



# Evaluation of Transform

Report for the National Theatre of Scotland

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Registered Name: Ekos Ltd

Registered Office: St. George's Studios, 93-97 St. George's Road, Glasgow, G3 6JA

Web: [www.ekos-consultants.co.uk](http://www.ekos-consultants.co.uk)

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Prepared by:	Brian McLaren, Sara Friel and Suzanne Munro	April 2010
Proofed by:	Kevin Williamson	April 2010

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## Executive Summary

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This summary outlines the key findings of an independent evaluation of the National Theatre of Scotland's Transform initiative.
- 1.2 Transform was developed and delivered by the National Theatre of Scotland as part of its Learn activities. With financial support from Scottish Power Learning and the Scottish Government Determined to Succeed (DtS) programme, Transform brought together schools and communities with theatre professionals to create high impact theatre events through a series of projects across Scotland.
- 1.3 Transform had four main objectives:
  - **artistic:** to create the best possible theatre experience for audience and participants;
  - **learning:** to introduce theatre and creative industry practice as an enterprise learning tool in schools and communities;
  - **partnership:** to create effective partnerships across the public and private sector; and
  - **legacy:** to ensure longer term benefits for partners and participants.
- 1.4 The evaluation focused on the 10 Transform projects that were developed and delivered since the formation of the new partnership with Scottish Power and Determined to Succeed. The first of the ten Transform projects started in January 2008, with the final project completed in March 2010.

### 2. Evaluation Process

- 2.1 The study method combined a desk based review of the information supplied by projects with a broad programme of fieldwork. The method comprised the following:
  - **desk-based review** of materials supplied by the National Theatre of Scotland, including attendance/participation data; self-evaluation evidence, video records of projects and audience research;
  - **consultations:** 27 in-depth interviews with schools, local authorities, local arts organisation, DtS and the National Theatre of Scotland;

- **online survey:** a web-based survey of creative practitioners involved in Transform, with 18 responses received; and
- **final review and analysis** including a workshop with National Theatre of Scotland staff and production of the final report.

### 3. Findings

- 3.1 The main findings of the evaluation are structured around the activities undertaken, impacts achieved and the performance of Transform against its objectives.

#### Activities

- 3.2 Each Transform project worked with secondary school pupils (mainly S3) and members of the wider community on the development of a theatre production from start to finish and across the full range of activities involved in production. The level of community involvement was varied, but all but one project did achieve some community engagement.
- 3.3 On average, each of the ten Transform projects delivered approximately 230 two hour workshops with total attendances of over 50,000 (NB: not unique attendees, as most attended more than one workshop).
- 3.4 At least 935 pupils and 201 community members were involved in the performances with many more also involved ‘behind the scenes’ in the production process. In fact, we identified around 25 different activities covered in the workshops from costume design and stage management to video production and marketing/PR.
- 3.5 The eventual performances attracted a combined audience of almost 6,000, the majority of which had not previously attended a National Theatre of Scotland event.

#### Impacts

- 3.6 The evaluation identified a range of impacts on pupils, schools teachers and the wider communities as well as for the National Theatre of Scotland itself.
- 3.7 Impacts on **pupils** were:
- increased self-confidence and belief in their own abilities;
  - improved self-esteem;
  - learning and development of new skills;
  - increased interest in the art and creative activity; and

- improved attitudes toward learning.
- 3.8 The range of activities covered in the projects enabled a wide range of pupils to participate, many of whom would not otherwise take part in arts activities. From the feedback, it is also clear that the experience was highly valued by the pupils, and helped to break down existing social barriers and build cohesion amongst year groups.
- 3.9 For **schools**, the impacts have been in terms of raising the profile of arts and creative activities and demonstrating their potential for learning in varied contexts. In some cases, the Transform projects encouraged cross-departmental working in schools and helped to build relationships with the wider community. Perhaps most significantly, the Transform projects were widely felt to have demonstrated the principles of the new *Curriculum for Excellence* in practice, prompting valuable reflection on wider teaching practice, even if there was less evidence that this learning had yet been embedded within the curriculum.
- 3.10 While there were undoubted tensions at times between **teaching staff** and the Transform creative teams, not least as a result of the class time committed to the projects, teachers were generally positive about Transform. For those closely involved in the projects the experience challenged their practice and provided an opportunity to learn new skills. For others more peripherally involved, Transform helped to raise awareness of the value of arts and cultural activities in learning, particularly following the performances.
- 3.11 Impacts on **communities** were harder to demonstrate. However Transform projects did engage parents more with the schools, helping to bring schools and communities closer together. In some projects, there was evidence of new friendships being created and barriers between generations being broken down. More widely, communities took obvious pride in the Transform events, and audience feedback was very positive throughout.
- 3.12 For the **National Theatre of Scotland** itself, Transform has both informed its approach to educational work and made a significant contribution to its artistic objectives. Many of the Transform projects were felt to have pushed the boundaries of theatrical practice, and the reflection on both process and the outputs was a consistent feature.

### Performance against Objectives

- 3.13 Transform has been successful in meeting its objectives in relation to artistic quality, learning, partnership and legacy, although there are issues in assessing some of these at this early stage.

- 3.14 **Artistic quality** was widely reported to be very high both throughout the processes and in the final performances. This is further supported by very positive audience feedback and press coverage. Indeed, the focus on artistic quality has been a defining feature of the programme and a major factor in its overall success.
- 3.15 Transform has delivered **learning** benefits to all that took part. Feedback from teachers was universally positive in this respect, although in most cases it was too early to establish the extent to which Transform pupils have increased attainment in examination results.
- 3.16 In terms of the project's **partnership** objectives, the evaluation found that Transform projects had helped to develop new partnerships between schools, local authorities and the National Theatre of Scotland as well as with wider community groups, although community partnerships were more variable.
- 3.17 The primary **legacies** identified in the evaluation were in terms of the longer term impacts on the participating pupils, and possibly also on the schools. It is unlikely that the programme will be replicated at local level due to resource constraints, but tangible legacies have been created in some places through new theatre and writing groups in schools and communities, and increased focus on arts activities within schools.
- 3.18 In addition to the programme's objectives, Transform has also made a strong contribution to the objectives of its main funding partners – DtS and Scottish Power Learning.
- 3.19 The programme has made a contribution to all six themes of DtS, and has been particularly effective in helping to develop skills for life and skills for work amongst participants. Similarly, the strong fit between the Transform process, its learning outcomes and the four capacities identified in the *Curriculum for Excellence*<sup>1</sup> suggest that the programme has contributed to three of the Scottish Government's 15 National Outcomes:
- Outcome 3: we are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation;
  - Outcome 4: Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens; and
  - Outcome 5: Our pupils have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

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<sup>1</sup> Successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

## 4. Challenges and Lessons

- 4.1 The evaluation identified a number of issues and challenges, as well as the key elements of the programme that contributed to its overall success.

### Issues and Challenges

- 4.2 Working with schools during curriculum time brings inevitable challenges relating to:
- managing school timetables and space requirements;
  - accommodating a flexible, creative process within highly structured school environments; and
  - ensuring effective communications between creative teams, school staff and other partners.
- 4.3 These challenges were generally overcome in time, but could have been mitigated by more time for planning and initial engagement prior to the start of the projects.
- 4.4 The creative process at the heart of the Transform model is inherently risky – the creative teams do not arrive with an idea in place. While many schools recognised the need to take risks to advance teaching practice, risk is not always as readily accommodated in educational contexts as it is in the arts. Again, it is important that all sides recognise the risks and understand how they can be managed. The successful track record of Transform should help in this respect.
- 4.5 Transform was a well resourced programme, both in financial terms and in relation to the more hidden costs of staff time, school resources and the support provided by the National Theatre of Scotland. This was a significant factor in its success and in its ability to deliver large scale projects that engaged entire school years (a unique benefit of the model). It does, however, limit the potential for replication without significant input of resources.

### Key Lessons

- 4.6 The evaluation identified a number of characteristics or features of the Transform model that appear to have been particularly important in its success. These are:
- the importance of artistic ambition and leadership, placing artistic quality centre stage in the process;
  - the crucial role of head teachers in committing schools to the projects and in keeping classroom teachers on board;

- the role of local authority partners in facilitating access to the wider community;
- the scale and ambition of the projects, working across Scotland and with large groups of participants to create high impact events within communities;
- the fact that the projects were about theatre production and not just drama – offering a range of activities in which pupils could participate, even if they did not want to perform. This also expanded the range of skills that participants can develop;
- working with pupils in curriculum time, reinforcing the link with school and with mainstream learning, and allowing the projects to engage those that would not normally sign up for extra-curricular arts activities;
- the participant centred nature of the process, helping to build participant engagement and sense of achievement;
- having schools apply to the National Theatre of Scotland, helping to ensure schools’ commitment to the projects;
- the nature and quality of the interpersonal relationships between the creative teams and participants – the fact that the creative practitioners are not teachers enabled a different relationship with pupils; and
- the prestige associated with being involved in a National Theatre of Scotland production – a source of pride for participants, schools and other partners.

