

# Camden Learning: Enrichment Pledges

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# Introduction

**Curriculum enrichment in schools refers to the universal entitlement to additional activities—such as arts, culture, civic engagement, sport, outdoor adventure and life skills development—that extend learning beyond the core academic subjects and nurture broader personal growth.**

Enrichment is fundamental to young people's learning, with recent UK research showing that sustained participation in enrichment activities supports engagement, belonging, skill development and positive learning behaviours, and should be treated as a core part of education rather than an optional add-on (Centre for Young Lives, 2023; Centre for Education and Youth, 2024; DCMS, 2023). This point has also been made in the 2025 Curriculum and Assessment Review Final Report which set out a commitment to develop benchmarks to support every school and college in providing a strategically planned and ambitious enrichment offer for all pupils (Department for Education, 2025). The review highlighted that curriculum enrichment is associated with better educational outcomes and achievement. For example, evidence shows that young people who attended sports clubs are more likely to be in education or employment as adults, highlighting how crucial enrichment is to long-term success.

Curriculum enrichment in schools refers to the universal entitlement to additional activities—such as arts, culture, civic engagement, sport, outdoor adventure and life skills development—that extend learning beyond the core academic subjects and nurture broader personal growth. Enrichment is fundamental to young people's learning, with recent UK research showing that sustained participation in enrichment activities supports engagement, belonging, skill development and positive learning behaviours, and should be treated as a core part of education rather than an optional add-on (Centre for Young Lives, 2023; Centre for Education and Youth, 2024; DCMS, 2023). This point has also been made in the 2025 Curriculum and Assessment Review Final Report which set out a commitment to develop benchmarks to support every school and college in providing a strategically planned and ambitious enrichment offer for all pupils (Department for Education, 2025). The review highlighted that curriculum enrichment is associated with better educational outcomes and achievement. For example, evidence shows that young people who attended sports clubs are more likely to be in education or employment as adults, highlighting how crucial enrichment is to long-term success.

Despite this importance, what is being offered to schools, and by schools, varies greatly. There is

clearly a need to systematise, codify, or ensure a baseline level of enrichment is offered to all pupils, rather than relying on pupil self-selection to participate in specific activities. Our findings indicate that mandating enrichment is more effective in ensuring equity than optional participation. The Curriculum and Assessment Review revealed that children in need had significantly lower participation levels: only 63% compared to 72% of those without identified needs. This highlights that enrichment must be embedded into the curriculum as a mandatory provision, not an optional extra.

It is encouraging to see the government working toward benchmarks that set out steps and goals for schools to deliver high-quality enrichment to all pupils. The five aims, civic engagement, arts and culture, nature and outdoor adventure, sports and physical activities, and developing wider life skills, provide a comprehensive framework. It is also positive that the government has identified numerous organisations that can support schools in developing and delivering enrichment activities, which is essential for ensuring pupils access high-quality experiences.

Camden presents a unique and complex context for enrichment provision. It is a highly diverse area with a significant percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals and high proportions of English as an Additional Language learners. Yet, it is also an area of considerable wealth, both cultural and financial. This creates a fascinating tension between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds living in an inherently advantageous area with exceptional resources.

Camden is close to, and contains, extraordinary cultural and civic institutions: the British Museum, Central Saint Martins, Hampstead Heath, the British Library, Google's UK headquarters, and Ronnie Scott's jazz club, among many others. This concentration of cultural capital, professional expertise, and opportunity makes Camden a uniquely rich environment for enrichment. The challenge, and opportunity, is ensuring that all pupils, regardless of background, can access and benefit from what surrounds them, with schools playing a crucial role in opening doors that might otherwise remain closed.



Against this backdrop, Camden Learning, a school-led partnership between Camden schools and Camden Council, developed the Building Back Stronger strategy in 2022. Central to this strategy was a focus on equity and excellence and an understanding how pupils' educational outcomes could be improved through comprehensive, high-quality enrichment provision. Through consultation with headteachers, specialist consultants, and other stakeholders, and building on existing practice across Camden schools, twelve enrichment pledges were created. These pledges represent areas of key importance and provide a framework for schools to deliver meaningful enrichment experiences.

Enrichment in Camden manifests in three distinct ways: borough-wide initiatives often facilitated by

Camden Learning (such as the biennial Camden Schools' Music Festival at the Royal Albert Hall and the Arts Biennale); school-led examples where teachers design activities to support their pupils; and pupil-led initiatives where young people themselves drive enrichment opportunities.

This report examines each of the twelve pledges, providing an overview of the range of activities and level of engagement for each, followed by detailed case studies from primary, secondary, and special schools. It is important to note that many activities span multiple pledges; in these instances, we have selected the most appropriate or relevant pledge to illustrate the activity's impact.

## The pledge promises every pupil in a Camden school the opportunity to:

1. See themselves in the curriculum and feel a strong sense of belonging to the school community
2. Perform music, drama and dance and experience performances not only in Camden but also in London's theatres and music venues
3. Learn to express themselves visually and creatively, often inspired by visits to London's museums and galleries
4. Understand Camden's and London's histories and cultures through local visits
5. Meet inspiring role models from a wide range of jobs and professions
6. Participate in physical and outdoor activities, including sports, teams and competitions
7. Learn how to achieve and maintain good physical and mental health
8. Know how to eat healthily, including how to cook and grow food
9. Take a position of responsibility and demonstrate leadership skills both in school and in the wider community
10. Develop enterprise skills, for example through support for a charity or local enterprise
11. Understand and feel part of a global and diverse world
12. Care for the environment and our planet



# Methodology

This report aims to address the following research questions:

1. **What unique and innovative approaches are schools in Camden using to deliver the twelve enrichment pledges?**
2. **To what extent is every pupil in Camden, across both primary and secondary phases, experiencing these enrichment opportunities?**

To answer these questions, a qualitative research design was adopted, prioritising depth of insight, exploration of practice, and the capture of lived experience across Camden schools.

This research followed an open and exploratory approach, developing iteratively across three key phases:

## Phase One: Scoping and Initial Engagement

Camden Learning and ImpactEd Evaluation (IEE) held initial scoping discussions to shape the research direction. During this stage, key Camden-based contacts were identified who were able to share informed perspectives on enrichment activity across the borough in maintained Primary, Secondary and Special Schools. These individuals guided us to early examples of innovative practice and schools that were delivering the enrichment pledges particularly successfully.

## Phase Two: Mapping Enrichment Activity Across Camden

IEE conducted **14 interviews** (20–30 minutes each) with the initial group of contacts. These interviews were used to build a borough-wide database of enrichment examples linked to each of the twelve pledges. The purpose of this phase was to develop a broad understanding of the range and nature of provision across Camden schools.

Following the interviews, the database was systematically analysed to identify relevant, compelling, and diverse examples of practice at school level. All Camden schools were then contacted directly. Each school was informed about the specific enrichment example connected to their setting that we wished to discuss and given the option to propose an alternative focus if preferred.

## Phase Three: School-Level Interviews

IEE subsequently conducted **25 school interviews** (25 minutes each), engaging teachers, senior leaders, and headteachers from across the borough. These discussions explored:

- school context and demographics
- the detail and structure of enrichment programmes
- motivations for delivering activities
- perceived impact on children and young people
- reflections on pupil engagement
- practical advice for schools seeking to adopt similar approaches

Information gathered in this phase enabled deeper insight into how enrichment activities function in practice, and what supports their success.

Before exploring individual pledges and case studies, it is worth highlighting key themes that emerged from conversations with headteachers, teachers, and subject consultants across Camden:

**Enrichment doesn't require massive budgets.** Success comes from being specific and intentional about what you want to achieve, then getting creative about delivery. Schools should confidently use external providers where necessary, recognising that these partnerships often bring expertise and inspiration that enhance what teachers can offer alone.

**Enrichment activities are inherently expansive.** They rarely fulfil only one narrow purpose but instead deliver multiple benefits across academic, social, emotional, and developmental domains.

**Embedding enrichment into the curriculum makes it most powerful and effective.** When enrichment is integrated into pupils' broader learning rather than treated as an add-on, its impact is significantly amplified.

**Senior leadership buy-in is essential.** When leaders prioritise enrichment—allocating time for planning, budget for delivery, and permission for teachers to invest energy—activities are more likely to succeed. Senior leaders need to understand the potential outcomes to champion these activities effectively.

**Teachers are passionate about enrichment and naturally recognise its equity potential.** Many teachers spontaneously mentioned their desire to narrow the gap between advantaged and less advantaged pupils and consistently observed how pupils with SEND thrived in enrichment settings in ways they found challenging in traditional classrooms.

**External providers inspire pupils in unique ways.** While teachers are invaluable, professionals from outside school inhabit different roles and bring fresh perspectives that can spark engagement in ways that classroom teachers sometimes cannot.

Perhaps the most important finding is this: **enrichment will be most effective and powerful if you actively support, encourage, and guide all pupils to access it.** This means actively supporting and encouraging certain pupils, ensuring universal participation rather than self-selection, and creating structures that bring every child into the experience. This approach supports children in discovering passions they might never have allowed themselves to explore if left to choose independently. That realisation, that a child enjoys something they didn't know they enjoyed, or were not previously aware of, is profoundly powerful and can be genuinely transformative.

# Approaches to impactful and successful enrichment

This section summarises the overarching themes that emerged across schools regarding their motivations for delivering enrichment, the impact on pupils, and the recommendations they commonly shared.

## Motivation

No matter the actual enrichment activity, schools were often motivated to ensure that their enrichment was accessible to all pupils, rather than just select groups.

Multiple schools we spoke to were motivated to enrich their pupils by diversifying and decolonising their curriculum so pupils could see themselves reflected in what they learned. Part of this was ensuring pupils worked with artists and professionals that shared similar cultural backgrounds and came from similar places. Schools also wanted pupils to understand how subjects being taught in schools could then turn into careers, helping them to understand the pathways that exist beyond the traditional routes. This was particularly the case in creative industries.

Schools' enrichment choices were also motivated by connecting their pupils to their local area, particularly its cultural offering and natural spaces. Schools were motivated by building their young people's cultural capital. They often aimed to do this by engaging with the local community, natural world, focusing on experiences that cannot be replicated in the classroom.

Schools were also motivated by wanting to expand pupils' life skills and future readiness. They wanted to provide opportunities to develop practical life skills, whether that's cooking, healthy habits, career aspirations and sense of direction. They wanted enrichment opportunities to increase pupils' motivation, and to encourage them to become active citizens.

## Impact

Enrichment activities consistently reached pupils who find traditional classroom settings challenging. Students with SEND thrived in performance, outdoor learning, and practical activities like cooking, often surprising staff with their engagement. Pupils struggling academically found their pathway through dance, music, or creative subjects, with some transforming their entire school experience. Simple activities like chopping vegetables or preparing food helped pupils become more open and expressive, while pupils with ADHD successfully participated in formal settings like sit-down meals with school governors, achievements that would be more challenging in conventional lessons.

Enrichment opportunities frequently facilitated pupils' development in confidence. This came from managing career conversations independently to performing at professional venues. The inclusive approach, particularly in sport and arts, increased pupils' sense of belonging and pride in representing their school. Students gained life skills including resilience, growth mindset, teamwork, and autonomy. In some cases, pupils developed a shared language around goal-setting, emotions, and wellbeing became embedded in school culture, with pupils more willing to help each other and demonstrate kindness. External performances and professional settings elevated pupils' self-perception, showing pupils their work deserved serious recognition.

Enrichment experiences shifted pupils' understanding of possible futures. Students recognised pathways into creative careers through mentorship with professionals, with alumni returning to share success stories and some gaining art scholarships or entering creative industries. Pupils made real-world connections between school subjects and careers, particularly in emerging fields. They began independently accessing opportunities beyond school and understood that career routes exist beyond corporate partnerships. For some pupils, experiences represented their first time leaving the borough, inspiring families to explore London together and broadening their sense of what's accessible to them.

When pupils saw themselves reflected in curriculum content, through diverse artists, decolonised learning, and faith-inclusive programmes, they understood the importance of representation. In some cases, music uptake increased among older pupils. Pupils challenged bias and divisive messages and became motivated to contribute positively to their communities, and beyond. Some understood the value of small-scale, local change, while others developed as active citizens equipped to make a difference on a broader scale.

