

**An Evaluation of the Teacher-Artist Partnership (TAP) CPD Initiative for
Supporting and Enhancing Arts Education in Primary Schools
2017-2021**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the findings of an evaluation of the Teacher-Artist Partnership initiative (TAP) that took place between December 2021 and October 2022. The purpose of the evaluation is to 1) enhance understanding of the experience of teachers and artists that have taken part in the TAP initiative and 2) its impact on participating schools. The evaluation also assesses the overall management, infrastructure and administration of the initiative and makes recommendations as to how it might be developed, enhanced and further embedded into the working of schools in future.

Experience of teachers and artists participating in the CPD Summer Programme

Overall, both teachers and artists who participated in TAP CPD summer programmes viewed the programme in a very positive light.

The evaluation found that the programme has changed the perspectives of teachers and artist on working creatively in partnership and enabled incorporation of arts education into the primary school curriculum in a meaningful and integrated manner. The programme has provided artists with the skill and knowledge needed to design and deliver creative interventions in partnership with teachers that can support the formal curriculum. The programme has enabled teachers to develop new practical creative skills and experiential learning techniques; to become more expressive and “think outside the box” in delivering the formal curriculum; and to foster creativity among children.

The evaluation also found that TAP training and experience is increasingly perceived by Arts Officers as a required standard of practice for participation by artists in other arts in education programmes.

Experience of teachers and artist participating in the TAP In School Residency Programme

The evaluation found that the vast majority of teachers and artists involved in TAP residencies enjoyed a very positive experience which they judged to be of great benefit to themselves and the children taking part.

First among the factors contributing to the success of TAP residencies identified by both teachers and artists is a strong teacher-artist partnership. Other important factors identified by teachers and artists include: time for collaborative planning; linkages to the formal curriculum; working with a single group of children; and careful planning and clear communication during residencies including online residencies in particular.

Teachers and artists also identified a number of challenges that they encountered when implementing TAP in-school residencies including in particular:

- The impact of Covid 19, including the necessity of delivering residencies online during 2020 and 2021;
- Time pressure, including completion of residencies within 14 hours of class contact time and competing demands on teachers' time;
- Implementing residencies in rural schools and counties where there is no Education Centre, including lack of availability of artists locally and the need for artists to travel long distances at their own personal expense as a result;
- Resourcing of residencies, including funding for materials in particular.

Impact on participating schools

In relation to the impact of TAP on participating schools, the evaluation found that the primary impact was on the individual TAP trained teacher and the children in their class.

However, the evaluation also found that in some instances, experience of a successful TAP partnership has enabled teachers and artists to work together to secure funding for further residencies and involve the host school in other arts in education initiatives. Where such sustained engagement has occurred, a transformative impact on the role of arts and creative activities across the whole school has been noted. The TAP initiative has been part of the causal package leading to this outcome.

The direct impact of one-off partnerships and residencies on the wider school environment and culture appears to have been more limited although further research beyond the scope of this evaluation is required to establish this with greater certainty.

Operation and management of TAP

The evaluation found that administration of TAP through the Tralee Education Support Centre is efficient, effective and - given the level of resources available - lean. National co-ordination of TAP by the Department of Education is also highly effective from a policy and programme development perspective.

Conclusions

The evaluation found that the TAP initiative is to be greatly valued as the only the only Inspectorate approved and accredited CDP programme in Ireland that cultivates partnership between teachers and artists by enabling both sets of professionals to train together and subsequently to plan and implement in-school residencies working in collaboration as equal partners.

Overall, the evaluation found that the aims of the TAP initiative were successfully met during the evaluation period from 2017-2021 by empowering participating teachers and artists to enhance the creative potential of every child through collaboration in primary schools and to equip teachers to integrate the arts in their classroom practice. In particular, the evaluation recognises the agility of the TAP team in responding to the Covid 19 pandemic to quickly migrate the programme online in 2020 which is a significant achievement in itself.

The evaluation also identified significant benefits of TAP participation for teachers, artists, lead facilitators and children as learners including but not limited to the following:

- supporting teachers to develop their reflective teaching practice, to focus more on process rather than outcomes, to foster the creativity of their students, and skilfully manage creative activities in the classroom;
- supporting teachers to integrate art and creativity into other subjects and to enhance learning in these areas;
- supporting teachers to make connections with other teachers and artists involved in TAP initiatives and to attain a greater knowledge of other school-based arts in education programmes;
- providing artist with the knowledge and skills needed to marry their creative interventions to the curriculum and to work in partnership with teachers;
- enabling lead facilitators to acquire new skills such as writing and designing the online training, teamwork experience and advance their own professional careers in teaching and the arts.
- increasing the self-confidence of children and enhancing their communication and teamwork skills; providing children who might not be perceived as academic, children with additional educational needs and children for whom English is not their first language with opportunities to learn through creativity; providing children with the opportunity to communicate and express themselves through the arts; and impacting positively on the general wellbeing of children.

The involvement of children in decision making as part of TAP

The evaluation found that while the TAP approach focuses on the needs of children and the school community as established through the School Self-Evaluation framework, contrary to the best practice principles set out in the National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making teachers and artists receive no formal training as part of the TAP CPD summer programme in how to facilitate children to form and express their views and involve them in decision-making during TAP residencies. However, both sets of professionals frequently identified the importance of ensuring that residencies develop in a manner that is responsive to the needs and interests of children as critical to their success and said that the process often unfolds in a manner that is essentially child-led.

The evaluation also found that children's views are not included in the monitoring and evaluation of TAP residencies in any direct or systematic way.

Recommendations:

- To further develop the partnership model, TAP CPD should incorporate teacher's and artist's perspectives with teacher-artist pairings being formed as early as possible.
- TAP CPD should actively support inclusion through an additional focus on systemic support for students with additional needs.
- In order to broaden accessibility of access to TAP CPD for all, consideration should be given to blended learning options as well as additional opportunities for CPD through the medium of the Irish language.
- Opportunities for the wider expansion of TAP in-school residencies should be examined including increased funding, increased travel allowance and fees for artist.
- Administration of the TAP initiative should be supported through adequate staffing at a central level and increased funding at a local level in Education Centres.
- A data management framework should be developed to ensure the process of the collection, monitoring, evaluation, analysis and reporting of TAP related data is supported including the expansion of mechanisms for feedback from in-school residencies.
- Children's participation in decision-making as part of TAP in-school residencies should be ensured through training of teachers and artists in child participation policy, methodologies and evaluation as well as developing mechanisms for children to evaluate their TAP experiences.
- While the views of children are not the only factors to consider when making decisions around the allocation of particular artists for in-school residencies and the identification of residency

themes/starting points, children's views should be sought directly on each of these issues and they should be given due consideration as part of the decision-making process.

- To support the function of lead facilitator/design team member, clear guidelines around job roles and recruitment should be developed and communicated by the TAP management.
- In order to expand the TAP initiative nationally, consideration should be given to the inclusion of TAP training in third level Initial teacher education programmes.
- A greater emphasis should be placed on the promotion and advertisement of TAP through existing channels such as TAP trained teachers and artists, social media, principal's networks, and other teaching and arts-based networks.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

This report sets out the findings of an independent external evaluation of the Teacher-Artist Partnership initiative (TAP) that took place between December 2021 and October 2022.

TAP is a continuing professional development (CPD) programme funded by the Department of Education and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media that aims to support and enhance the integration of the arts in primary school education. The TAP initiative was launched as a pilot programme in 2014. Since 2017, it has been implemented as a Creative Youth initiative under Pillar 1 of the Creative Ireland Programme 2017 – 2022.

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

1. enhance understanding of the experience of teachers and artists that have taken part in the TAP initiative;
2. assess its impact on participating schools;
3. assess the overall management, infrastructure and administration of the initiative; and
4. make recommendations as to how it might be developed, enhanced and further embedded into the working of schools in future.

An in-depth study of the pilot phase of the TAP initiative from 2014-2016 was completed in 2016 (Kenny and Morrissey 2016). The present evaluation report focuses on the period 2017 to 2022 with a particular emphasis on the years 2019 to 2021 during which a number of developments took place including but not limited to: a significant expansion of the initiative to double the number of in-school residencies available from 2019; and migration of the initiative online for a two-year period in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

1.2 Approach, sources of information and limitations

Approach

The evaluation team adopted a developmental/participatory approach to the evaluation. This approach positions the members of the evaluation team as facilitators of a collaborative review of the TAP initiative and its outcomes. In line with this approach, the involvement of the client in the overall design of the evaluation and the provision of opportunities to direct and feedback on its progress were central to the process. This included the provision of written materials on which to base the

evaluation, such as relevant project documents, academic articles and policy documents, and the suggestion of potential interviewees for the evaluation from among the TAP alumni and network of external stakeholders. The client was also invited to comment on the contents of an evaluation progress report submitted in June 2022 and the successive drafts of evaluation report submitted from October 2022 – February 2023.

Sources of information

The principal source of qualitative data analysed for this report is a series of semi-structured remote interviews with a total of 41 stakeholders, including the following:

- TAP management and staff (3 persons, including the Director of Tralee Education Support Centre)
- Lead facilitators/design team (6 persons)
- TAP trained artist (13 persons)
- TAP trained teachers/principals (14 persons)
- External stakeholders (5 persons)

All interviews were recorded and data was coded, categorised and analysed thematically. A fair representation of the data collected was assured through strategies such as content analysis to measure the frequency of emerging themes.

Quantitative and qualitative data provided in TAP CPD summer programme feedback forms submitted by teachers and artists in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were also analysed. In addition, a review of some 151 Joint Teacher Artist Reports received by the evaluators in June 2022 was also undertaken. A large body of administrative material received during the period December 2021 to March 2022 relating to the development and implementation of the TAP initiative from 2017-2021 was also reviewed.

Limitations

In accordance with instructions received from the client, the present evaluation focuses on the views of participating teachers, artists and facilitators as direct beneficiaries of the TAP initiative rather than the views of children in schools that have hosted TAP residencies. The evaluators are aware of a recently produced report authored by a longstanding TAP lead facilitator and member of the TAP national design team that presents a snapshot of the experience of children involved in eight face-to-

face TAP residencies in 2022. The evaluators had no role in researching or writing the report and it does not form part of this evaluation.

According to figures provided by TAP management and staff, a total of 845 TAP residencies were allocated between 2014 and 2023. In June 2022, the evaluators received over 500+ pages of documentation from TAP management and staff comprised of some 151 Joint Teacher Artist Reports. This material had not been reviewed or processed for use by the TAP office and was received as raw data.

While the Joint Teacher Artist Reports invite teachers and artists to comment on the 'learning outcomes' achieved for participating children during their residency, children themselves have no direct input into this material or the reports more generally. As such, the voice of the child is not included in the residency evaluation process in any systematic way. At the same time, the extent to which the Joint Teacher Artist Reports made available to the evaluators can be relied upon as a source of data that accurately reflects the experience of teachers and artists involved in delivering in-school residencies is limited by the following:

- 71 (47%) of the 151 Joint Teacher Artist Reports received by the evaluators in June 2022 relate to TAP residencies that took place online in 2020. These reports do not speak to the majority experience of delivering TAP residencies face-to-face in-schools prior to and following the disruption caused by the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Joint Teacher Artist reports do not enable anonymous feedback from teachers or artists to Education Support Centres or the TAP administrative base in Tralee.
- The reports are compiled and submitted jointly by teachers and artists and do not therefore provide either teachers or artists with a confidential opportunity to raise issues or concerns they may have had in relation to the actions or inaction of their TAP partner.
- The reports must be signed off by school principals and do not therefore provide teachers and artists with a confidential opportunity to raise issues or concerns they may have had regarding the support they received during schools during residencies.
- Payment of artists is conditional upon receipt of a Joint Teacher Artist Report by the relevant Education Support Centre which may discourage artists from reporting difficulties they may have encountered during residencies.

The evaluators have been provided with basic information relating to the TAP budget from 2018-2022 including the annual grant amount provided by the Department of Education and the annual grant amount provided by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media as well as a budget breakdown for a single year and this information is included in the description of the TAP initiative provided in section 2 Context. As agreed with the client, this evaluation does not include a value for money assessment of the TAP initiative.

1.3 Report outline

- Section 2 of the evaluation report provides an overview of the TAP initiative, sets out the national policy context and highlights other ongoing arts in education programmes in Ireland.
- Section 3 addresses the TAP CPD summer programme.
- Section 4 addresses the TAP in-school residency programme.
- Section 5 addresses the impact of the TAP initiative in schools.
- Section 6 addresses management of the TAP initiative.
- Section 7 sets out the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

2 CONTEXT

2.1 Overview of the TAP initiative

The TAP initiative is a Department of Education approved programme, the aim of which is to empower teachers and artists to enhance the creative potential of every child through collaboration in primary schools, to equip teachers to integrate the arts in their classroom practice and give artists an opportunity to make a valuable contribution to education. It is coordinated by the National Director for the Integration of the Arts in Education with the Department of Education and implemented with administration support from the National Administrative base in Tralee Education Support Centre. TAP is jointly funded by the Department of Education and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, the Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. Basic information about the TAP budget is presented in Table 1 below. A more detailed breakdown of the annual budget is attached as Appendix I.

Table 1: TAP Funding 2018-2022 (source: K. Sweeny DoE 2022)

TAP CPD	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
DoE	€113,000	€240,000	€120,000	€250,000	€250,000	€973,000
DTCAGSM	€230,000*	€240,000	€352,000**	€240,000	€240,000	€1,302,000
Total	€343,000	€480,000	€472,000	€490,000	€490,000	€2,275,000

*Inclusive of additional €15,000 admin **Inclusive of €112,000 stimulus funding

The aims of the TAP programme are:

- To support teachers and artists in developing the professional skills necessary to work in partnership; to plan, implement and reflectively evolve arts rich experiences through which children explore their personal creativity and develop their unique pupil voice.
- To sustainably enhance the national programme of school-based arts learning in Ireland by providing teachers and artists with both the professional skills necessary for delivery and the relationship necessary for initiative sustainability.
- To develop an understanding of curriculum and assessment as tools for identifying and responding to children's deepest needs, and that arts rich experiences enhance learning through social, emotional and physical as well as cognitive creativity.
- To extend artists and teachers knowledge of whole-school and community evaluation systems such as SSE to address identified needs in their schools through creativity and connectedness.

- To support participants in identifying the essential elements for working in partnership.
- To enable participants to develop their knowledge of current research and successful AiE practices and develop best practice in their partnership approaches.
- To enable teacher and artist partners to work reflectively, developing a deeper awareness of contextual factors and the transformative power of artistic and creative processes for children teachers, artists and school communities
- To establish well-grounded and effective partnership projects amongst participants and provide opportunities for partnerships of teachers, artists and children to share learning with their communities.

The initiative is comprised of two elements:

- A five-day Teacher Artist Partnership CPD summer programme for primary teachers is offered through all 21 full-time Education Support Centres nationwide under the existing infrastructure of Department of Education approved Teacher Summer Courses. During the five-day Teacher Artist Partnership CPD summer programme, approximately 20 teachers and 4 artists are trained together to work in partnership with each other in a wide variety of artistic disciplines including but not limited to the visual arts, drama, music, digital arts, textiles, ceramics, photography, creative writing, poetry and dance, followed by;
- A TAP funded Artist in Residency programme that allows approximately eight teacher-artist pairs at each Education Support Centre to collaborate on the design and delivery of a creative project tailored to the needs of the cohort of children taking part.

The TAP CPD summer programme is Department of Education approved for three Extra Personal Vacation Days (EPV days), making it an attractive option for primary teachers. At the same time, artists selected for the training programme are also paid a stipend of €150 per day to attend. In addition, artists that subsequently deliver a 20-hour in-school residency in partnership with a TAP-trained teacher are also paid a fee of €1,000.

The TAP initiative was established by the Curriculum Assessment and Policy unit of the Department of Education and approved by the Teacher Education Section of the Department. The initial design of the TAP CPD and Residency programme was led by the arts education subcommittee of the then Association of Teachers'/Education Support Centres in Ireland (ATECI) and the then Department of Education and Skills. It was designed and delivered in partnership with then Department of Arts,

Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Encountering the Arts Ireland (ETAI) and the Association for Creativity and Arts in Education (ACAE).

Teacher Artist Partnership CPD takes place within the annual summer course programme for primary teachers. The programme forms an integral part of primary teachers' professional learning in Ireland and takes place annually during school holidays in face-to-face, online and blended capacities. The summer course structure is designed to contribute to the continuum of teachers' professional learning, promoting innovation and excellence in teaching, learning, assessment, leadership and/or management. The programme supports the Department of Education's Statement of Strategy 2019-2021 goals and must include strategies to support teachers in the following areas of policy: School Self-Evaluation; Digital Technologies; and where applicable, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2011-2021; STEM Education Policy 2017-2026; Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2023.

The Teacher Education Section within the Department of Education has responsibility for the summer course programme and an overall remit in overseeing the quality of CPD provision to support teachers and school leaders in implementing national policy priorities. The Inspectorate undertakes quality assurance in the approval and evaluation of the summer course programme and subsequent inspection. Summer courses approved by the Department of Education, on the recommendation of the Inspectorate, are eligible for Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days for primary teachers under the terms of Rule 58 in Rules for National Schools. The acquisition of EPV days in return for professional learning is a key motivational factor for teachers to engage with the summer programme and their participation provides the Department of Education with a significant vehicle for transmitting educational policy priorities to educators nationally.

TAP was submitted for bi-annual approval by the Department of Education up to 2020 when the programme moved to a 3-year cycle of approval due to the impact of Covid 19. An inspection was undertaken of the TAP face-to-face course 2017 and of the online TAP course in 2021.

In 2017 the inspection found that the "course provides an excellent collaborative preparation for artists and teachers about to embark on an artist-in-school project" (Inspection Report 2017). The 2021 report found that the "overall quality of this course [was] very good" and that it "address[ed] national policies very effectively" (Inspection Report 2021). The reports identified opportunities for developing self-assessment and pairing artists and teachers prior to training.

The early development of the TAP initiative has been well documented elsewhere and will not be repeated in detail here (Kenny and Morrissey, 2016). Instead, the main features of this process are summarised below.

- The process of design commenced in 2013 under the leadership of the programme design team.
- The TAP initiative was launched on a pilot basis in August 2014 with a week-long residential CPD summer programme in Laois Education Centre. Six lead teachers were selected to take part and paired with six lead artists. Each of these six lead teacher-artist pairs then delivered an in-school residency in a different primary school with one residency taking place in each of the six ATECI regional networks.
- In 2015, the six trained teacher-artist pairs participated in two facilitation training days and each pair delivered a week-long CPD summer programme at one of five regional Education Support Centres to a total of 79 participants (59 teachers and 20 artists).
- In 2016, a total of 21 teachers and 21 artists were trained through Laois Education Centre to facilitate the TAP CPD Summer course at each of the 21 Education Support Centres (one pair from each Centre) concluding the pilot phase of the initiative.