## 5. Final Comments

- 5.1 The evaluation evidence suggests that Transform has been a very successful programme in artistic and learning terms and in the impacts it achieved for participants and partners. The model itself has much to offer in the way of learning about the processes through which participation in creative activities can contribute to educational progress, particularly in the context of the *Curriculum for Excellence*.
- 5.2 This is an opportunity for the National Theatre of Scotland to play a leading role in these debates, and to deliver theatre of the highest artistic quality, and which provides a valuable context for learning.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an independent evaluation of the Transform project delivered by the National Theatre of Scotland.

### 1.1 Background

- 1.2 In October 2006, the National Theatre of Scotland launched Transform as a collaborative project with Scottish Power Learning and local authorities that allows Schools of Ambition working with schools and communities to transform their approaches to learning.
- 1.3 Transform has evolved over its lifetime. Following an initial four projects, Transform received financial backing not only from Scottish Power Learning, but also from Determined to Succeed (DtS) to deliver a further 12 Transform Projects. At that time, two were already in the advanced planning stages, and the current evaluation focuses on the 10 Transform projects that have been developed and delivered since the formation of this new partnership. The first of the ten Transform projects started in January 2008, with the completed in March 2010.
- 1.4 By bringing together schools and communities with theatre professionals, the partnerships aimed to produce high impact theatre events that use the local environment as a backdrop to tell compelling stories.
- 1.5 The National Theatre of Scotland places a creative team into the schools and their communities, and together they create the vision and programme, working with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to produce the theatre event. Each Transform had a dedicated budget together with National Theatre of Scotland support in the form of production, marketing and management resources. Each project is managed by a Steering Group comprising representatives from the school (usually the Head Teacher), the local authority and voluntary arts organisations in the local communities.
- 1.6 The main objectives of Transform were fourfold:
- **artistic:** to create the best possible theatre experience for audience and participants;
  - **learning:** to introduce theatre and creative industry practice as an enterprise learning tool in schools and communities;
  - **partnership:** to create effective partnerships across the public and private sector; and
  - **legacy:** to ensure longer term benefits for partners and participants.

1.7 In order to assess performance against these objectives, the National Theatre of Scotland commissioned an independent evaluation of Transform in October 2009, which sought to:

- collate and analyse the self-evaluation data, feedback forms and video evidence; and
- identify the key lessons to inform future activity (although a follow on initiative is already in planning stages and has taken account of the lessons learned throughout the Transform project).

## 1.2 Study Method

1.8 The evaluation was designed to focus on impacts, lessons learned and examples of best practice of the Transform programme as a whole, and not to provide detailed individual project-level evaluations. It was also the intention not to duplicate project level evaluation of beneficiaries, rather to use this to inform the programme level evaluation.

1.9 There were five main elements of the evaluation process, as follows:

- **inception:** this stage established a firm and clear understanding between the National Theatre of Scotland and EKOS as to the study scope and rationale. At this stage all information, documents and data were accessed in order to inform the subsequent stages of the study;
- **desk-based review:** comprising a review of all programme level data as well as project level data including:
  - attendance and participation data
  - data collected via participant feedback forms and/or other self-evaluation tools employed on individual projects
  - video footage of the projects, with particular focus on participants' and partners' reported experiences and the impacts of the projects
  - research completed by the National Theatre of Scotland, including audience surveys;
- **consultations:** in-depth interviews covering all Transform projects with schools (12), local authorities (seven), local arts organisation (two), DtS (one) and the National Theatre of Scotland (four). These consultations focussed on the rationale for involvement, the impacts of Transform, the contribution to Scottish Government objectives, DtS, Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), legacies that have emerged and the lessons learned;

- **online survey:** a web-based survey was distributed to 53 practitioners, artists, designers and directors involved in Transform, with 18 responses received. It elicited feedback regarding the rationale for and nature of involvement, impacts (personally and for participants), legacies and lessons learned; and
- **workshop and reporting:** this final stage comprised a workshop with National Theatre of Scotland staff to feedback the initial findings and discuss their implications, particularly in relation to informing future activity.

## 1.3 Report Structure

- 1.10 **Chapter 2** provides an overview of the Transform programme, including its development, the financial inputs, the activities undertaken and the summarised findings of the desk review.
- 1.11 **Chapter 3** reports the achievement and impacts of Transform with regards to the pupils, schools, teachers, communities, creative practitioners and the National Theatre of Scotland.
- 1.12 **Chapter 4** presents the performance against the main objectives of the programme, namely artistic, learning, partnership and legacy. It also reports progress against DtS objectives and those of Scottish Power Learning.
- 1.13 **Chapter 5** reports the main process issues and the key success factors for Transform, before conclusions are drawn in **Chapter 6**.

## 2. Overview of Transform

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1 This section provides a brief overview of the Transform Project. It describes the following:

- funding;
- activities; and
- main findings of the desk review.

### 2.2 Funding

2.2 The total financial input to Transform was £699,047, comprising £200,000 from local authorities, £200,000 from DtS and £160,000 from Scottish Power. The remaining £139,047 was from the National Theatre of Scotland's internal resources. The average value of each Transform project was just under £69,000, ranging from £59,000 (Fife) to £78,000 (Orkney).

**Table 2.1: Financial Inputs to Transform**

	Local Authority	DtS	Scottish Power	National Theatre of Scotland	Total
Orkney	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£22,129	£78,129
Aberdeenshire	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£20,000	£76,000
Moray	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£19,759	£75,759
Caithness	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£18,694	£74,694
Dumfries	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£17,249	£73,249
East Renfrewshire	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£8,787	£64,787
East Ayrshire	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£7,493	£63,493
Glasgow (forecast)	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£6,000	£62,000
Inverclyde	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£5,547	£61,547
Fife	£20,000	£20,000	£16,000	£3,389	£59,389
Final project evaluation				£10,000	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£160,000</b>	<b>£139,047</b>	<b>£699,047</b>

2.3 In our experience, this is a relatively well resourced programme, but one which delivered a significant number and range of activities, as reported below.

## 2.3 Activities

2.4 **Table 2.2**, below provides an overview of the workshops and performances undertaken for the Transform projects. The ten Transforms comprised 2,292 workshops<sup>2</sup> and 39 performances. Details of each are provided below.

### 2.3.1 Workshops

2.5 On average, each Transform delivered approximately 230 two-hour workshop sessions, with total attendance ranging from 1,998 (Glasgow) to 10,717 (East Renfrewshire), and averaging approximately 5,000. However, it should be noted that this is not unique individuals, with individuals typically attending several workshops.

**Table 2.2: Workshops**

	Number	Total Attendance
East Renfrewshire	177	10,717
Dumfries	293	9,875
East Ayrshire	310	6,840
Inverclyde	286	5,280
Orkney	287	3,551
Caithness	104	2,978
Moray	174	2,610
Glasgow	171	1,998
Fife	175	2,100
Aberdeenshire	315	3,940
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,292</b>	<b>49,889</b>

Source: National Theatre of Scotland

2.6 The activities of the workshops were widespread, thus ensuring that each participant could play a part in Transform. The types of activities are detailed below.

- British Sign Language
- Costume Design
- Creative Writing
- Dance
- Front of House
- Glass Design
- Lighting Design
- Marketing/PR
- Music
- Parkour
- Photography
- Physical Theatre
- Production
- Puppetry
- Rap
- Set Design
- Singing
- Stage Management
- Team Building
- Technical Support
- Theatre Design
- Video Production
- Visual Art
- Wardrobe

<sup>2</sup> One workshop is defined as a two-hour session.

## 2.3.2 Performances

- 2.7 There were 39 performances across the ten Transform projects. The total audience figures reached close to 6,000, with Transform Orkney attracting the largest attendance (20% of the total). Some Transform audiences were limited due to venue restrictions.
- 2.8 In total, 935 unique pupils and 201 community members were involved in the performances. However, these figures underestimate the extent of pupil and community involvement as more would have been involved in the processes that led to the performance, but the unique number that attended workshops was not recorded (as reported above).