## Recommendations from teachers

### Leadership buy-in:

Schools emphasised the critical importance of senior leadership support and protected time for teachers to plan enrichment activities. They recommended establishing clear protocols, such as minimum trip requirements or compulsory enrichment expectations, so activities don't get deprioritised. Schools advised being strategic about how to evidence outcomes, having a clear vision of what you want to achieve, and reviewing approaches regularly to ensure they remain aligned with goals. Several schools suggested focusing on fewer but deeper enrichment activities rather than spreading efforts too thin, with a clear "hook" or purpose for each programme.

### Inclusion by design:

Schools consistently stressed designing inclusion into programmes rather than adding it as an afterthought. This includes ensuring all pupils can participate through individual risk assessments, involving key parents early, and getting teachers to proactively support pupils who struggle organisationally to sign up for opportunities they genuinely want. Schools recommended managing pupil and parental expectations from the outset, being transparent about processes, and treating enrichment as integral to education rather than an optional extra. Making activities compulsory or setting minimum participation standards helped ensure equity of access.

### Partner with external organisations:

Schools strongly advocated for building sustained relationships with external partners, creative organisations, local venues, professional artists, and community groups, rather than one-off engagements. They recommended responding positively when local organisations offer outreach, researching what's available in the local area, and adapting programmes to the specific context. Schools supported using specialists to deliver high-quality experiences while supporting teachers in developing their own skills.

### Embed enrichment within curriculum, and the curriculum within enrichment:

Rather than treating enrichment as separate from learning, schools recommended integrating it into whole-school activities, planning across year groups, and ensuring trips are embedded within learning sequences, ideally in the middle rather than at the end. They advised linking different elements together (such as cooking to gardening and wellbeing) and working towards specific events that give purpose and momentum to activities.

### Embed enrichment into the school day:

Rather than trying to squeeze enrichment around existing timetables, extend the school day on designated days specifically for this purpose, making specific enrichment activities part of the formal school day. Communicate clearly with

parents, framing enrichment as curriculum time rather than optional extras. This removes the choice to opt out whilst making expectations transparent. Ensure enrichment delivery is part of teachers' contracted hours or fairly compensated. Some schools pay staff additional stipends annually to deliver sessions, recognising the extra time and energy required.

### Adapt enrichment offer based on cohort's strengths and interests:

To maximise enjoyment and engagement, ensure your enrichment offer is tailored to the specific strengths, interests, and contexts of pupils. Teachers emphasized this was particularly important when selecting types of performances for end of Year 6. For example, choosing comedy for a humorous cohort or more serious drama for a mature group. Consider your community's practical realities when deciding which instrument a whole class would learn; one school switched from brass instruments to ukulele after recognising that pupils couldn't practice brass at home in shared rooms or flats due to noise constraints.

### Consistent support for pupils to engage in enrichment:

Schools recommended consistently encouraging pupils to participate, helping them see value in experiences they might not initially appreciate, and involving pupils in leadership roles to support activities. They emphasised the importance of keeping parents engaged through regular communication, encouraging cross-year friendships and community building, and supporting pupils to follow up with professionals after events to develop networking skills. Practical advice included taking children outdoors, starting with engaging but simple activities, exploring the local area for inspiration, and being persistent; recognising that meaningful change can take up to two years.

### Implement tracking and quality assurance:

Build systems that monitor pupil choices across terms and years, gently pushing students towards variety rather than allowing repeated selection of the same activities. Consider introducing tiered awards based on diversity of participation to gamify the experience whilst ensuring pupils stretch beyond comfort zones. Actively monitor which pupils haven't signed up or participated. Often those with additional needs or lacking home support, and build proactive systems where staff reach out to ensure these pupils, who benefit most, don't slip through gaps.



## Pledges

This section highlights the ways Camden schools are delivering the twelve pledges set out in Camden's Building Back Stronger education strategy. For each pledge, we provide an overview of the types of enrichment activities taking place across the borough, followed by specific school-level examples. While many activities contribute to multiple pledges, they have been organised under the pledge that best aligns with their core purpose to support navigation and clarity.



### Pledge 1:

## **Pupils see themselves in the curriculum and feel a strong sense of belonging to the school community**

Across Camden, schools are reshaping their curricula to ensure pupils feel represented, valued, and connected to their community. Many schools have achieved the Rights Respecting Schools Award, which embeds the principle of "creating safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured, and they are able to thrive." Central to this approach is collaboration between children, young people, and adults to develop and maintain school communities based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. Teachers report that the programme has empowered pupils to stand up for their own rights and those of others, reduced prejudice and discriminatory attitudes, and amplified pupil voice. Schools are further fostering this sense of belonging through pupils' voice in student councils. Many schools have spent time on decolonising their curriculum. This is particularly important considering the diversity of the pupil population in schools in Camden.

# Case study 1: Holy Trinity NW3

Holy Trinity NW3 is a primary school with 171 pupils and 53.2% Free School Meal eligibility. They wanted to diversify their art curriculum to ensure pupils encountered artists from different minority groups including women and Black and Global Majority artists, creating artwork that reflected their diverse cohort and developing a strong sense of belonging for all children.

## Rationale

Cohort	All pupils
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's spiritual strategy has the following four areas: the self, others, the world &amp; beauty and the 'beyond'.</li> <li>They recognised their art curriculum needed to reflect their diverse pupil population.</li> <li>The goal was to expose students and teachers to artists from different cultural backgrounds so all children could see themselves represented.</li> </ul>

**Curriculum diversification** introducing artists from different minority groups including women and Black & Global Majority artists across year groups.

**All the classes completed self-portraits.** introducing artists from different minority groups including women and Black & Global Majority artists across year groups.

**Teacher professional development** through the process of researching and teaching about a diverse range of artists previously unfamiliar to staff.

**Cross-curricular approach** linking art encounters to the school's broader framework of relationship with self, others, beauty, and the world beyond.



## Impact

The programme shifted how pupils saw themselves within the arts. An impressive 84% of pupils reported that artists looked like them, and 99% believed it was important that everyone is represented in the arts. Pupils expressed genuine enjoyment in creating portraits and finishing their artwork, while recognising the importance of learning about artists from different cultural backgrounds. The impact extended beyond students to teachers, who also learned about the diverse range of artists they hadn't previously encountered. The project reinforced the school's "village school" atmosphere, where belonging is central, with pupils producing artwork that authentically reflected their diverse community and understanding why representation matters in creative education.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Start with a clear vision and framework** - Decide exactly what you want children to get out of the programme, whether using existing pledges or creating your own, and ensure this vision is supported from senior leadership.
- Be strategic and specific so you can evidence outcomes** - Plan how artists will be integrated into the curriculum and what pupils should gain from studying them.
- Involve pupils and parents from the outset** - Use mechanisms like house captains to help choose artists so students understand why they're doing it, and get parents on board to reinforce the importance of diverse representation at home.

# Case study 2: Kingsgate

Kingsgate is a community primary school in West Hampstead with 594 pupils and 54.7% Free School Meal eligibility. Kingsgate's enrichment activities are integrated within the curriculum and designed to prioritise equal access and inclusivity for all pupils, considering the size and the make-up of the school.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kingsgate wanted to broaden cultural capital and personal development by exposing all pupils to diverse experiences: art projects, music lessons, trips to museums and galleries, festivals and sports competitions.</li> <li>• The curriculum within the school was decolonised to reflect the diverse cultural heritage of the pupils.</li> <li>• Kingsgate wanted to embed enrichment into the curriculum through complementing learning with external partnerships and local opportunities ensuring every child can participate, develop new skills, explore their interests and represent the school in various domains.</li> <li>• Through decolonising the curriculum Kingsgate aimed to ensure it was inclusive and catered to the diversity of the school.</li> </ul>

Kingsgate wanted to review and reshape their curriculum especially music, art, history and geography to ensure it reflected the multiculturalism within the school.

The process involved consulting with experts, art consultants, and local authorities to develop and validate the curriculum content.

The curriculum continues to be reviewed and updated to reflect new perspectives and maintain inclusivity.

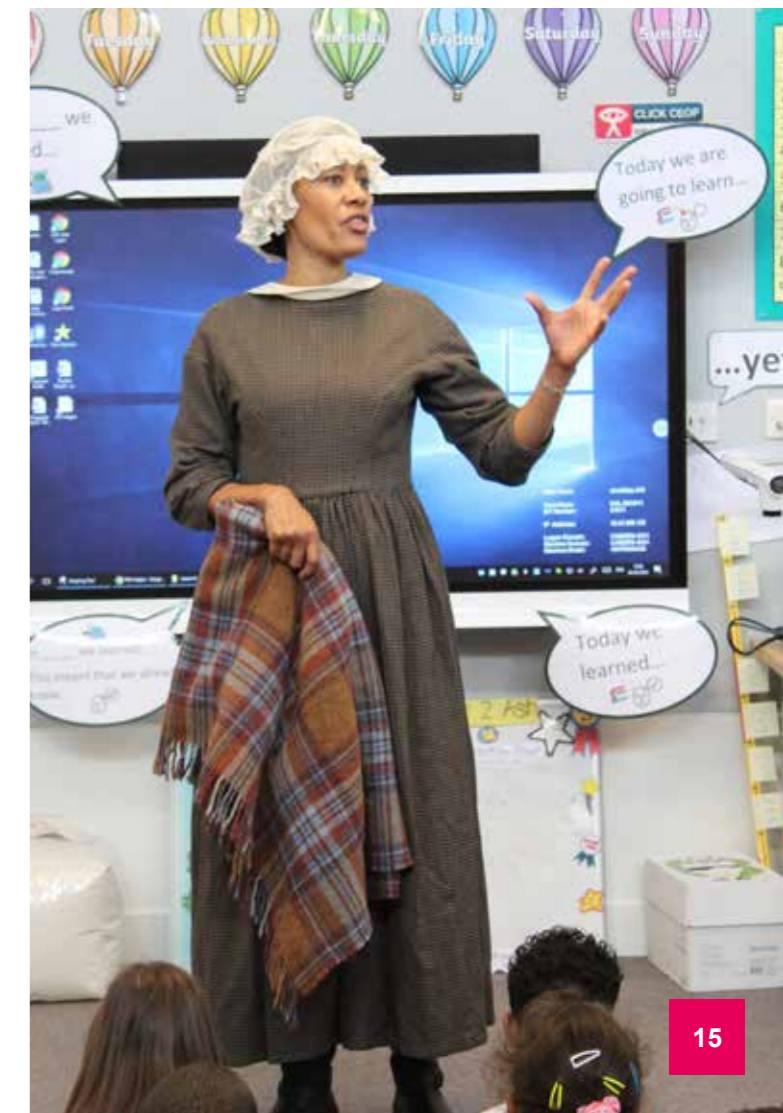


## Impact

By decolonising the curriculum, the school reported pupils felt empowered to question dominant narratives in history, art, and literature, encouraging critical thinking and independent inquiry. The school wanted to make sure the pupils could see themselves in the curriculum and so the decolonisation helped them to foster awareness, fairness and resilience and ensure the enrichment activities were accessible to all. It has also helped the pupils to challenge biased or divisive messages they may encounter outside of school and provide a protective foundation against harmful societal and media narratives.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Give it time and be persistent** - approach curriculum changes gradually with small, consistent steps rather than trying to do everything at once—meaningful change may take up to two years.
- **Seek support and review regularly** - use consultants, advisors, or networks for guidance, and revisit the curriculum periodically to ensure it still aligns with your goals.