The reach of the TAP initiative has been extended nationally in the years since its initial development and the summer programme has been updated on three separate occasions (2017, 2019 and 2020). However, the TAP model remains largely unchanged, focusing as it does on “engagement in dialogue and collaborative arts activities” as well as the “building and nurturing of teacher-artist relationships” as the basis for professional learning and skills exchange (Kenny and Morrissey, 2016: 15). Prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic, this model enabled the delivery of arts in education training for some 1,005 artists and teachers and 212 facilitators as well as the allocation of 346 in-school residencies (see Table 2 below).

In 2020, following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, a commitment was made to migrate the TAP CPD summer programme online. A team of seven experienced TAP Design Team Teacher and Artist Lead Facilitators collaborated to convert the face-to-face initiative to an online programme. The timeframe for conversion (through April and May 2020), combined with challenges of remote working saw the appointment of two 2014 trained Facilitators to lead the online programme development based on the content of the 2019 TAP Facilitator Training which the team had designed and delivered collaboratively. Individual team members were invited to develop asynchronous activities and to lead

live creative and discursive engagements during the online training. The Lead Facilitator team were trained by the Mayo Education Support Centre Director to deliver the CPD summer programme remotely. The CPD summer programme was delivered to some 338 teachers via the Moodle platform. Following the conclusion of the CPD summer programme, 126 previously TAP trained artists were recruited to work with the newly trained teachers to deliver a total 167 in-school residencies most of which also took place online due to ongoing Covid restrictions. A total of seven lead facilitators were also allocated online residencies in 2020 to enhance their understanding of remote partnership between teachers, artists and children.

Table 2: TAP CPD, facilitator training and residencies (source: K Sweeney DoE 2022)

Year	Total trained (teachers and artists)	Teachers trained	Artists trained	Facilitators trained	Residencies allocated
2014	12	6	6	0	6
2015	79	59	20	12	0
2016	42	21	21	0	21
2017	357	277	80	40	80
2018	217	159	58	0	94
2019	338	258	80	33	145
2020	338	338	0	0	174
2021	229	185	44	0	119
2022	354	251	103	6	210
TOTAL	1966	1554	412	91	849

In 2021, the CPD summer programme was delivered online for the second year to a total of 229 participants, including 185 teachers and 44 artists, none of whom were previously TAP trained. Following the CPD summer programme, some 119 residencies were allocated (see Table 2). Depending on the Covid restrictions in place at the time of implementation, these residencies took place during the 2021-2022 academic year online, face-to-face or through blended engagements.

The TAP CPD summer programme returned to a face-to-face format in 2022 and was delivered in 20 Education Support Centres nationwide during the summer months with 252 teachers and 108 artists taking part. A total of 206 TAP in-school residencies have been allocated for the 2022-2023 academic

year. As in previous years prior to the pandemic, these will take place face-to-face with a payment to participating artists of a €1,000 fee for a 20-hour project.

As demonstrated, in table 2 above, from 2014-2022 a total of 1,932 individuals completed the TAP CPD summer programme including 1,570 teachers, 435 artists and 213 facilitators. A total of 845 residencies were allocated in the same period. TAP is now also being developed as a European programme under the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership in Innovation and Sharing of Best Practice category with four other countries.

The following videos were produced by TAP to explain the key questions about the initiative:

1. What does a child-led process look like?
<https://vimeo.com/667811489/cd4418c1f9>

2. What is the value of the arts in the classroom?
<https://vimeo.com/667812297/be3860cac2>

3. Why is the Teacher/Artist relationship important?
<https://vimeo.com/667824187/af9c107701>

4. Why is it important to document your projects?
<https://vimeo.com/667823855/fceffbfa19>

2.2 National policy context

The TAP initiative was conceived as an early response to the 2012 Arts in Education Charter launched by the then Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in association with the Arts Council. The Charter confirmed the central role of the arts in enabling all children to achieve their full potential and called for collaboration and partnership across departments and sectors in order to advance this objective. By endorsing partnership as a policy choice, the Charter echoed the findings of the 1979 Benson report and built on previous policy documents such as 'Points of Alignment' and 'Artists-Schools Guidelines' (ACI 1979; 2008; 2006). It was also in line with existing academic literature at the time and best practice internationally (Cape UK, 2009; Colley et al., 2012; Creative Partnerships, 2007; UNESCO, 2000, 2006, 2010). But while the underlying principle of cross-sectoral collaboration and partnerships was not unique to either the

Charter or the TAP initiative, TAP was the first such programme in Ireland to train teachers and artists together and to combine this training with in-school residency opportunities.

Undoubtedly, the launch of the Charter was a landmark development in relation to the promotion of the arts in education in Ireland, the early results of which include not only the TAP pilot but also, for example: the launch of the Arts in Education portal in 2015; the first National Arts in Education Portal Day in 2016; and the development of an Arts in Education Map of Ireland which commenced in 2016.

Although not a Charter initiative, also taking place in 2016 was 'Ireland 2016' - a programme of events planned to mark the centenary of the 1916 Rising. The year-long commemoration saw thousands of largely culture-based projects exploring issues of identity, community, culture, heritage and citizenship taking place nationwide. As such, it provided an unparalleled opportunity for community engagement in the arts and showcased the power of the arts in education.

The Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2022 was inspired by the Ireland 2016 year of commemoration. It is described as an Ireland 2016 'legacy initiative' and is built around five pillars, the first of which focuses on 'enabling the creative potential of every child' through the first Creative Youth Plan published in 2017. In December 2022, the Government extended the Creative Ireland Programme until 2027 and Creative Youth will continue as one of its five key pillars with a new Creative Youth Plan 2023-2027 due to be brought to Government in 2023. The TAP initiative was brought under the umbrella of Pillar 1 of the Creative Ireland Programme in 2017 and has been implemented as a Creative Youth initiative since that time.

While explicitly endorsing the objectives of the Charter, in particular the potential of collaboration, the Creative Ireland Programme broadens the scope of the arts to include all forms of creativity. Unlike the Charter, which was initiated by just two government departments (the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) and implemented in partnership with the Arts Council, the Creative Ireland Programme is a whole of government initiative providing a collaborative framework across departments and agencies to embed creativity into public policy.

The principles and objectives of the TAP initiative are closely aligned to those of the Creative Youth Plan as it relates to arts in education with two significant exceptions. First, in contrast to the earlier TAP programme, Creative Youth explicitly recognises the child's right to be heard as guaranteed in

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and establishes the promotion of this right as a cornerstone of the programme as follows:

‘A core principle in this plan is that the voice of children and young people should be heard in both the development and delivery of programmes. Ireland has a strong infrastructure for children’s participation and the Creative Ireland Programme and this Plan will benefit from this infrastructure’ (Creative Youth Plan, 2017).

Secondly, along with more traditional art forms such as music, drama and the visual arts, the Creative Youth Plan specifically includes coding as among the cultural and creative activities to which it strives to enable universal access for children and young people in Ireland by 2022, while at the same time setting the goal of extending access to a broader range of unspecified creative activities.

The flagship Creative Youth programme with by far the largest budget is Creative Schools (see Table 3 below). The Creative Schools programme is led by the Arts Council in partnership with the Department of Education. The focus of Creative Schools is the development over a two-year period of a ‘creative plan’ for each participating school/Youthreach centre that embeds the arts in teaching and learning. To achieve this goal, schools/Youthreach centres can avail of up to nine days of support from a Creative Associate (artist/teacher) as well as a grant of up to €4,000 to implement their creative plan.

In addition to TAP and Creative Schools, other flagship Creative Youth programmes targeting the formal education sector at primary and secondary level include Creative Clusters, Arts in Junior Cycle and BLAST. The Creative Clusters programme supports the establishment of institutional cooperation between clusters of primary schools on the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of innovative creative learning projects over a two-year period. The Art in Junior Cycle programme provides elective workshops on various art forms and approaches for junior cycle teachers. The BLAST programme supports in-school residencies delivered by TAP trained artists at primary and secondary level.

Table. 3 Creative Youth budget for flagship programmes

CREATIVE YOUTH FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME	ANNUAL BUDGET
Creative Clusters	€375,000
TAP	€490,000
BLAST	€500,000
Creative Schools	€3,230,000

These Creative Youth programmes now exist alongside a great many other arts in education initiatives available throughout the country. These initiatives take various forms including one-off school visits by artist practitioners (e.g. Writers in Schools Scheme), in-school artist's residencies (e.g. CRAFTed; DesignSkills) training for teachers (e.g. the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland; the Arc Children's Cultural Centre) and school visits to cultural institutions.

The TAP initiative sits apart from all of these as the only Inspectorate approved and accredited CDP programme in Ireland that cultivates partnership between teachers and artists by enabling both sets of professionals to train together and subsequently to plan and implement in-school residencies working in collaboration as equal partners.

3. REVIEW OF THE TAP CPD SUMMER PROGRAMME

3.1 Introduction

This section of the report evaluates the Teacher-Artist Partnership (TAP) Continuous Professional Development (CPD) summer programme. In line with the terms of reference for this evaluation, the analysis presented below focuses on: the experience of teachers and artists participating in the TAP CPD programme; and the experience of lead facilitators delivering in the TAP CPD summer programme. In each case, particular attention is paid to the benefits of participation/facilitation and the shared learning identified.

As discussed, and agreed with the client, the analysis presented below focuses on the years 2019-2021 and is based on the following sources of information:

- Findings from 2019 TAP face-to-face CPD participant and evaluations
- Findings from 2020 TAP online CPD participants evaluations
- Findings from 2021 TAP online CPD participant evaluations
- Findings from 27 interviews with TAP CPD participants and 6 lead facilitators 2017-2021 carried out for this evaluation

The impact of TAP in schools - including the impact on children as learners - which is also highlighted in the terms of reference as a focal point for the evaluation, is addressed separately in section 5 of this report.

3.2 The experience of teacher and artist participants

3.2.1 Findings from 2019 TAP face-to-face CPD teacher participant evaluations

The key learnings identified by 100 teachers who completed the TAP CPD evaluation form in 2019 included:

Better understanding of TAP and in-school residencies

Overall, teachers stated they had gained a better understanding of TAP and in-school residencies after participating in the face-to-face CPD course. This included a better understanding of how TAP works, who are the key actors in in-school residencies, the role of teachers and artists, the timeframe for residencies, aims and objectives, how to develop, co-ordinate, plan and implement a partnership between a teacher and an artist.

- *“Key learnings would include the approaches involved in both the planning and implementation of the TAP project to any situation in school.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Improved understanding of the importance of the arts in education

A key learning identified by teachers who participated in TAP CPD was a deeper understanding and appreciation of the arts. This included learning about the positive impact the arts can have on children in relation to expression, confidence, creativity and learning. Teachers also understood better the benefits of working with an artist in the classroom and bringing in artistic expertise to schools.

Improved understanding of artists perspectives

Overall, teachers felt they gained a better perspective on artists and understood the key challenges facing artists after participating in TAP CPD. Many teachers reported understanding artists expectations for in-school residencies better. Some teachers said they were inspired by the experiences, lessons and approaches of artists from the courses.

Importance of a partnership approach

A key learning identified by teachers was how to work in partnership with artists, the importance and benefits of the partnership approach. This included how to develop, co-ordinate and implement a partnership with an artist. The importance of the planning stages of a partnership between teachers and artists and flexibility within planning was discussed. Other important aspects of a successful partnerships approach identified were co-creation, how to work in collaboration, communication between teachers and artists, developing trust and sharing of expectations. The partnership approach not only has benefits for teachers in terms of improving their teaching approach, it also improves the learning experience of children who are benefitting from learning from both teacher and artist.

- *“We learned how an artist/teacher partnership can facilitate a unique learning and teaching experience for the child/children and how it can be carried out to provide a well-developed experience/experiential lessons.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Increased awareness of artists and art forms

Teachers reported increased awareness of different artists and art forms following participation in TAP CPD. In particular, teachers increased their awareness of local artists and arts forms available

locally for in-school residencies. This included expanding their creative knowledge on various art forms.

Improved creative teaching

The majority of teachers felt they had increased their personal creativity and creative teaching following participation in TAP CPD. Teachers spoke about developing new practical creative skills, experiential learning and new ideas to bring back to the classroom. A number of teachers reported benefits of participating in the course such as becoming more expressive, realising there is no right or wrong way to work creatively and “thinking outside the box” more in terms of teaching the arts and creativity. Teachers reported greater ability to present, teach and manage creative activities in the classroom and how to foster creativity among children.

- *“I’ve learned that we all learn through experience and that as a teacher I must allow the children to express themselves more in many mediums rather than rushing and trying to tick the relevant boxes.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Integrating arts education into the curriculum

A key learning identified by teachers who participated in TAP CPD was learning how to incorporate arts education into the primary school curriculum in a meaningful and integrated manner. Teachers also spoke about gaining more confidence in teaching more areas of the arts curriculum and reinforcing the value of the arts in education throughout the curriculum.

- *“Re the curriculum, I would have had a tendency to focus too much on the visual arts but now I will try and use the other mediums more in particular drama/movement/dance.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Process led learning

A key learning from TAP highlighted by teachers was learning to focus on the creative process rather than outcomes and end products. Teachers reported that they came to recognise the value of focusing on the creative process with children so that they can learn through experience. Teachers also recognised that focusing on outcomes can be stressful for some children. Teachers also acquired practical teaching methods such as Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) which was identified as useful by many teachers.

- *“I’ve enhanced my knowledge of the creativity process and reflected on how to incorporate it into classroom life. Artists provided great ideas of how to develop skills and improve creative experiences within each area of the arts which I found really helpful as each residency will only focus on one area (mostly).”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Better understanding of the voice of the child

A small number of teachers discussed having an increased understanding of the importance of the rights of the child after participating in TAP CPD. However, it was suggested that more content on the importance of the voice of the child should be included in future TAP CPD.

- *“Voice of the child is very important and must be considered when discussing/organising content.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

3.2.2 Findings from 2019 TAP face-to-face CPD artist participant evaluations

Key learnings identified by artists

The key learnings identified by 32 artists who completed TAP CPD evaluation forms in 2019 included:

Learning new arts techniques, methods and approaches

The most commonly identified key learning highlighted by artists was learning new arts techniques, methods and approaches to incorporate into their practice in the classroom. Artists spoke about the benefits of learning new practical skills, tips and techniques from other artists and teachers. Artists felt this opened them up to a wider variety of art forms and many artists discussed the benefits of using different elements of different art forms in their future practice.

- *“The potential of using elements of different art forms (e.g. visual, music) within facilitating classes in my own art form (theatre).”* [Artist]

How to collaborate effectively with teachers

The next most commonly identified key learning reported by artists was learning how to collaborate effectively with teachers in a TAP residency. This included artists learning how to effectively collaborate and communicate with teachers as well as understanding better the perspectives, roles and priorities of teachers. Having a better understanding of teacher’s perspectives on issues such as the curriculum, teaching practices, classroom issues, paperwork and their position within schools helped artists understand teachers better and in turn helped them collaborate with them more

effectively. Artists understanding teachers better in terms of challenges and barriers of working with artists in the classroom was also highlighted as working well.

- *"I found it useful to hear the teachers' perspectives on practical matters and what was doable (or not) in a classroom context."* [Artist]

Learning about the education curriculum

The next most frequently reported key learning for artists was learning more about the primary school education curriculum and how to incorporate the arts and their practices into the curriculum. Artists agreed TAP CPD helped them understand the education curriculum and education policy better, and in turn, gave them a greater understanding of teacher's perspectives, approaches and rationale. Learning how to integrate TAP projects and arts based practices into the education curriculum was considered to be an important key learning by artists.

- *"Integrating creative art processes as a learning methodology across the curriculum."* [Artist]

How to plan a TAP residency

The next most commonly reported key learning for artists was learning how to plan a TAP residency effectively with teachers. This included learning what is involved in the planning of a TAP residency with a teacher, how to plan, organise and execute arts projects, the time needed for planning a residency, lesson models and what the key elements are for a successful residency and partnership between artists and teachers.

- *"The key learning was learning what is involved in planning a residency with a teacher."* [Artist]

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)

The next most common key learning mentioned by artist was learning more about Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS). Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a research-based teaching methodology that supports learner-centred thinking and feeling when looking at art objects. Artists discussed learning more about Visual Thinking Strategies from both other artists and teachers.

- *"Learning about teachers' use of visual thinking in the classroom."* [Artist]

How to work with children in the classroom

Artists also reported improved learning in relation to how to work with children in the classroom. This included how to involve children in decision-making and listen to children better. Overall, artists also felt the course helped them work more effectively with children and teachers as a group.

- *“The course gave a very clear guideline on how teachers and artists and children can work together in order to have a beneficial and enjoyable residency (to all involved with children in the very centre of attention of course!)” [Artist]*

Other key learnings

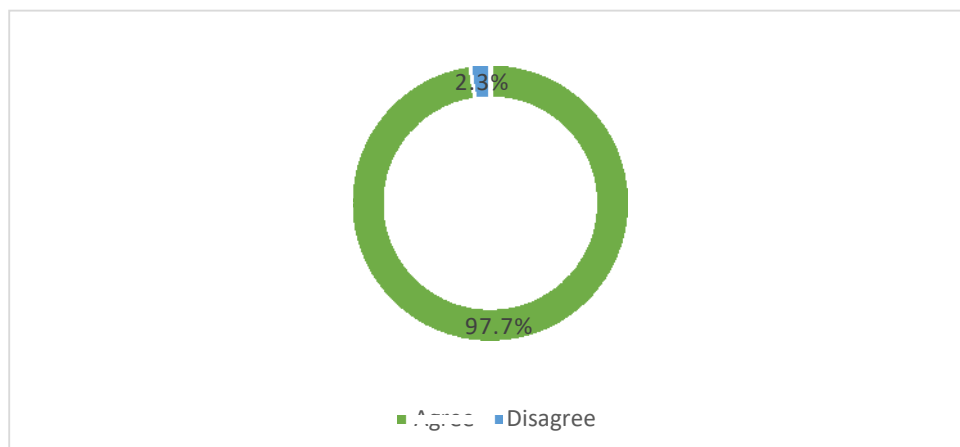
Other key learnings highlighted by artists included learning more about:

- Child protection policy and guidelines;
- Local funding opportunities for artists;
- Meeting and networking with other artists;
- Where to access arts in education resources;
- Reflective practice;
- Assessment techniques;
- GDPR policies.

3.2.3 Findings from 2020 TAP online CPD participant evaluations

A total of 309 participants completed evaluations of the 2020 online TAP CPD course. Participants were asked if TAP online in 2020 changed their perspective on working through creativity and partnership. As can be seen from figure 3 below, the vast majority (97.7%) of respondents agreed the TAP online course changed their perspective on working through creativity and partnership and 2.3% disagreed.