**Table 2.3: Performance Data**

	No.	Audience	Pupils	Community
East Renfrewshire	2	900	125	55
Inverclyde	2	450	142	10
Caithness	3	450	102	74
East Ayrshire	3	450	124	15
Moray	4	512	93	0
Dumfries	4	400	73	12
Orkney	5	1,219	153	11
Fife	5	500	56	9
Glasgow	6	600	67	11
Aberdeenshire	5	518	NA	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>5,999</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>201</b>

Source: National Theatre of Scotland

### Audience Research

- 2.9 A questionnaire was distributed to audience members at three Transform performances: Moray, Caithness and Orkney, which gives further insight into the make-up of the Transform audience. This was undertaken by TNS Global Research, and achieved 249 responses. The key findings were that:
- three quarters of respondents had never attended a National Theatre of Scotland performance/event before;
  - most (70%) of the respondents were female;
  - the most common age groups were 35-44 (24%), under 16 (23%) and 55+ (19%);
  - most respondents were economically active, with 59% in full or part-time employment;
  - the most common way in which respondents became aware of the event was through a friend, colleague or family member (63%); and

- two thirds of respondents knew someone in the event and cited this as one of the main reasons for attending, with over a third (36%) citing an interest in the event itself.

## 2.4 Desk Review

2.10 As noted above, a desk review was undertaken to inform both the study process and the main findings (reported in Chapters 3 and 4). This included a review of project contracts, application forms, session reports, Steering Group meeting notes, event manuals, workshop descriptions, participants' evaluation forms, DVDs and newspaper press cuttings. This enabled an assessment of the performance of each of the individual projects (albeit to inform the Programme level evaluation).

2.11 The key findings of the desk review work were as follows:

- Transform projects primarily targeted high school pupils, but also sought to engage with community groups, teachers, local artists and the local community in general;
- community engagement varied across the 10 projects, with some involving more community members than others, notably Caithness and East Renfrewshire. There was no community engagement for the Moray Transform;
- new partnerships were formed and existing partnerships strengthened, particularly between secondary schools and local authorities, the National Theatre of Scotland and schools and the National Theatre of Scotland and local authorities;
- the benefits of participating were wide ranging and included:
  - developing soft skills (e.g. confidence) as well as practical skills (related to theatre) among pupils
  - building new relationships
  - ensuring involvement of those that would typically not have access to, or would not participate in, theatre-based activity
  - providing pupils with access to professional artists;
- Transform was also expected to contribute to and inform the future implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence*, and to assist in developing a sense of community pride;
- the type of workshops were varied, ensuring that all pupils would find a suitable role, from physical theatre, Parkour and rapping to, creative writing, Gaelic singing, film making and music;

- the Transform process brought out the (often hidden) talents and skills of those involved, whilst developing new skills and facilitating new relationships, particularly cross-generational relationships;
- feedback from the pupils was extremely positive. They not only reported enjoying the experience, but also a wide range of benefits from participating (e.g. learning new skills, confidence and better relationship with co-pupils). The pupils also reported an increased interest in theatre (and the arts more widely), with some considering pursuing a career in theatre;
- the quality of the performances was overwhelmingly rated very highly by stakeholders who typically viewed the performances as exciting and innovative pieces of theatre;
- most performances achieved high audience numbers or were at full capacity;
- most of the performances took place outwith the school in unusual venues including football grounds, old warehouses, factories and pavilions; and
- the projects have left legacies. These are mainly evident in the impacts on the individuals who took part (many reported that they will remember it forever), and in the fact that it raised awareness and interest in drama, theatre and the arts. Other legacies were also reported, such as the campus song (Ayr) and creation of creative groups as a direct result of Transform (Inverclyde).

## 3. Achievements and Impacts

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1 In seeking to provide an account of the impacts of the Transform initiative, we have focussed on the impacts on four main groups that have participated in the projects:

- pupils;
- teachers;
- schools; and
- communities.

3.2 We have also collected feedback from a sample of theatre professionals involved as part of the creative teams, and have offered some comments on the impacts of Transform on them and on the National Theatre of Scotland.

3.3 It should be noted that the limited scope of the study has meant that the data required to assess these impacts is in many cases 'second hand'. For example, the study did not allow for primary research with the pupils themselves and thus we have gathered information on these impacts from teachers, the National Theatre of Scotland Learn team and from the documentary evidence for each project, as described earlier.

3.4 Similarly, while we have direct feedback from teachers and head teachers on the impacts of Transform on teachers and schools, we have again relied (mainly) on second hand reports of the wider community impacts, again through data from teachers, some community partners, the National Theatre of Scotland Learn team and the documentary evidence.

3.5 This does not downgrade or invalidate the qualitative data collected, but it is important to acknowledge these limitations when interpreting the findings. It is also important to note that at the time of consultations, two projects were ongoing – Aberdeen and Glasgow. As a result, impact data on these two projects was limited.

## 3.2 Impacts on Pupils

- 3.6 Triangulating the data and feedback from the consultation interviews and the documentary evidence for each of the ten projects, a very consistent set of messages emerged regarding the impacts of Transform on participating pupils.
- 3.7 All of the projects focussed mainly on Secondary (S3) pupils, and worked with them within curriculum time. Despite the obvious issues with loss of classroom time, all of the consultees (in particular the teachers) were very positive about the benefits to the pupils.
- 3.8 The projects were universally reported as having a positive impact on the pupils':
- self-confidence;
  - belief in their own abilities;
  - self-esteem;
  - learning, in that they developed new skills;
  - interest in the arts and creative activity; and
  - attitudes towards learning.
- 3.9 These impacts were realised in a number of ways. The experience of participating in a process that resulted in productions of such a high quality was frequently reported as a key factor. Pupils were often unaware of their own potential and of what they could achieve in this context. The self-esteem benefits that arise from being part of high quality productions should not be underestimated. It was also reported that the fact that the pupils were participating in a National Theatre of Scotland project was a source of pride. Indeed, the creative teams often made it clear to the pupils that rather than working with the National Theatre of Scotland they *were* the National Theatre of Scotland.
- 3.10 The fact that the projects were about theatre and not just drama was also significant. Performing on stage was not the only way in which the pupils could get involved. Instead, the projects addressed every stage in the process of producing a work of theatre from writing, staging and production, music, costume design and marketing and promotion.

- 3.11 This range of choice enabled the projects to engage pupils that would perhaps not take part in drama activities, and broadened their understanding of theatre and of the professional opportunities in the industry. Again, the feedback from the teachers was that all of the Transform projects had engaged pupils that they would not have expected to participate in arts activity. The fact that the project workshops took place in curriculum time almost certainly helped with this, as extra-curricular activities tend to attract those with an existing interest. Indeed, in most of the projects, teachers reported an increased interest in the arts amongst the participating pupils and the numbers of those taking drama increased in at least three schools.

*“By the time the performance came I was confident enough to operate a pretty scary sound desk. I’ve now thought about a whole new range of careers because of Transform.”*

**School pupil**

- 3.12 All of the teachers also reported that the year groups that participated had become more cohesive, with many citing specific instances in which existing barriers between groups of pupils had been broken down by the shared experience of working on the production. This then translated into more productive class work thereafter.

*“Before the project we all had little groups which we were always in but by the end we had become close friends. I worked with people I wouldn’t have before.”*

**School pupil**

- 3.13 It is the attitudinal impacts that are perhaps most significant. Teachers reported that following the Transform experience, the pupils were more settled and more positive about school, and that they appeared more motivated to learn. Many of the teachers also reported that the pupils had developed a greater sense of responsibility for their own learning and in many cases the pupils were required to take on extra work to catch up on lost classroom time, which they did willingly.

- 3.14 These impacts were often most visibly evident amongst pupils typically regarded as ‘difficult’ either as a result of behavioural issues or lack of confidence. Many teachers described the impacts on such pupils in transformational terms, citing examples of pupils working on the project in their own time, unexpectedly choosing to stay on at school or to make new subject choices as a result of their experiences on the Transform projects.

- 3.15 Finally, teachers were asked about the impacts of Transform on pupils’ educational attainment. In most cases it was considered too early to provide a clear view of this, particularly as the project had focused on S3 pupils (many

of whom are now in S4). However, *expectations* in this respect were broadly positive.