## **Pledge 2:**

### **Pupils perform music, drama and dance performances not only in Camden but also in London's theatres and music venues**

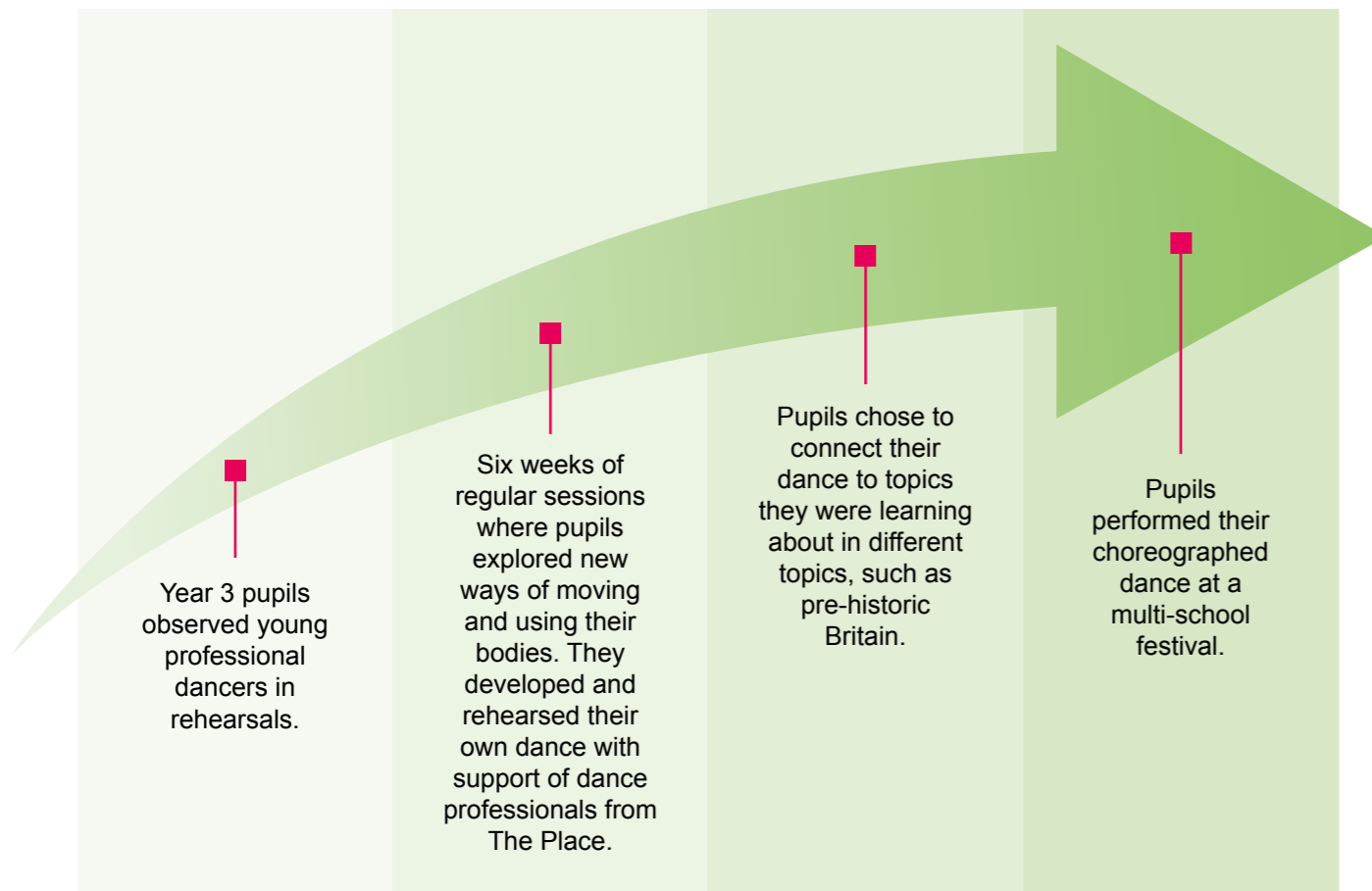
This pledge comes to life across Camden as schools encourage and facilitate pupil performances in music, drama, and dance. The pinnacle of the music calendar is the biennial Camden Schools' Music Festival, where 2000 Camden school pupils perform at the Royal Albert Hall to an audience of 3,000 people, live-streamed to 14,000 homes. This event is supported by comprehensive provision through Camden Music Service, which involves 160 music teachers, borough ensembles, youth choirs, orchestras, whole-class ensemble teaching, bursaries and mentors, ensuring all pupils can access high-quality music education. Drama is celebrated through school productions and partnerships with professional theatres, including the Donmar Warehouse, giving pupils opportunities to develop performance skills and confidence on stage. Dance provision includes partnerships with local organisations that bring professional choreographers into schools, deliver workshops, and create pathways for pupils to explore movement and expression as both an art form and a potential career.

# Case study 3: Argyle Primary

Argyle Primary School is a community primary school in Camden with 278 pupils and 60.8% Free School Meal eligibility. They partnered with a local dance organisation, The Place, to elevate their dance provision, help pupils see dance as a potential career, and develop a group performance for a festival showcase.

## Rationale

Cohort	Year 3
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argyle wanted to ensure pupils received quality dance teaching from experienced professionals.</li> <li>Year 3 pupils were chosen as the most suitable cohort to participate due to their understanding of basic movement.</li> <li>Teachers saw this as an opportunity to spot pupils with dance talent and nurture it early.</li> <li>Year 3 pupils have greater flexibility in their timetable to dedicate sufficient time to commit to the dance programme.</li> </ul>



## Impact

Pupils, including those they didn't expect, gave feedback that they were captivated by performers' rhythm, movement, creativity and teamwork. Through the sessions, pupils developed both enthusiasm for and understanding of dance, learning to craft a piece from start to finish. By working alongside talented young dancers who served as role models, they built collaboration, communication and confidence. Many pushed beyond their comfort zones, working through initial nervousness to feel genuine pride and achievement in their final performance, which left parents in awe.

The impact extended in a unique way to pupils with SEND. A non-verbal pupil became increasingly interested in their peers across the programme's duration, beginning to copy their movements and work alongside them. More broadly, pupils with SEND became more accepted and understood by their peers than before. The culmination of the experience with professional dancers encouraged pupils and teachers to integrate movement into activities outside of dance.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Align dance content with pupils' broader curriculum learning.
- Clearly communicate the programme's purpose and benefits to staff.
- Build in observation time during rehearsals to ensure quality.

# Case study 4: Fitzjohn's Primary School

Fitzjohn's Primary School is a primary community school with 230 pupils and 13.1% Free School Meal eligibility. They wanted to create a meaningful Year 6 leaving experience that develops confidence, teaches resilience through auditions, and gives every child ownership over a substantial creative project, whilst preparing pupils for secondary school transitions and potential creative careers.

Rationale	
Cohort	Year 6
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 6 needed a major project to engage all pupils, including those who typically avoid performance.</li> <li>The school created an original two-hour musical where every child contributed lyrics and music.</li> <li>The project taught collaboration, handling audition disappointment, and the satisfaction of creating something genuinely impressive.</li> </ul>

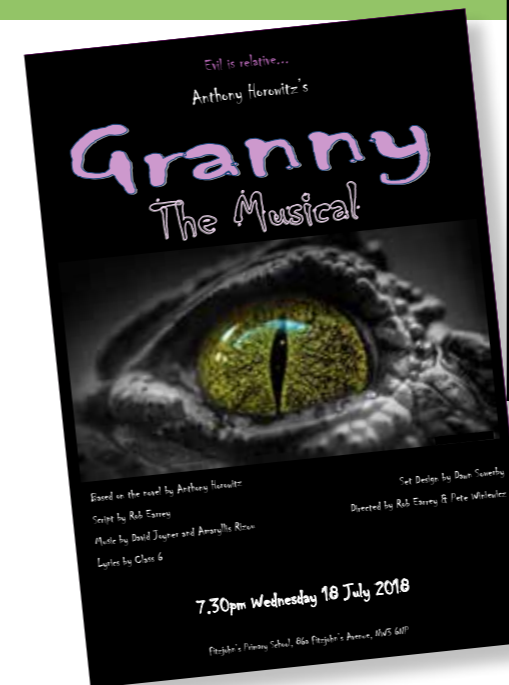
**Script adaptation and character development** starting with pupils reading the text, acting out pieces with character voices, and adapting the script based on the specific year group's skills and strengths (some years comedic, others more serious).

**Collaborative lyric writing** where pupils learn what songs do in musicals (push story, develop character, bring humour), watch YouTube clips for examples, work as a whole class to create structure, write verses in pairs, and contribute so every child has input in the final musical.

**Music composition sessions** in small groups with the music teacher, where pupils sing their lyrics and he finds the tune on guitar or keyboard based on how they think it should sound.

**Serious audition process** teaching pupils that auditions matter in professional settings and preparing them for potential failure and the life lesson of trying without guaranteed success.

**Five-week summer rehearsal period** with some pupils joining the design team to create artwork and posters, culminating in an evening performance with lighting and special effects to make it feel like a significant event.



## Impact

The programme enabled individual pupils to make visible progress and helped to foster greater confidence within the year group. Pupils who wouldn't normally engage in performance participated because they knew the output would be public. Collaboration sparked creativity, with pupils inspiring each other as ideas generated more ideas. Notably, some pupils with SEND took on lead roles. For example, one pupil with autism performed the lead, and the rehearsal and performance process appeared to support a significant increase in their confidence. For many pupils, something clicked during the actual performance when they realised the play was funny and saw audience reactions to their puns and exaggerated characters, making them more confident in their abilities. Several alumni have chosen to pursue creative arts careers, suggesting that the programme may have played a role in nurturing their interests. The emphasis on serious auditions taught resilience and handling disappointment, important life skills that extend beyond performance into secondary school and adult life.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Seek consent from writers and select material that matches your class** - if they're a funny cohort, choose comedy; if more mature, select something darker, and don't patronise children by oversimplifying content or underestimating what they can achieve.
- **Run serious auditions that help pupils develop resilience** - pupils to learn how to embrace challenges, understanding that outcomes are not always guaranteed.
- **Manage children's and parental expectations from the start** - be clear about the process, time commitment, and that not everyone will get their desired role, preventing conflicts and disappointment later in the project.

# Case study 5: Hawley Primary School

Hawley Primary School is a 3 – 11 community primary school with 228 pupils with 51.3% of pupils eligible for free school meals. They wanted to ensure pupils have rich musical experiences and understand that music is accessible and achievable in all their lives, particularly where attending concerts or engaging with musicians isn't the norm, showing pupils that music careers are real, local, and attainable goals.

Rationale	
Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils often lack exposure to live music and professional musicians in their everyday lives, making it difficult to envision music as an accessible career or understand what musicians do.</li> <li>The school aimed to weave musical opportunities throughout the curriculum, ensuring every child performs on broader stages than just the school.</li> <li>Wanted to establish links with external organisations.</li> </ul>



## Impact

The music enrichment activities encouraged untapped pupil talents and changed perceptions. One pupil who was not academic thrived in music and performing arts, lighting up in these experiences in ways not seen in other learning contexts. Another pupil's parent was surprised by how much their initially reluctant children enjoyed participating once they reached the performance stage. The local scale of partnerships helped pupils realise music careers are achievable goals - they did not need to become 'the next Taylor Swift'. For pupils where concerts and professional musicians aren't part of family life, seeing this happening within their community and realising it's an actual job people do, love, and earn money from proved powerful. The partnership with OAE exposed pupils to traditional instruments and the history of music-making, with programmes designed to be child-friendly even when using original music through practice, fun, and interactive approaches. The school's clear expectation that everyone would take part meant even initially reluctant pupils participated. While these activities may not appeal equally to every pupil, universal participation ensured that no one missed the opportunity for a potentially inspiring experience. Pupils now have invitations to fuller productions like The Magic Flute, demonstrating how initial partnerships create ongoing opportunities.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Understand your community** - choose musical activities that work for pupils' home environments and avoid options that create barriers.
- Secure senior leadership support** - ensure leaders champion music initiatives and maintain engagement with external partners.
- Invest in a dedicated music teacher** - a passionate teacher helps drive opportunities and signals the school's commitment to external organisations.

# Case study 6: The Camden School for Girls

Camden School for Girls is a voluntary aided secondary school in Camden with 1076 pupils and 28.4% Free School Meal eligibility. They wanted to solidify their music department whilst ensuring their offer continues to be accessible for all pupils.

Rationale	
Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school has a long-established reputation for a strong music department, with some pupils gaining admission through a music specialism.</li> <li>The school has made a deliberate effort to ensure that music does not become a point of exclusion.</li> <li>By adapting its approach and offering accessible opportunities, the school aims to fully include all pupils in music-based activities.</li> </ul>



## A Stage for Every Pupil, Every Term

- Each term features a major community performance.
- Events such as Battle of the Bands for groups formed both in and beyond curriculum time.
- Musicals and orchestra productions involving 120 pupils.
- Open for pupils of all experience levels to participate.

## Expert Tuition Made Accessible

- High-quality teaching is delivered by professional tutors and conductors from Camden Music Services, industry connections, and the school's own music staff.
- Lessons are offered at different times of day, recognising that not all pupils can stay after school.
- Flexible provision raises aspirations while removing barriers.

## Pupils Leaders Supporting the Music

- Three Music Ambassadors from each year group volunteer for the role.
- They prepare music, help with rehearsal setup, and provide practical assistance.
- Their contributions support the department with capacity and foster ownership and leadership among pupils.

