home during their early years are ahead in reading and Maths at age nine

10

The arts keep you healthy: people who take part in the arts are 38% more likely to report good health

Read the Key Research Findings in full at:  
[www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence)

# Funded **Action Research Studies** and **Test and Embed** projects to improve outcomes across the region and nationally.

## **! Idea**

Bridge partners could **identify exemplary Early Years practice** in their regions and collaborate with identified providers.

Woolenwick Infant and Nursery School  
Learning Growing Achieving Together



## Woodwork in the Early Years



Thursdays  
10 June  
17<sup>th</sup> June  
24<sup>th</sup> June  
1<sup>st</sup> July

4.00pm - 5.30pm

*Limited places available*



Capitalise on the strong resurgence in EY woodworking. This session is an introduction to **woodwork** in the Early Years led by Atelierista **Richard Parker**. Richard is a lifelong passionate woodworker who is trained to deliver EY woodworking. He is driven by EY creativity, promoting this through a range of different media using clay and other natural resources. Look out for his upcoming workshops, including handmade artist's charcoal.

Find out how woodwork complements the EYFS curriculum.

This is a hands-on session including a demonstration on the safe use of Early Years woodworking tools, followed by the opportunity for hands on experience.

**£35.00** to include

Our bespoke reference book to safe woodwork practice in the Early Years.

A list of go to tools and materials to aid your resourcing.

As well as anything you make in the session.

Bespoke woodwork benches available to order for **£95.00** on the day



To book a place, please contact us by Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
Woolenwick Infant and Nursery School  
Bridge Road west, Stevenage SG1 2NU  
[admin@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk)  
01438 216070

**Bridge funding** and cultural providers should capitalise on the **co-creating** during pandemic.

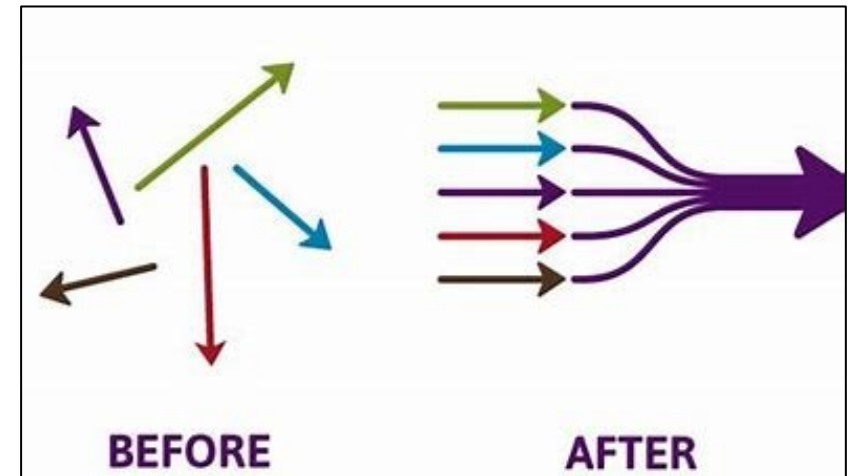
**! Idea**

**Cultural Providers** and **Outstanding EY providers** could offer funded **parent/child workshops** in order to give new experiences - *resulting in meaningful interactions and rich language development, as well as a reduction in the sense of not being entitled to access arts and cultural events.*



**Investing and developing** cultural providers to **better communicate their programming** with schools.

! Idea  
**Identify opportunities, invest and develop** cultural providers and educational settings to improve understanding of one another to **increase and improve collaborations between sectors.**



All stakeholders need **new opportunities** to **connect, collaborate** and **learn** to **improve outcomes** for all.

**! Idea**

Could Bridge Partners support a nationally renowned and respected arts organisation to lead and devise an **Early Years Festival**? –  
A celebration of the arts in the widest sense?

# Ideas in summary

- Cultural providers need to **recognise that young children are creative and competent** and **remove lower age restrictions**.
- **Leaders** need to **understand the value of the arts**.
- Funded **Action Research Studies** and **Test and Embed** projects to **improve outcomes across the region and nationally**.
- Bridge funding and cultural providers should capitalise on the co-creating during pandemic, offering **parent/child workshops**.
- Cultural providers need to **better communicate their programming** with schools.
- Cultural providers should consider which **areas of the curriculum** their discipline can target, other than art and design.
- An Early Years **Conference**, Early Years **Festival**, Early Years **Arts Award**



# Creativity is Universal

*One Hundred Languages of Children*  
by Loris Malaguzzi

[The Hundred Languages- A Maker's Mindset - YouTube](#)

The **wider** the range  
of **POSSIBILITIES**  
we offer **children**,  
the more **INTENSE** will be  
their **motivations** and  
the **RICHER** their  
**experiences.**

Loris Malaguzzi