- 3.16 In one school, the year group that participated in Transform had achieved the highest aggregate Year 4 results for some years, and none of the Transform participants had performed worse than expected, with many exceeding expectations. This was attributed to Transform.
- 3.17 However, this was the only school in which specific feedback was available. In most others it was too early, and some teachers did express concern about the loss of class time and how this might affect exam results. In one case, a teacher actually reported a drop in attainment (in prelim exams) and attributed this to the time lost to Transform. Interestingly, a number of the teachers that did express these concerns (including the teacher that reported a fall in attainment) also talked very positively about the personal, behavioural and learning benefits of the Transform process, suggesting that the link between these and attainment in exams is not well established.
- 3.18 It is difficult to assess in an empirical sense the specific characteristics of the Transform process that led to these impacts, although we discuss these issues in more detail in the **Chapter 5**. However, a number of teachers identified the following as important factors:
- the different kind of relationship that the National Theatre of Scotland creative teams were able to develop with the pupils as a result of not being teachers;
  - the fact that the process was designed to build ownership amongst participants, thereby giving them responsibility and encouraging commitment;
  - working with expert theatre professionals provided not only a high quality creative process, but also exposed the pupils to different adult influences – considered at times risky by some, but ultimately beneficial; and
  - the fact that the project had a tangible output – the production – giving participants a sense of achievement on completion.
- 3.19 We return to some of these issues in our later discussion of the key process issues relating to Transform.

### 3.3 Impacts on Schools

- 3.20 All of the teachers were positive about the impacts of Transform on their schools, although a number of issues were also highlighted. In all cases, it was reported that Transform had helped to raise the profile of culture and arts activities within the school. In particular, many reported that Transform demonstrated the potential for learning in different contexts, and the value of arts as a vehicle for learning.
- 3.21 It was also reported that the cross-disciplinary nature of the production process – writing, design, music, drama – facilitated and encouraged collaboration across school departments, an impact that many felt would have longer term benefits for the schools in question.
- 3.22 The involvement of the wider community was also felt to have had important benefits for the schools. In the few cases where productions actually took place within school grounds, they brought people into the school that might not otherwise visit (including, it was reported, some parents that had not previously visited the school). In all projects, Transform was felt to have raised the profile of the schools within the community and enhanced their reputation. In particular, there was consistent feedback about how impressed audiences were with the productions, helping to change preconceived ideas about what the schools and the pupils were capable of producing.
- 3.23 Impacts on parents were also important, and some of the teachers reported that when pupils become engaged with the Transform process, their parents became more interested in the school. In particular, the quality of the final productions were reported as having a real impact on parents, making them feel more positive about the school as a whole. This was further confirmed by the audience feedback collected by the National Theatre of Scotland.
- 3.24 The schools also benefitted from the impacts that Transform had on the participating pupils, particularly in relation to increased cohesion within year groups, and the impacts on learners' motivation.
- 3.25 In relation to wider policy perspectives, one of the most significant effects for schools was the way in which Transform aligned with the principles of *Curriculum for Excellence* and prompted reflection on teaching practice. Many of the teachers highlighted the very strong fit with *Curriculum for Excellence* and the four core capacities that it seeks to develop in pupils, with a consistent view that these were strongly encapsulated within the Transform process. As schools across Scotland continue to review their work against the context of the new guidance, Transform provided a real opportunity for participating schools to observe and learn about the process

of learning in different contexts and to reflect on the implications for teaching practice. A number of the teachers spoke of these benefits.

*“On an educational level, Transform and the National Theatre of Scotland delivered all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.”*

**Deputy Head Teacher**

- 3.26 However, despite this awareness and understanding of the ways in which Transform could and did contribute to the goals of the new approach, there was far less evidence of the learning being embedded within the curriculum in any systematic fashion. Although there is arguably a close fit with subject areas such as English, drama and music, it was not obvious that clear links had been made from the Transform work back to the classroom.
- 3.27 This is not a criticism of the National Theatre of Scotland or Transform. It is not the job of the National Theatre of Scotland to develop or deliver the curriculum (its job is to deliver high quality theatre). It is also not a criticism of the schools, as the difficulty of embedding this kind of practice should not be underestimated. However, it is clear that for many, if not all of the schools, Transform has provided a demonstration of the principles of *Curriculum for Excellence* in practice, and that this has prompted and informed their ongoing process of reflecting on their teaching practice in response.

### 3.4 Impacts on Teachers

- 3.28 Teachers played an obviously crucial role in the Transform projects at different levels. Committing to projects of this scale within curriculum time involves a degree of risk, particularly when the outcome is not always clear at the outset and, as such, the support of the head teacher is critical, an issue that we discuss in more detail in **Chapter 5**.
- 3.29 For other teachers, Transform was met with a full spectrum of different attitudes ranging from complete commitment and enthusiasm to outright scepticism and even hostility. However, there was consistent feedback that many of those that were initially sceptical about the value of Transform were at least partly converted by the end of the process and particularly when they could observe both the quality of the eventual performances and the impacts on the pupils.

*“The experience was also transforming for the school staff. Watching the pupils develop throughout the rehearsal period was, personally and professionally, inspirational.”*

**Deputy Head Teacher**

- 3.30 Teachers also reported that the projects helped to raise awareness – their own and that of their colleagues – of the ways that learning can take place in different contexts. It also helped to raise the profile and status of arts activities as a valuable learning context, and some also reported individual learning benefits and skills development through involvement in projects of this nature and scale.
- 3.31 For some, Transform also encouraged them to take risks and required them to place trust in the creative teams, even when they had doubts about the process.
- 3.32 However, despite these positive benefits, a number of tensions and issues were identified.
- 3.33 The Transform projects placed significant demand on some of the teaching staff – head teachers and others. Some of the head teachers reported spending much time and effort to keep other teaching staff on board and reassure them of the value of the project, and some of the classroom teachers had to work very hard to negotiate timetables and find space for the activities. In almost every case, the level of input required exceeded their original expectations, and one head teacher said that while it would be good for the school to repeat the experience, on a personal level they would not be prepared to do so due to the work pressure it created.
- 3.34 A few teachers reported not being as involved as they would have liked, with a feeling in a couple of cases that they were being held a little at ‘arms length’ by the creative team. This created some tensions, although again it was reported that these issues were largely overcome.
- 3.35 It is also true to say that many of the teachers in each of the participating schools had only peripheral involvement, and two of the head teachers said that the school as a whole might have benefitted more with wider staff involvement.

## 3.5 Impacts on Communities

- 3.36 In almost all of the projects, members of the wider community were involved as participants in the process and not just as audiences for the final performances. This tended to work less well when the activities all took place within the school – where the tendency was to view the projects as a school activity rather than something for the wider community – or where links to the community were less easily facilitated.

- 3.37 Within the context of a study of this scale and nature it is difficult to assess the impacts on wider communities. Nevertheless, a number of general findings did emerge:
- increased parental involvement can be considered a community impact as it is part of bringing communities and schools closer;
  - in projects with significant community participation, this led to old and new friendships being developed; and
  - cross-generational impacts were widely reported where older people were involved in working with the pupils and as a result changing their attitudes towards each other.
- 3.38 In other cases, the performances were significant community events, and ones in which the communities took obvious pride. This is reflected in the very positive audience feedback from all of the performances as well as the comments from community partners, teachers and the creative practitioners.
- 3.39 There is also evidence of community legacies. For example, in Inverclyde the project was credited with bringing the two participating schools together, addressing sectarian differences, and paving the way for the approval of a new joint school campus within the community. In other projects, community and school groups have formed to continue their interest in theatre and creative writing, and new partnerships have also formed between community organisations and schools.

## 3.6 Impacts on Creative Practitioners

- 3.40 The study gathered data from 18 practitioners, artists, designers and directors involved in the 10 Transform projects. All reported impacts as a result of their participation in the projects, including:
- increased profile and opportunity to develop further their portfolio of work;
  - opportunities to work with young people and to develop understanding of the role of arts in secondary education;
  - experience of working with communities;
  - new skills and abilities enabling them to improve their practice; and
  - experience of working alongside a large production team.
- 3.41 In addition, all of the practitioners rated the quality of the artistic experience for the participants very highly.

## 3.7 Impacts on the National Theatre of Scotland

- 3.42 Although not a specific focus of the study, it is clear that Transform has had a numbers of impacts on the National Theatre of Scotland itself. It has significantly informed the National Theatre of Scotland’s approach to educational work, and it is clear that the organisation continually reviewed the projects and reflected on the experience. This review and reflection process then informed ongoing enhancement and changes to the Transform process throughout the delivery period.
- 3.43 Through discussions with the National Theatre of Scotland staff, it is clear that the projects have also had an artistic impact. It is significant that the National Theatre of Scotland does not draw any distinction in its Business Plan between mainstream productions and the educational activities of the Learn team in terms of the organisation’s overarching artistic ambitions. Feedback from the National Theatre of Scotland staff was that many of the Transform projects had pushed the boundaries of their theatrical practice and this was a direct result of placing artistic ambition at the centre of the process.
- 3.44 The National Theatre of Scotland team also reported significant international interest in Transform, and the Learn Director is due to visit New York to discuss opportunities to further develop the model with leading experts on arts and education.

## 4. Performance against Objectives

4.1 In this section we consider the evidence for the performance of Transform against its main objectives, and against those of the main public sector sponsor – the Scottish Government Determined to Succeed Programme.