## Experiences Beyond the Classroom

- A rich programme of musical trips from Year 11 visits to musicals to Year 13 orchestra excursions and full music tours to broaden pupils' cultural and performance experiences.
- Camden School for Girls' ensures that cost is never a barrier, so all pupils can participate.

## Impact

Music performances positively impacted pupils, staff, parents and carers, and the wider community. Performances “bring the community together. It’s a sharing of joy and positivity, bringing the community together from all sides.” Parents saw their children in a different light, and teachers also witnessed pupils who typically struggle in traditional classroom settings perform confidently, providing opportunities to reset ideas and rebuild relationships.

The orchestra encouraged pupils to sit with others from different year groups, forming vertical friendships and a sense of community that would not exist without these music activities. The school currently has 13 pupils studying Music A-level in Year 12 and 12 in Year 13, bucking the national trend for music uptake. Six pupils from the previous Year 13 cohort went on to study music at university or conservatoire.

One pupil observing the Islamic faith was initially reluctant to join the choir, feeling that the repertoire would be predominantly Christian and that no other members looked like her. After joining and prompting changes to ensure more diverse repertoire and representation, she is now flourishing in the choir.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Consistently remind and invite pupils to take part** - encouragement creates engagement and facilitates inclusion.
- **Trust that pupils will benefit** - stay confident guiding them through experiences they might not yet see the value of.
- **Encourage mixing across year groups** - this will build friendships across the community.
- **Involve pupils in leadership** - encourage them to support activities.

# Case study 7: Acland Burghley

Acland Burghley School is a 11 – 18 secondary school with 1218 pupils with 36.5% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals. They wanted to show pupils what the arts can bring to them, ensuring their creative provision was inclusive and accessible to all students, particularly those with additional educational needs and those in receipt of pupil premium funding.

Rationale	
Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognised the need to make creative arts provision genuinely universal rather than exclusive.</li> <li>The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE) in residence and a strong creative arts team was an opportunity to bridge gaps and build collaboration between students with high needs and their peers.</li> <li>They want to expose all pupils to music and performance experiences they hadn't previously encountered and helping them see how performing arts can lead to future career pathways.</li> </ul>

**Musical Connections programme** run by OAE, bringing together students with special educational needs and those without for collaborative "jam off" sessions, focusing on inclusion and joint music-making.



**Whole school production** supported by OAE involving 200 students with two separate casts performing on different nights, including proper auditions on a professional stage.

**Annual Dance show** - professional stage and performances at Arts Depot in Finchley rather than the school assembly hall.



**Young Producers programme** where students receive support with sound, lighting, and backstage elements to make productions more professional.



**Instrumental and vocal preparation** led by OAE that enabled pupils who wouldn't have previously participated to perform at the Royal Albert Hall.



**Interdepartmental collaboration** between drama, dance, and music teams, creating a whole-faculty approach with dedicated dance studios and exclusively creative pathways available for students.



## Impact

The programme transformed participation across the school, with diversity amongst performing students increasing over the years as pupils watched their friends perform and wanted to join in subsequent years. One Year 10 student exemplifies the individual impact: after a hard transition in Years 7 and 8, they found their way through creative subjects, using lunchtimes and before-school sessions to capitalise on dance opportunities. This transformation led them from a difficult place to performing at the Edinburgh Fringe and in Bucharest. The programme successfully facilitated the balancing of academic achievement with creative development, with increasing numbers of pupils participating in creative arts. The creative arts team established that creative provision is for everybody in the school, with the whole-school production deliberately avoiding turning anyone away since it only happens once a year, reflecting genuine commitment to inclusion.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Facilitate performances in professional venues** like local arts centres rather than school halls. This elevates the experience, signals that student work is valued, and helps pupils understand where creative careers can lead.
- **Build inclusion into programme design from the start** - considering running two casts instead of turning students away, ensure mix of SEND and non-SEND students in all activities, and actively track disadvantaged student participation to ensure the creative arts genuinely reach everyone.
- **Teachers must proactively support organisationally overwhelmed pupils** - check that students who express interest actually complete sign-ups, as those who struggle with organisation often have passion but need additional support to access opportunities they genuinely want.



### **Pledge 3:**

## **Pupils learn to express themselves visually and creatively, often inspired by visits to London's museums and galleries**

Camden school pupils are immersed in world-class cultural resources, surrounded by leading galleries, museums, artists and architecture. With the British Museum and prestigious institutions like Central Saint Martins on their doorstep, schools actively cultivate these relationships to inspire pupils and encourage creative expression. This creative energy culminates in the Camden Schools Arts Biennale (CSAB), a week-long exhibition celebrating artwork from every school and key stage across the borough—from early years through to A-Level. Organised by Camden Learning in collaboration with Central St Martins, Camden Council, independent artists and cultural partners including The Photographers Gallery and The October Gallery, the Biennale showcases the breadth and ambition of young people's artistic practice, making visible the creative talent thriving across Camden's schools.

# Case study 8: Primrose Hill Primary School

Primrose Hill School is a primary school with 429 pupils with 38.5% of pupils eligible for free school meals. They wanted to encourage their pupils to engage with their local surroundings.



## Rationale

Cohort	Reception
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils developing cultural capital was part of their school improvement plan, so the school wanted to incorporate this even at the very beginning of a pupils' education.</li> </ul>

**Story sparks exploration -**  
After reading 'The Queen's Hat' in Reception, a pupil led the class to the top of Primrose Hill where they observed and sketched London's iconic skyline and famous landmarks.

**Research and discovery -**  
Back at school, pupils researched the buildings they had drawn, delighting in discovering quirky and unusual facts about their local architecture.

**Digital and physical creation -**  
Children designed models of their favourite buildings using computers, then brought their designs to life by creating large-scale sculptures from recycled materials.

**Collaborative gallery project -**  
Pupils worked together to transform their individual sculptures into a complete Primrose Hill skyline gallery display.

**Real-world curation skills -**  
They hosted parents, peers and teachers at their gallery, learning practical aspects of curation including ticketing, creating maps and lanyards, and guiding visitors through the exhibition.

## Impact

The project transformed pupils' understanding of their place within London, helping them realise that iconic landmarks were right on their doorstep. One child discovered they could see the BT Tower from their bedroom window. This newfound awareness inspired families to explore the city together. One family, including a child with complex learning needs, visited the famous buildings their children had modelled, documenting their adventure in a photo booklet. The project also strengthened home-school connections, with one parent sharing his own architectural drawings with the class after hearing about their work.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Jump on a bus** with your class to observe and be inspired by the surrounding landscape and landmarks.
- **This project doesn't require extensive materials or budget to get started;** use your imagination and passion to bring the project to life and enable pupils to explore their local area in new ways.

# Case study 9: Kings Cross Academy

Kings Cross Academy is a stand-alone academy primary school in Camden with 400 pupils and 48.4% Free School Meal eligibility. As part of their enrichment, the school is determined that every child will have the opportunity to work with a real, practicing artist during their time at the school, ensuring hands-on, authentic art experiences for all pupils. These experiences are funded through their Academy sponsor, The King's Cross Group.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kings Cross Academy's goal is to help every child discover their passions and develop into lifelong learners.</li> <li>• To achieve this, pupils are exposed to a wide range of experiences including, large-scale art projects, sports tournaments, and one-to-one music lessons.</li> <li>• Rooted in the school's original values of collaboration and extending learning beyond the classroom, Kings Cross Academy uses the creative resources of the King's Cross estate to give children unique opportunities.</li> <li>• When a child shows enthusiasm, whether for art, music, or sport, the school provides further experiences to deepen that interest, aiming to instil a love of learning and a clear sense of what motivates them as they move to secondary school.</li> </ul>

All classes within the school are named after artists. The school has connections with these artists through the Aga Khan Centre and Central Saint Martins.

Pupils have the opportunity to create large-scale art projects throughout the year and participate in a series of workshops to produce either individual pieces of art that form a collective one or one large collaborative piece.

The school curates and displays the art at their own exhibition at Central Saint Martins every second year for families and the public to enjoy.



## Impact

The school's arts provision has enhanced pupils' creativity, problem-solving, and overall approach to learning. High-quality tuition from professional artists inspires the pupils, helping them to develop skills and achieve success they might not have experienced in other subjects. When reflecting on the impact of the art provision, the school shared examples of pupils gaining scholarships in art once attending secondary school.

Beyond technical skills, working with local practitioners makes the arts tangible and provides real-world connections to major industries such as Google, Meta and Facebook and creative careers. For many pupils from less affluent backgrounds, this exposure transforms their understanding of opportunity, showing them pathways into high-profile industries and making success feel achievable. Due to the local connections pupils see the opportunities as accessible and it brings the learning to life.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Broaden your perspective** - don't let school leadership focus solely on externally measured outcomes and subjects, consider the broader purpose of education.
- **Prioritise the arts** - arts education is a crucial part of developing well-rounded, creative pupils.

# Case study 10: Rosary Catholic Primary School



Rosary Catholic Primary School is a 3-11 school, with 301 pupils, of which 41.4% are eligible for Free School Meals. The school is open to pupils from all faiths and backgrounds and wanted to provide a rich and varied curriculum.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rosary School increasingly recognises that children excel in different areas, and as a result they need exposure to as many areas of the curriculum as possible, so they have opportunities to excel.</li> <li>The school aims to provide a rich and varied curriculum with pedagogical approaches that suit as many children as possible, with a particular focus on an art curriculum with breadth.</li> <li>A staff member is completing the Cultural Education Leadership Programme. As part of this, the school will hold termly 'Design Days' where all classes plan and create projects linked to each term's topic.</li> </ul>

Rosary's art leader has mapped a clear progression of skills across the art curriculum from early years to Year 6. The curriculum is structured around six strands (textiles, 3D modelling, printing, collage, painting and drawing) with skills systematically built as pupils progress through the school.

The school subscribes to Access Art, a programme, which provides a range of adaptable projects and tutorial videos to support teachers' delivery. They also receive support from a visiting specialist teacher.

The school has also established a partnership with the October Gallery. All classes attended last year, developing skills in looking at, appreciating and articulating opinions about art, as well as practical making sessions. Staff training session run by the gallery have been held at school to support teaching of Sculpture.

Last academic year, all classes made art works for a whole school art exhibition attended by families celebrating the school as Rights Respecting.



## Impact

Staff reported all pupils, even those with different strengths have excelled as artists, receiving affirmation from peers, teachers, and parents about their work. Art was identified as a significant source of stress relief for Year 6 pupils facing SATs-related pressure, with teachers highlighting the powerful and calming nature of activities as pupils became increasingly focused and settled. Pupils engaged with free art activities across London and felt considerable pride seeing their artwork displayed publicly. For parents who didn't see themselves as gallery-goers or families whose work would be exhibited, seeing their children's art displayed publicly (at the Camden Biennale) proved particularly meaningful, shifting perceptions of what cultural participation looks like and who it's for.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Leverage Camden's CPD sessions and networks** - the art leader training provides valuable content and networking opportunities where colleagues generously share expertise, whilst affordable programmes like Access Art offer effective, ready-to-use resources that support curriculum delivery.
- Embrace experimentation and focus on process over perfection** - don't be reluctant to try new approaches even if outcomes aren't immediately perfect, as children value the creative process and exploration rather than final appearance.
- Build staff confidence through positive framing** - art is an area where teachers can feel reluctant due to perceived skill gaps or resourcing challenges, so maintain an encouraging approach when bringing staff on board, emphasising that engagement and willingness to explore matter more than technical expertise.



#### **Pledge 4:**

### **Pupils understand Camden's and London's histories and cultures through local visits**

Schools across Camden enable all pupils to explore their local area through carefully planned trips integrated into curriculum learning. From The Crick's cutting-edge biomedical research facilities to the intimate beauty of Fitzrovia Chapel, the rich historical resources of Camden Archives, and the hands-on experiences at Kentish Town City Farm, pupils engage with the diverse cultural, scientific, and community assets on their doorstep. These visits deepen understanding of place and belonging, connecting classroom learning to their neighbourhood.

# Case study 11: Eleanor Palmer Primary School

Eleanor Palmer Primary School is a primary community school with 237 pupils and 20.7% Free School Meal eligibility. They wanted to ensure pupils engaged with their local area, particularly those who don't necessarily access or feel able to access it, whilst deepening curriculum learning through experiences that cannot be replicated in school.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school recognised that enriching subjects like geography is challenging when confined to the playground, and outdoor learning benefits pupils in ways classroom settings cannot.</li> <li>They embedded experiential trips to nearby Hampstead Heath and residential experiences to broaden horizons, particularly valuable for pupils with limited experience beyond their local area.</li> <li>Real-world experiences developed social skills, growth mindset, and resilience.</li> </ul>

**Annual topic-led trips to Hampstead Heath** for every year group, linked to curriculum with staff guidance on how visits deepen learning beyond what's possible in school, embedded within rather than bolted onto learning sequences.