Figure 3: ‘TAP online has changed my perspective on working through creativity and partnership’



Participants were asked to outline how TAP online CPD in 2020 changed their perspectives on working through creativity and partnership. The key ways in which participants perspectives were changed included:

- a better understanding of the TAP process.
- understanding the benefits and value of working in partnership for teachers, artist and children.
- an increased understanding of the importance of the arts and creativity in children’s education, learning and development.
- learning how to listen to the voice of children in arts and creative activities.
- recognising the importance of using the arts and creativity to access the curriculum.
- understanding how to include children with additional educational needs in the arts and creative activities.
- broadening of engagement with different art forms and creativity and artists.
- being able to provide a wider range of creative activities in the classroom.
- creating a more positive outlook towards the arts and creativity.
- increased confidence in engaging with the arts and creativity.
- ability to achieve better outcomes.
- ability to change the culture of a school.

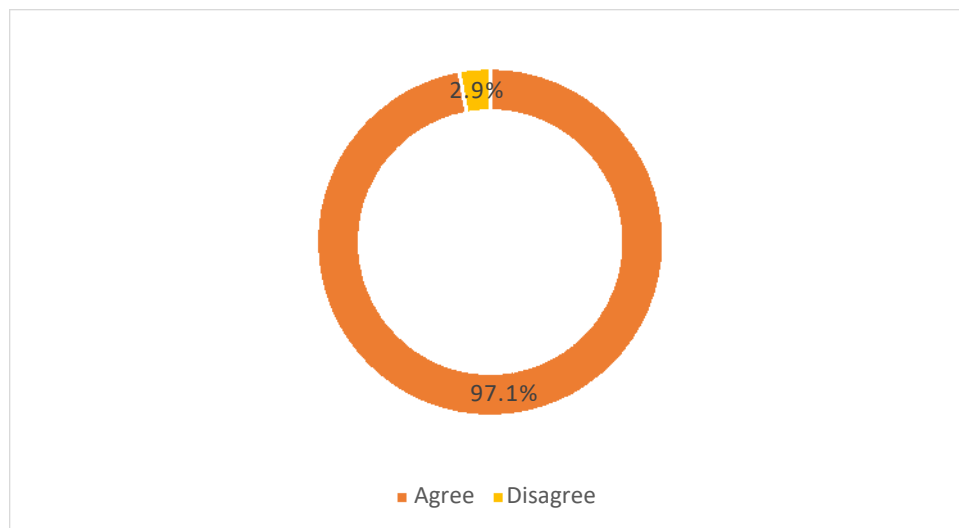
The following quotes from participants who completed TAP CPD online in 2020 highlight how their perspectives on working through creativity and partnership were changed:

- *“TAP Online 2020 has given me a greater understanding of the programme, how it works, how pupils, teacher and artist collaborate and explore different perspectives of art and most of all how EVERYBODY in the partnership is afforded the opportunity to be as creative as they can. I loved it!”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *“TAP has clearly shown me that teachers and artists can work productively together to enable the children to realise their creative potential. This is something I could never do on my own.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *“It has reminded me of the huge variety of art forms there are and has made me think outside the box when it comes to art and creativity.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]

- *“It has given me the confidence to follow the children’s lead and listen to their voice more. It has taught me that you don’t need much to get creativity going in a class all you need is some time, space and materials. It has led me to unimaginable and wonderful places in my classroom. It has shown me the important place that the arts hold in educating children.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]

Participants in the 2020 TAP online course were also asked if the course had changed their goals for their professional practice. Overall, 300 (97.1%) participants agreed the course had changed their goals for their professional practice and nine participants (2.9%) disagreed (see figure 4 below).

Figure 4: ‘TAP online changed my goals for professional practice’



Participants were asked to specify in further detail how TAP CPD online in 2020 changed their goals for professional practice. The following key themes were identified by participants in relation to how TAP changed their goals for professional practice:

- integrating more planning in arts and creative processes.
- the importance of reflection and evaluation in creative processes.
- providing more time and space for the arts and creativity in the classroom.
- focusing more on the creative process rather than the end result.
- listening to the voice of children more.
- involving children more in decision-making as part of creative processes.
- involving children with special educational needs in creative processes more.
- allowing children to have more freedom in relation to creative processes.
- developing a more creative and imaginative environment for children.

- having a better partnership/teamwork approach e.g., engaging more with other teachers, artists and the wider community.
- taking a whole-of-school approach in the future.
- integrating the arts and creativity into the curriculum more.
- further developing arts and creative skills to transfer to students.
- engaging more with IT in relation to the delivery of the arts and creativity.

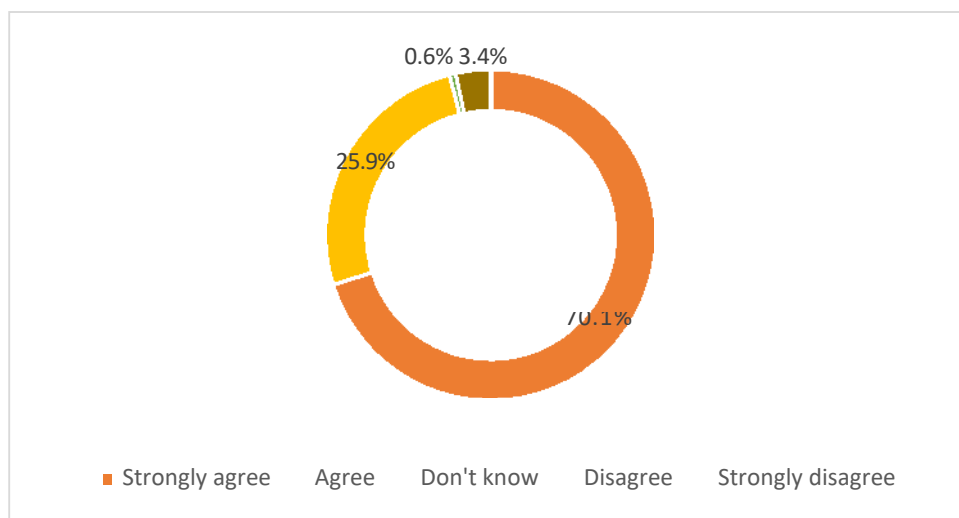
The following quotes from participants from the 2020 online course highlight how they have changed their goals for professional practice:

- *“I will be more accommodating, open, mindful, and encourage a deeper thinking to pupils engaging in Art activities. Support a variety of Arts and embrace each child's ability and creativity. I myself have got the push to enhance and continue with my own creative passions and to extend them to others.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *“As a teacher and artist, I am always very focused on the preconceived finished product. This course has taught me I should relinquish control to the children as it is their process and finished product that's important and not mine.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *“Previously I would have templates/strict instructions for my art lessons for example. But after this course I realise I should allow more freedom for creativity among the children.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *“I want my classroom to be more creative and I want to integrate art into more subjects across the curriculum.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *“I will appreciate the arts more and the benefits it has to offer. I will respect the needs and values of the pupils in my class and the staff in my school. I will become more flexible and open to change. I will use the arts to develop all subject areas and also give children with SEN more time to engage in arts activities.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]

3.2.3 Findings from 2021 TAP online CPD participant evaluations

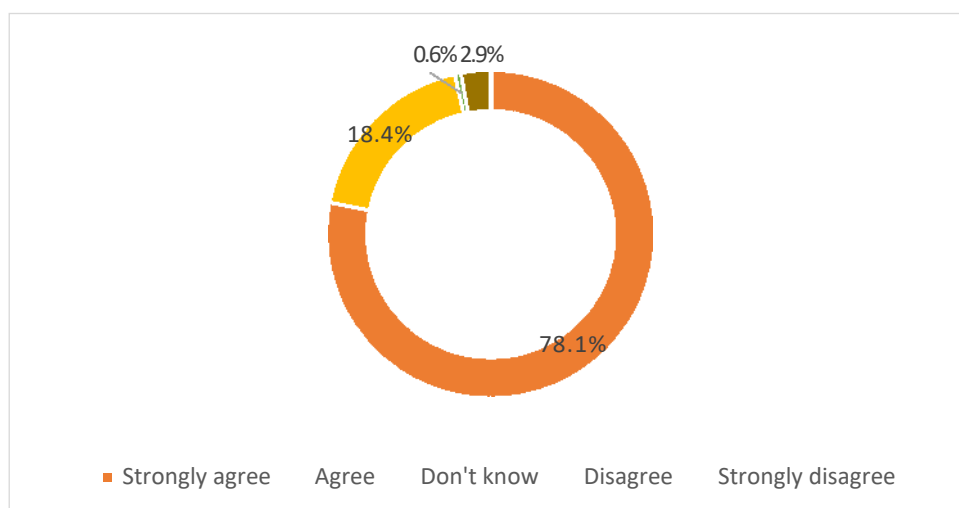
A total of 174 participants, both teachers and artists, who participated in the 2021 online TAP CPD completed participant evaluations forms. Participants were asked if they felt they had achieved the stated learning outcomes of TAP CPD course. As can be seen from figure 5 below, 70.1% strongly agreed that they achieved the stated learning outcomes of the course, 25.9% agreed, 0.6% were unsure, no one disagreed and 3.4% strongly disagreed.

Figure 5: 'I achieved the stated learning outcomes of this online course'



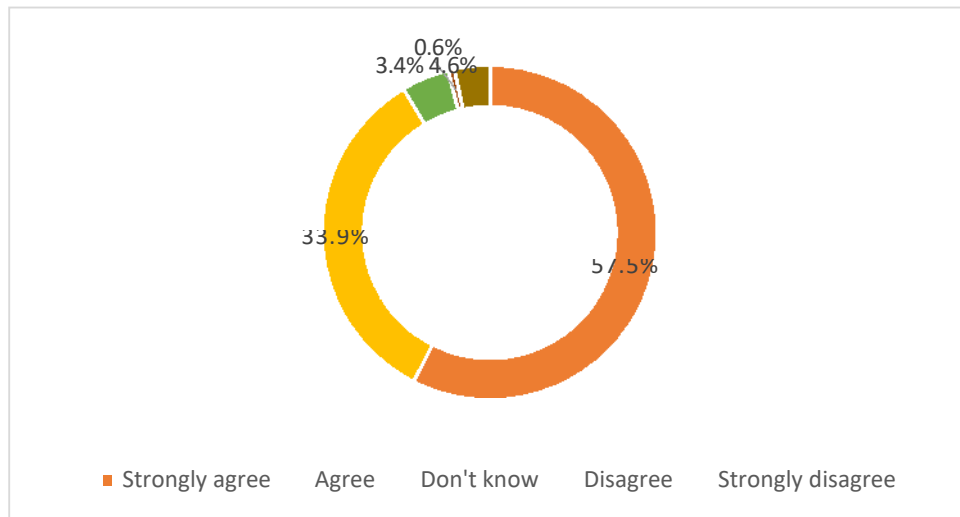
TAP CPD summer online programme participants were asked if they agreed or disagreed that the course was professionally enabling and relevant to the work of schools. As can be seen from figure 6 below, 78.1% strongly agreed, 18.4% agreed, 0.6% were unsure, no one disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed.

Figure 6: This online course was professionally enabling and relevant to the work of schools.



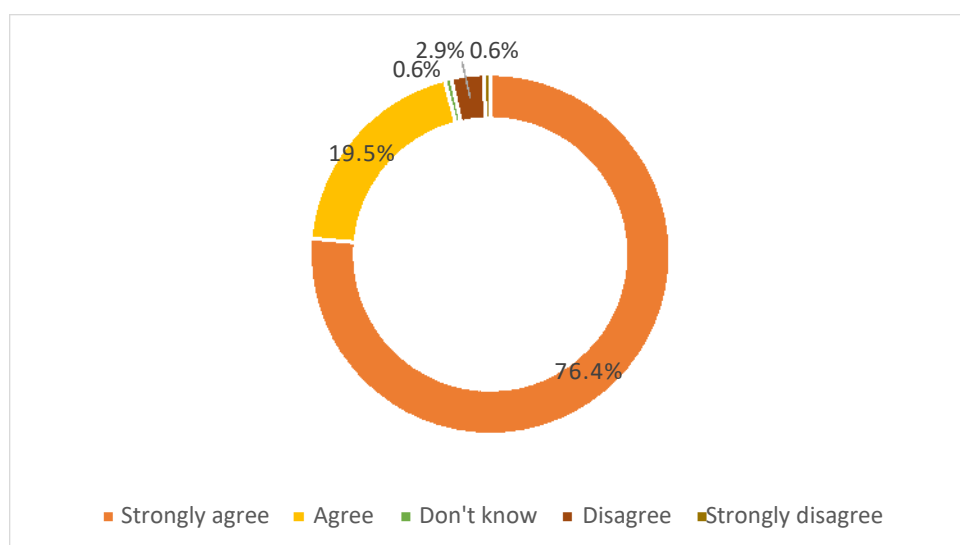
Participants were asked if the TAP CPD summer online course improved their teaching or leadership skills. Overall, 57.5% strongly agreed that the TAP CPD summer programme had improved their teaching or leadership skills, 33.9% agreed, 0.6% were unsure, 3.4% disagreed and 3.4% strongly disagreed (see figure 7 below).

Figure 7: This online course has improved my teaching or leadership skills.



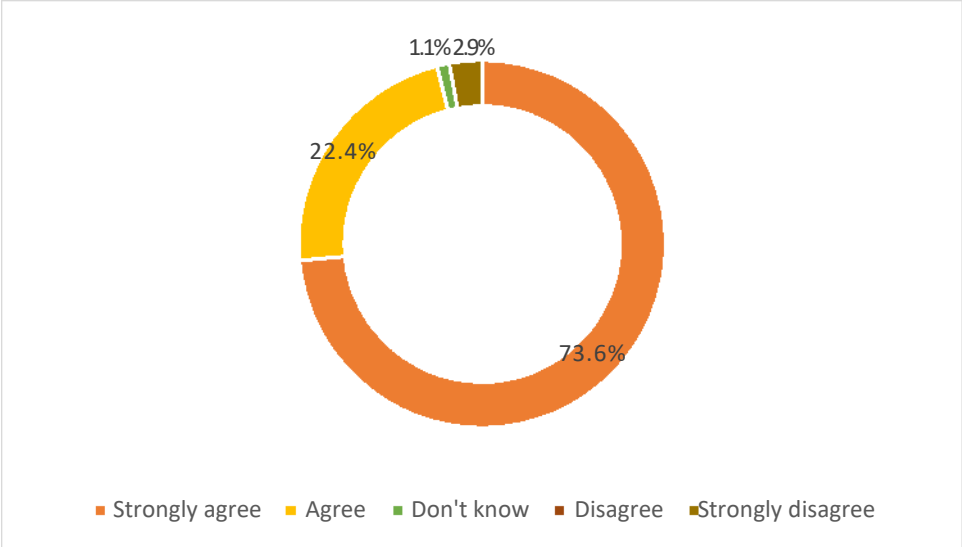
Participants were asked if they agreed or disagreed that the programme tutor ably led the learning and ensured there were good levels of engagement. As can be seen in figure 8 below, 76.4% strongly agreed their tutor ably led the learning and ensured there were good levels of engagement, 19.5% agreed, 0.6% were unsure, 0.6% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed.

Figure 8: 'The tutor ably led the learning and ensured there were good levels of engagement'



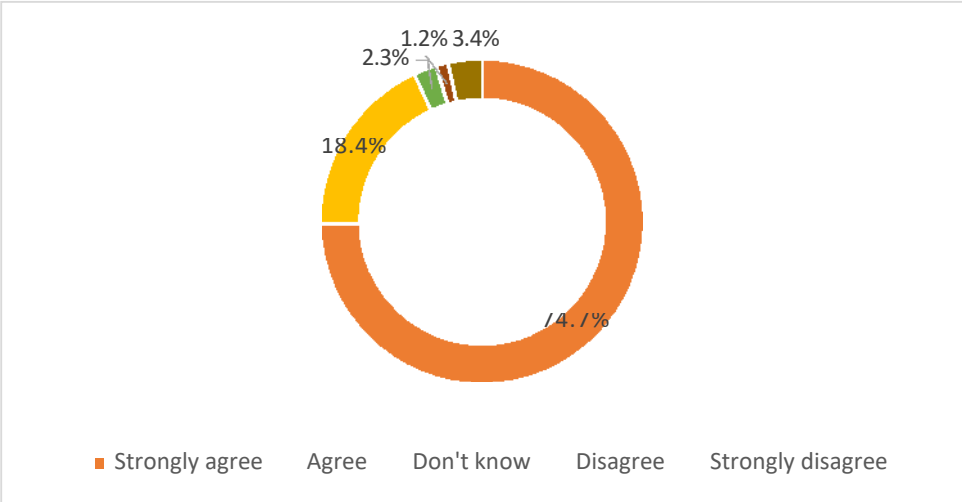
Participants were asked if the tutor provided them with appropriate feedback on their assignments/activities and tasks. Overall, 73.6% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 22.4% agreed, 1.1% were unsure, no one disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed (see figure 9 below).

Figure 9: 'The tutor provided me with appropriate feedback on my assignments/activities and tasks'



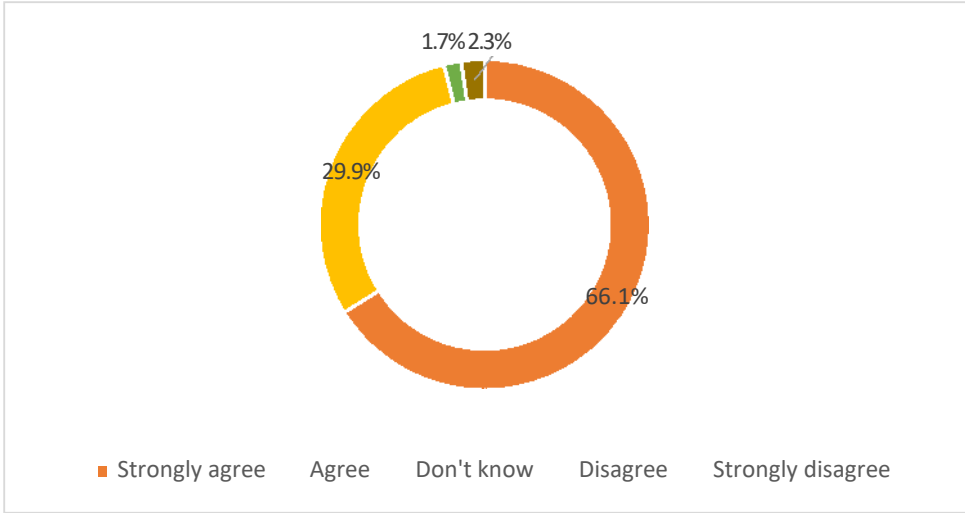
Participants were asked if they thought the online course was well structured and effectively managed. Almost three quarters (74.7%) of participants strongly agreed the course was well structured and effectively managed, 18.4% agreed, 2.3% were unsure, 1.2% disagreed and 3.4% strongly disagreed (see figure 10 below).