### 4.1 Programme Objectives

4.2 As noted in **Chapter 2**, Transform was designed to achieve four main objectives:

- **artistic**: create the best possible theatre experience for audience and participants;
- **learning**: introduce theatre and creative industry practice as an enterprise learning tool in schools and communities;
- **partnership**: create effective partnerships across the public and private sector; and
- **legacy**: ensure longer term benefits for partners and participants.

4.3 Within each, the National Theatre of Scotland identified measures through which to assess performance against these objectives. In this section we offer a view on the extent to which the programme has achieved its objectives and, where appropriate, comment on the suitability of the measures that have been identified.

#### 4.1.1 Artistic Objectives

4.4 The primary outcome identified for the artistic objective of the programme was to produce a high profile innovative piece of theatre which is artistically led and supported with robust production values and creative and enterprising learn activity. The National Theatre of Scotland identified two measures through which to assess this objective:

- **qualitative**: feedback from the participants and audiences recognises the scale, ambition and innovation. The event is valued by all and there is good critical appraisal; and
- **quantitative**: the event is attended by a wide ranging audience and attendance targets are met.

4.5 On the qualitative measure, the feedback gathered throughout the evaluation provides very strong evidence of artistic achievement. All of the consultees agreed that the artistic quality of the work had been extremely

high, and this is further supported by positive press coverage of many of the Transform projects.

- 4.6 The National Theatre of Scotland conducted audience research for three of the Transform projects, and the findings indicated that the performances attracted a wide ranging audience. In particular three quarters of these audiences had not previously attended a performance or event by the National Theatre of Scotland. Two thirds attended because they knew someone in the performance, but a further third identified an interest in the event itself, suggesting that productions were reaching beyond a core audience of parents and teachers.
- 4.7 We are not aware of explicit attendance targets being set. Indeed, the fact that projects were not fully defined at the outset, both in terms of the work to be created and the venue in which it would be performed, it is difficult to set meaningful attendance targets. However, performances were very well attended, in many cases selling out, and there is no doubt that audiences for the Transform projects have been strong.
- 4.8 Therefore, against the measures set by the National Theatre of Scotland, Transform has achieved its artistic objectives. However, feedback from the artistic teams and from the National Theatre of Scotland Learn team suggests that in fact the programme has considerably exceeded artistic expectations. The quality of the creative teams was universally praised by consultees, and Transform engaged some of Scotland's most respected theatre professionals, some of which felt that the projects had been amongst the best artistic work of their careers. For the National Theatre of Scotland, there was a feeling that some of the projects had experimented with new theatrical forms and had pushed the boundaries of theatre practice in Scotland.

#### 4.1.2 Learning Objectives

- 4.9 In a project of this nature, it is more difficult to specify learning outcomes and robust measures through which they can be assessed. The outcomes identified by the National Theatre of Scotland for this objective are:
  - pupils and teachers create a performance and other aesthetic outcomes to support the event;
  - pupils and teachers create marketing and organisational operations for the event; and
  - pupils and teachers recognise the enterprising skills developed and their relevance to the world of work.

- 4.10 The key measures through which to assess this objective were:
- **qualitative:** pupils and teachers are able to demonstrate learning outcomes and their relevance to life beyond the school and the production and supporting materials are equal to other National Theatre of Scotland productions; and
  - **quantitative:** agreed pupil and teachers attendance and participation targets are achieved; the school adopts methodologies and invests in supporting a legacy and learning partnership is able to capture evidence of improved engagement, attendance and attainment.
- 4.11 On the qualitative measures, the evidence from the evaluation suggests that this has been achieved. As described earlier, all of the feedback from teachers was that clear learning outcomes had been achieved, particularly in relation to behavioural and attitudinal outcomes such as motivation to learn, attention and attitudes towards school attendance. The quality of the production and supporting materials is harder to assess objectively, but again the feedback suggests that the quality has been high.
- 4.12 Of the three specified quantitative measures, only one is truly quantitative – the other two are more qualitative. The quantitative measure relating to participation and attendance of pupils and teachers is difficult to assess without targets, and we are not aware that explicit targets were set. However, based on the feedback received and the participation data report earlier, it is clear that the level of participation amongst pupils has been very high, although less so for teachers. Attendance by teachers was reportedly good.
- 4.13 In relation to the other two measures here, as we have already noted there is little evidence that schools have yet adopted the methodologies or invested in supporting legacies other than accommodating a higher number of pupils wishing to study drama. However, there are two important qualifications to add to this. First, this is a not a measure over which the National Theatre of Scotland has much influence – it is not its job to embed these methods within school practices. Secondly, although the schools may not yet have adopted these methodologies, many spoke about their desire to do so, and there is clear evidence of an awareness of the value of the Transform approach to wider teaching practice. It may then be that in time, there will be more evidence of progress in this respect.
- 4.14 The final measure related to the extent to which the learning partnership is able to capture evidence of improved engagement, attendance and attainment. Although a qualitative measure, it would be possible to quantify some of these benefits through school attendance and attainment data. However, as noted earlier, it is too early in many cases to measure

attainment, although the qualitative feedback suggests good impacts in relation to engagement and attendance, and an expectation that attainment gains may be achieved.

- 4.15 With these issues in mind, the evidence does suggest that Transform has met its learning objectives, although there is scope to improve the measures adopted to assess progress in this area. In particular, the provision of attendance and attainment data from schools would be helpful, and there may even be potential in the future to conduct more rigorous research into the impacts of participation in this kind of activity by collecting data on an agreed set of learning measures both prior to participation and again afterwards, and comparing the results to those of a matched control group of pupils that did not participate.

### 4.1.3 Partnership Objectives

- 4.16 A number of outcomes and measures are identified within the partnership objectives of Transform. The outcomes are:

- a body of evidence and evaluation is created and disseminated to current and future stakeholders and participants;
- an independent review of outcomes;
- the importance of DTS in developing enterprising young people is more widely recognised;
- local partnerships are created between schools and communities;
- Scottish Power has a platform to support the advance of culture and creativity as part of its community programme and brand awareness; and
- through the partnership, awareness of Scottish Power and its brand is increased.

- 4.17 The identified qualitative and quantitative measures are as follows:

- **qualitative:**
  - the learning partnership can describe and adopt the methodology, critically review and adopt advocacy role for the future
  - partners are able to articulate the added value of the partnership approach
  - partnerships are strengthened and platforms for advocacy are shared; and

- **quantitative:**

- learning partnership adopts methodology for transition programmes
- learning partnership is able to demonstrate the impacts of DtS on young people
- additional achievements achieved through partnership are quantified
- sustainable strategy for legacy is written and implemented
- success by all partners in awards
- programme and partners feature the programme in publications
- journals and additional beneficial links are developed across partners.

4.18 Overall, this is a somewhat odd list of measures, and many are difficult to assess. It is clear that partnerships have played a strong role in the success of Transform, particularly the partnerships between the schools and the creative teams. Local authorities have also played a critical role in facilitating access to community groups, venues and other partners as well as supporting schools in making applications to the programme.

4.19 New partnerships have also been created between schools, between the National Theatre of Scotland and schools and local authorities and between schools and community groups, although the last of these is perhaps least evident.

4.20 In relation to DtS, partnerships have not been well established at local level. There seems to have been limited interaction between the Transform projects and local authority contacts with responsibility for delivery local DtS action plans.

4.21 However, the learning impacts reported earlier suggest that Transform has made a strong contribution to the DtS agenda, as discussed in more detail below.

4.22 We have not assessed the impacts of Transform on awareness of the Scottish Power brand.

4.23 Overall, then the performance of Transform against its partnership objectives is at one level strong in that all of the projects have been developed and delivered in partnership between the creative team and schools and often also with local authorities and community groups. However, not all partnerships have worked – for example, the difficulties in engaging

community partners in a couple of the projects and the variable roles played by local authority partners.

#### 4.1.4 Legacy Objectives

4.24 Although it is still too early to assess the full legacies of the Transform projects, there are indications of a number of actual and potential legacies that may be achieved in time.

4.25 Four key outcomes have been identified under this objective:

- each transformed learning partnership supports a new Transform;
- pupils and teachers engage in more cultural and creative activities;
- pupils articulate onto HE or FE courses; and
- an annual programme of Transforms is shared throughout Scotland.

4.26 The quantitative and qualitative measures identified for these outcomes are as follows:

- **qualitative:**
  - each local authority is able to articulate the value of Transform to developing young people
  - survey carried out of participants beyond transition to assess the sustainability of their progression
  - the Transform initiative is innovative, coveted and celebrated; and
- **quantitative:**
  - each local authority supports an annual Transform project
  - agreed number of participants demonstrating active engagement in creative or cultural activity and/or articulate transition to FE courses
  - 10 Transforms happen per year.

