



# ART ROOMS BURSTING WITH POTENTIAL

Transforming children's lives through art

“The Art Room was the key that unlocked my daughter’s world. It’s an oasis.”

Parent of Art Room student



# Transforming lives

## Annual review 2015/16

We believe far more could be done to tackle the crisis in children's mental health. It's the reason why we take such a pioneering approach. With Art Rooms embedded in primary and secondary schools across Oxford, London and Edinburgh, we work therapeutically with children who are being held back in life by their emotional challenges. Rather than waiting until problems escalate and children are referred to 'crisis' services, we offer an early intervention, working in familiar places where children already spend their day. Our latest impact study shows our tried and tested approach is highly effective.



Now we want to make sure thousands more children get the specialist support they need. That means working directly with more children and sharing what we've learned with hundreds of professionals, inspiring change across the country.

Thank you for supporting our work. You're helping thousands of children to flourish and grow - now and in the future.

**The Art Room CEO, Lisa Harker**

# Helping children thrive

Using art as a therapeutic vehicle, we work with children and young people who are facing emotional difficulties, helping them transform their lives.



While practitioners help children transform everyday objects, like a chair or lampshade, into a unique piece of art, the subtle therapeutic intervention gives each child an opportunity to grow.

Most of the children who came to The Art Room in 2015/16, were experiencing severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. When they left 65% of all children – and 73% of children with severe mental health difficulties – experienced an improvement in their emotional wellbeing, behaviour and/or relationships.

“ His intelligent, expressive face and ready smile don't reveal what he has endured, but when I ask him to sum up what The Art Room has meant to him, he says that it showed him 'a little road through to where I could go' - and that says it all. ”

School Governor, 2015



# The children we help

Children are usually referred to us because their school is concerned about their emotional wellbeing or behaviour. Many are disengaged from mainstream education and being disruptive or withdrawn.

Their behaviour may be the consequence of turmoil in their lives, bereavement or family difficulties. They may be young carers or they're finding their feet after arriving in the UK. They might have specific learning difficulties or be on the autism spectrum. Others are 'looked-after' children in the care system or they keep missing school. Some might simply need a respite from the pressures of mainstream education.

Whatever is affecting their mental wellbeing, time at The Art Room builds on children's current interests, skills and knowledge, helping them to explore their identity, express themselves and develop their social skills.

When children join us, they're struggling to cope at school. Most return to the classroom feeling more self-assured, more socially skilled and far better equipped to learn.

“ When I am in the Art Room, all the bad things fly away. ”

Student Year 4

# Responding to a growing mental health crisis

With growing concerns over the number of children and young people suffering from anxiety, depression and other mental health problems, The Art Room's innovative approach is more vital than ever.

**One in ten children** have a diagnosable mental health disorder – an average of three in every classroom.

**1/4** of children referred to mental health services are turned away

**75%** of mental health problems set in before the age of 18

## Offering an effective solution

The Art Room offers non-stigmatising, effective support that stops problems from escalating. Working closely with schools, we identify which children could benefit from a therapeutic intervention and we act swiftly to turn things around.



## Reaching more children

**8** students or less per group allows for highly tailored care

**550** the number of young people we see every week

**40** the number of schools we work with each year

**£18** the fee for one child to attend a session

**2001** the year inspiring pioneer, Dr Juli Beattie OBE founded The Art Room



## Making a difference

65%

of children experienced an improvement in their emotional wellbeing, behaviour and/or relationships after spending time in The Art Room. (Read more at [theartroom.org.uk/impact](http://theartroom.org.uk/impact))

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types of affordable courses help us share Art Room methodology with hundreds of professionals, agencies and charities. (See [theartroom.org.uk/training](http://theartroom.org.uk/training)).

93p

per £1 is spent transforming children's lives through art. We use the remaining 7p to raise the next £1.



To see our income and expenditure for 2015/16, visit [theartroom.org.uk/finances](http://theartroom.org.uk/finances)

# Transforming children's mental health

We aim to bring about a transformation in children's mental health, by influencing support for children's mental wellbeing up and down the country. Over the next three years we aim to support more children in four key ways:



- increase the number of **schools** we work with
- train **teachers** to help children take what they have learned back into the classroom
- help **school leaders** and other **professionals** understand our techniques so the benefits reach more schools and children across the UK
- shape national decisions about **mental health services of the future**, by sharing evidence of the effectiveness of our approach with policy makers. Ultimately, we aim to bring about change for millions of children.

# With your support we can help more children grow

The Art Room is run by a diverse mixture of people who believe all children have the right to thrive. We're practitioners, volunteers and training specialists; donors, creatives and corporate partners. Together we're making a major difference to the lives of children who are facing difficulties and need extra emotional support to turn things around.

We are extremely grateful for the vital donations we receive from individuals, trusts, foundations and corporations. And we're honoured to have the support of many fantastic patrons, including our Royal Patron HRH The Duchess of Cambridge, Grayson Perry and Juliet Stevenson, who do so much to raise awareness of the therapeutic work we're doing with children and young people around the UK.

If you would like to find out more, or help support our work, we'd love to hear from you.

[www.theartroom.org.uk](http://www.theartroom.org.uk)

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