Figure 10: 'The online course was well structured and effectively managed'



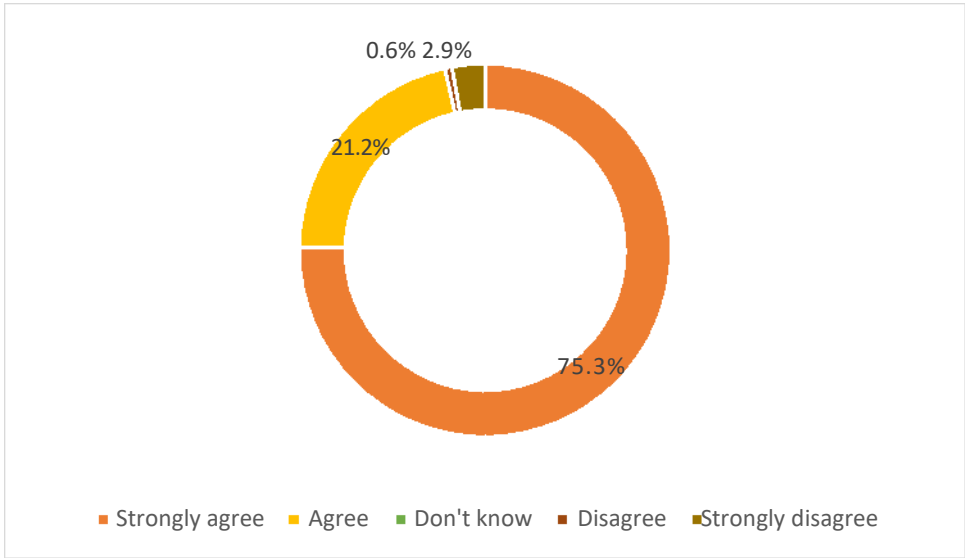
Participants were asked if the online course made meaningful links with school self-evaluation and information and communications technology. Almost two thirds (66.1%) of participants strongly agreed with the statement, 29.9% agreed, 1.7% were unsure, no one disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed (see figure 11 below).

Figure 11: 'The online course made meaningful links with school self-evaluation and information/communications technology'



Participants were asked if they considered the online course was of good quality. Just over three quarters (75.3%) of participants strongly agreed the course was of good quality, 21.2% agreed, 0.6% disagreed and 2.9% strongly disagreed (see figure 12 below).

Figure 12: 'The online course was of good quality'



Feedback on the online aspect of the course

With regard to online delivery aspect of the 2021 TAP CPD, the feedback from teachers and artists was generally very positive. A total of 221 participants from the 2021 online TAP CPD completed qualitative evaluations. Of these, 176 (79.6%) were teachers and 45 (20.4%) were artists. Participants were asked if the online CPD programme had changed their perspective on working through creativity and partnership.

The majority of teachers and artists who participated in the TAP CPD online course in 2021 found it accessible, interactive, of good quality, well-presented, thought provoking, enjoyable and useful. Participants commended the manner in which the online course was run, the skills of the lead facilitators who delivered the online course and the resources used e.g., the videos. A number of teachers noted that the online course also had a focus on well-being which benefitted participants during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, some participants found the online dimension of the course challenging in terms of use of technology and found the Moodle platform difficult to navigate. Another challenge identified by participants who took part in the online CPD was not being able to interact with other participants as much online and many participants stated a preference for a face-to-face course.

- *“It was online and it was actually fine. I would prefer face-to-face but they did a good job and they covered everything. I think for the type of course, it works well online. You are not doing the hands-on part and how to implement it and the online worked well.”* [Teacher who complete TAP CPD online]

- *“It was done through Tralee and it was very good. The videos were nice and it required you to look at the planning side of things. It was very enjoyable and there was a well-being feel to it. It worked well and the mentors were very good.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]

3.2.4 Findings from interviews with TAP CPD summer programme participants 2017-2021

General perceptions of TAP CPD

Overall, both teachers and artists who participated in TAP CPD summer programmes provided very positive feedback. Participants felt the summer programme worked very well, was of good quality, was very beneficial both professionally and personally. Artist appreciated the parity of esteem offered to both teachers and artist on the programme and the fact that artists were compensated for their

time. Teachers also liked the pace of the TAP CPD. The fact that teachers are participating in the course at the end of the school year is factored into the planning of the programme.

Aspects of the summer programme participants enjoyed included the practical tasks, theory, resources, videos, meeting other teachers and artists, hearing other participant's experiences and the mindfulness and well-being focus of the course. Parts of the summer programme which participants found challenging included the reflective journal which was considered time-consuming and lacking in clear instruction. However, this could have been due to the fact that the reflective journal was perhaps more challenging to complete online than in person where time is given to completing the journal after activities. Many participants felt the CPD summer programme would have a positive impact on their future teaching and artistic practice.

- *"I found it brilliant and it suited me down to the ground and it had to be done in a week. I loved the pace of it and it really make me think. It's the one summer course I remember and it wasn't too taxing but you got a lot out of it."* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *"I was so impressed with the quality of this course. It went above and beyond my expectations. I gained a lot from it personally and professionally."* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *"It (TAP CPD) has had a profound impact on how I collaborate with teachers. I always keep it as 50/50 as possible now. The summer programme gave me the methodologies I needed to do that."* [Artist who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Rationale for selecting TAP CPD

Teachers reported varying reasons for selecting the TAP CPD summer programme. While some teachers stated they had a prior interest in the arts and creative activities, other teachers described it as "ticking the box" in terms of entitlement to extra personal vacation days. Some teachers highlighted they had difficulties in securing a place in the TAP CPD in recent years due to capacity. For the most part, artists were attracted to the TAP CPD summer programme because they already had some experience of working in schools and the summer programme offered a unique opportunity to train alongside teachers.

- *"I came across it when I was researching summer courses...my background is music and I was interested in it and the idea of working with an artist appealed to me."* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

- *"I just did the summer course to tick the box and I wasn't thinking about it. I am into art myself any so that was what drew my attention to it."* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD online]
- *"I had done a bit of work in schools with other programmes by then and it was the chance to train with teachers that grabbed my attention. You don't get that and its very worthwhile, it changes everything."* [Artist who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Partnership aspect of TAP training

Participants identified the partnership aspect of joint training with teachers and artists in TAP CPD as being particularly effective. Teachers felt they learned from artists' experiences of working in schools which provided an insight into how residencies work and helped establish parity between artists and teachers. At the same time, artists gained insight into the school curriculum and how to add value to their work in schools by designing creative projects that could support the delivery of the curriculum. While teachers and artists are not paired for residencies during the TAP CPD summer programme, a number of participants did end up delivering a residency with a teacher/artist they had trained alongside which was noted as being very useful in enabling them to forge a strong partnership.

- *"I did the course with the artist and we had the whole week getting to know each other and it was much easier. I did another one (CRAFTed) and you just met them on the night. With TAP you had a chance to build a relationship with them and the artist gave a synopsis of their work to know what they were about."* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]
- *"I absolutely loved every second of it (TAP CPD) and loved meeting the other artists. I think the artists being included is very important to get a feel for what they would do in the classroom."* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]
- *"I learned that the artist and I are equals. We are equally involved. I cannot sit back and leave the "arty business" to the artist."* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]
- *"Sometimes, working as an artist in a school you feel a bit undervalued, like the teacher just sees it as a chance to catch up on other work while you 'entertain' the class. But the summer course was coming from a very different starting point."* [Artist who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

- *“The tutors and teachers there recognised the importance of creativity in schools and the value that artist can bring. We were all treated as professionals of equal standing on a common mission.”* [Artist who completed TAP CPD face-to-face].

3.4 Suggestions from teachers and artists

Teachers and artists that took part in interviews conducted for this evaluation made the following recommendations in relation to the further development of the TAP CPD summer programme.

Expansion of TAP CPD to more teachers, principals and SNAs

While TAP is a Primary Teacher CPD Programme with Artists included, and not designed therefore for principals and SNAs, many participants suggested the capacity of TAP CPD should be expanded to increase availability of the course to more teachers, principals and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs). This included the suggestion of including more teachers from the same schools to participate in TAP CPD to encourage collaboration across whole schools. Some teachers suggested school principals should also participate in the TAP CPD alongside teachers from their school in order to increase their understanding of and support for the initiative. The rollout of TAP CPD to SNAs in schools was identified by a number of participants. It was thought that including SNAs in TAP CPD courses would better support the inclusion of children with special educational needs in TAP in-school residencies

- *“Could this course be made available to Special Needs Assistants as many of my friends in this position in our school are very creative and artistic and they could bring this into the classes they work in and teach in too!”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]
- *“I asked my principal could I take 15 minutes to promote the programme and I think the principal wasn’t keen as the school is busy. Maybe if the principal and teachers did the course together because I think they should have a better understanding of the course.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Inclusion of more artists in TAP CPD

Participants also suggested TAP CPD should be expanded to include more artists. There are currently more teachers involved in TAP CPD therefore, it was recommended that more artists should be included in TAP CPD with some suggesting participation of equal numbers of artists and teachers.

- *“My opinion is to review and update this course with EQUAL participation of both artists and teachers, together, designing the course with equal collaboration.”* [Artist who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

More focus on artist’s perspectives

Participants generally felt there was currently more focus on teachers rather than artists as part of the TAP CPD course. Therefore, it was suggested that there should be more focus on the artist’s perspectives in courses. For example, it was suggested that including information on the challenges faced by artists and the professional frameworks within which they operate would increase teachers’ understanding of artists’ perspectives.

- *“A large focus was placed on the teacher’s role and it would have been nice to further explore things from the artist’s perspective.”* [Artist who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Pairing of artists and teachers in TAP CPD

A common suggestion made by participants was to pair teachers and artists who will take part in future in-school residencies prior to or during the TAP CPD summer programme. Participants felt this would be beneficial in terms of teacher and artist pairs working together from the beginning of the course, getting to know each other, developing relationships and starting to plan for future in-school residencies. Some teachers also indicated they would like to choose the type of art form they engage in as part of future in-school residencies.

- *“If you could know who you are going to be working with it would save time. TAP and other programmes should all do this from the outset.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Networks and information sharing

It was suggested TAP should develop networks, hubs and online forums in order for CPD participants to share information and good practices. Networks could also develop lists of artists and share information on artists working in each region and create clusters of expertise in regions so artists can work across local schools. However, it should be noted that currently a TAP trained Artist Register is established in each of 21 full-time Education Centres. Local Authority Arts Officers also draw TAP trained Artists from these registers and the register of Trained Artists supports the delivery of BLAST. Artists on the register work across schools as the Education Centre will use TAP trained Artists over

and over again for many other initiatives. There was perhaps a lack of awareness of the current register by some artists. The creation of a regional co-ordinator for TAP was discussed e.g., to match schools with artists, support in-school residencies.

Promotion and advertisement of TAP CPD

Overall, participants felt TAP CPD could be promoted and advertised more widely to encourage higher levels of participation. It was suggested that links to information on TAP CPD could be disseminated via Education Support Centre websites and emails to schools that have already participated in TAP to encourage more teachers to engage. In addition, promotional materials could be developed to distribute to schools and teachers could promote TAP in their own schools e.g., give presentations to other teachers. However, many of these suggestions are already in place which shows a lack of awareness of current promotion and advertisement of TAP among respondents.

- *“A brief summary of what the course is it would be very helpful because people didn’t know what the course was about or the residencies so a brief description on the education centre website would be useful as well. The teachers that do the course are the best ones to promote it in schools by word of mouth.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]

Future delivery of TAP CPD

In terms of the future delivery of TAP CPD, the majority of participants favoured face-to-face courses in the future. The main reasons for delivering face-to-face training related to the relationship building between teachers and artists. Some teachers suggested a blended approach to training e.g., a mix of face-to-face and online training. Other teachers stated a preference for online training, highlighting benefits such as decreased cost, not having to travel long distances to training or needing childcare. In terms of timing and delivery of TAP CPD, it was suggested by some teachers that courses could be run during the school year.

- *“The TAP summer course really needs to be face to face. We (teachers) were debating whether to have it online or face to face but online you are not getting the benefits of developing a relationship.”* [Teacher who completed TAP CPD face-to-face]
- *“This could work lovely as a blended learning course, the flexibility of the online hours worked great but I did miss the human aspect of it.”* [Artist who completed TAP CPD online]

Other suggestions made by teachers and artist included:

Aims and objectives

Include an introductory session to explain the outline of the TAP CPD course and ensure there are clear aims and objectives for each module.

Guidelines and supports

Develop clear guidelines for required assignments (for the online course), reflection pieces and other activities for TAP CPD including the reflective diary. Develop a glossary to explain educational terms, language and concepts. Provide more opportunities for participants to ask questions at the beginning of the course.

Resources and tasks

Include more practical and creative tasks in the course. Provide more practical and up to date examples of teacher artist partnerships e.g., videos. Provide more examples of TAP in-school residencies from an artist's perspective. Develop FAQs on how to start and run a TAP in-school residency.

Creative focus

Ensure a wide range of art forms are represented within TAP CPD e.g., music, drama, visual art, poetry, dance.

Curriculum

Develop an explanatory video on the school curriculum aimed at artists. (However, it should be noted that the primary school curriculum is currently under development and this is a changing space.)

Irish language

Include more Irish language content in the course. Provide the option for teachers and artists working in Gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht areas to complete the course through Irish. However, it should be noted that in Gaeltacht areas an Irish speaking artist is included in TAP.

Use of technology

Include more live workshops as part of any online course e.g., dance, drama workshops. Use small group break-out rooms for discussion on Zoom and other online platforms.

More time

Provide more time for teacher and artist partnerships to plan and share creative activities together.

3.4 The experience of lead facilitators

3.4.1 Findings from interviews with TAP CPD lead facilitators 2017-2021

Recruitment of lead facilitators

The recruitment process for lead facilitators for the TAP initiative is as follows: each ESCI/ATECI nominated a Teacher and Artist; teachers were selected by EC's and Artists were selected by ETAI/LAAO. However, there appeared to a lack of clarity among lead facilitators in relation to the recruitment process.

Experience of Lead Facilitators

The lead facilitators reported mixed views on their involvement with the TAP design team. While lead facilitators benefitted personally and professionally and generally enjoyed the experience, some highlighted concerns and challenges. The residential training of lead facilitators was considered to work very well. Those consulted felt there was generally a good comradery and working relationship between lead facilitators. There was a consensus that both teacher and artist lead facilitators were motivated to be involved in the TAP initiative by their passion for creativity and the arts in education. However, there was a perception among some interviewees that lead facilitators involved in the design team were not treated equally.

There were concerns raised by some artist lead facilitators that their voices were not heard in equal measure to the voice of teacher lead facilitators by management. According to stakeholders consulted, it is very important to make sure that artists are involved in the design of TAP to ensure it is a creative process and there is a focus on the creative process rather than on artistic outcomes and meet the needs of the Approved Application for a Teacher CPD Programme. Some teacher lead facilitators also felt their voices were not heard by management and their skillset was not valued.

- *"We (design team) started off with a partnership approach but over time some artists and teachers felt their voices weren't being listened to and their skillsets were not being used."* [Lead facilitator]

- *“It was vital to have the artists in the design team to push that corner and keep the spaces open to have a space that is creative and not outcome driven.”* [Lead facilitator]

Challenges identified by lead facilitators

Lead facilitators identified a number of challenges related to their involvement with the TAP initiative. A key challenge for lead facilitators was the different perspectives, experiences and motivations for artists and teachers in relation to their involvement with TAP. Lead facilitators who were teachers reported being primarily motivated by the opportunity for continuous professional development whereas artists were not only motivated by the opportunity for continuous professional development but also the prospect of future employment. The nature of artists’ employment is more ad hoc and less secure and well paid than teachers. In addition, artists and teachers generally have different approaches to creativity and the arts, for example artists being more process led and teachers being more outcome led. However, it should be noted that many lead facilitators, both teachers and artists, spoke about their passion for the TAP initiative.

- *“We are coming from different backgrounds. There probably are some challenges. Artists are all so different as teachers are all so different. Teachers maybe need to organise and okay everything. Although that aspect is vital leaving open space and letting it emerge is also vital and that is a challenge.”* [Artist lead facilitator]
- *“I was doing the summer course and they were asking did you get paid and the teachers hadn’t even checked their bank accounts but the artists knew straight away if they had been paid, so the motivation is different to teachers.”* [Artist lead facilitator]
- *“It (TAP) really has changed my life and it has been a life changing experience for me.”* [Teacher Lead Facilitator]

Another challenge identified by lead facilitators was the high levels of administration involved in their participation in the TAP design team. Some lead facilitators who were involved in the development of the online CPD course during Covid found conducting meetings online particularly challenging. There was a perception that teachers are more used to administration and form filling than artists.

- *“I love the work with TAP but it was also extremely time consuming and it was very intense because everyone is very passionate about it. The design team is a fab group of women.”* [Artist lead facilitator]

The final key challenge identified by TAP lead facilitators was moving the TAP CPD course online as a result of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. According to lead facilitators interviewed, developing the CPD online course was very time-consuming process that sometimes lacked structure which some lead facilitators found stressful. It was also perceived that there was a lack of clear communication in relation to the various roles of those involved in the online project and their management. This led to confusion and dissatisfaction among some lead facilitators. However, in terms of the success of the online CPD course, lead facilitators felt it worked very well overall. Lead facilitators identified benefits of participation in the online course during the Covid-19 pandemic including social benefits and personal development. There was a general consensus that either a blended approach of online and face-to-face training or a return to in person training would work best.

Benefits of involvement in TAP

The benefits of involvement in the TAP initiative identified by lead facilitators were both personal and professional. Personal benefits identified by lead facilitators relating to their involvement in TAP included increased self-confidence, social benefits particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic and general personal development. Professional benefits included learning new skills such as writing and designing the online training, teamwork experience and advancement of their own professional careers in teaching and the arts. Some artists reported that involvement in TAP increased their network and led to new sources of employment and opportunities with other arts in education programmes.

Shared learning

A number of shared learnings were identified by lead facilitators interviewed for this evaluation. This included lead facilitators who are teachers and artists learning more about each other’s perspectives, motivations, professions and ways of working. Working together in the design of TAP CPD allowed both teachers and artists perspectives to be acknowledge and incorporated into the course.

Overall initiative

In general, lead facilitators were of the view that the TAP initiative is an effective programme with a unique partnership approach between teachers and artist, is of benefit to schools and children in

relation to the improved teaching of the arts and could be replicated in other areas of education. According to some lead facilitators, the TAP initiative has also had a wider impact on other arts in education programmes in Ireland such as BLAST which is available only to TAP trained artists.

- *“TAP 100% works and it is the glue that holds the other initiatives together. I was involved in another programme and for me it was a disaster because the teacher and artist hadn’t been TAP trained. It was two separate individuals working independently.”* [Lead facilitator]

3.4.2 Suggestions from lead facilitators

A key recommendation made by lead facilitators was the provision of more funding for the development of TAP networks for teachers and artists to support sharing of information and good practice. This included online networks and in-person events. As well as sharing information and best practice, it was thought that the development of a TAP network would help increase visibility at a national level and promote the initiative to schools, teachers and artists. Lead facilitators also recommended that the TAP CPD course be included in teacher training in third level education in order to embed the philosophy of TAP into the perspectives and teaching practice of all teachers.