4.27 As measures of the success of the project, some of these are problematic, mainly because they are outwith the direct control of the project. This would apply particularly to the measures relating to future local authority delivery and to the progression of young people to further and higher education. It is also too early to provide an assessment of achievement against these measures.

4.28 However, our own research has identified a range of specific legacy impacts, even at this early stage. These include, for example:

- a creative writing group of school pupils and a community theatre group in Inverclyde;
  - an increase in pupils studying drama and arts in a number of areas;
  - the approval of plans to establish a joint campus between two schools in Inverclyde;
  - a new drama teacher employed in a school in Fife and a new partnership between the school and the Fife Arts and Theatre Trust; and
  - possible establishment of a new community theatre group in Dyce.
- 4.29 However, the majority of the consultees agreed that the primary legacies would be in terms of the longer term impacts on the participating pupils (and to a lesser extent on the schools).
- 4.30 The National Theatre of Scotland has actively sought to embed legacies through its Transformers work. This has involved the National Theatre of Scotland in going back to each of the Transform areas and seeking to provide support to help develop and embed legacies within communities and schools. This has included, for example, the provision of support and advice to community theatre groups and trying to find a drama teacher. It is too early to be able to assess the impacts of this work, but it is at least evidence of ongoing commitment to help develop longer term and more sustainable legacies.
- 4.31 Despite the positive feedback from local authority representatives that participated in the evaluation, the potential for further Transforms to take place is far from clear. This reflects a lack of resources rather than lack of enthusiasm or interest. A number of the partners, schools and local authorities, reported that they would like to repeat the experience but noted that the costs of projects on this scale would be prohibitive.
- 4.32 Therefore, while it is unlikely that Transform will produce a legacy in the shape of an annual programme of Transforms across Scotland delivered by local authorities and their partners, other legacy impacts are visible. Most importantly, the impacts on the participants have potential to translate into longer term benefits in relation to creativity, learning and participation.

### 4.1.5 Summary

4.33 Our view is that Transform has performed well against its own objectives, even if the measures identified for assessing this performance have not always been well specified. In particular, it is important that the National Theatre of Scotland specifies objectives and measures over which it can be expected to exert an influence, and against which it can be judged.

## 4.2 Determined to Succeed Objectives

4.34 Determined to Succeed is a strategy for developing the enterprise and employability skills of young people. It is built around six interrelated themes:

- supporting the development of skills for life, skills for work;
- engaging employers;
- broadening the reach of Determined to Succeed;
- embedding enterprise in the curriculum;
- building capacity; and
- enhancing our international profile.

4.35 Based on the data collected in the evaluation process, the table below summarises the ways in which Transform contributes to these key themes.

Determined to Succeed Theme	Transform Contribution
Skills for life, skills for work	Transform helped to develop life skills such as communication, creativity and team working, as well as confidence. It also provided opportunities for young people to develop more specific work related skills in areas relating to theatre production, music, design, video and marketing and promotion, all within the context of a professional theatre environment.
Engaging employers	The National Theatre of Scotland is an employer in the cultural industries.
Broadening the reach of DtS	This theme relates mainly to extending the DtS programme to fit with the 3-18 focus of the Curriculum for Excellence. Transform worked only with secondary school pupils, and mainly with S3.

Determined to Succeed Theme	Transform Contribution
Embedding enterprise in the curriculum	This theme places emphasis on the link between the classroom and the workplace, and while this was not an explicit objective of Transform, the project provided a clear demonstration of learning in different contexts. The link back to classroom practice is not yet well established, but the potential for this is clear.
Building capacity	Transform has clearly delivered learning benefits to teachers involved in the process and, more widely, it has challenged and inspired schools to think about teaching practice. In this way, it has made a contribution to this theme.
Enhancing our international profile	Scotland's approach to enterprise in education is well regarded internationally, and Transform itself has attracted significant international interest, as noted above. This interest may translate into further opportunities for the National Theatre of Scotland to play a leading role in helping to define and demonstrate the role of arts practice and creativity in educational contexts. Participants were also exposed to theatre professionals working in an international context and within international models of theatrical practice.

4.36 Our view is that Transform has made a strong contribution to the themes and ambitions of the DTS Programme and, as mentioned earlier, to the *Curriculum for Excellence*. As such it can be argued that the project has *contributed* to three of the Scottish Government's 15 National Outcomes:

- Outcome 3: We are better educated, more skills and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation;
- Outcome 4: Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens; and
- Outcome 5: Our pupils have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

### 4.3 Scottish Power Learning Objectives

- 4.37 Scottish Power Learning is the flagship corporate community programme for Scottish Power, and is focused education and employability. Through the Programme, Scottish Power delivers and supports learning programmes in schools, community and workplace settings. It also invests in the cultural well being of communities through arts sponsorship, and Transform fits both with its educational as well as cultural objectives.
- 4.38 The schools programme are mainly focussed on helping pupils prepare for the world of work, while community programmes tend to be more targeted at unemployed young people. The aim of the organisation’s arts sponsorship is to contribute to the cultural well being of communities.
- 4.39 Although it was not an explicit objective of the evaluation to assess the impact on Scottish Power Learning, we have given some thought to the extent to which Transform aligns with and contributes towards its objectives.

Scottish Power Learning Objectives	Transform Contribution
To help prepare pupils for the world of work	The evidence suggests that the Transform experience has been useful in helping pupils to develop new skills and knowledge that will be of use in their future work lives. This also includes the development of the ‘softer’ skills such as communication, self confidence and creativity that will be particularly important in future work.
To contribute to the cultural well being of communities	Transform has (mainly) been successful in engaging communities and in providing cultural experiences of real value. As such, Scottish Power Learning’s sponsorship of the programme has made a contribution to the cultural well being of Scottish communities.
Scottish Power Learning to act as the business advocate for creative learning	Scottish Power Learning has, by virtue of its support for Transform, demonstrated a commitment to creative learning.
Scottish Power to build relationships with communities	Scottish Power’s sponsorship was consistently acknowledged in publicity around the Transform events and its branding was used on all promotional materials (leaflets etc). The level of direct involvement by the organisation was less clear.

## 5. Process Issues and Key Lessons

### 5.1 Issues and Challenges

- 5.1 The available evidence suggests that Transform has delivered a range of impacts and performed well against its objectives and those of the main public funding partner. However, the evaluation data and feedback also identified a number of challenges and issues that the projects faced, and it is worth briefly reflecting on these.

#### **Time Management and Planning**

- 5.2 At a practical level, working in schools brings inevitable challenges with timetabling and space, and these were common themes throughout the evaluation feedback. Managing and structuring workshop sessions within an already crowded school timetable such that pupils did not miss too many of the same classes was resource intensive work for the National Theatre of Scotland and the schools alike.
- 5.3 There were also some tensions between the creative teams and schools regarding timing and planning. Schools must operate in a highly structured and regulated way to specific timetables, and there is little room for spontaneous flexibility. A number of the schools felt that there was a learning process to go through (on both sides) such that each understood the other's needs and requirements.
- 5.4 In particular, schools needed the creative teams to work within the timetable slots and not exceed these, or indeed finish early such that groups of pupils were late for other activities or were left unsupervised. Similarly, creative teams should not be expected or required to take on disciplinary roles with pupils.
- 5.5 While these issues were frequently reported, it was also noted that they were, in every case, largely overcome with time and communication. However, more initial time for planning may have helped to mitigate some of these issues.

#### **Communications**

- 5.6 Communication was a further issue raised in the consultation, and is partly related to the timetabling issues discussed above. There was some feedback both from creative practitioners and from schools that communications between the two parties were not always as good as expected. Although again these issues were largely overcome, or were outweighed by the project outcomes, this was a source of some tension in some of the projects. More

planning time and clearer articulation of expectations on both sides would have helped with this.

### Key Roles

- 5.7 The feedback suggests that a number of people involved in the Transform process played specific and critical roles in the process. These were:
- head teachers;
  - directors; and
  - local authorities.
- 5.8 The role of the head teachers is important in two respects. First, without the support and commitment of the head teachers, the projects would not have worked. Secondly, head teachers played a critical role in keeping classroom teachers on board, even when concerns were raised, and negotiating class time for the creative team.
- 5.9 The (artistic) directors were similarly crucial in setting the artistic direction for the projects and in driving forward the process. The first two Transform projects delivered prior to the DtS funding (not covered in this evaluation) worked with 'flatter' team structures with no identified director or leader. The introduction of a director not only provided leadership within the creative teams but allowed the artistic ambitions of the projects to become a central focus. The projects also attracted high quality and experienced theatre directors of international standing.
- 5.10 Finally, local authorities played an important role in many of the projects. Although in most cases, the local authority helped schools with the application, many also remained closely involved in the process. In particular, local authority contacts provided important routes into the wider community and were able in some cases to help identify and negotiate access to venues and other partners. When these relationships worked well, local authority partners were able to add value to the process.