**Heath Education Centre workshops** tailored by year group: Year 2s learning maps and compass points through a pirate treasure hunt in the secret garden; Year 3s becoming soil scientists studying dams and river networks; Year 6s doing orienteering across the entire heath with proper terrain maps.

**Year 6 residential to Farms for City Children** founded by Michael Morpurgo, where pupils receive farm jobs for the week (such as feeding hens), wake at 7am, live in dormitories, and spend evenings without devices engaging in parlour games, journaling, and book reading.

**Individual risk assessments and parent involvement** ensuring all pupils can attend where possible, with key parents invited when relevant and clear agendas shared so pupils aren't fixated on logistics.

**Pupil engagement through sketchbooks and journals** to capture learning and reflections during visits.



## Impact

Exploring the local area was particularly helpful for pupils who struggled in traditional classroom settings. A Year 2 boy with attention and behavioural needs was completely focused from start to finish, completing tasks with peers that he wouldn't do in a normal class setting. For many pupils, particularly those on the farm residential, horizons were dramatically broadened, some experienced leaving the borough for the first time, and several have gone on to pursue degrees in agriculture. Beyond individual pupil impact, the programme enriched staff experience, with teachers forming networks across cultural sites and partnering with local independent schools, resulting in an Modern Foreign Languages teacher and clubs now running at Eleanor Palmer. The stringent approach to embedding trips within curriculum meant learning was deepened rather than disrupted, with pupils developing social and life skills, growth mindset, and resilience through experiences like living in dormitories, managing early starts, and engaging without screen time.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Establish clear trip protocols and minimum requirements** - create written guidance so Early Career Teachers know how to set up trips, align all visits with school values and ethos, and mandate a minimum number (e.g., three per year) so teachers prioritise trips.
- Embed trips in the middle of learning sequences, not at the end** - this makes experiences most impactful as pupils can apply what they learn afterwards, and ensure trips offer something genuinely unreplicable in school.
- Give teachers protected time off timetable to plan and organise trips** - explicitly grant permission for this administrative work.



## **Pledge 5:**

### **Pupils meet inspiring role models from a wide range of jobs and professions**

Schools across Camden prioritise connecting pupils with professionals across diverse industries, helping them understand pathways into various career fields. Through careers fairs, strategic partnerships with major employers like Google, headquartered in the borough, collaborations with artists and galleries, and invitations to professionals to speak directly with students, pupils gain valuable exposure to working life and develop essential networking skills. These connections span creative, corporate, scientific, and community sectors, ensuring all young people can envision futures that align with their interests and aspirations.

# Case study 12: Edith Neville

Edith Neville is a community primary school in Camden with 217 pupils and 51.2% Free School Meal eligibility. The school curriculum revolves around six recurring themes. As part of their enrichment, they integrate their careers education linked to the six themes with guest speakers invited into the school throughout the year to provide meaningful context to the learning. The school utilises community links, including through the Camden STEAM hub, to ensure a wide range of professionals visit the school and that these guest speakers are representative of the school community.



## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Edith Neville wanted to increase pupils' sense that they deserve opportunities and develop their aspirations helping them to feel like they belong and can achieve anything they set their mind to.</li> <li>Through introducing careers and professional pathways early, the school hope to provide pupils with a sense of direction and motivation before they go to secondary school.</li> <li>By addressing barriers to learning and providing ample opportunities to explore careers through their learning the school aims to broaden pupil horizons.</li> </ul>

## Impact

Edith Neville gave examples of pupils coming back to the school at their own instigation to share success stories about their careers and being accepted into university. The school are in the early stages of organising inviting alumni back into school to give career talks to current pupils to share, inspire and celebrate their achievements.

The school also shared examples of pupils working with climate change consultants, art students, and institutions like Central St. Martin's and through this work pupils were able to enhance their creativity, develop their global awareness, and practical application of learning. These experiences had a positive impact upon pupil motivation, confidence, and autonomy, demonstrating tangible benefits from connecting curriculum learning to meaningful community and professional opportunities.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Integrate enrichment activities into whole-school themes rather than treating them as add-ons, this way they align with the curriculum and help to reduce teacher workload.
- Collaborative planning across year groups increases efficiency and excitement for staff.
- Using community and external organisation links to provide meaningful, multi-year group opportunities.



The school's curriculum revolves around six recurring themes, revisited each year with increasing complexity as children move through the school. In the Summer term the focus is on 'looking after the planet' and 'aspirations'.



Careers education is woven throughout the themes via guest speakers. When activities directly relate to a whole school theme they are introduced in assemblies and explored in workshops. Pupils also explore texts appropriate to their age group linked to the key themes.



During the aspirations half term, pupils reflect on the skills and traits they value, and explore corresponding careers. At the end of year 5, students share their career interests, which then guides visits and activities in the year 6 careers programme.



E.g. during a theme on being a global citizen, a visitor from Camden Community kitchen shared their work supporting refugee families.

# Case study 13: Haverstock School

Haverstock School, part of the H3 federation, is a secondary community school with 909 pupils, with 72.6% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals. They partnered with the Roundhouse, a historic performing arts venue in Camden, London to provide creative industry exposure for their students. With many families focused on financial sector careers through corporate partners like Deloitte and Convex, the school was motivated to showcase alternative career pathways within their local community and demonstrate opportunities in the charitable and creative sectors.

## Rationale

Cohort Year 10 – Year 13

### Details

- School wanted to offer more than corporate work placement partnerships to open students to experiences beyond traditional business settings.
- School wanted to show students that creative organisations also needed business, technical and operational professionals.

**Year 10 workplace visits** including building tours exploring the Roundhouse's history and unique acoustic properties, workshops, group presentations, and performances related to festivals, helping students understand both creative elements and behind-the-scenes festival production.

**Creative Music Workshops** delivered to classes throughout the day, with lessons each period showcasing careers in creative subjects and how live production TV works.

**T-level work placements** where students learned operational systems including the trellis system, gaining practical technical skills from Roundhouse staff.

**Class visits to the Roundhouse building** allowing pupils to experience the venue's unique features, including standing in specific places where sound reverberates in particular ways.

**Ongoing promotion** of Roundhouse opportunities through Google Classrooms, leading to young people attending.



## Impact

Students experienced shifts in their understanding of career possibilities. Initially dismissing the Roundhouse as mundane because of its proximity, pupils' questions multiplied as they discovered the building's rich history and unique features. Most importantly, students from communities that don't typically encourage creative careers began recognising that creative industries need business and technical professionals, not just performers. Two T-level students working under the mentorship of a female Roundhouse professional moved from career uncertainty to targeted goals through consistent engagement with real operational skills. Young people now independently attend Roundhouse events beyond school requirements, demonstrating lasting engagement with creative opportunities.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Partner with local creative venues that actively want to engage young people** - don't assume students know what's on their doorstep just because it's local; make the opportunities exciting by showcasing unique aspects like building history and technical operations.
- **Prioritise the arts alongside corporate partnerships** - give students a genuinely broad view of career options, emphasising that creative organisations need business and technical professionals too, not just performers.
- **Ensure sustained engagement rather than one-off visits** - consistent, structured programmes with professional role models help students develop targeted career aspirations and understand genuine pathways into creative industries.

# Case study 14: Regent High School

Regent High School is a secondary community school with 1086 pupils and 67.6% Free School Meal eligibility. They partnered with Camden Cleaner Air to run a careers event focused on sustainability and the environment for Year 11 and Year 12 students, aiming to provide cultural capital and help pupils understand the links between their subjects, particularly science and geography, and emerging career fields like environmental law and sustainable fashion.

Rationale	
Cohort	Year 11s and Year 12s
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school recognised that many students weren't aware of the links between their subjects and potential careers, particularly in emerging fields like environmental law and sustainable fashion.</li> <li>By connecting pupils with industry leaders through this careers event, they aimed to build confidence in career conversations and show students the diverse pathways available, including routes that don't require university or college.</li> </ul>

Clean Air Initiative careers event focused on sustainability and environment, delivered through Camden Cleaner Air outreach, with 30 Year 11 and 12 Year 12 students attending.



Industry leader meetings where pupils met professionals from fields like environmental law and sustainable fashion, learning about different career pathways and the various routes into these professions.



Student-led networking sessions where pupils engaged directly with professionals, managing conversations independently without teacher mediation.



Follow-up contact opportunities where students could exchange details with professionals and reach out after the event to continue conversations.



## Impact

Students gained insights into career possibilities, enjoying seeing what else was out there and discovering diverse pathways that don't necessarily require university or college. The event built confidence in having career conversations, with pupils becoming more comfortable discussing their futures and managing those conversations without teacher support. One Year 12 student demonstrated initiative by sending multiple follow-up emails to individuals they'd met at the careers fair, showing genuine engagement beyond the event itself. The programme successfully broadened students' horizons, particularly for those who hadn't previously connected their subjects to real-world careers in fields like sustainability and environmental law.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Respond to outreach opportunities from local organisations** - when groups like Camden Cleaner Air approach your school, say yes and work with them to tailor events to your pupils' interests and subjects.
- **Create structured follow-up opportunities** - encourage pupils to exchange contact details and send follow-up emails to professionals, teaching networking skills that extend beyond the single event.

# Case study 15: Hampstead School

Hampstead School is a 11-18 secondary school with 1228 pupils with 49.5% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals. They have an annual careers week with events, the largest of which is a whole school careers fair.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The careers programme helps the school meet the Provider Access Legislation, which mandates that schools give Years 8 to 13 students access to information about technical education and apprenticeships.</li> <li>Beyond this statutory requirement, the school provides careers support from Year 7, giving all students opportunities to have meaningful conversations with professionals and develop networking skills for their future careers.</li> </ul>

### Annual Careers Fair held within Careers Weeks.

An array of organisations are invited including colleges, training providers, apprenticeship providers, universities and different private job sectors.

**The event is designed to emulate professional networking events.**  
It supports pupils to practise the communication skills needed in this context.

### Each year group circulates the careers fair.

Pupils are given time to interact with the organisations that attend. They are provided with activities to support meaningful conversations. Teachers are on hand to provide support.

### Exhibitors are briefed to tailor their approach for different year groups.

Conversations with younger groups focus on describing career paths, while older pupils discuss the qualifications and skills they would need.

### Pupils participate in a real-world experience.

They see what career and networking events are like, which will be part of their future career search. They also have the opportunity to develop a range of soft skills.



## Impact

Teachers reported pupils benefitting from the careers fair, particularly in developing soft skills including the courage to initiate interactions, improved speaking abilities, and confidence engaging with adults outside their day-to-day experiences. The fair created individual opportunities, with one pupil becoming fascinated by artefacts brought by an exhibiting organisation, sparking a conversation that built confidence to discuss subject interests and explore career pathways, ultimately leading the pupil to request and secure a work experience placement. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds gained exposure to the breadth of careers available in sectors like the Civil Service through their social mobility programme, accessing career information and opportunities comparable to their more advantaged peers. The fair facilitated all pupils - regardless of background - to envision professional pathways and understand the range of careers open to them.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Start research early and build sustained relationships** - many organisations are willing to participate but require time to commit, and establishing ongoing partnerships encourages them to attend year after year, creating consistency and deeper engagement for pupils.
- Equip both professionals and teachers to facilitate meaningful conversations** - ensure visiting professionals understand how to engage pupils at their specific age and developmental stage, and prepare teachers to support students in initiating interactions, asking questions, and following up on opportunities that emerge from conversations.



## **Pledge 6:**

### **Pupils participate in physical and outdoor activities, including sports, teams and competitions**

Schools across Camden engage pupils in sport and outdoor activity. The annual Camden Shield brings schools together for competitive team sports, fostering school pride and physical development. Enthusiastic teachers champion sporting opportunities, and several schools emphasised the benefits of outdoor learning, whether through trips to Hampstead Heath, residential experiences, or simply taking lessons outside, recognising that physical activity and fresh air support both wellbeing and engagement in ways that classroom learning alone cannot achieve.