- *“I would like to develop a TAP network - a collaboration and sharing event, allowing conversations so that TAP gets a sense of itself and it can speak for its self on a national level.”* [Lead facilitator]
- *“There needs to be more about TAP in the teacher training. A few artists have said that teachers have more rigid viewpoints.”* [Lead facilitator]

4 EVALUATION OF THE TAP IN-SCHOOL RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report reviews the TAP In-School Residency Programme from 2017-2021. In line with the Terms of Reference for this evaluation, particular attention is paid to:

- The experience of teachers and artists working in partnership within a school including the added value of TAP CPD;
- The challenges that were encountered;
- The effectiveness of the residency supports provided to participating schools;
- And the involvement of children and young people in decision-making throughout the initiative.

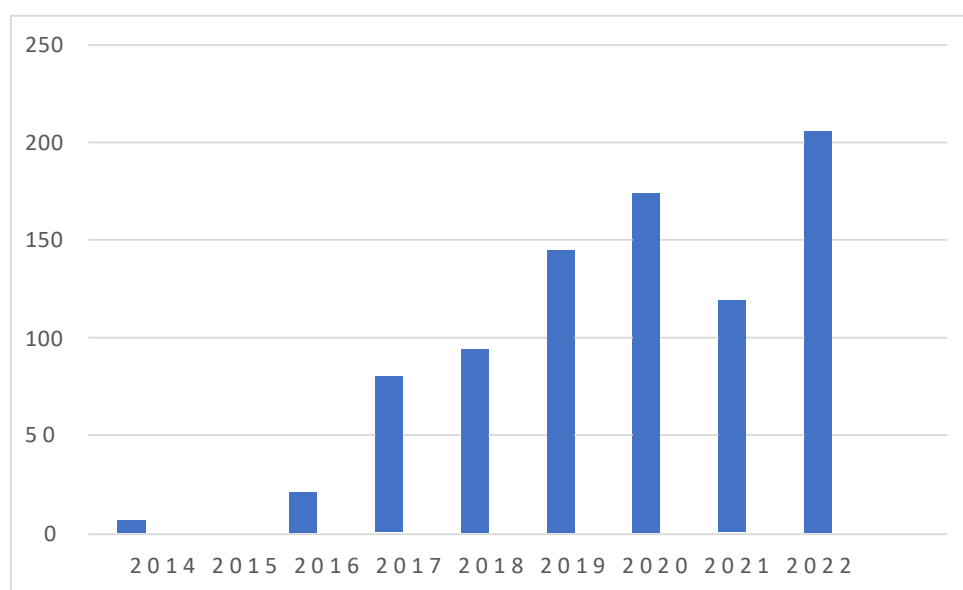
The analysis presented in this section is based on the following sources of information:

- Findings from semi-structured interviews with 13 artists involved in the delivery of TAP in-school residencies;
- Findings from semi-structured interviews with 13 teachers and one principal involved in the delivery of TAP in-school residencies;
- Findings from a review of 151 JTAR reports submitted to the evaluators in June 2022.

4.2 Description of the in-school residency programme

In-school residencies have been a central feature of the TAP programme since its inception. They allow TAP trained teachers and artists to work together to design and deliver bespoke arts in education programmes for children in participating schools. In-school residencies were conceived as face-to-face engagements however during the Covid years 2020-2021 they were by necessity often delivered online.

Figure 13: TAP residencies allocated 2014-2022



As demonstrated in figure 13 above, in the years 2014-2016 residencies were allocated to those training to become facilitators only. In 2017, the residency programme was expanded to offer an average of four TAP funded in-school residencies for allocation through each of the 20 participating Education Support Centres. In 2019, this number was increased again to eight residencies for each Centre.

In 2020, stimulus funding secured from Creative Ireland during the Covid 19 pandemic made it possible to offer a residency to all teachers that expressed an interest following training with the result that 174 residencies were allocated (including seven residencies for online facilitators). These teachers were matched with 126 previously TAP trained artists who responded to an online-call-out administered by the Education Support Centre, Tralee. In 2021, the number of residencies allocated fell to 119 before rising again to 206 in 2022, the highest number of TAP funded in-school residencies allocated in any one year to date.

Prior to Covid, each in-school residency was of 20 hours in duration including six hours planning time and 14 hours contact time with artists. Artists received a grant of €1,000 for their contribution issued by the Education Support Centre, Tralee (Administration base) and administered locally by each participating Centre in accordance with agreed guidelines. Artists' travel expenses could also be reimbursed up to a maximum of €100. The cost of materials was to be covered by the school.

In the 2020/21 academic year the grant available for each residency was increased from €1,000 to €2000 and the duration was extended from 20 hours to 30 hours as a result of the addition of Covid

19 Stimulus funding of €1,000 per residency. The decision as to whether residencies should take place online or face-to-face was taken locally by each school in line with prevailing guidelines at the time. Of the 101 Joint Teacher Artist Reports relating to residencies allocated in 2020 that were made available to the evaluators, 71 relate to residencies delivered online.

In the absence of additional Covid 19 stimulus funding in the academic year 2021/22, the duration of the residencies reverted to 20 hours and the grant available to support the contribution of participating artists was reduced to €1,000, the level set in 2017.

Several excellent examples of TAP residencies are featured on the Arts in Education portal and can be accessed at the links included below (in alphabetical order):

- Cave Dweller
<https://artsineducation.ie/en/project/cave-dweller/>
- Donal of Dunamase and the mighty boar of Ballyfriar
<https://artsineducation.ie/en/project/donal-of-dunamase-and-the-mighty-boar-of-ballyfriar/>
- Finding the Common Thread
<https://artsineducation.ie/en/project/finding-the-common-thread/>
- Scoil Násaiúnta Muire gan Smál
<https://artsineducation.ie/en/project/teacher-artist-partnership-scoil-naisiunta-muire-gan-smal/>
- The Lonely Traveller
<https://artsineducation.ie/en/project/the-lonely-traveller/>

4.3 Experience of teachers and artists

4.3.1 Findings from interviews with teachers and artists

The vast majority of teachers and artists interviewed for this evaluation described their experience of delivering in-school residencies for the TAP programme in very positive terms. First among the factors contributing to the success of TAP residencies identified by both teachers and artists is a strong teacher-artist partnership followed by:

- Time for collaborative planning;
- Linkages to the formal curriculum;

- Working with a single group;
- And, in relation to online residencies, careful planning and clear communication.

Teacher-Artist partnership

One of the unique aspects of TAP in-school residencies that works particularly well in the eyes of participants is partnership between teachers and artists. Traditionally, visiting artists in schools work independently of teachers to deliver discrete projects that stand apart from the rest of the curriculum. By contrast, TAP residencies envisage teachers and artists working together to plan, develop and deliver arts in education initiatives that are woven into the curriculum. The TAP CPD summer programme was seen as vital in laying the foundations for this partnership approach, even though in most cases teachers and artist are not paired until after the summer programme ended.

- *“Training together as professionals of equal standing really gave me an understanding of how my skills as an artist could complement what she is trying to achieve.” [Artist]*
- *“It was nice to have a second person in the classroom and observe the children at points and it definitely was a collaboration because traditionally if someone comes into the classroom the teacher can stop and step back but the TAP programme is about collaboration between the artist and teacher.” [Teacher]*
- *“It definitely was a partnership and you have to agree with each other. She (artist) was well up on things and what worked well in other schools. I never did anything like it with anyone as friendly and helpful and she was meticulous about everything and was very honest about it.” [Teacher]*

Several teachers and artists spoke about the added value of the TAP model and compared this favourably to other arts in education programmes involving residencies, such as BLAST and Creative Schools. There was broad agreement that what sets TAP apart from these other initiatives is joint training for teachers and artists, the equal voice given to artists and teachers in the TAP model; the emphasis placed on partnership in planning and delivery of in-school residencies and the focus on process rather than product.

Many teachers and artists interviewed for this evaluation viewed the in-school residencies as a vital capstone to the TAP CPD training they had received. Others described how their residency experience

helped the learning from the CPD summer programme to bed-in with the result that they apply a partnership approach to all arts in education initiatives in which they are involved, including residencies funded through other programmes.

- *“TAP is revolutionary and yet it’s based on some very simple principles: TAP artists and teachers are trained together to work in partnership with each other to deliver residencies that are process driven.” [Artist]*
- *“The residency allowed me to use the methodologies we were trained in on the ground. So now ! have real experience of working in partnership a with teachers and ! know how to weave an art project into the curriculum.” [Artist]*

But despite this very positive overall assessment of the partnership approach, varying levels of partnership between teachers and the artists they worked with to deliver TAP residencies were also evident in the interviews conducted for this evaluation. While most teachers described working in equal partnership with artists to plan and deliver their projects, some spoke about having a more hands-off approach and letting the artist lead in the classroom activities.

- *“! left it to her [artist] and she is the expert and they like to be let alone and use their own creativity...! joined in where ! could like singing along and dancing. ! learned a lot from her. ! would have a sense of handing the class over and not to be micromanaging it.” [Teacher]*

This reality is also reflected in the challenges experienced in delivering residencies that were identified by some artists during interviews for this evaluation who described how teachers with a heavy workload sometimes used class contact time with artists during TAP residencies to ‘correct copies’ and ‘catch up on their other work’. However, it must be stressed here that occasional deviation from the intended approach to partnership promoted by the TAP initiative is to be expected in a nationwide roll-out and is not indicative of any weakness in the TAP design or management. Rather, such instances will occur from time to time due to a combination of local circumstances and individual personalities. As documented above, the vast majority of teachers and artists reported very positive experiences of their TAP partnership and identified the partnership approach as one of the most important standout features of the TAP approach.

Time for collaborative planning

The collaborative planning stage of the TAP in-school residencies was considered to be very important by both teachers and artists in ensuring the residency worked well. This included pre-planning and ongoing planning during the residency. The planning stage also helped develop a positive working relationship between teachers and artists. Artists were also appreciative of the fact that they are compensated for time spent planning with up to six hours of pay.

- *“We met on the phone or on zoom to have a chat about what we were going to do and then I went back to the children for topics and she came back with a plan and that was really important. Every Tuesday, even though we had a plan, we would touch base.”* [Teacher]

Linkages to the formal curriculum

All of the teachers that took part in interviews for this evaluation said the capacity to link TAP in-school residencies to the formal curriculum was a key aspect of the programme that worked very well. Several artists identified the ability of teachers to expand on a project in creative ways outside the 14 contact hours allocated with artists as a vital success factor. At the same time, several teachers said the key to achieving this was the ability to link the residency theme to, for example, the art, music, English, history or geography curriculum. Such linkage also allowed for a more explicit focus on the development of children’s skills in the areas of literacy, numeracy and team work in particular. In addition, teachers said that this linkage allowed them to spend longer periods of time than normal working on creative projects than they otherwise would.

- *“I suppose at the start I was like, ‘how are we going to get a whole six weeks based on this theme?’ I always try and integrate things and it was much easier to tick that box with two of us working on it. I wouldn’t normally give that much time to art every week.”* [Teacher]
- *“It has changed my practice and professional career. Prior to the training I had little understanding of the education system in Ireland but now I can tie art into the curriculum”* [Artist].
- *“You really know the partnership is working when the teacher takes the lead and moves the project along between sessions. A lot can be achieved when that happens. It takes the project to the next level.”* [Artist]

Working with a single group

The opportunity to work with one group/class of children throughout the residency rather than moving around the school or trying to involve the whole school was also identified by artists as an important feature of the TAP model that contributes to its success.

Careful planning of online residencies

Additional factors contributing to the success of residencies delivered remotely as a result of Covid 19 restrictions included careful planning (which after a strong partnership was identified as the most important contributor by both teachers and artists) as well as clear communication between teachers and artists.

4.3.2 Findings from Joint Teacher Artist Reports

The Joint Teacher Artists Reports reviewed by the evaluators present a similarly positive overall view of the TAP in-school residencies and identify broadly similar features as essential to their success with one notable difference in terms of emphasis. By contrast to the feedback received during interviews, the Joint Teacher Artist Reports also frequently identify support from the host school, in particular the school principal, as crucial to the success of in-school residencies.

4.4 Challenges

4.4.1 Findings from interviews with artists

Artists interviewed for this evaluation identified a number of challenges that they encountered when implementing TAP in-school residencies. These can be divided into the following categories: partnership, finances; and practicalities. Several artists also offered comments and suggestions in relation to feedback and evaluation.

Partnership (in order of frequency of mention)

- **Pairing** - Teachers and artists are not paired for residencies until after the conclusion of the TAP CPD summer programme. Several artists remarked that this practice is contrary to the goal of cultivating partnership between teachers and artists and that it would be far preferable to be paired before the training concludes.
- **School support** - Several artists commented that they have not always received adequate support from the host school when delivering a TAP residency. In particular, some schools have failed to supply adequate materials and space for residencies. In a few instances schools

have also insisted that the planned residency must be a whole school activity or that it should involve several classes for one or two sessions each. This diminishes the impact of the residency and is contrary to the intended TAP approach. However, such instances should be expected in rolling out an initiative with the scope and reach of TAP and are not indicative of a weakness in its design or management but rather occur due to a combination of local circumstances and individual personalities.

- **Time poor teachers** – As mentioned in section 4.3.1 above, some artists said that in some instances the teachers they were in partnership with had no time/very little time for the residency and did not get much involved. This was particularly the case in larger schools/classrooms and in classrooms where discipline is an issue.
- **Teachers not TAP trained** - Some artists said that in some instances the person they ended up working with in the school had not in fact completed the TAP CPD training. In particular, some artists referred to instances where the TAP training was completed by school principals but responsibility for delivering the subsequent residency was handed over to other teaching staff within the school.

Finances (in order of frequency of mention)

- **Travel expenses** – Artists' travel expenses are reimbursed up to a maximum of €100 and time spent travelling is not funded. Several artists commented that this has discouraged them from accepting residencies in remote schools/schools that are not close to their home/place of work. Several artists also commented that €100 is no longer sufficient to cover the cost of travel even where the school is close by.
- **Fee** - Some artists suggested that at €50 an hour the residency fee established in 2014 is now too low, especially since artists frequently dedicate more than 20 hours to a residency; many artists supplement the materials provided by schools with their own supplies; travel expenses are not covered over €100; and travel time is not funded.

Practicalities (in order of frequency of mention)

- **Number of residencies** - TAP trained artists are offered an average of two TAP residencies during the academic year following their training. Thereafter, practice varies from centre to

centre as to whether these artists can deliver subsequent TAP residencies in the same school/with the same teacher or indeed elsewhere.

- **Scheduling** – Several artists said that they experienced difficulties in scheduling contact hours at hosts schools. They said that sometimes teachers wanted them to come in for one hour every week at the same time for 14 weeks and did not understand that it would be very difficult to achieve anything in one hour and that this was not an efficient use of artists' time, particularly when travelling a considerable distance to the school.
- **Teachers are time poor** – Several artists remarked that teachers are under enormous pressure to deliver the curriculum and that this leaves little time for experimentation. As a result, some teachers were unable to engage fully with the TAP residency and used the time instead to correct homework and prepare lessons etc.
- **No two schools are the same** – Some artists said that while 20 hours is sufficient to deliver an impactful art in education project in some schools with previous experience in the area, for those with little or no previous experience, it was not enough.

In addition to those listed above, artists identified a number of practicalities that also presented a challenge during the delivery of remote residencies in 2020 and 2021. These include (in order of frequency of mention):

- Unreliable broadband
- Lack of access to appropriate devices
- Working with younger age groups

Evaluation and feedback (in order of frequency of mention)

- **Joint Teacher Artists Reports** - Several artists commented that it is not possible to report honestly on their experience of TAP residencies in Joint Teacher Artist Reports since the reports are co-authored with teachers and signed off by the school principal.
- **Review and act on feedback** – Several artists also stated that although the Joint Teacher Artist Reports invite practical suggestions from teachers and artists that may improve the quality or delivery of the TAP initiative these have never been acknowledged or, to the best of their

knowledge, acted upon. As a result, they questioned whether the Joint Teacher Artist Reports represent a 'tick box' exercise or a genuine channel for feedback from teachers and artists.

- **Awareness raising** - Some artists remarked that the TAP initiative is not well known despite having been in existence for almost 10 years.

4.4.2 Findings from interviews with teachers

Covid-19 pandemic

One of the key challenges identified by teachers for TAP residencies in the last two years was the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in some schools conducting residencies online. Engaging with artists in a school residency online was challenging for teachers in terms of logistics, an increased workload, time pressure and virtual engagement with the artist. Children being in pods in classrooms as a result of Covid restrictions was also a challenge in terms of movement in the classroom and mixing of groups. However, teachers who participated in a residency that went online praised the professionalism of artists who were skilled in engaging with children. A positive aspect of online engagement with artists highlighted by teachers was artists working in their own creative environment and being able to show children their workspace.

- *"The overall experience was great but a bit difficult with Covid. We were paired up with a ceramic artist and we did the first few sessions over zoom and it was clay and I had a younger class of first and second class and it was very hands on and my lunchtime was gone because of Covid but logistically it was very, very tough because of covid and to get 26 lumps of clay out."*
[Teacher]
- *"What was nice was over zoom was the artist was able to show us her workshop. She was very good and had clear instructions of working and was very experienced in working with children. As things started to free up, she came into the classroom so when she came in it worked really well."* [Teacher]

Challenges related to time

Some teachers consulted highlighted challenges related to time and the timing of TAP school residencies. This included teachers feeling under time pressure to complete residencies at particular times of the year e.g., before Christmas. Beginning residencies after returning to school following the Covid-19 pandemic was discussed as being difficult in terms of time pressure and teachers catching

up with the curriculum. Teachers felt that in-school residencies were not suited to classes that had other time commitments such as First Communion and Confirmation. The timing of the delivery of school residency programmes was also discussed by teachers. Some teachers consulted felt programmes worked better if it was delivered for two hours a week over a shorter period of time rather than an hour a week for a longer period of time. The length of the in-school residency was considered to be too long by some teachers. Lack of time or availability of schools to engage in TAP in-school residencies was highlighted in particular by small schools or DEIS schools.

- *“It (school residency) was very condensed and rushed to get it done before Christmas. To experience it at a different time of the year would be nice. It was too close to September and it was just after Covid as well.” [Teacher]*
- *“We actively decided to not give the residency to classes doing communion and confirmation because they already have a lot going on and a lot of treats.” [Teacher]*

Geographical challenges

Some teachers identified geographical challenges related to TAP in-school residencies. Challenges highlighted related to geographical issues included artists travelling long distances, the costs associated with travel and lack of time to dedicate to planning and debriefing between artists and teachers. Geographical challenges are also linked to a lack of artists and Education Centres in certain areas. In particular, teachers from Tipperary highlighted the challenges related to not having an Education Centre in the county and artist travelling from other counties e.g. from Waterford Education Centre.