### Risk

- 5.11 In many ways, risk is at the heart of the Transform model. Any creative process involves risk, particularly where the outcomes are unknown, and this is challenging for schools. While many schools recognised this, and embraced the need to take risks to advance teaching practice, entering into projects of this nature was tantamount to a 'leap of faith' at times.

- 5.12 It is important to recognise that risk is not always as readily accepted in educational contexts as it is in the arts, and there is a need for understanding on both sides of the nature of the risks involved. For schools there is considerable risk in committing significant amounts of classroom time to a project of this nature when its educational benefits may not always be apparent at the outset. For this reason, all of the school consultees noted that a project of this nature and on this scale needs to engage pupils in non-examinable years, with S3 consistently identified as the most appropriate.

### **Costs**

- 5.13 It is important to recognise the costs involved in the project. This relates not only to the funding, which was generous for projects of this nature, but also to the other less obvious costs in staff time, school resources and particularly the support of the professional production teams at the National Theatre of Scotland. The fact that the projects had access to these additional resources is a significant factor in their success, although some of the schools did report that the projects were more costly than they had anticipated.
- 5.14 As reported earlier, the cost of Transform projects was regarded as a barrier to their replication either by schools or by local authorities, neither of which would have easy access to the support and expertise provided by the National Theatre of Scotland.
- 5.15 It is worth reiterating that while all of these issues were identified throughout our evaluation work, the consensus view was that any problems were far outweighed by the quality of the projects and the impacts achieved.

## **5.2 Success Factors and Key Lessons**

- 5.16 All of the evidence and feedback suggests that Transform has been a success. There have been issues and challenges but these were mainly addressed, and partners are universally positive about the experience. This leads us to consider what it is about the Transform model that has led to these outcomes.
- 5.17 Based on the evaluation evidence and our wider experience of evaluating arts projects in educational and community settings, we believe that a number of factors can be identified as being critical to the success of Transform.

### **Scale and Ambition**

- 5.18 At the programme level, part of the success of Transform lies in its scale and ambition. The programme reached a wide range of schools and communities across Scotland from Orkney to Dumfries and Galloway, and set out to produce theatre with impact. For many, the fact that the projects were part

of a national programme was important, and gave the Transforms a level of profile and prestige.

### **Theatre not Drama**

- 5.19 It is important that the projects were about theatre and not just drama. This meant that participants had a range of choices about how to get involved. Even if they did not want to perform, the pupils could contribute to writing, music, design, lighting, production, marketing and promotion, and still feel part of the production process. This undoubtedly allowed the project to reach more young people, and to reach those that would not normally participate in a drama or arts project.
- 5.20 The projects also had an end product and goal – the production (and installation in one case). For the pupils, being involved in every stage of the process through to its completion provided a sense of achievement and pride. In previous evaluation work, we have found this to be an important element in the success of participatory arts projects.

### **In Curriculum Time**

- 5.21 The fact that the projects took place in curriculum time was important for two reasons:
- for the pupils, it reinforced the link with the school and with their mainstream learning; and
  - it meant that the projects were able to engage those that would not normally sign up for extra-curricular arts activity, enabling the projects to work with whole year groups. This was critical in building the group cohesion that so many of the teachers identified as a key impact.
- 5.22 Although it does cause some difficulties, working with the pupils in curriculum time is an important lesson for future practice.

### **Commitment**

- 5.23 School commitment to the projects is fundamental. We have already noted the importance of head teacher commitment, but the decision by the National Theatre of Scotland to shift the project from a model in which the National Theatre of Scotland engaged local authorities who then identified schools to one in which schools and their partners apply to participate was significant. The very act of applying is a commitment in itself, and this method allowed the National Theatre of Scotland to select projects and schools on the basis of the degree of commitment presented in the application.

### **Participant Centred**

*“It has been challenging at times but by allowing the process to be driven by the young people’s ideas, they have grown in confidence markedly, giving them a firmer base on which to meet new contexts in future.”*

#### **Local Authority**

- 5.24 The Transform process is very strongly focussed on building ownership amongst the young participants. While the artistic direction is provided by the director and creative team, participants are given a meaningful role in content creation. This is both challenging and empowering, and is an important factor in the level of commitment and enthusiasm that the teams were able to generate amongst the young people.

### **Interpersonal Relationships**

- 5.25 The relationship between the creative practitioner and the pupils is fundamentally different to that that exists between teachers and pupils. Many of the consultees also commented that exposure to new adult influences was a positive feature of the projects for the pupils, and indeed in pupil comments it is clear that many formed strong bonds with the creative teams.

### **National Theatre of Scotland**

- 5.26 There is considerable prestige for schools, local authorities, community partners and participating pupils in being involved with the National Theatre of Scotland. One of the teachers even commented on the impact on pupils’ pride and self esteem of being told by the National Theatre of Scotland team that they were not working with National Theatre of Scotland but that they *were* the National Theatre of Scotland. The National Theatre of Scotland brand and reputation not only opens doors but confers subtle benefits on partners and participants.

*“It has certainly engaged them and caught their imagination, and part of that is because these are top-notch professionals at the top of their game.”*

#### **Head Teacher**

- 5.27 It is also worth reiterating the value of having a professional production team supporting the projects. This was crucially important and was widely recognised as part of the added value that the National Theatre of Scotland were able to bring to the projects.

### Artistic Ambition

- 5.28 Perhaps the most important and significant factor in the success of Transform has been the artistic ambition with which the projects were approached. The National Theatre of Scotland did not treat the Transform projects as worthy but artistically limited projects – quite the opposite. The decision to put high quality directors in place to lead teams, and to focus on producing high quality theatre not only led to better productions, but to better experiences for all involved.
- 5.29 It is tempting in projects of this nature to draw distinctions between the artistic product and the process through which it was realised. The former is often where the artistic value is considered to lie, while the latter is seen as the primary vehicle for delivering benefits to the participants.
- 5.30 This is, in many ways, a false distinction. Of course the process confers benefits by challenging participants, building cohesive groups and encouraging creative engagement. However, participating in a process that is artistically second rate is far less likely to build confidence, develop creative thinking or raise self-esteem. Artistic quality is paramount, and we have found this to be a consistent finding of evaluation work in this area<sup>3</sup>.
- 5.31 It is also significant that in its Business Plan, the National Theatre of Scotland draws no distinction in its artistic vision between its mainstream productions and the National Theatre of Scotland Learn work. This commitment to artistic excellence is a key factor in the success of Transform.

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<sup>3</sup> See for example our own work on the *Evaluation of the Partners Artists Residency Programme* for the Scottish Arts Council (EKOS, 2008) or *Evaluation of the Cultural Pathfinder Programme*, for the Scottish Government (EKOS, 2009).

## 6. Conclusions and Wider Perspectives

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1 As stated in the introduction, the objectives of the evaluation were to:
- collate and analyse the self-evaluation data, feedback forms and video evidence;
  - provide an overall assessment of the effectiveness of Transform in meetings its objectives; and
  - identify the lessons for future activity.

### 6.2 Self-Evaluation Evidence

- 6.2 The self-evaluation evidence summarised in **Chapter 2** provides a useful overview of the scale and reach of Transform, and is a valuable context against which to review the qualitative data and feedback gathered through the evaluation process. In particular, we found a high degree of consistency between the two, reinforcing the findings described earlier and summarised below.
- 6.3 However, we have not drawn conclusions based solely on the self-evaluation data and evidence, and will not seek simply to restate the analysis already presented. Instead, we offer some comments on the self-evaluation approach and the nature of the information collected.
- 6.4 Although much of the data is useful - numbers of performances, attendances and number of workshops – it was less easy to identify the absolute number of participating pupils. This is because participants in *each* workshop were counted and a total calculated. As a result one child attending 15 workshops will be counted as 15 attendees rather than one.
- 6.5 A more useful approach would be to count the number of pupils that take part and to also track their attendance, as this would provide a measure of total participation, but also of drop-off and intensity of participation.
- 6.6 The comments from participants and partners are useful as anecdotal feedback and confirm the very positive perceptions reported in the evaluation. In particular, the DVD records provide a rich picture of the Transform process and events, as well as capturing participant, partner and audience feedback.

