

Recruiting artists and ensuring suitability

How to find artists

On the web:

- Use the artists and arts organisations page of this website
- Use the discussion boards or project example pages to ask who other teachers in reading have worked with - share good examples on the discussion boards to spread the word to other teachers
- Look on national and regional artists databases (see links page).
- Contact an RBC Arts Development Officer for contacts from the artists' database and general advice (individual artists are not shown on the arts and education website).
- Kim-lin Hooper (Arts Development Officer, Arts and Education)
0118 9015157
- Kate Wood (Arts Development Officer, Projects)
0118 9390714
- Tammy Bedford (Arts Manager)
0118 9390394

At what point should I start contacting artists?

At any time. You could either:

- Contact people to briefly talk through ideas and costs on the phone before even planning your project or before filling in a funding application.
- If you know an artist or arts organisation that you'd definitely like to work with (you worked with them before and it was a success), you could plan a project in partnership with them chosen and put in a joint funding application.
- Once you have an idea and the funding, send out a project brief to several artists/ organisations inviting project proposals and asking for

CVs, shortlist the best and interview one or two to choose who you will work with (See [Your Project Brief](#) for some more advice on this).

Either way, it is always beneficial to have a planning meeting or at least a planning telephone/ e-mail conversation with the artists before the project starts, even if you only have them in for one session. This will help iron out any differences in expectation, help the school and the artist understand each others aims and limitations, and set a clear focus for the project together. Put down what you've agreed in writing, including the fees, and get both parties to sign it (see below - Letter of Agreement).

Ensuring Suitability

Criminal Records Bureau checks

- Enhanced CRB disclosure is recommended if artist will have sole responsibility for the children at any time during the project. Ask if they already have a certificate and decide whether it is recent enough or whether to recheck them.
- If they will be accompanied by a teacher *all the time* then consult your schools' child protection policy to find out whether CRB disclosure is needed.
- RBC Arts Development would recommend that an artist is accompanied by a teacher at all times - the teacher should have responsibility for the care of the participants, the artist for delivering the activity. Working alongside an artist can also be a good creative professional development opportunity for a teacher, if they are fully involved.

References

If you've never worked with a particular artist or arts organisation before, obtain references from other schools, youth groups etc that they've worked with.

Qualities to look for when selecting artists:

- Artistic quality - ask in your brief to look at photos and evidence of previous arts and education projects they've carried out, and also their own work. Is it good work? Would this inspire the young people you work with? Would it teach them something, that the school can't provide?

- Previous experience of working with children or young people or the target group, or evidence of good rapport with people.
- Rapport: Could you work together well? Even if an artist isn't confident about looking after a whole class, could they have your support with this? How do they come across when you talk to them?
- Some of the best projects involve teachers and artists working together to plan and facilitate a project, and recognising and making use of each other's strengths.
- Good ideas for creatively involving the participants, and motivating them to come up with ideas

Public liability insurance

Artists paid to do work on freelance contracts are not covered RBC's public liability insurance. Reading Borough Council policy requires freelancers to be insured for public liability up to the value of £5 million or £2 million at the very minimum if their activity is low risk.

- Ask the artist, or arts organisation you are working with if they have public liability insurance, and to see their certificate. Under Reading Borough Council policy you can't work with them if they don't have the appropriate level of cover.
- Ways round this: For artists only working occasionally, the cost may be too large in proportion to the amount they earn from the work. They can allow for the cost of cover for the length of the project in their fee. If you are applying jointly for funding, you could include this as a project cost in your funding application (see Your Project Budget).

Letter of agreement

Once you've selected your artist(s) you should have a letter of agreement that both parties sign. If your project brief covers all this both parties could sign that instead (see [Your Project Brief](#) advice sheet).

It should include:

- Name of project, the project aims and objectives and measures of

success

- Number of sessions the artist will work for, session times and dates
- Number of participants they will work with
- The fee and what is included (travel, preparation, planning and evaluation meetings etc)
- Materials budget that has been allocated.
- Payment schedule (how and when they'll be paid eg. in instalments or one block)
- Who the artist(s) will report to
- Late cancellation policy
- Any other conditions of employment