- *“In Tipperary we are very short on artists because we don’t have an education centre. We are working with Waterford education centre and they (artists) have to travel a lot. The artists need travel expenses and to be paid a bit more and they are paid around 30 euro before tax and travel is coming out of that.” [Teacher]*

Working with children with special educational needs

Some teachers highlighted challenges related to artists working with children with special educational needs. For example, some teachers identified challenges for children with autism engaging in artistic activities due to sensory issues.

- *“It definitely highlighted children who had difficulties. I have a child with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and he couldn’t cope with the noise and he was putting his hands over his ears and I hadn’t seen that before and he didn’t like the clapping games.” [Teacher]*

4.4.3 Findings from Joint Teacher Artist Reports

Since each Joint Teacher Artist Report relates to just one residency, no comment is made in the Reports on some of the broader issues relating to the way in which the residency programme itself is designed that were raised during interviews conducted for this evaluation. These include, for example, the point at which teachers and artists are paired and the number of residencies permissible. However, many of the other challenges that were highlighted during interviews were also identified in the Reports.

In particular, the cap placed on travel expenses for artists was frequently referenced by both teachers and artists as a potential impediment to residencies, especially for rural schools, and the adequacy of the €50 an hour fee for artists was also questioned as early as 2017. In addition, the 20-hour duration of each residency was also highlighted as a challenge by some teachers and artists with a preference for longer residencies being stated. Some teachers and artists also commented on difficulties experienced in obtaining the necessary materials for a residency and suggested that this should be funded by the TAP programme rather than the host school. In line with comments made during interviews for this evaluation, teachers also frequently highlighted time pressure as a challenge in delivering their TAP residency. For example, the evaluators received 19 Joint Teacher Artist Reports for the year 2017. In response to item 14 which focuses on the allocation of resources for TAP residencies, eight teachers (42%) specified time pressure as a significant challenge with three of these teachers identifying competing demands upon their time at the end of the school term as a particular problem (see section 4.5.2 below for further on the issue of resourcing). Specific questions regarding the resourcing of TAP residencies were not included in Joint Teacher Artist Reports from 2018 onwards and concerns in this regard were rarely raised in response to other questions such as ‘What could have been better’.

The major difference between the feedback offered during interviews conducted for this evaluation and that presented in the Joint Teacher Artists Reports is the notable absence in the latter of any comment on the difficulties that are sometimes experienced in the teacher-artist partnership itself during residencies. As highlighted under *Partnership* above, from the artists perspective, these include for example, teachers who are not TAP trained sometimes being assigned to deliver a TAP residency;

teachers not engaging fully with residency due to other work pressures; and an insistence that the residency should involve several groups of children for a short period of time each or be delivered as a whole school activity. The absence of material in the Joint Reports that reflects on the challenges sometimes presented by the partnership approach would seem to confirm the view that as co-authored documents, the Joint Reports do not provide teachers or artists with a safe mechanism through which to feedback to those administering and implementing the programme on such difficulties.

The challenge most frequently identified by teachers and artists in the Joint Teacher Artist Reports made available to the evaluators is that posed by technical issues including in particular inadequate broadband. While this issue undoubtedly posed problems at certain times, its prevalence in the Joint Reports reviewed by the evaluators is due more to the fact that 71 (47%) of the 151 Joint Reports reviewed relate to residencies that were delivered online during the year 2020.

4.5 Residency supports

4.5.1 Findings from interviews with teachers and artists

Artist interviewed for this evaluation had little knowledge of the residency supports provided to participating schools and were not therefore in a position to comment on this element of the initiative. Similarly, teachers interviewed as part of the evaluation had little knowledge of residency supports provided to artists. One teacher who was also a lead facilitator discussed getting support in relation to an in-school residency from the National Arts in Education Administration in the Education Centre, Tralee. In this regard it is important to note that the TAP initiative prides itself on providing individual attention to all stakeholders. As such, every query submitted to the Tralee Education Centre Administration Base is answered by the National Director coordinating the TAP initiative.

- *“If I have any problems, I am on the phone to her. She is the one that gives the advice all the time. When I first got the residency for Senior Infants, they supported me and helped me.”*
[Teacher]

In terms of support for artists themselves, one artist commented that local Education Support Centres are not well placed to support artists during residencies since administrators in such centres are not knowledgeable about arts in education nor are they expected to be. It was suggested as a result that some thought should be given to how best to support artists that encounter difficulties/require additional guidance at such times. Another artist suggested that additional training for artists

delivering residencies in special schools/for groups including children with additional needs would be welcome.

4.5.2 Findings from Joint Teacher Artist Reports

The template for the 2017 Joint Teacher Artists Report explicitly asks respondents to comment on whether the residency in question was sufficiently well-supported by the local Education Centre, the Nominating Arts Agency and the host school. Of the 19 reports for 2017 reviewed by the evaluators, in the vast majority of cases both teachers and artists either agreed or strongly agreed that this was the case. In only two instances was a negative response received (two teachers said they disagreed that that the residency was supported by the Nominating Arts Agency through the ETAI). By contrast however, a significant portion of both teachers (42%) and artists (38%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statement: ‘Sufficient resources (time, funding, materials, other) were allocated to the TAP residency?’ The resource constraints most frequently identified by both teachers and artists were:

- Time
- Funding for materials
- Funding for artists’ travel

These issues were also highlighted by both teachers and artists that took part in interviews for this evaluation as presenting a challenge during some TAP residencies.

Respondents were not asked to comment on residency supports in subsequent Joint Teacher Artists Reports for the years 2018-2021.

4.6 Involving children and young people in decision-making

4.6.1 The rights-based approach

The analysis presented below is grounded in a rights-based approach to the involvement of children and young people in decision-making as set out in the National Framework for Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-making (National Framework) Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (2021). The National Framework was developed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Inclusion and Youth in collaboration with Professor Laura Lundy of Queen’s University, Belfast and is itself underpinned by:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and
- The National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-making (the National Participation Strategy).

Article 12 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child states that:

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

The Lundy Model provides a pathway to help conceptualise Article 12 of the UNCRC. It focuses on four distinct, albeit interrelated, elements that are evident in a rights-based approach to child and youth participation in decision-making and have a rational chronological order: Space, Voice, Audience and Influence (see Appendix II). The Framework also includes three checklists (attached to this document as Appendix III) and a series of Children and Young People’s Feedback Forms that provide a simple but structured way to guide decision-makers in the use of the Lundy model and good practice principles.

4.6.2 Findings from interviews with teachers and artists

TAP is conceived as a CPD programme for teachers that involves artists. As such, teachers followed by artist are the primary beneficiaries of TAP activities and it is their practice first and foremost that the initiative aims to influence. Nevertheless, the position of children as end beneficiaries is tacitly recognised in the basic TAP documents which list among its core objectives that of supporting teachers and artists to deliver ‘arts rich experiences through which children can explore their personal creativity and develop their unique pupil voice.’ But despite these ambitions, contrary to the General Comments issued by the Committee on the Rights of the Child on implementation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and also the best practice principles set out in the National Framework for Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-making, although the TAP approach focuses on the needs of children as established through the School Self-Evaluation framework, teachers and artists receive no formal training as part of the TAP CPD summer programme in how to facilitate children to form and express their views and involve them in decision-making during TAP residencies.

Best practice in terms of child and youth participation in decision-making highlights the importance of including the voice of the child as early as possible in any project (see the National Framework Planning and Evaluation Checklists) and enabling children’s ‘blue-sky thinking’ (see National Framework,

Section 4 Prioritising Children and Young People's Perspectives p. 14 for further). However, artists and teachers interviewed for this evaluation said that:

- Children are not made aware of the variety of art forms available in their catchment area through TAP trained artists;
- They are not given any role in selecting the art forms/artist they will be working with from those available; and
- They are often not involved in deciding the theme/starting point for the residency.

While it is fully accepted here that the views of children are not the only factors to be considered in making such decisions, it is nonetheless suggested that in line with established best practice, children's views should be sought directly on each of these issues using creative and age-appropriate methodologies that enable them to express themselves in a variety of ways and their views should be given due consideration as an important part of the decision-making process.

In order to achieve this, it is suggested that as a first step it is necessary for TAP management to review the relevant processes with the aim of identifying where it is feasible to create space for the views of children to be included in decision-making. Once this review has been completed, it would then be possible to revise the processes in question as appropriate. For example, the pairing of teachers and artists for TAP residencies is currently carried out by Education Support Centres with no involvement from children often during the summer months when they are not in school. Following an internal review of this process, it may therefore be considered advisable to change the timing of this decision to ensure that the views of children regarding the art forms/artist they prefer to work with can be established at the start of the new school year and taken into account by Education Support Centres along with all other relevant factors. Similarly, thought should also be given to what processes can be put in place to best ensure that the views of children are routinely sought and considered by teachers and artists when identifying the theme/starting point for each residency.

Interviews with TAP trained artists and teachers carried out for this evaluation indicate that once the art form, artist and theme/starting point for each residency has been established, the degree to which the involvement of children in decision-making is evident as a driving force varies from residency to residency, depending on the approach and skill of both the teacher and artist involved. Some artists interviewed for this evaluation were of the view that since teachers know their students well, it is up to teachers to ensure that the views of children are taken into consideration from the beginning of

the residency. Several artists also commented that the opportunities to involve children and young people in decision-making at the planning stages are necessarily limited by the fact that each residency is only 20 hours in duration and provides for just 14 hours of direct engagement with children. Some artists suggested that as a result the responsibility to ensure children are involved in decision-making from the outset lies primarily with teachers who can interact with children outside the allocated residency hours. But not all teachers were in agreement with this analysis. Some teachers commented that as creatives, artists are more used to working flexibly and responding to their environment and that it is therefore the job of artists to ensure that the views of children can influence the development of the residency.

Some teachers reported being sceptical about the inclusion of children in decision-making before delivering a TAP in-school residency but later recognised that children are important agents in the process and that their inclusion as decision-makers benefits both the development and execution of TAP projects. Benefits identified by teachers included: creating a greater sense of ownership of the project for children, focusing on topics that are of interest to children, keeping the interest of children in the process and ensuring there were effective outcomes. At the same time, other teachers expressed their desire to include children more explicitly in decision-making in the classroom as part of what motivated them to deliver a TAP in-school residency.

- *“I didn’t think it (listening to the voice of children) would work well at the start but I think it was vital because if they aren’t interested you are hitting a brick wall.”* [Teacher]
- *“The children were asked to look at what message they would want to use and that wall (mural) to deliver. ‘Be kind’ had been a big focus of the work we did...so that came out very strongly.”* [Principal]
- *“You are going nowhere if you don’t include children. To me they are equal agents. The curriculum is child-centred and spiralled and the teacher doesn’t have to be didactic at the top. We don’t know what children need unless you ask them. Children kind of know what they need, as adults we know some of things, they need but you have to review things as you go along if it isn’t working well.”* [Teacher]

Most artists interviewed for this evaluation said that once a residency is under way, they check in with participating children regularly to seek their feedback on progress to date and their ideas regarding next steps. As such, they said that the process often unfolds in a manner that is essentially child-led.

- *“I’ve done a lot of music teaching in Gaelscoileanna. In the past I just focused on teaching the songs, keeping the tradition alive. I would have accepted that it wouldn’t appeal to everyone in the class. But with TAP you try to connect with each child on a personal level. Working with the teacher is essential in making that connection. They know their students.” [Artist]*
- *I’m asking the kids how they want things to progress every day. So, they lead and I respond to them. It’s a very personal way of working.” [Artist]*
- *“It evolves from an agreed starting point in line with what the children want. The theme and artform are not always chosen by them but after that it is very open.” [Artist]*
- *“My role is to provide them with inspiration and basic skills. Then I let them off!” [Artist]*

Several artists and teachers interviewed for this evaluation said that either the views of children should be directly incorporated into Joint Teacher Artist Reports or an alternative evaluation methodology should be employed to capture these views at the end of each residency. In addition, many artists and teachers were in agreement that training on best practice methodologies for including children and young people in decision-making would be a welcome addition to the TAP programme.

- *“If I have time I do video feedback, but there is no formal feedback sought from the kids at any stage. It’s a pity.” [Artist]*

4.6.3 Findings from Joint Teacher Artist Reports

While the Joint Teacher Artist Reports invite teachers and artists to comment on the ‘learning outcomes’ achieved for participating children during their residency, children themselves have no direct input into this material or the reports more generally. As such, the voice of the child is not included in the residency evaluation process in any systematic way, particularly with regard to children’s broader experience of the residency. For example, what they enjoyed, what they didn’t enjoy, what they felt worked well, what didn’t work so well, what changes they would make and what they feel they learned themselves.

Teachers and artists are not explicitly invited to comment on the involvement of children and young people in decision making during in-school residencies as part of the Joint Teacher Artist Report nor on the degree to which ‘the voice of the child’ is evident during residencies. However, in their

responses to other questions raised in these reports both sets of professionals frequently identified the importance of ensuring that residencies develop in a manner that is responsive to the needs and interests of the children as critical to their success.

4.7 Participants' suggestions

4.7.1 Joint suggestions

Funding

Both teachers and artists called for funding for more TAP residencies. In this regard it is noted that overall, more teachers apply for in-school residencies than are successful which shows there is a demand for more residencies were funding to be made available.

Voice of the child

Several teachers and artists were in agreement that the provision of training on how best to involve children in decision-making in TAP residencies would be welcome. Teachers and artists also suggested that steps should be taken to ensure that the views of children are captured more systematically in evaluation and feedback forms completed at the end of each residency.

4.7.2 Artists' suggestions

Artists interviewed for this evaluation made a number of suggestions regarding further development of the TAP in-school residency programme including the following:

Partnership

- Pair teachers and artists for residencies before the TAP CPD summer programme ends.
- Require principals attending the TAP CPD summer programme to give an undertaking to deliver a residency themselves or to train alongside another teacher from the same school who will do so.
- Provide a TAP refresher programme for all trainees after five years.

Finances

- Urgently review the €100 cap on artists' travel expenses.
- Urgently review the fee for artist.

Practicalities

- Issue clear instruction to nominating bodies as to the number of TAP residencies each artist is permitted to deliver and whether repeat residencies are permitted at the same school/with the same teacher.
- Offer guidance to host schools and TAP trained teachers on the maximum group size for residencies and the need to involve only one class/group throughout.
- Offer guidance to host schools and TAP trained teachers on scheduling TAP residency hours.
- Require schools hosting TAP residencies to demonstrate how teachers will be supported to meet their day-to-day responsibilities while at the same time delivering a TAP residency.
- Differentiate between schools when allocating residencies and offer longer/repeat residencies to schools that need it.
- Provide targeted training for artists delivering residencies in schools for children with special educational needs.

Evaluation and feedback

- Establish an alternative channel through which both teachers and artist can offer their feedback to nominating bodies and the TAP head office following the completion of in-school residencies in addition to/instead of the Joint Teacher Artist Report.
- Ensure that the feedback received from teachers and artists following residencies is systematically reviewed by nominating bodies and acted upon as appropriate.
- Ask participants in the TAP initiative to provide feedback on where they heard about it as well as for their advice on where best to advertise it.
- In order to raise awareness of the initiative, require artists and teachers to give a presentation to the whole school community on the TAP approach and what they learned from the residency as part of the residency itself. This already takes place in some instances and should be a formal requirement.

4.7.3 Teachers' suggestions

Teachers interviewed for this evaluation made a number of suggestions regarding further development of the TAP in-school residency programme including the following:

Incorporate TAP training into Initial teacher education

A key recommendation made by teachers was to include TAP training as part of the teacher training curriculum in third level education. The universal training of teachers in TAP was suggested to ensure all teachers are trained in a similar manner in relation to the arts and creative activity. Some teachers also suggested TAP training should be included in artist's third level education.

- *"I think it (TAP) should be part of third level teachers for teachers and for artists as well as they tend to work in schools and a professional artist needs an income as well."* [Teacher]

Choice of type of art form

Some teachers felt there should be a choice in the art form and type of artist they were partnered with for TAP school residencies. Participating in the TAP CPD alongside their partner artist was also considered to be a good idea in terms of developing a working relationship, planning programmes and getting to know teaching styles and approaches.

- *"You have no say in which artist you are teamed up with. If you weren't working with an older class, it mightn't have worked with the clay. The older classes got more out of it."* [Teacher]

Pairing of teachers with local artists

Teachers also suggested being paired with locally based artists due to geographical challenges and high travel costs if artists are travelling long distances to schools.

- *"It might have been useful to be paired up with the artist who is local to you. You have no idea who you are paired with."* [Teacher]

Engagement with principals

It was recommended that TAP should engage more with school principals to ensure they are fully informed about in-school residencies, what is involved for teachers, how they can support participating teachers and what benefits are for teachers, children and schools.

Development of a network of TAP teachers

Teachers suggested a network for teachers who have participated in TAP in-school residencies should be developed to help share examples of TAP projects and programme, let teachers share what worked well and what didn't work well about TAP in-school residencies, share good practices and promote shared learning.

- *"I think TAP is fantastic but I haven't had a chance to talk to other teachers. There is the arts in education portal, so I think if there was an opportunity to get together even like a dinner to get teachers together or a zoom to meet or to have a forum to see what worked and didn't work."* [Teacher]

Improved advertisement and promotion of TAP

Finally, teachers suggested TAP summer courses and in-school residencies should be advertised and promoted better to recruit more teachers and to disseminate the benefits for teachers, children and schools.

5. IMPACT OF TAP ON PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report reviews the impact of the TAP initiative in schools. In line with the terms of reference for this evaluation, particular attention is paid to:

- The impact of TAP on teaching practice in participating schools
- The impact of TAP on school culture in participating schools
- The impact of TAP on children as learners in participating schools

The analysis presented in this section is based on interviews conducted for this evaluation with teachers and principals who have completed both the TAP CPD summer programme and at least one TAP residency. In relation to the impact of TAP on children as learners, it must be noted that exploring the views of children from the perspective of teachers does have limitations. However, in the absence of an opportunity for the evaluators to consult with children directly for this evaluation, interviews with teachers present a feasible alternative.

5.1 Impact of TAP on teaching practice

Creative practice prior to TAP

Interviews conducted for this evaluation indicate that many teachers who participated in TAP did so because of their interest in the arts and creative activities. However, prior to participation in the TAP CPD summer programme and in-school residencies, teachers' knowledge and experience of creative and artistic practice varied widely. Some teachers consulted considered themselves to be artistic and creative whereas others did not. Some teachers described having an interest in the arts and creativity but lacking the skills to bring this interest to bear in the school setting.