- 6.7 The collation of press clippings and comments is also useful as it provides an account of the very positive critical reaction to the Transform productions, lending an important external view to the assessment of artistic quality.
- 6.8 However, future self-evaluation methods might usefully adopt a different approach. In particular, there is real value in being able to demonstrate the impacts on participants in a way that does not rely solely on post-involvement self reports.
- 6.9 The most robust approach would be to assess participants *prior* to their involvement on a range of measures covering issues such as their attendance at school, educational attainment, attitudes to school and learning, involvement in extra-curricular activities and self-esteem. These would be captured through a combination of self completion questionnaires, existing school data and input from teachers. This would then provide a baseline against which future change can be measured following their participation. Ideally, these findings would be compared to those for a matched group of pupils that did not participate, but this is problematic where whole school years are involved.
- 6.10 Although this may sound like a complex and daunting process, it need not be overly complicated, and could be conducted in a relatively 'light touch' way. The result would be far more compelling evidence of the impacts of cultural participation in pupils.

### 6.3 Effectiveness in Meeting Objectives

- 6.11 As reported in **Chapter 4**, our main conclusion is that Transform has been successful in meeting its objectives in relation to artistic quality, learning, partnership and legacy, although there are issues in assessing some of these at this early stage.
- 6.12 We have also noted that the measures identified by the National Theatre of Scotland for assessing performance against objectives were not always well specified or appropriate to the activities of the project. This is perhaps an area for future improvement and, in particular, measures of success should focus on issues that are within the control and influence of the project.
- 6.13 Our second main conclusion is that Transform has also made an effective contribution to the objectives of the main public funding partner, Determined to Succeed. The National Theatre of Scotland is a leading employer in its field, and the Transform process has clearly provided pupils with wide experience of the skills and activities involved in theatre production, opening minds to new career possibilities and developing new skills for life and work.

- 6.14 Although the links between the classroom and the Transform model and its resultant learning benefits have not yet been clearly articulated, it is important to reiterate that this is not the responsibility of the National Theatre of Scotland.
- 6.15 Indeed, it is important that the role of the professional arts organisation in this context is fully understood. It is not their role to be educators. Rather it is their role to produce excellent theatre and to provide high quality creative experiences for participants. In so doing, there can be little doubt that learning takes place and that wider benefits can be realised. However, this is not the result of the creative practitioners attempting to be teachers – the learning benefits are *intrinsic* to the creative process, an issue that we return to below.
- 6.16 Finally, it is also useful to consider the extent to which Transform contributes to the objectives of the National Theatre of Scotland as an organisation. The National Theatre of Scotland has seven core objectives, and the table below (and over) details these along with the way in which Transform has contributed to each.

National Theatre of Scotland Objective	Transform Contribution
Artistic excellence	Transform has produced theatre of a consistently high quality and often innovative nature. This is evidenced by critical reaction, audience and partners' feedback and the views of the National Theatre of Scotland team and the creative practitioners.
Across Scotland	Transform has worked across Scotland, ensuring a sufficient geographic spread of activities.
Beyond Scotland	The international focus of Transform is less immediately apparent, although the National Theatre of Scotland reported significant international interest in the project and has considered trying to take one of the shows on tour internationally.
A developing audience	Transform has attracted people that would not normally participate in or attend arts events and has provided them with a very positive experience. This is audience development.

National Theatre of Scotland Objective	Transform Contribution
A learning organisation	Throughout Transform, the National Theatre of Scotland has reviewed and reflected on the process and made continuous improvements to enhance its impacts. As such, it has behaved as a learning organisation.
Professionalism and sustainability	There was widespread praise for the professionalism of the National Theatre of Scotland and the creative teams. However, sustainability is less clear as this will ultimately depend on the availability of resources to continue the work. The observed legacies do however suggest some longer term impacts.
Cultural leadership	Our view is that Transform is a model of good practice in arts and education, and has achieved a high profile, universally positive feedback and a degree of international interest. The National Theatre of Scotland is, and has the opportunity to continue, to play a leading role in this field. Importantly, it has done so by remaining focussed on its core artistic mission.

## 6.4 Lessons for Future Activity

6.17 The evaluation has identified a number of key lessons that could usefully inform future activity, as follows:

- planning time was sometimes constrained given the demands of running so many projects within a relatively short space of time. It is important to allow sufficient time for planning to ensure that all partners have a full understanding of the project and each other's requirements and concerns;
- adequate planning can also mitigate practical issues and tensions around scheduling workshops during class time, and the more certainty that can be provided around this the better for schools;

- honest and open communications between creative teams, schools and other partners from the outset is essential;
- head teacher commitment is crucial to securing wider buy-in from classroom teachers;
- offering a range of activities for participants helps to widen participation and extend the benefits to those that might not take part solely in performance activities;
- working with pupils in curriculum time is also important as this allows for wider participation and a higher profile within the school. This in turn helps to raise the profile not only of the projects itself, but of the role of creative activity in the learning context;
- risk is central to the success of the process, and all parties must be aware of the nature and extent of the risk on all sides and be willing to accept this. Concerns in this respect can be mitigated by evidence of past success;
- locating project activities within schools can be a barrier to wider community participation (although where the community is engaged this can help strengthen the links between communities and schools). Some balance is probably required; and
- artistic excellence should be the primary goal, and will drive the realisation of the wider benefits described in this report. Compromise in this area will have a negative impact on the experience for participants (and audiences) and will reduce the overall level of impact.

## 6.5 Wider Perspectives

- 6.18 The National Theatre of Scotland is already planning a follow on programme that builds on the lessons and experience of Transform. Creative Communities will be even more ambitious in scale and scope than Transform, and the programme aims to stage a series of large scale community theatre events. Both the creative process and the events will be based this time not in schools but in community settings, although the projects will still work with school pupils during curriculum time, as well as with members of the wider community.
- 6.19 However, Transform itself has much to say about the processes through which participation in a creative production process (from start to finish) can contribute to educational and social progress.
- 6.20 There is much international interest in these issues, particularly as much of the developed world grapples with the challenges of a new economic structure in which creativity, innovation and the so-called softer skills will be

key determinants of personal and organisational success. Changing educational systems essentially designed for a manufacturing economy is no small challenge, and there is growing interest in the way in which arts practice can contribute by provide a valuable context for learning.

- 6.21 In many respects this is not new. There is a long history both of arts education within the curriculum and arts as a means of learning across the curriculum. However, the latter remains a somewhat instrumental view of the role of arts practice in learning e.g. arts as a way of learning maths. What Transform demonstrates is that the very processes and ways of thinking that are *intrinsic* to creative arts practice are those that can help promote learning and develop skills for life and work.

### Opportunity

- 6.22 This is important because there is growing international interest in Scotland's approach to education. The *Curriculum for Excellence* is a real opportunity to develop an approach to education fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and its focus on the four capacities is a very strong fit with the capacities consistently identified in arts education initiatives.
- 6.23 More relevantly in the context of the current study, these are the capacities that Transform was widely felt to have developed amongst its young participants.
- 6.24 In a recent presentation<sup>4</sup>, Eric Booth, a leading expert on arts and education, identified a number of the elements that are intrinsic to artistic activity and that have important positive impacts on learning. These include:
- attention skills, and being able to direct attention selectively;
  - inquiry skills;
  - analogical or metaphorical thinking;
  - the capacity for self assessment;
  - motivation to learn;
  - sense of play; and
  - project-based activity.
- 6.25 Many of these elements have emerged from this study as being impacts achieved by Transform, most notably the impact on pupils' attention skills, their motivation to learn and their capacity for self assessment. Transform is also project based activity, with a defined end goal that builds commitment

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<sup>4</sup> Eric Booth, keynote speech at Inspiring! Conference at the HMIE/LTS Good Practice Conference: Arts and Creativity Conference, 2009.

and the realisation of which contributes to the sense of achievement. Play is also a feature, and the sheer enjoyment of taking part is an important but sometimes ignored benefit. Indeed, most of the comments from pupils captured in the self-evaluation feedback were about how much participants had enjoyed the experience.

- 6.26 Booth also describes a set of conditions that are held to be most effective in enabling school communities to move towards becoming creative learning environments. These include having many visible examples providing evidence of the benefits of arts practice, engaging the whole school and enabling intra-school communications. Again all of these are widely reported characteristics of the Transform projects.
- 6.27 Although this area needs more thinking and more work, there is almost certainly an opportunity here for the National Theatre of Scotland. In Transform, the organisation has developed a model that appears to make a significant contribution to the development of the four capacities of *Curriculum for Excellence* and that illustrates the intrinsic benefits of arts participation. Processes such as this may well have a role to play in to developing new models for education, and the National Theatre of Scotland could play a leadership role in this respect.