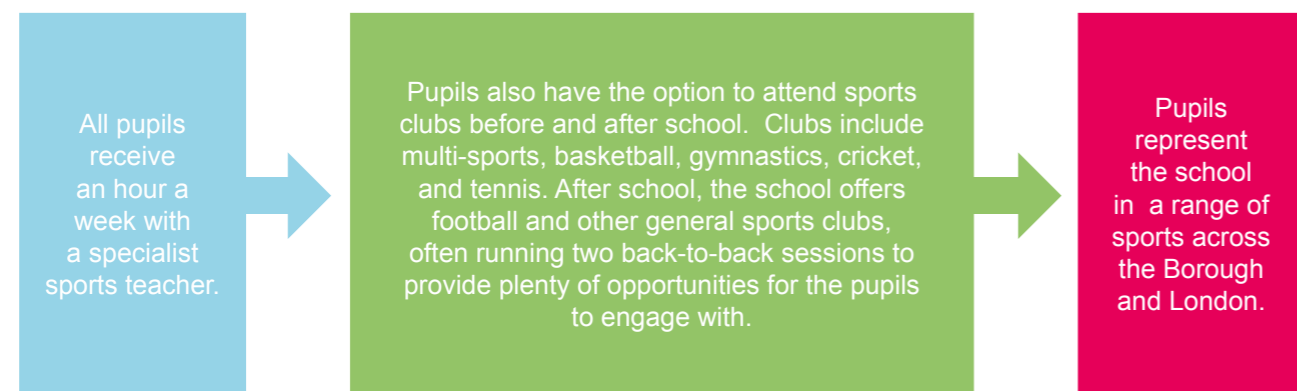
# Case study 16: Gospel Oak

Gospel Oak is a community primary school in Camden with 424 pupils and 36.2% Free School Meal eligibility. The school provide extensive sports enrichment through a specialist sports teacher, a hired sports coach and a dedicated sports teaching assistant who work together to deliver high-quality PE a cross all year groups.



## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gospel Oak wanted to give all pupils the opportunity to excel in other areas of the curriculum, beyond the core academic subjects.</li> <li>Offering sessions with a specialist sports coach ensures pupils receive expert instruction and the best possible sporting opportunities.</li> <li>The school aims to promote lifelong healthy habits through fitness and wellbeing.</li> <li>This aligns with the school's ethos of offering a broad and balanced curriculum, while also supporting teacher PPA release time.</li> <li>In addition, the school uses sports premium funding to support additional staffing so it can offer a wide range of sports clubs.</li> </ul>



## Impact

Pupils can engage with a range of sporting activities and through this they gain strong enjoyment and pride from taking part in the sports, especially when representing the school in competitions across the Borough and London. The school prioritises participation over elitism, more pupils, regardless of skill level, get the chance to compete, which boosts pupils' confidence and makes it more inclusive. Wearing the school kit and taking part in events and competitions also enhances the pupils' sense of belonging, pride and achievement. Pupils feel motivated to take part in events and through focussing on personal bests, they develop resilience and many experience success in competitions. Overall, every child benefits by having meaningful opportunities to represent the school and they therefore feel valued in sport.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Use specialist coaching** - bringing in a dedicated sports coach or specialist teacher greatly improves the quality of PE due to their higher expertise and experience.
- Support classroom teachers** - specialist-led PE gives teachers valuable PPA time and removes the expectation that they must be experts in every subject.
- Treat sport as a standalone subject** - unlike cross-curricular areas, PE works best as its own focused discipline, which helps maintain clarity and effectiveness in delivery.



## **Pledge 7:**

### **Pupils learn how to achieve and maintain good physical and mental health**

Schools across Camden are committed to developing young people who are attuned to their physical and mental health. Primary schools deliver comprehensive mental health programmes focused on emotional literacy and preventative approaches to poor wellbeing. Most schools participate in the borough-wide Healthy Schools initiative, promoting holistic health education. External organisations including LoudMouth Theatre, Hopscotch, and Brook work with schools to tackle challenging topics such as misogyny, healthy relationships, and mental health awareness through age-appropriate workshops and performances. Some schools have adopted whole-school approaches to wellbeing, embedding mental health support into everyday school life and ensuring pupils develop the language, skills, and resilience to support themselves and others.

# Case study 17: Christ Church Primary School, Hampstead

Christ Church Primary School, Hampstead is a voluntary aided school with 191 pupils and 3.7% Free School Meal eligibility. They wanted to proactively teach children practical strategies to promote good mental wellbeing, giving pupils tools and tips to support their own and others' mental health through a whole-school approach that becomes embedded in the school's vocabulary and culture.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School recognised that mental wellbeing requires explicit teaching and practice, not just reactive support when problems arise.</li> <li>Ran comprehensive programme every two years with assemblies, classroom activities, and whole-school events, they aimed to normalise conversations about emotions, resilience, and wellbeing.</li> <li>Building a shared language and practical strategies that pupils, staff, and parents could all use to support mental health across the school community.</li> </ul>

**Happiness Project** - ten themed wellbeing modules including goal setting, giving (work with local soup kitchens and Great Ormond Street Hospital), healthy bodies and resilience.

**Emotions week** where pupils learn to name, identify, and add shape and colour to emotions, creating emotion necklaces and understanding that negative emotions are normal and constant happiness is unrealistic.

**Belonging activities** including creating jigsaws showing how everyone fits together, making and swapping friendship bracelets, and discussing belonging to families, religious groups, and school houses.

**Celebrating difference presentations** where pupils share why they're unique (being coeliac, dyslexic, etc.), family and friends week with letter-writing to distant relatives, and simplicity week exploring prayer and nature for wellbeing.

**New activities week** trying skateboarding, ice skating, climbing, fencing, calligraphy, canoeing, boat trips, and London Eye visits, discussing feelings before and after to overcome anxiety and build satisfaction.

## Resilience Puzzles!



## Impact

The programme changed how pupils talk about and understand their wellbeing. Teachers now regularly hear pupils naming and discussing emotions, using the language of resilience and "bouncing back," and setting targets aligned with the "aiming high" theme. Pupils developed bravery to share their uniqueness with the whole class during celebrating difference presentations. One breakthrough moment came when a pupil who loved swimming spoke about Michael Phelps as an inspiration, explaining that both they and Phelps are dyslexic and find solace in swimming. This public sharing represented a significant step for that child. The adventurous activities during 'Try Something New' week helped pupils overcome anxiety and experience the satisfaction of trying new things.

Beyond individual impact, the happiness stones initiative, where children wrote messages of happiness and left them around the world, with people emailing the school when they found them, created a tangible sense of spreading wellbeing beyond the school gates. The programme built up shared school language around belonging, target-setting, and aiming high that now permeates everyday interactions.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Secure senior leadership engagement and agree budget early** - the project can be carried out at low-cost or fundraising could be used to provide additional external enrichment activities and workshops.
- Start with research, then adapt to your context** - decide the scale that suits your school and pick elements to deliver at a pace that works, rather than trying to implement everything at once, and link themes to existing curriculum and enrichment where possible.
- Keep parents informed through regular newsletter updates** - this builds home-school consistency in wellbeing language and ensures strategies are reinforced beyond the school day, creating a genuine whole-community approach.



"...I found one of your school's happiness stones in Hollandsche Rading in the Netherlands. I think it's a really wholesome idea and it's cool that it reached a whole other country!"

# Case study 18: Netley Primary School

Netley Primary School is a mainstream primary school which has 388 pupils, supporting children aged 2 - 11. 60.1% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals. Netley has a Centre for Autism, a specialist provision for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder within the school.



## Rationale

Cohort Early Years

- Details
- The Early Years leads at Netley Primary School recognised that many pupils are still developing the emotional regulation skills needed to engage fully in learning and relationships.
  - They introduced emotion coaching as a consistent, practical approach to support children to co-regulate with adults during moments of dysregulation or when experiencing new emotions such as excitement or nervousness.
  - Training Early Years staff aimed to help pupils tolerate strong feelings, develop emotional language, and begin making more positive behavioural choices over time.

Netley Primary takes a reflective approach to behaviour, asking “why might that have happened?” rather than relying on punitive methods.

Emotion coaching focuses on co-regulation, helping children tolerate, understand, and label emotions, and supporting them to make different choices about their behaviour.

Early Years leaders completed TIPiC (Trauma-Informed Practice in Camden) training and, with support from Camden’s Kids Talk, received emotion coaching training at no cost. They then trained all other staff across the school.

The approach builds children’s ability to manage feelings such as sadness or anger with support from skilled adults, laying the foundation for later interventions like Zones of Regulation, which require self-regulation skills.

## Impact

Early Years leads report that emotion coaching has transformed behaviour and wellbeing practices. Pupils are more regulated, better able to describe and reflect on their feelings, and increasingly able to manage strong emotions with support. Staff now have a consistent approach and feel confident dedicating time to emotional development, helping children feel secure, supported, and calm. One pupil illustrates the impact: previously, they would become frustrated and withdraw when challenged, struggling to communicate their feelings. Through emotion coaching, they learned to connect their responses to underlying feelings of rejection, seek support when needed, and manage situations without withdrawing. Over time, they developed the ability to express emotions clearly and no longer require additional behaviour support. At the cohort level, more children achieved the Early Learning Goal for emotional regulation last year than in previous years, showing early evidence of the approach’s effectiveness.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Allocate sufficient time and resources for initial training** and ongoing development to fully embed emotion coaching.
- **Secure staff buy-in** - ensure all staff understand that emotion coaching supports emotional regulation, not removing accountability.
- **Ensure consistency across all staff** - children should receive the same responses from every adult, backed by whole-school commitment to the principles of emotion coaching.



## **Pledge 8:**

### **Pupils know how to eat healthily, including how to cook and grow food**

Schools across Camden are committed to teaching pupils how to eat healthily through hands-on, experiential learning. Many schools are building gardens where pupils grow vegetables and herbs, understanding the full cycle from seed to plate. Cooking is prioritised, with special schools sometimes offering significantly more provision than mainstream settings and working towards qualifications in food preparation. External partnerships elevate this experience, from professional kitchen visits with supermarkets to programmes like "Know Your Onions" from School Food Matters. Schools are promoting lifelong healthy eating habits that link cooking to wellbeing and potential career pathways.

# Case study 19: Heath School

Heath School is a pupil referral unit (PRU) for 11- to 16-year-olds with 33 pupils on roll and 77.4% Free School Meal eligibility. Their key aim is to prepare all students for their next transition, which includes providing opportunities for students to develop life skills so that they can thrive when they leave. The food curriculum is a core part of this to support disadvantaged students to learn about preparation of healthy meals and develop cooking skills. It also provides students with employability skills for the future and increases their confidence in their own abilities. Heath School work with a range of external partners to elevate their food teaching.

Rationale	
Cohort	All Years
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school saw that pupils needed practical life skills in food preparation and nutrition alongside academics.</li> <li>For students from challenging backgrounds, the food curriculum built trust, responsibility, and offered recognised qualifications.</li> <li>The hands-on approach let pupils actively learn on their feet - a format many preferred over traditional classroom settings.</li> </ul>

Four weekly food lessons working towards a BTEC qualification covering nutrients, growing food, and practical cooking skills, taught by a dedicated food team including teacher and assistant.

"Know Your Onions" programme from School Food Matters where pupils planted vegetables and herbs, prepared the garden, had two cooking sessions, visited a garden market, and ran their own market stall selling raw produce and homemade items like lavender biscuits and brownies.

Community meal events where students prepared all food for Eid celebrations, Black History Month, and careers coffee mornings, inviting governors and Camden community members to share meals together.

Weekly Active Learning trips to expand students' experiences within the local area, included visits to London Markets to research ingredients and selling techniques to prepare students for holding their own market stall, as well as sharing a Caribbean Meal during Black History Month to experience different cuisines, learn employability skills for running a business and developing confidence in a new environment.

A partnership with Beyond Food, a charity run by professional Chefs in a working restaurant in the city. Students have been taught new skills in the Beyond Food kitchen and were exposed to a potential career pathway for their future.



## Impact

The practical nature of cooking supported pupils to engage with learning, with students reluctant to be taken out of food lessons and proudly sharing their creations during lunch. Pupils naturally helped each other in the kitchen, demonstrating kindness, one of the school's character virtues. More experienced students showed other students techniques, boosting confidence and self-esteem.