- *"I love teaching but I love the arts as well...TAP has reconnected me with it."* [Teacher]
- *"I would highly recommend it to everyone especially those who are not confident in the arts and it should be compulsory for all teachers. The first residency was with drama and I had to put myself out of my comfort zone."* [Teacher]

Creative teaching practice

Interviews conducted for this evaluation suggest that by undertaking the TAP CPD summer programme and participating in in-school residencies, teachers enhanced their artistic and creative

skills. Teachers spoke about developing new skills in the arts which have supported their teaching practice. Importantly, many teachers were of the view that TAP also increased their confidence and ability to engage more in artistic and creative activities in the classroom. As a result, these teachers have dedicated more time to arts and creative practices for children on a weekly basis during the TAP residency. Some teachers also reported dedicating more time to the arts and creative activities in the classroom beyond the TAP in-school residency. Some teachers also said that through the TAP initiative they had learned to recognise when it would be helpful to bring artists into the school to support the delivery of the curriculum through creativity.

- *“It (TAP) definitely has helped. I learned things are easier to do, like I had a block about music and it is not as hard as, I think and I learned you have to ask for help and bring people in.”* [Teacher]
- *“I learned so much. I was confident in the teaching the arts but I would try a lot more now. I gained personal skills in terms of clay, fabric etc...”* [Teacher]

Reflective teaching practice

Interviews conducted for this evaluation suggest that participating in the TAP CPD summer programme and in-school residencies had a positive impact on the teaching practice of those teachers directly involved in the initiative. Teachers most commonly stated that since their involvement with TAP initiatives, they had become more focused on the process of learning rather than on learning outcomes. This was the case not only in relation to the teaching of art but also in relation to other subjects on the school curriculum. Some teachers also spoke about their enhanced ability to integrate art and creativity into other subjects to support learning in these areas. For example, integrating Irish with drama and visual art patterns with maths.

- *“I wouldn’t be as concerned about perfection and every class isn’t ready for what you want them to do. I had one quiet child last year who wouldn’t open her mouth at all and the drama teacher had a slightly different approach and drew her out and I was amazed at it. You can’t push children to do x y and z on a certain day. They have to be ready and I would be more forgiving now and I wouldn’t be looking for results say like putting a picture on the wall. Its more process led.”* [Teacher]
- *“Sometimes when you get bogged down in the curriculum you get bogged down in the lesson and I am less concerned about the product than the process now.”* [Teacher]

- *“It helped me to approach the thematic type of learning and to work backwards to see what inspired children and fit it into the curriculum.” [Teacher]*

Art and creative activities

Teachers interviewed for this evaluation spoke about how the TAP initiative changed their perspectives in relation to teaching certain art forms and delivering creative activities. Some teachers stated they had felt nervous or apprehensive about teaching art and creative activities in the classroom before participating in TAP. The teaching of art and creative activities which teachers perceived to be ‘dirty’ or ‘messy’ such as clay and printing appeared to be a barrier for some teachers. However, a number of teachers reported feeling more at ease leading these types of activities after completing the TAP CPD summer programme and in-school residencies. Having an artist working alongside the teacher for these types of activities helped teachers relax and gain more confidence in teaching using these mediums.

- *“They (children) had never done print and rollers and I was like, ‘oh my god that is going to go everywhere.’ I would have done a class first about it and said ‘this is the clean and dirty table.’ It was difficult for me to hold back sometimes if they were in the middle of an activity.” [Teacher]*
- *“It could be difficult in terms of messiness and what can go wrong and I would have a chat about it (with the artist) beforehand. Teachers generally don’t tend to do clay.” [Teacher]*

5.2 Impact of TAP on school culture

Leadership of the TAP initiative in schools

Since teachers are responsible for selecting their own CPD courses, the choice of course is usually informed primarily by the interests of individual teachers rather than a recognised need for skills in a particular area within the school as a whole. Interviews conducted for this evaluation suggest that as a result, participation in TAP is generally undertaken on the initiative of individual teachers and that these teachers generally work with artist to deliver residencies for children in their own class only.

Several teachers who had completed the TAP CPD summer courses and in-school residency programme spoke about promoting the benefits of TAP to other teachers within their school in an

informal manner with varying degrees of success and some reported bringing their creative learning and practice to other classes in their school following in-school residencies.

- *“It is harder to get the other teachers involved because there are 30 teachers in the school... Class teachers can be very insular, so I do a lot of PR for TAP and explain it to them and get them interested but it is hard because some teachers aren’t as interested in the arts.”* [Teacher]

- *“After TAP I also went on to teach another class and brought that expertise with me.”* [Teacher]

A small number of teachers and principals identified benefits for the wider school of participation in TAP residencies which included involving other teachers and children in the project, increased interest in arts and creative activities and connecting with other artists and programmes. When teachers also spoke about showcasing the work produced during residencies for the wider school where possible. However, interviews conducted for this evaluation would suggest that for the most part the benefits of participation in the TAP initiative including the in-school residencies programme primarily accrued to TAP trained teachers and the children in their class, which is the primary aim of the initiative, and the impact on the wider school was more limited. However, it should be noted that the TAP initiative does not have a “whole school” focus.

- *“The discussions that went on with the children meant all teachers were involved. The site for the mural was right outside the classroom door. The nature of it meant everyone was hands on.”* [Principal]

- *“I have seen the skills and ideas from TAP used with other teachers in the school. Some of the ideas I have used in the course I have seen them come around again which means it is coming around.”* [Teacher]

Role of school principals in TAP

Interviews conducted for this evaluation indicate that while some school principals are themselves TAP trained, principals generally have low levels of involvement in TAP initiatives. Although the majority of teachers reported that school principals had a positive attitude toward teaching staff

participating in the TAP CPD summer programme and in-school residencies, on the whole most principals were said to have adopted a 'hands-off approach'.

In a few cases, teachers reported higher levels of engagement from their school principal in relation to TAP in-school residencies. This included principals encouraging teachers to participate in the TAP CPD summer programme and supporting teachers during residencies by, for example, covering their class while they debriefed with artists after TAP sessions. According to teachers, clear communication between teachers and their principals about TAP and its objectives was instrumental in gaining this higher level of support.

- *"You need to explain to the principal that you need a bit of time and support around TAP and make sure the principal is on board and supportive. My principal put me into TAP and does support me."* [Teacher]

Interviews conducted for this evaluation would suggest that TAP trained principals are also more likely to be supportive of TAP residencies and other arts in education initiatives even though they are unlikely to deliver these initiatives themselves. For example, a TAP trained school principal interviewed reported that she had completed the TAP training along with another teacher from the school who delivered the subsequent TAP residency. Both women then worked together to secure further residencies and involve the school in several other arts in education initiatives which combined have had a transformative impact on the role of arts and creative activities across the whole school.

- *My principal didn't really care as long as it (TAP) was working. I think principals could do more training in arts programmes in schools. They (principals) see it an opportunity to get money in for the school to do arts programmes."* [Teacher]

Collaboration between schools and the arts and creative sector

Teachers who have participated in the TAP CPD course and in-school residencies reported greater levels of collaboration between themselves and other artists since their participation in TAP initiatives. Due to their involvement with TAP initiatives, teachers said they had made connections with other teachers and artists involved in TAP initiatives and also reported greater knowledge of other school-based arts in education programmes. Some teachers also spoke about their increased openness to bringing in artists to work in partnership in the classroom following completion of the TAP CPD course and in-school residencies.

- *“We are now working with [the artist] for something else so I suppose we are more open to expertise and creativity coming into the school.” [Teacher]*
- *“You make a lot of connections with other artists and teachers and see how their residencies work and we might apply for other programmes and bursaries as well.” [Teacher]*
- *“It (TAP CPD) opened other windows for grants and funding I wasn’t aware of and other teachers weren’t aware of it either.” [Teacher]*

5.3 Impact of TAP on children as learners

Artistic and creative skills

According to teachers interviewed for this evaluation, one of the key positive impacts of participation in TAP in-school residencies for children was increased artistic and creative skills. Through TAP programmes, children benefitted from experiencing a wide range of art forms including, for example, visual art, clay modelling, dance, drama and poetry. For some children, this included being exposed to many new art forms and creative experiences.

- *“I think it’s important for the children to meet a real artist and it really inspires them and they sit up and listen and are motivated to learn new skills.” [Teacher]*

Learning

As well as having a positive impact on children’s artistic and creative skills, many teachers were of the view that participation in TAP programmes has had a positive knock-on effect on children in relation to other educational areas of learning such as literacy, numeracy and maths. For example, it was suggested that residencies in the areas of creative writing and poetry can benefit children’s literacy just as exploring patterns in visual art residencies can benefit children’s learning in maths.

- *“I think it (TAP) is a great programme and I noticed how it inspired the kids are in terms of maths, literacy.” [Teacher]*

Teachers also spoke about TAP in-school residency programmes benefitting the learning of children who were less academic. Numerous examples were provided by teachers of children who were perceived to struggle academically in class but who excelled in TAP programmes. According to teachers, many children appeared to benefit from the teaching practice of artists which was different to day-to-day teaching and the school curriculum. Positive affirmation from a person other than their

teacher was judged to be effective for many children in increasing their self-confidence. In addition, the approach of artists provided children with new ways of learning through creativity. For example, focusing on process rather than product and accepting that creative outputs do not have to be perfect or look a certain way.

- *“So many children learn differently and that is where the arts come into their own...There were children who were quiet that were good at dance.”* [Teacher]
- *“Children that weren’t always academic learned that to excel you don’t have to be academic.”* [Teacher]

Personal and social skills

Many teachers identified a positive impact on the development of children’s personal and social skills. Reported impacts included increased self-confidence, self-expression, social skills, attention span, communication skills, teamworking ability and life skills. In some cases, teachers felt that participating in TAP in-school residencies supported the cohesion of the class involved.

- *“Even the language and their literacy skills improved, the teamwork and the child that maybe isn’t as good in class, it gave them the freedom to express themselves.”* [Teacher]
- *“They (children) learned a lot of life skills and we did papier-mâché and they had to hold and lift paper and there was lot of teamwork more than in school day to day. I felt it really cemented the class together.”* [Teacher]

Well-being

Another key impact highlighted by teachers was the positive impact of participating in TAP in-school residencies on children’s well-being. Teachers felt TAP programmes were particularly beneficial for children’s well-being following returning to school after the Covid-19 pandemic. From a social perspective, TAP in-school residencies allowed children to socialise and mix with other children in the classroom, meet people in their communities and for people to come into the classroom to talk to children in relating to their TAP projects. These activities which weren’t possible due to Covid-19 restrictions helped children socially and increased their well-being.

- *“It (TAP) was almost like a wellbeing and mindful class after Covid, never mind the skills learned.”*
[Teacher]
- *“I think it (TAP) is really, really powerful. During Covid they (children) weren’t able to work in groups so it nice to see them collaborating together. It was about getting out in the community and we had a bee keeper come in to talk to them and a parent that was entomologist came.”* [Teacher]

Classroom behaviour

Many teachers felt TAP had a positive impact on the behaviour of children in the classroom environment. The release of energy from participation in creative activities and having another voice (that of the artist) in the classroom was seen to be effective in reaching some children with behavioural issues. In addition, some teachers spoke about learning new strategies from artists in dealing with challenging behaviour in the classroom.

- *“They (children) love working with a stranger in the class and a different personality works well. I had a very difficult class and it was very tough and it really helped the class and the artist gave me strategies to help deal with behavioural issues.”* [Teacher]
- *“Children who were oppositional, and I had two of them that were very difficult, it gave them a release of energy when we got out of the classroom and there was another person setting a boundary and it gave them a choice in decision making in terms of their behaviour.”* [Teacher]

Children with additional educational needs

A number of teachers reported positive impacts for children with additional educational needs e.g., children with literacy issues, children whose first language is not English and children with Autism. Teachers reported that children with literacy issues and for whom English isn’t their first language benefitted from participation in TAP activities where they could communicate and express themselves through artistic and creative means. Similarly, some teachers reported that children with additional education needs, such as Autism, benefitted from the different approaches to learning introduced by artists.

- *“The main thing I notice was I have a few boys that can’t read or write but they could express themselves in other ways like spoken language and visually through drawing and painting.”* [Teacher]
- *“We are an all-boys school and have 19 different nationalities and it can be challenging but they really took to it. We had a boy with no English but he used to come up to me and say, ‘drama, drama!’”* [Teacher]
- *“It (TAP) has been great for children with autism and I’ve noticed how important it is for those children as often they are very creative and it gives them a chance to shine. There was one little boy in the class that confided in the artist about he felt emotionally and he got very involved in it and I was able to stand back.”* [Teacher]

Experience of arts and creative activities

Teachers reported that TAP in-school residencies enabled children to experience arts forms and creative activities that they might not ever have had access to previously. Having an artist in the classroom normalised the arts and creative activities also introduced children to various careers in the artistic and creative industries.

- *“They really enjoyed it and it was very different for them and we would never have had a céilí or noticed music the same way before.”* [Teacher]
- *“The children see they (artist) are a real person and just normal and you can have a career in the arts no matter how bright you are and the career in the arts becomes more accessible. When the artist comes in it become normal for them and they recognise them for being in their school.”* [Teacher]

5.4 Increasing the impact of TAP in schools

Teachers offered a number of suggestions as to how to increase the impact of TAP on the wider school community. Suggestions made by teachers included encouraging teachers and artists to showcase their work in schools for the whole school community (e.g. hanging art, giving a performance etc) or to give a presentation to the whole school on the residency and its benefits. The opportunity to include children in planning and delivering such activities were also noted. Taking the time to introduce the artist to other teachers in the school during residencies and inviting other teachers into the classroom

to assist or observe TAP sessions were also seen as easy ways to increase awareness of the TAP programme and its benefits.

It was also suggested that TAP training targeting school principals would also be of benefit in garnering support for arts in education initiatives on the ground and increasing the impact of TAP. In this regard, it was suggested that a shorter one or two day programme might be delivered to principals with an interest in arts in education but who would not be delivering such programmes in schools themselves. As an alternative, it was also suggested that principals might attend a portion of the TAP CPD summer programme only.

- *“I find if the artist goes into the staff room for a cup of tea it helps. We try and have a board in the corridor to exam what we are doing in the classroom to get everyone interest. I have done it with four classes so the kids are aware of it.” [Teacher]*

6. OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF TAP

6.1 Introduction

This section of the report reviews the operation and management of the Teacher Artist Partnership CPD initiative. In line with the terms of reference for this evaluation particular attention is paid to the overall management of the TAP initiative, TAP infrastructure and TAP administration.

6.2 Overall management of TAP

The TAP initiative is centrally administered by the National Administrative base in Tralee Education Support Centre and nationally coordinated by the Director for the Integration of the Arts in Education on behalf Department of Education.

The administration of TAP through the Tralee Education Support Centre was found to be very efficient, effective and, given the level of resources available, lean. Despite the large volume of administrative work and supports required for the TAP programme, up until recently there was only one employee working on the programme in the Tralee: the national arts in education administrator. This administrator plays a vital part in the day-to-day management and co-ordination of the TAP initiative and was also highlighted by stakeholders consulted for this evaluation as having an important role in the area of personnel management and the provision of support to teachers and artists. While all queries from stakeholders are submitted to the administrative base in Tralee, queries are responded to by the National Director.

The recent appointment of part-time administrative and financial staff to the TAP office in the Tralee is a necessary and welcome development however, it is suggested that the adequacy of this new staffing arrangement itself should be kept under review and consideration should be given to further increasing staff levels as and when necessary. National co-ordination of TAP by the Department of Education is also highly effective from a policy and programme development perspective. However, there was a perception among some stakeholders that different sections within the Department operate in isolation from each other.

While many stakeholders view the way in which the TAP initiative is coordinated by the Department of Education in a positive light, some - including some lead facilitators - felt that their skillset was not acknowledged or utilised and reported feeling “side-lined” and “undervalued”. It is not unusual that

such perceptions should exist in relation to a programme with a remit as wide as that of TAP, both in terms of its geographic spread and the number of agencies and persons involved in delivering it. However, it is suggested that with the turbulent years of Covid now behind us, it may be timely to take the opportunity to focus greater attention on interrogating the needs and supporting the wellbeing of those on the panel of lead facilitators, particularly since the TAP initiative is reliant on them for its delivery. Clear communication around the facilitation opportunities for lead facilitators and the system in place may help in this regard.

6.3 TAP infrastructure

The 21 nationwide full-time Education Support Centres are part of the TAP infrastructure and play an important role in relation to the management and distribution of TAP CPD summer course places and in-school residencies. This arrangement ensures that the initiative has a strong geographical spread (although since TAP CPD is not compulsory and teachers self-elect to participate, it can nonetheless prove difficult to ensure there is an equal spread of different types of schools e.g., DEIS schools, Gaelscoileanna, rural and urban schools). It also serves to spread the considerable burden of implementing TAP beyond the national administrative base in Tralee and the National Coordinator. However, this model of devolved management also presents challenges of its own particularly in relation to the role of Education Support Centres in the overall initiative.

The Directors of Education Support Centres are often primary school principals who are seconded to the position. This brings with it a high level of experience and expertise in the area of teacher CPD, working with teachers and an understanding of in-school residencies. However, Education Support Centre Directors are also employed on short-term contracts (five years) which means that there are always new Directors in post with little or no knowledge of TAP who are active in the network. This can result in a lack of engagement in and prioritisation of the TAP initiative in certain areas. This reality is reflected in comments made by some stakeholders interviewed as part of this evaluation who remarked that some Education Support Centre Directors had a “hands-off” approach to TAP. It should be noted that training is provided every year for Education Centre Directors and administrative staff by the National Director and the National Arts in Education Office in Tralee.

- *“The change of Director every five years is very challenging. They are only in their jobs and five years is too little and there is no continuity and from the admin point of view you have to talk them through it.”* [Lead facilitator]

- *“We (Directors) are in the role for five years so that can be challenging...and some (Directors) don’t stay for the full five years. It can be difficult to get your head around the project and there are a lot of projects going on.”* [Education Centre Director]

To a lesser degree, the nationwide network of 31 local authority Arts Officers is also part of the TAP infrastructure and plays a significant role in raising awareness of the TAP CPD summer programme among local artists, nominating artists for in-school residencies and maintaining a register of TAP trained artists e.g., through the Annual Call Out for Artists to participate in TAP training each year. A register of TAP trained artists is created, maintained and operated by the Director of local Education Centres. In combination with that of Education Support Centres, the role of Arts Officers in the initiative thereby lends TAP access to local knowledge that would otherwise be impossible for the small team in the national administrative base to replicate. Arts Officer also have access to Education Centre register of TAP trained artists.

In relation to the TAP register, it is also noteworthy that TAP trained artists are frequently recruited from the register to other arts in education programmes such as Creative Schools and BLAST, with TAP training and experience increasingly perceived by Arts Officers as a required standard of practice for participation in such programmes.

