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The Impact of dot-art Schools – New Research Unveiled!

dot-art Schools believes the arts have the power to change and shape young people's lives.

For many Liverpool City Region schools, the annual **dot-art Schools** inter-school art competition is already a well-established fixture in the academic calendar as it launches its eighth year. The online art competition culminates in a public exhibition of the winning artworks and a prize giving celebration for teachers, students and their families. The competition is open to all Primary (Year 5) and Secondary (Year 9) and SEND schools in the six boroughs of Liverpool City Region and the surrounding area. It is designed to nurture talent, raise ambition and take art out of the classroom into the real world.

The competition was established in 2012 in response to demand from local schools and the sidelining of the arts in the curriculum, to date over 6700 children from 398 schools have taken part. Participating in the competition can contribute to a school's Artsmark journey, boost students' self-esteem, raise their aspirations and engage student's families.

Earlier this year, **dot-art Schools** were delighted to be accepted for the CERI (Cultural Education Research Initiative) research project. CERI is a partnership between Curious Minds and Liverpool Hope University to support research-informed practice in cultural education.

The research offered an opportunity to examine what impact participating in the competition has had on both the school and students, and to map and learn more about the social, economic and educational context those schools sit within. We wanted to discover what motivates schools to take part in dot-art Schools competition. investigate the reasons for the diverse quality of artwork entered and address ways to support teachers to improve the quality of pupil's art experiences. Does competing build quality, so schools produce better art as a result?

"I think the fact that they get to have their work displayed at Liverpool school of art and design, that was just amazing and to have the parents come along, to really show the children that this is a kind of a career, this is something you could do in life. It's not something a lot of them had even considered and then they were just in awe."

Secondary teacher interviewee

"It's a nice way to celebrate our pupils work and for them to receive acknowledgement for the work they've done. I think the awards ceremony is fantastic for boosting their self-esteem getting them out of their comfort zone."

SEN teacher interviewee

CERI Researcher Adam Haunch states:



"The dot art Schools programme has reached out to particularly deprived communities, in a manner that is not only inclusive but that has brought out the very best that these communities have to offer, resulting in, at primary level, schools in highly deprived areas being far more successful than their affluent peers. This is undoubtedly evidence that the cultural capital of these participants has been significantly increased."

The dot-art Schools programme aims to encourage and nurture talent by celebrating and showcasing Year 5 & Year 9 students' artworks both online and in public exhibitions. This research enabled us to gather measurable data on the impact we're having and analyse that data to develop future strategies to improve our offer. The research has clarified how our work impacts on schools and young people and will inform our planning for new ways we can best support teachers.

We looked at data about participating schools from 2012 – 2018 to give a demographic context of the schools that have taken part. We discovered that 64% of the participating primary schools and 50% of the secondary schools are in the most deprived quarter of the UK population.

The researcher from Liverpool Hope University also conducted interviews with teachers from a representative range of schools and those competing regularly as well as for the first time.

dot-art Schools project manager Carolyn Murray commented:

"We're delighted to have taken part in the CERI research which has confirmed many of our hunches about the nature of schools we work with and the positive impact we are having on them and their students across the region. We are inviting primary, secondary and SEN schools across the Liverpool City Region to join us for our 8th annual, inter-school art competition. We look forward to working with even more schools for the 2019-20 competition."

Schools who want to enter next year's dot-art Schools competition can register up to 18th December 2019. For more information visit <http://schools.dot-art.com> or contact Carolyn Murray on schools@dot-art.com.

ENDS

For more information or photos please contact Carolyn Murray, dot-art Schools Project Manager schools@dot-art.com or call 0345 0176660.

EDITORS NOTES:

The dot-art Schools programme has been developed by **dot-art**, a Liverpool based arts organisation which has been supporting artists and developing innovative and creative visual arts projects and initiatives since 2006.



In 2012 we were approached by a Liverpool school who asked if we could develop a way to showcase the art work of talented school children in the same way we do professional artists. Since then we have been using our skills, experience and expertise to give the young people of the region access to an exciting new public platform for their creative output, and a taste of the way the art world works.

dot-art supports visual artists and champions art as an integral part of everyday life

We do this by selling locally sourced, affordable art, working with businesses to put art in the workplace and public realm, running art classes and working with schools and community groups. All this is underpinned by our unique membership scheme for artists in the North West which gives access to all the activities above and a package of support and advice, creating and developing artists' careers.

dot-art was founded in Liverpool in 2006 and specialises in affordable, high quality, locally sourced art. We work with over 100 artists to provide an unrivalled choice of original art and limited edition prints for home or business, as well as offering a range of complementary services including; commissions, art rental, art consultancy, exhibition planning and implementation, bespoke framing, art valuation and restoration and artist sourcing.

All our work supports our not-for profit arm dot-art Services CIC, which exists to support North-West based visual artists, both emerging and established, through a range of services and opportunities designed to help them develop their careers and gain exposure and promotion for their work, as well as delivering a programme of adult art classes at a range of venues across Liverpool and dot-art Schools, our innovative inter school art competition, launched in 2012.

Find out more on our websites

<http://dot-art.com>

<http://schools.dot-art.com>