Individual transformations were striking: one pupil being taught separately, who finds enrichment challenging to access, began thinking about pursuing a culinary career through individual cooking lessons. A shy pupil opened up more when chopping vegetables because he was engaging in a positive activity. Most notably, a pupil with ADHD was able to sit down at the dinner table with the headteacher and governors during the Black History Month celebration, developing communication skills that would have been impossible in traditional classroom settings. The trust placed in pupils, using sharp knives despite coming from high-risk assessments, proved important, with the kitchen becoming a space where students demonstrated responsibility and capability.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Build towards specific community events with plenty of preparation time - hosting governors, parents, and community members for meals, pupils develop life skills and pride in their achievements.
- Link food teaching to gardening and wellbeing - having a garden provides a calming space for pupils who are dysregulated and creates a full cycle from growing to cooking to eating that deepens understanding and engagement.



# Case study 20: Robson House

Robson House is a pupil referral unit with 19 pupils and 84.2% Free School Meal eligibility. They partnered with a local supermarket to provide professional cooking experience for all pupils, wanting to show students what a proper professional kitchen looks like whilst teaching nutrition concepts like getting 30 different plants per week and developing practical cooking skills in a challenging but supportive environment.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school already dedicates more curriculum time to cooking than most mainstream schools but wanted to elevate the experience by taking students to a professional kitchen setting.</li> <li>They aimed to shift pupils' understanding from "5 a day" to the newer concept of 30 plants per week, whilst challenging preconceptions about vegetarian food.</li> <li>The experience exposed their predominantly male pupil population to male chefs, potentially opening career pathways.</li> </ul>



**Waitrose Partnership cooking session** where all 30 pupils made veggie burgers in a professional kitchen, following instructions for the base recipe with freedom to choose their own toppings.

**Nutrition education** focused on the "30 plants per week" concept, teaching pupils that different plants and even spices count toward this goal and encouraging them to count plants as they added them to their burgers.

**Pair work and collaboration** with pupils sharing pans and equipment, developing teamwork skills including sharing, taking turns, and following recipe steps in the correct sequence.

**Professional kitchen exposure** in Kings Cross, showing pupils what commercial cooking environments look like and the positive time spent with adults in professional settings.

**Sit-down meal experience** where pupils ate together after cooking, trying something different from their usual school meals.

## Impact

The experience shifted pupils' attitudes and engagement. Initially sceptical about veggie burgers made from beans and pulses, students genuinely enjoyed what they created by the end. Pupils became more engaged in including plants in their diets, showing interest in counting additions to their burgers. One moment of note involved a pupil with autism who rarely speaks, staff expectations were low for engagement, yet she participated fully and ate substantially more than usual, particularly noteworthy given her recent limited food intake. The experience also broadened teachers' perspectives on vegetarian cuisine. Pupils developed cooking skills and collaboration abilities through sharing equipment and working in pairs. Staff expressed interest in repeating it.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Find a clear 'hook' to tie the activity together** - in this case, the "30 plants per week" concept worked brilliantly, giving pupils something concrete to focus on and count during the activity.
- **Ensure there's a clear teaching point beyond just cooking** - whether it's nutrition education, teamwork, or career exposure, articulate what you want pupils to learn beyond the practical skills.



### **Pledge 9:**

## **Pupils take a position of responsibility and demonstrate leadership skills both in school and in the wider community**

Schools across Camden encourage pupils to take on positions of responsibility in diverse ways. School councils, both general and topic-specific around issues like climate action and civil society causes, give pupils a genuine voice in shaping their school community. Borough-wide initiatives such as Future Leaders provide platforms for young people to develop leadership skills, engage with civic issues, and understand their capacity to drive positive change both within school and in the wider community.

# Case study 21: The UCL Academy

The UCL Academy is a 11 – 18 secondary school with 1115 pupils with 46.4% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals. The school wanted to ensure 100% of pupils participated in enrichment whilst empowering students to take leadership positions and develop civic engagement through their Self-Directed Learning (SDL) programme, running on extended Wednesdays and Thursdays where pupils not only choose from 40 activities but actively shape the curriculum, lead initiatives, and drive political and community engagement.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School wanted to enable pupils to play a part in designing the enrichment programme itself rather than simply participating in teacher-led activities.</li> </ul>

**Student-designed enrichment zones** led by the school ambassador group (Years 7-13) who shaped the categories. Teachers communicated purpose to students, and ensured offerings reflected genuine student interests and needs.

**Student and parent input** shaping the enrichment curriculum each term, resulting in activities including community languages, political frameworks, citizenship groups, and student-initiated partnerships.

**Human Rights and Global Citizens Group** looking at different political views and what they might do if they could vote, independently inviting local MPs to speak, and partnering with Citizens UK to explore global citizenship after seeing the influence this small group had and expanding organically.

**Student-led ambassador programme** that developed a memorandum of understanding with UCL Student Union about forming their own student union, creating proposals on how to influence school decision at a policy and process level, focusing on learning and school improvement.

**Pupil-initiated community partnerships** including a student bringing in a youth worker to run a session on identity exploration, another pupil arranging for their Olympic fencing coach to run classes all year, and students organising a community walk mapping a 50-minute radius with photography and storytelling.



## Impact

The programme facilitated pupils to take on responsibility and use their student voice. A political group started small but grew as pupils saw the influence members were having, leading to partnerships with Citizens UK and independently reaching out to local MPs. Student union work moved beyond typical school council remit, with pupils wanting to influence their learning and school decision-making after meeting with university students. One student with SEND needs and barriers around identity arranged for their youth worker to deliver a session. They went from struggling to talk about themselves to discussing challenging topics with pride, identifying what they and their peers needed. The student-conceived community walk took pupils to King's Cross to photograph their local area, whilst sports groups independently organised matches and brought in coaches. Teachers recognised they needed to help young people build community relationships, planning more work with organisations like Somali Youth groups and other local Youth centres' based on barriers pupils identified.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Give pupils genuine power to shape enrichment and support** - move beyond token consultation by enabling pupils to design enrichment, propose activities, and initiate partnerships with external organisations, recognising that pupils often identify needs and barriers adults miss.
- Support pupil-led political and civic engagement** - back political and civic initiatives even when participation is initially small, as impact often drives wider involvement. Ensure opportunities move beyond discussion to give pupils real influence over decisions.



## **Pledge 10:**

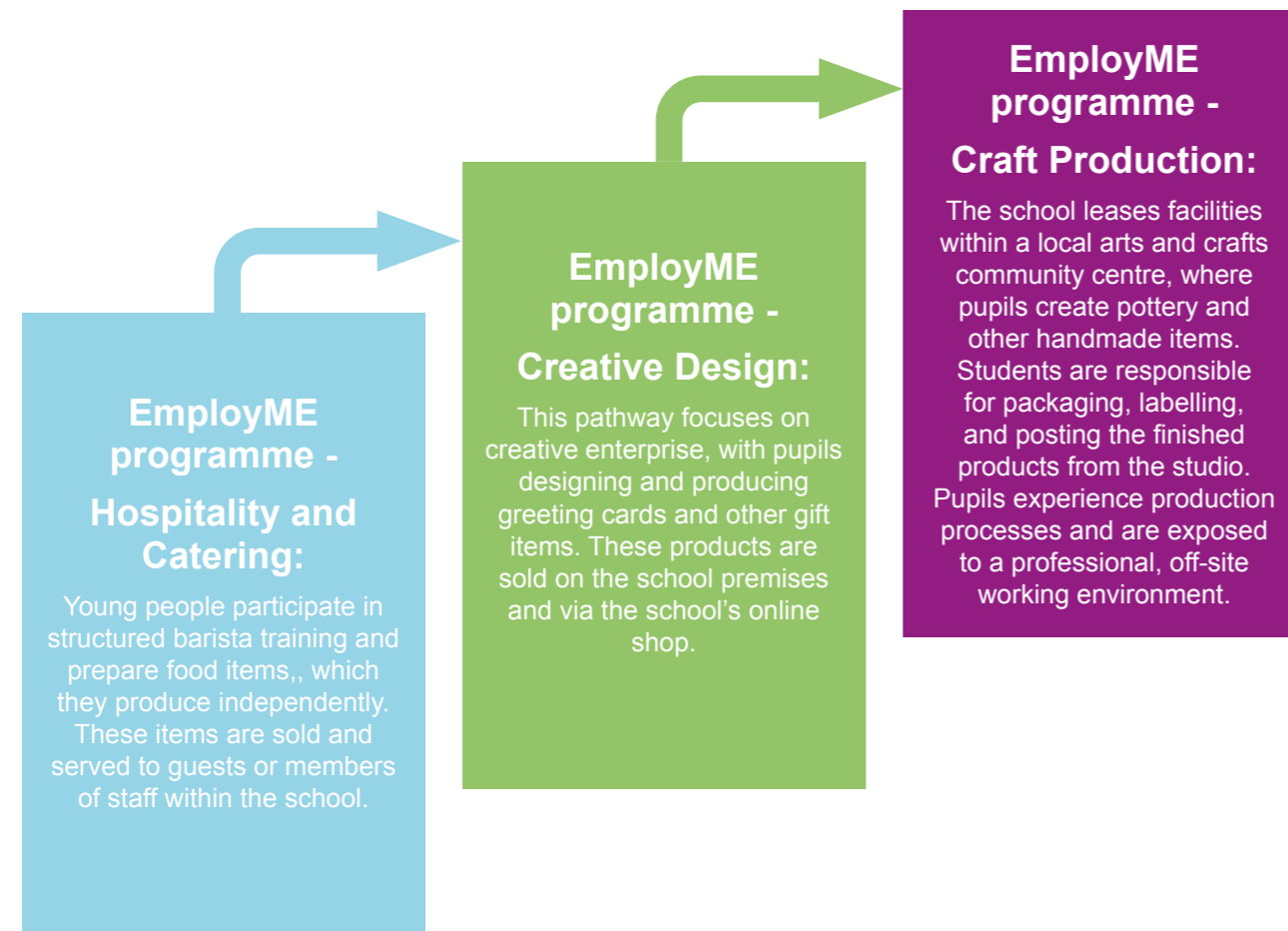
### **Develop enterprise skills, for example through support for a charity or local enterprise**

Schools across Camden are developing pupils' enterprise skills through hands-on, immersive activities such as the Green Dragon's Den, where pupils pitch sustainable business ideas to real judges. Some schools actively encourage pupils to conceptualise and launch their own business ventures, facilitating these ideas coming to life through mentorship and practical support. Enterprise weeks provide focused opportunities for pupils to experience entrepreneurship, developing skills in planning, budgeting, marketing, and pitching, preparing them to become confident, innovative thinkers who can turn ideas into action.

# Case study 22: Swiss Cottage School

Swiss Cottage School is a community special school with 260 pupils aged 4-19 and 63% of Free School Meal eligibility, supporting pupils with a range of special educational needs including speech, language and communication difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and severe and profound learning difficulties.

Rationale	
Cohort	Year 7 – Year 11
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swiss Cottage School is focused on building enterprise skills for their KS3 and KS4 pupils, centred on preparation for adulthood, with emphasis on independent living skills and vocational learning activities.</li> <li>As a special school, they have the flexibility to design a curriculum that truly meets the needs of every child.</li> <li>The school is focused on developing life skills, particularly social and personal development, and equipping learners for interaction beyond the school gates.</li> <li>There are different curriculum pathways designed for different learning profiles, each of which develops pupils' understanding of the world of work and community engagement, and which build to a careers programme in sixth form.</li> </ul>



## Impact

Teachers reported that the pupils involved began to develop a practical understanding of the world of work in a supportive and structured environment. Experiences are adapted to individual needs, helping pupils build confidence with workplace routines, expectations, and social interactions at a pace that is appropriate for them. Through hands-on activities, pupils strengthen essential life skills such as money management, communication, and decision-making. These skills are taught in meaningful, real-life contexts, supporting greater independence and readiness for life outside school.

## Recommendations from teachers

- Build regular, meaningful exposure to the changing world of work into pupils' time at school** - treating careers and entrepreneurial education as a way of planting early motivation and aspiration, and building on pupils' preferences and skills to work toward long term quality of life outcomes.



## Pledge 11:

### **Pupils understand and feel part of a global and diverse world**

Schools across Camden celebrate the wide variety of cultures represented in their diverse student communities, using this richness as a gateway to understanding the global world. Where schools actively engage with the cultural backgrounds of their pupils, through curriculum content, celebrations, and inclusive practices, they create connections that extend far beyond the borough. The borough-wide Rights Respecting Schools Award encourages pupils to understand their own rights and those of people across the world, fostering global citizenship and empathy. By valuing diversity and promoting equality, dignity, and participation, schools help pupils see themselves as part of an interconnected global community.