6.4 TAP administration

Education Support Centres also play an important role in relation to the day-to-day administration of TAP. This includes the payment of artists which ensures administrative burdens are not placed on schools which could be off-putting. However, some stakeholders raised concerns about the standard of administration in some Education Support Centres in relation to the TAP initiative. This included lack of engagement with correspondences on TAP and not providing paperwork such as Joint Teacher Artist Reports. The low level of funding allocated to Education Support Centres to administer the TAP initiative was seen by some stakeholders as a key exacerbating factor in this regard. It was stated that Education Support Centres also receive a considerably higher level of funding for the administration of other arts-based school programmes and this reality does not encourage prioritisation of TAP in busy Centres. Therefore, it is suggested that the level of funding allocated to Education Support Centres for the administration of TAP should be reviewed in consultation with the network and raised if necessary.

- *“I think the Education Centres should get more funding for the administration of TAP. If they were getting the equivalent amount to Blast and Creative Clusters it might work better.”*

The high turnover of administrative staff in Education Support Centres is also challenging for the smooth implementation of the TAP programme. The roll out of review days for Education Centre Directors and administrative staff to share information on requirements and expectations are used in terms of training on the TAP initiative. This included review days both face-to-face and online during the Covid pandemic.

- *“It depends on the Education Centre and the interest of the Director. Some administrators are there and don’t want to do anything. They have no interest and only half do the job. It’s also important that the director takes interest.”*
- *“The problem with the summer courses is the Education Centres are promoting it but they don’t know a lot about it so it hasn’t happened in my area. The managers change so quickly that they wouldn’t be up to date with what was going on.”*

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Conclusions

This report details the findings of an evaluation of the Teacher-Artist Partnership (TAP) initiative which is a CPD programme funded by the Department of Education and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media that aims to support and enhance the integration of the arts in primary school education. Overall, the evaluation found that the aims of the TAP initiative were successfully met during the evaluation period from 2017-2021. TAP CPD enabled teachers and artists to work in partnership, plan, implement and develop creative art in education projects for children in participating schools.

Partnership as an approach

The evaluation highlighted the unique partnership aspect of the TAP initiative to be particularly effective. Traditionally, teachers and artist have worked in isolation in school-based arts programmes. However, joint TAP CPD training of both teachers and artists provides an equal partnership approach which carries through to TAP in-school residencies and provides a more holistic and beneficial creative and artistic experience for children. It also provides a space of common learning for artist and teachers to better understand how their professional knowledge and expertise can enhance creative practice with children through the learning relationship.

Linkages to the curriculum

The evaluation demonstrated that the TAP CPD was very effective in linking the arts and in-school residencies programmes with the wider education curriculum. Teachers, in particular, found this aspect of the TAP initiative allowed them more time to advance in-school residencies outside of contact hours with artists and helped them focus on the process of creative learning rather than just on outputs which resulted in enhanced learning outcomes for children. Teachers also identified the cross-curriculum benefits of the TAP initiative with creative and arts activities noted to have supported children's learning in other areas such as literacy and numeracy. Artist similarly benefitted from learning more about the primary education curriculum and how to incorporate their practice into the curriculum effectively.

Benefits for teachers

The evaluation showed the TAP initiative was very effective in increasing the creativity of teachers and improving their creative teaching practice. Not only did teachers learn new practical creative and

artistic skills, many reported an increased confidence in teaching the arts. Teachers reported “thinking outside the box” more in relation to teaching the arts and creativity as well as applying this learning to other areas of the curriculum. Overall, the TAP initiative supported teachers to develop their reflective teaching practice, to focus more on the process rather than outcomes, to foster the creativity of their students, and skilfully manage a classroom during creative activities.

Benefits for artists

The evaluation showed that the TAP initiative benefits artists that work in schools by providing them with the knowledge and skills needed to marry their creative interventions to the curriculum and to work in partnership with teachers. TAP also benefits artist as self-employed individuals by providing opportunities for paid short term residencies in schools and access to a wider network in the education sector, which may result in further opportunities with other arts in education programmes. It must be noted however, that while the TAP initiative undoubtedly benefitted most artists in terms of their engagement with the education sector through involvement in arts in education initiatives, for artists this represents only part of their professional practice, and in this sense, the benefits of TAP for participating artists are limited as compared to those accrued by teachers. Nevertheless, being TAP trained enables artists to be recognised by Arts Officers and to be employed throughout the education sector in other education initiatives such as Blast. In the same way as teachers gain professional skills and understanding that sustains beyond the residency, so too do artists.

Benefits for lead facilitators

The benefits of involvement in the TAP initiative identified by lead facilitators were both personal and professional. Personal benefits identified by lead facilitators relating to their involvement in TAP included increased self-confidence, social benefits particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic and general personal development. Professional benefits included learning new skills such as writing and designing the online training, teamwork experience and advancement of their own professional careers in teaching and the arts. But while lead facilitators benefited from their involvement in the initiative and generally enjoyed the experience, some highlighted concerns and challenges including, in particular, that their voices were not heard by management and their skillset was not always valued.

Benefits for children as learners

The evaluation found the TAP initiative helped to enhance the school-based arts learning of children involved in the programme. TAP in-school residencies helped to provide a wide range of arts activities delivered by a variety of artists in partnership with teachers and also provided teachers and artists

with the skills to provide sustainable programmes of activity. The evaluation also showed that TAP in-school residencies provided children with exposure to many art forms they had never previously encountered as well as familiarising children with the work of artists and increasing awareness of the arts as a career choice.

Teachers highlighted many educational, personal and social benefits of creative learning for their pupils. Some teachers identified the creative learning benefits for children who might not be perceived as academic, children with additional educational needs and children for whom English is not their first language. Teachers highlighted the positive impact of participation in TAP in relation to increasing the self-confidence of some children and enhancing their communication and teamwork skills. A common theme identified was that of the TAP in-school residencies providing children with the opportunity to communicate and express themselves through the arts.

Teachers also reported a positive impact of TAP programmes on the behaviour of some children. In addition, the positive impact of participating in a TAP in-school residency for children's well-being was highlighted. This positive impact on well-being was particularly evident after children returned to school following school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Impact on schools

In relation to the impact of TAP on participating schools, the evaluation found that the primary impact was on the individual TAP trained teacher and the children in their class. The impact on the wider school environment and culture appears to have been more limited although further research beyond the scope of this evaluation is required to establish this with greater certainty.

The involvement of children in decision-making as part of TAP

TAP is conceived as a CPD programme for teachers that involves artists. As such, teachers followed by artists are the primary beneficiaries of TAP activities and it is their practice first and foremost that the initiative aims to influence. Nevertheless, the position of children as end beneficiaries is also recognised. Yet teachers and artists receive no formal training as part of the TAP CPD summer programme in how to facilitate children to form and express their views and involve them in decision-making during TAP residencies. In line with this reality, the evaluation indicates that the degree to which the involvement of children in decision-making is evident as a driving force during in-school residencies varies from residency to residency, depending on the approach and skill of both the teacher and artist involved. In this regard, the evaluation also recognises that both sets of

professionals frequently identify the importance of ensuring that residencies develop in a manner that is responsive to the needs and interests of children as critical to their success and said that the process often unfolds in a manner that is essentially child-led.

Overall management

The administration of TAP through the Tralee Education Support Centre is efficient, effective and - given the level of resources available - lean. National co-ordination of TAP by the Department of Education is also highly effective from a policy and programme development perspective.

In addition to the national administrative base in Tralee and the relevant Department of Education personnel, the TAP infrastructure also includes the 21 nationwide full-time Education Support Centres, which play an important role in relation to the management and distribution of TAP CPD summer programme places and in-school residencies, as well as the nationwide network of local authority Arts Officers. This devolved model of programme delivery ensures that the TAP initiative has a strong geographical spread and also serves to spread the considerable burden of implementing TAP beyond the national administrative base in Tralee. However, it also presents challenges of its own particularly in relation to monitoring the progress of the various elements of the TAP initiative.

The TAP programme generates very large volumes of administrative data. For example, each TAP residency, of which some 845 have been allocated to date, results in the production of a substantial Joint Teacher Artist Report. At the same time, every TAP CPD summer school participant, of which there have been more than 1,800 to date, is invited to complete an evaluation form reflecting on their experience of the programme. However, since the responsibility and process for monitoring progress remains vague and the resources needed to do so have not been put in place this material is not regularly and systematically reviewed in order to inform the development of the initiative and ensure that any adjustments that may be necessary are made. In order to ensure that the learning produced by TAP is captured for the benefit of not only of the initiative itself but arts in education programmes in Ireland more generally, it is therefore suggested that further consideration should be given to the creation of a TAP monitoring and evaluation framework that is properly resourced and clearly demarcated in terms of responsibilities.

7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from the findings of the evaluation:

- To further develop the partnership model, TAP CPD should incorporate teacher's and the artist's perspectives with teacher-artist pairings being formed as early as possible.
- TAP CPD should actively support inclusion through a focus on the support of students with additional needs.
- In order to broaden accessibility of access to TAP CPD for all, consideration should be given to blended learning options as well as additional opportunities for CPD through the medium of the Irish language.
- Opportunities for the wider expansion of TAP in-school residencies should be examined including increased funding, increased artist payments and expenses and monitoring structures.
- Administration of the TAP initiative should be supported through adequate staffing at a central level and increased funding at a local level in Education Centres.
- A data management framework should be developed to ensure the process of the collection, monitoring, evaluation, analysis and reporting of TAP related data is supported including the expansion of mechanisms for feedback from in-school residencies.
- Children's participation in decision-making as part of TAP in-school residencies should be ensured through training of teachers and artists in child participation policy, methodologies and evaluation as well as developing mechanisms for children to evaluate their experiences.
- To support the function of lead facilitator/design team member, clear guidelines around job roles and recruitment should be developed and communicated by the TAP management.
- In order to expand the TAP initiative nationally, consideration should be given to the inclusion of TAP training in third level teacher training programmes.
- TAP networks can be used to promote the initiative and encourage the exchange of shared learning and best practice.
- The wider promotion and advertisement of TAP can be supported through using channels such as teachers in schools, social media, principal's networks, and other teaching and arts-based networks.

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APPENDIX I TAP Budget Breakdown & Residency Programme

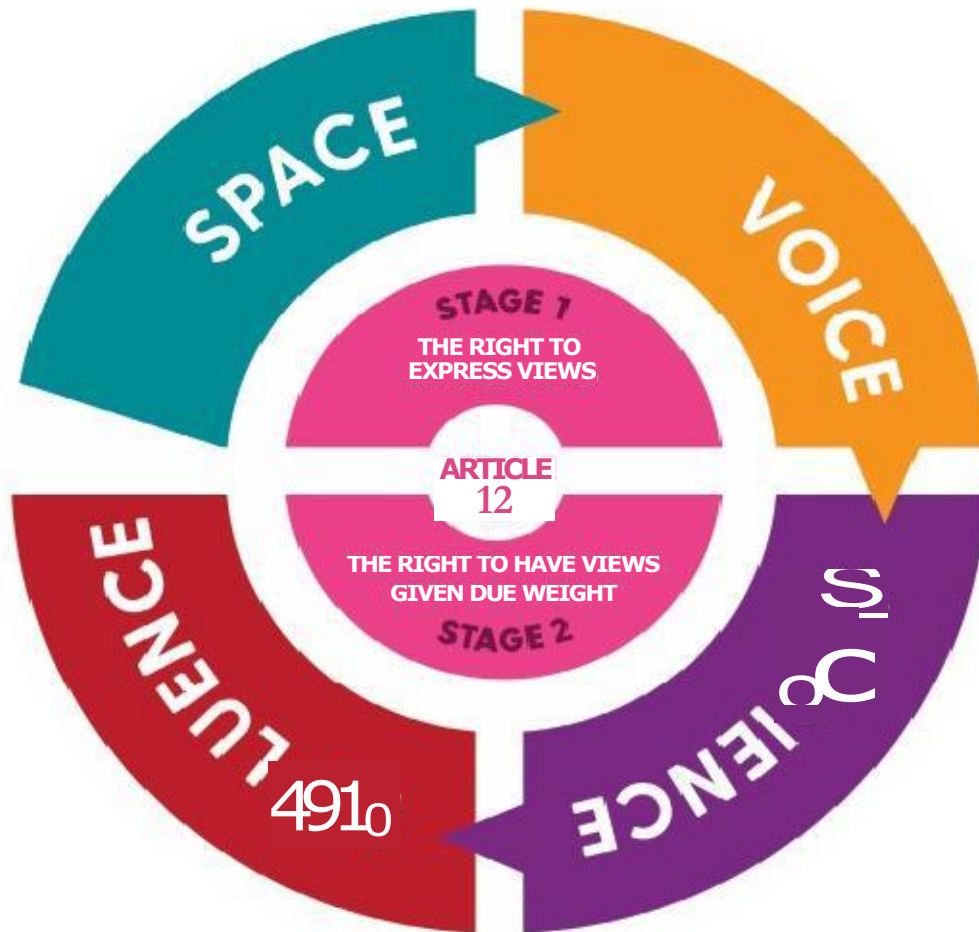
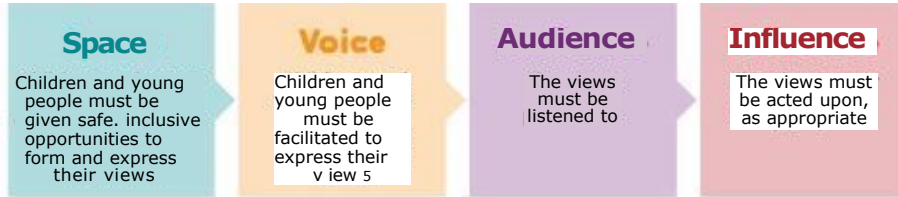
Teacher Lead Incl PRSI	23,854.32 (21)	DoE
Artist Lead incl PRSI	21,898.80 (21)	D/TCAGSM
Artist Participation	71,400 (21)	D/TCAGSM
Residency (up to 8/ per 21 Courses)	168,000 (21)	D/TCAGSM
Venue (Space, Admin, Catering, Materials)	74,548.95 (2022)	DoE
	127,048 (21) (2023)	
Overall National Programme Co-ordination and Central Administration Fee, including Admin Salaries AiE Office, Printing, PR & Marketing, Féilte Teaching Council participation, Zoom Licence, Programme development, Review & Planning (Annual).	100,000	DoE
Evaluation and Register (Annual)	10,000	DoE
Development of On-line Training Course incl Moodle Platform and associated Training, IT Management and Maintenance.	21,596.73	DoE
Digital recording and capture of Residencies for Arts in Education Portal and Resources Repository.	20,000	DoE
Evaluation	10,000	DoE
Total DES: 21 Courses	(2022)	€250,000
Total DTCAGSM: 21 Courses		€240,000
Total: 21 Courses		€490,000

Notes:

- When TAP was originally designed in 2013/2014 it was decided that all Artist/Creative participation would be funded by DTCAGSM. Additional budget has been requested for development of TAP and increased payment for Artists/Creatives.
- Department of Education funds all Teacher associated costs (Lead Facilitator) and all other costs. Additional budget has been requested from DoE and an additional €10,000 allocation was granted in 2022.
- All payment for Lead Facilitators for Summer CPD Programmes are governed by DoE TES rules.

Lundy Model

This model provides a pathway to help conceptualise Article 12 of the UNCRC. It focuses on four distinct, albeit interrelated, elements. The four elements have a rational chronological order.



Planning Checklist

This checklist guides you on how to listen to children and young people and involve them in decision-making when you are developing policies, plans, services, programmes, governance, research and legislation at national, local and organisational level.

You should inform children and young people that they have the right to a voice in decision-making and that you will take their views seriously.



- How will you ensure that children and young people are involved as early as possible?
- How will their involvement be sustained?
- How will those who have been, or may be, directly affected by the topic be involved?
- What steps will be taken to ensure the process is inclusive and accessible?
- How will they be supported to feel safe and comfortable expressing themselves?
- What support will be provided to those who become anxious, upset or uncomfortable?

- Have you made a clear list of the topics on which you want to hear the views of children and young people?
 - How will you ensure that the key focus of the process stays on the topics you identified?
 - How will they know that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time?
 - How will you support them in giving their own views, while including age-appropriate and accessible information?
- How will you ensure that they are given a range of ways to express themselves that best suits their needs and choices?
- How will the process allow them to identify topics they want to discuss?

- How will children and young people be informed about the scope they have (including the limitations) to influence decision-making?
- How will they be given age-appropriate and accessible feedback at key points during the development of a service or policy?
- What *are* your plans to make sure that children and young people's views impact on decisions?
- How will they be given age-appropriate and accessible feedback explaining how their views were used and the reasons for the decisions taken, in a timely manner?
- How will you ensure that they are given opportunities to evaluate the process throughout?

- How will children and young people know to whom, how and when their views will be communicated?
- How will you show your commitment to being informed and influenced by their views?
- How will you identify and involve relevant decision-makers (those responsible for influencing change)?
- How and when will a report/record and a child or youth friendly summary of their views be compiled?
- How will you ensure that they are given an opportunity to confirm that their views are accurately recorded?
- What plans are in place to support them to play a role in

Evaluation Checklist

This checklist is a guide for the self-evaluation and external evaluation of policies, plans, services, programmes, governance, research and legislation at national, local and organisational level.

- How did you ensure that children and young people were involved as early as possible?
- How was their involvement sustained?
- How were those who were directly affected by the topic involved?
- What steps were taken to ensure the process was inclusive and accessible?
- How were they supported to feel safe and comfortable expressing themselves?
- What support was provided to those who became anxious, upset or uncomfortable?

- Did you make a clear list of the topics on which you wanted to hear the views of children and young people?
- How did you ensure that the key focus of the process stayed on the topics you identified?
- How did they know that participation **was voluntary and they could withdraw at any time?**
- How did you support them to give their own views, while including age-appropriate and accessible information?
- How did you ensure that they were given a range of ways to express themselves that best suited their needs and choices?
- How did the process allow them to identify topics they wanted to discuss?

- How were children and young people informed about the scope they have (including the limitations) to influence decision-making?
- How were they given age-appropriate and accessible feedback at key points during the development of a service or policy?
- What did you do with their views?
- **How** were they given age-appropriate and accessible feedback explaining how their views were used and the reasons for the decisions taken, in a timely manner?
- How did you ensure that they were given opportunities to evaluate the process throughout?

- How did children and young people know to whom, how and when their views would be communicated?
- How did you show that you were committed to being informed and influenced by their views?
- How did you identify and involve relevant decision-makers (those responsible for influencing change)?
- How and when was a report/record and a child or youth-friendly summary of their views compiled?
- How** did you ensure that they were given an opportunity to confirm that their views were accurately recorded?
- What plans were put in place** to support children and young people to play a role in communicating their own views?

INFLUENCE

AUDIENCE

Everyday Spaces Checklist

This checklist is designed as a guide to help you ensure that children and young people have a voice in decision-making. It can be applied in many everyday situations including in classrooms, hospitals, childcare settings, child and youth services, youth and sports clubs, youth projects, arts and creative initiatives and other spaces.

Please do not use this checklist for developing policies, plans, services, programmes, governance, research and legislation – use the Planning Checklist on page 18.

Please make sure that the ways you involve children and young people in decision-making are age-appropriate and accessible for all, whether in person or online.