# Case study 23: Christ Church School

Christ Church School is a voluntary aided 3 - 11 primary school in Camden with 173 pupils and 50% Free School Meal eligibility. The school offers a wide range of enrichment activities under the umbrella of 'courageous advocacy' rooted in its Christian vision and Church of England values. Rather than focussing solely on charitable fundraising, the school aims to teach pupils how to actively engage with and influence society through a variety of events and activities. These enrichment activities may be linked to remembrance, Christmas, harvest and anti-racism.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christ Church wanted to encourage pupils in their school to become active citizens and make a difference in their community.</li> <li>All pupils have the option to participate in a number of different projects aimed around the school vision and values.</li> <li>All pupils within the school have different levels of involvement with the projects, events and activities that are on offer.</li> </ul>

## Project participation

- **A team of pupils called 'Faith Ambassadors'** act as leaders for enrichment and meet regularly with a senior member of staff where they plan out activities and opportunities for pupils in the school to take part and become active citizens.
- **All pupils are welcome** to participate in projects that are available for their year group with as little or as much involvement as they like.

## Example projects

- **The Globe** - a project with London Diocesan Board for Schools which focused on celebrating the life and work of Wangari Maathai, the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize and a Kenyan environmentalist and women's rights advocate. All pupils took part in lessons about Maathai's life and impact. Following this, children created presentations and wrote speeches inspired by themes from her work, such as gender equality, equal access to education, and fair pay. A group of pupils were then invited to deliver their speeches at the World Summit on Women and Girls at the Houses of Parliament. The project also fed into the schools equality week.
- **Peace pledge** - alongside selling poppies for Remembrance day, pupils learnt about peace and being peacemakers through lessons, then created posters as part of a competition. Participation was optional, making activities inclusive while encouraging active engagement.



*I pledge to use my words in a kind way,  
I pledge to help others as I go throughout my day,  
I pledge to care for the Earth with my healing heart and hands,  
I pledge to respect people in each and every land,  
I pledge to join together as we unite the big and small,  
I pledge to do my part to create peace for all!*

*Liyana, Oak Class*

## Impact

Through encouraging all pupils to engage with the events and activities organised by the Faith Ambassadors within the school, the pupils have been able to think about how they can contribute positively to their community, aligning their learning and actions with the school's values. As a result, the pupils are more motivated and equipped to contribute positively to society and help make the world a better place, now as well as in the future. Whether this is through engaging with projects that are fighting injustice in some way or through practically helping others, the pupils really enjoy the activities because they feel empowered to make a difference. Being given responsibility and tasks helps them to understand that even small actions matter, especially when combined with others' efforts. In addition, the projects inspire them and encourage active participation, reinforcing a sense of purpose and involvement within the community while aligning with the schools Church of England values.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Focus on a few key enrichment projects** rather than spreading efforts too thin.

# Case study 24: St Eugene de Mazenod Roman Catholic Primary School



St Eugene de Mazenod Roman Catholic Primary School is a 4 – 11 voluntary aided primary school of 204 pupils with 45.6% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals. The school is a Catholic school, but is open to pupils from all faiths and backgrounds. They have a range of activities that support pupils to understanding that they live in a diverse world and how to support those less fortunate.

## Rationale

Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saint Eugene's is inclusive of all faiths and backgrounds, but the school values are rooted within Catholic social teaching.</li> <li>• Teachers at the school encourage pupils to think about themselves, their school, family, the location they live in, and then globally, working to make an impact on all the communities that they are part of.</li> </ul>

### Charitable giving stance

The school aims for pupils to experience giving as a consistent activity, instead of sporadic fundraising days. Children contribute one item to a local food bank monthly, and the school council delivers these donations. Roughly once a month, students wear their own clothes and donate money, that will go towards one of two charities. The funds support a primary school in Takana, Kenya or go to Plan UK. The Kenyan school in return share videos (i.e. playing football) to reinforce the idea that pupils at St Eugene are no different to them.

### Catholic social teaching

Each half term focuses on a different social teaching principle to engage pupils. Recent projects include "preferential option for the poor" and "looking after creation". An example activity from the "looking after creation" project, is that children make individual pledges such as turning off taps when brushing teeth or not dropping litter, connecting their daily actions to broader environmental and social responsibility.

### Equality studies programme

Children learn about inspirational figures from around the world. Younger year groups explore gender equality, challenging stereotypes about toys and careers. Year 6 students participate in an art competition researching inspirational Black British people and creating portraits, which the school has won twice. The teaching approach emphasises discussion, debate, role play and acting, with follow-up assemblies where children share their learning.

### Global connections display

A permanent display in the school hall features a world map showing every student's name and the countries they have connections to. This celebrates international heritage whilst emphasising that all children are British and Londoners, reinforcing the message that they belong to this community whilst maintaining their diverse cultural connections.

### Curriculum representation

The school has reviewed its curriculum to ensure diverse representation, examining art curricula and reading materials to include authors and artists from different backgrounds and ethnicities, including female artists and authors. This supports children to see themselves reflected in what they learn and are exposed to excellence from diverse sources.

## Impact

Teachers reported that pupils responded enthusiastically to the activities. They enjoyed the discussion, debate, role play and acting involved in equality studies and rose to the challenge. Pupils felt proud of their ability to discuss complex issues thoughtfully and noticed issues of fairness and justice around them. The programme developed year on year, and by Years 5 or 6 many pupils had developed a strong understanding of social justice concepts. Where they had learned about inspirational figures in earlier years, they retained and recalled this knowledge.

The activities helped pupils understand that they could make a difference in the world. Food bank donations provided a visible and meaningful way for pupils to give, which they felt proud of, while links with the school in Kenya helped to break down perceived differences. Teaching aimed to ensure pupils understood that they were important and that their choices could create positive change. It was hoped that the pledges made would continue into adulthood.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Schools should timetable these activities explicitly** - there is no "right" time in the year or week; provision needs to be mandated from the top down, with senior leaders allocating protected time and resources to reduce the planning burden on teachers.
- **Schedule follow-up sessions where pupils can reflect on and share their learning** - create opportunities to celebrate pupils' work, ideas and learning, while enabling them to hear what is happening across the whole school.



## Pledge 12:

### **Pupils care for the environment and our planet**

Schools across Camden support pupils in caring for the environment through diverse, meaningful activities. From visiting local gardens and nature reserves to celebrating Earth Day, running eco-committees, planting feminist orchards, and establishing climate action groups, pupils engage actively with environmental stewardship. Borough-wide initiatives like the Clean Air Initiative connect sustainability to future careers, helping young people understand how their current learning in subjects like science and geography links to professional pathways in fields such as environmental law and sustainable fashion. These experiences empower pupils to see themselves as agents of environmental change, equipped with both the practical knowledge and career awareness to make a substantial impact on protecting the planet.

# Case study 25: Rhyl Community Primary School



Rhyl Community Primary School is a community school with 376 pupils of which 65.4% are eligible for Free School Meals. They wanted to deliver high-quality food education lessons from plot to plate – combining growing and cooking to facilitate pupils’ connection to the outdoor world and natural environment.

Rationale	
Cohort	Whole-school approach
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2013, Rhyl Primary has prioritised food education and fundraised for proper cooking facilities.</li> <li>• They recognised many urban pupils had limited exposure to the natural world.</li> <li>• The school was determined to make outdoor learning a core part of their food programme.</li> </ul>

**Garden-based learning for all students -** Children learn in their outdoor garden (built in a former car park), engaging in seasonal planting and harvesting while tuning into nature's sounds and changes, developing an adventurous approach to food by growing crops they can pick and eat fresh.

**Hands-on cooking in a purpose built kitchen -** Children learn practical cooking skills in a fully kitted out kitchen, making simple recipes like flatbreads while exploring where ingredients come from and using tactile techniques like kneading and stretching dough.

**Seasonal and sensory learning -** Throughout the year, pupils focus on seasonal activities and tactile experiences, listening to birdsong, observing small changes in the garden, and responding to hands-on learning that engages their senses.

**Real-world maths and nurture programme -** Cooking lessons incorporate cross-curricular learning with measuring and budgeting, while students with specific needs receive focused life skills training including shopping, knife skills, and entrepreneurial projects like growing and selling salad or specialty herbs to local restaurants.

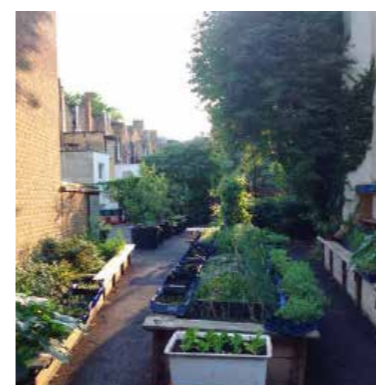
**Career exploration and enterprise -** Children meet professional chefs, learn about diverse food industry careers (chef, hospitality, food business owner), and gain real experience by cooking meals that school staff purchase, building confidence and practical skills.

## Impact

Children who struggle in traditional classrooms often thrive when learning outdoors in the garden or working hands-on in the kitchen. The informal setting doesn't feel like a typical lesson, which helps these pupils to open up and express themselves more freely than they might during a maths lesson, for example. Working in the garden and kitchen also powerfully develops children's language skills. As they taste ingredients, knead dough, or describe what they're experiencing, teachers constantly model rich vocabulary and scaffold their learning in real-time. Children absorb new words naturally while using their hands, creating an oracy-rich environment where they're learning on multiple levels simultaneously - something much harder to achieve within the four walls of a standard classroom.

## Recommendations from teachers

- **Take children outdoors** - provide opportunities to engage with natural environment.
- **Start with something engaging and simple** - for example, cooking a flatbread.



# Conclusion and Recommendations

**Our research reveals that there are many different ways to provide meaningful enrichment activities to pupils across all ages, varying in intensity, topic, and approach. To a certain degree, this report offers a menu of examples and case studies that school leaders can use for inspiration, adapting successful models to deliver specific outcomes for their own pupils. Simultaneously, our exploration of enrichment within Camden demonstrates that there is no single definitive way to deliver enrichment effectively. Success can be teacher-led, pupil-led, parent-informed, or driven by external providers. What matters most is that there is passion and genuine engagement driving the work.**

## **Embed enrichment into the curriculum.**

Teachers thought that enrichment was most successful when it is integrated into learning rather than perceived as a separate entity. When tied to the day-to-day experiences pupils have in school, enrichment becomes more meaningful, sustainable, and impactful.

## **Be inspired by your surroundings.**

Local partnerships and resources make enrichment more accessible and inclusive. Camden schools demonstrate how proximity to cultural institutions, green spaces, and professional organisations creates rich opportunities that don't require extensive travel or budgets.

## **Make enrichment compulsory, not optional.**

While potentially unpopular or seemingly prescriptive, this approach is remarkably effective. Our case studies consistently show that pupils who struggle in traditional classrooms—often those least likely to volunteer for enrichment opportunities—are precisely the ones who benefit most. By actively encouraging, supporting, and sometimes guiding all pupils to participate, schools unlock potential that might otherwise remain hidden. Many teachers and headteachers expressed surprise at how well certain pupils thrived in enrichment settings when they wouldn't have expected it.

## **Recognise that enrichment is inherently expansive.**

A single activity rarely fits neatly into one category. An arts-based project might simultaneously develop career aspirations and entrepreneurial skills. Don't try to limit activities to singular purposes, embrace their multifaceted nature and the unexpected benefits they deliver.

## **Be ambitious about what your pupils can do.**

Teachers and headteachers consistently reported being surprised by how well certain pupils engaged with activities beyond their expectations. This speaks to the potential of enrichment: sometimes pupils don't know what they're going to enjoy or what will bring out a different side of them. Creating opportunities for discovery is an essential part of an enrichment curriculum.

## **Enrichment is not a luxury or an add-on, it is essential to developing well-rounded young people who are confident, capable, and ready to engage with the world around them.**

The examples in this report demonstrate that with intentionality, creativity, leadership commitment, and a determination to include all pupils, schools can deliver enrichment experiences that genuinely change lives. Whether through music at the Royal Albert Hall, cooking in professional kitchens, exploring Hampstead Heath, or meeting environmental lawyers at careers fairs, Camden schools are showing what is possible when enrichment is prioritised, embedded, and made accessible to every child.

The challenge now is to ensure this becomes the norm rather than the exception, not just in Camden, but across all schools for every child.

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