



square circle
educational arts

Who we are

Square Circle Arts (SCA) is a Sheffield-based, not-for-profit participatory arts company which offers bespoke services using interactive drama and multisensory storytelling. We have over ten years' experience of using these art forms as educational tools with primary school pupils, to teach a wide range of subjects. Here at Square Circle Arts we believe that the cognitive, social, physical and emotional benefits of the performing arts can be far-reaching and profound.

Approach

SCA prides itself on its **flexible** and **exploratory** approach which tailors to the needs and dynamic of each group we work with. We work **collaboratively** with staff by drawing on their strengths, in order to get the most out of both staff and pupils. Our **user-led ethos**, for which we place the student at the centre of his or her own learning or development, has proven to have long-lasting results in terms of **engagement, motivation, understanding** and **confidence**. By combining **capacity-** and **confidence-building**, we always aim to leave each project with a sustainable legacy rather than just 'a nice memory'.

"I feel that the drama project is a clever way for children to learn and work together, feel confident and expand their listening skills." Y6 pupil

What we can offer you

- High-quality, inclusive and student-centred drama sessions which facilitate learning across the following subjects/themes:
 - Literacy: A cross-curricular, topic-based approach
 - Modern languages: Spanish
 - Citizenship: Cultural awareness and diversity
- A broad, balanced, imaginative and relevant approach to the curriculum, using exciting topics to link subjects in engaging and interactive ways, and providing broader contexts for writing.
- Skills, ideas and strategies to help you plan creatively in the future.
- Alternative PPA provision for your classroom.
- A unique, challenging and far-reaching way to help raise attainment for pupils who qualify for the Pupil Premium or the Count Me In programme.
- **A free taster session before you commit to more sessions!**

Aims

- To increase wellbeing and excitement in learning.
- To increase motivation, engagement, achievement and attendance.
- To develop the children's confidence to try new things, building on their strengths and interests, so they achieve their full potential.
- To help build pupils' self-esteem and a positive self-image.
- To promote pupils' independence in their learning, by encouraging decision-making, problem-solving and risk-taking.
- To promote an emotionally, socially and physically healthier lifestyle.
- To promote positive relationships and social skills.
- To add to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Subjects and themes



Literacy: A cross-curricular, topic-based approach

We explore interesting and stimulating topics which link reading, writing, speaking and listening in exciting and interactive ways. Topics include Aliens and Traditional Stories (Key Stage 1), the Rainforest and Egypt (Key Stage 2). Topics cover a range of curriculum subjects from English to Citizenship, ICT to History, Geography to Maths, presenting broader contexts for writing. We use techniques which follow the pupils' interests, where the child is placed in the role of expert and is encouraged to build up their knowledge and form their own opinions.

We use interactive tools, games and exercises which encourage effective communication and build up pupils' confidence in expressing themselves and trying new things. We focus on language development, enhancing vocabulary and expressive language, as the way to improve their reading and writing. We encourage frequent reflection.

We have a successful track-record of working with high numbers of pupils with EAL.

Please see our [Literacy guide](#) for more details.

Modern Languages: Spanish

We believe that languages are better off being acquired through 'doing', experiencing, and being immersed in that language in a stimulating, exciting, positive and meaningful environment. We try to put pupils at ease and in their comfort zone – not out of it – by building their confidence up so that they are able to adapt to a different way of communicating, looking at and commenting on the world around them.

At the heart of the sessions is an intercultural and interlinguistic

exchange between our pupils and children from a school in South America, which will inform the line of enquiry in each session. The sessions will culminate in a GRAN TUR Y FIESTA LATINA in which groups will each present a Spanish-speaking country to the whole school. Please see our [Modern Languages \(Spanish\) guide](#) for more details.

Citizenship: Cultural awareness and diversity

We can offer one-off, or a series of workshops designed to raise awareness about cultural difference and similarity, and to help students to respect and value diversity within our local and global society.

Through drama exercises which encourage group-work and cooperation, frequent debate and reflection, pupils acquire a deeper understanding of the social, political and psychological influences and effects of 'interculturality'. Using metaphor, image and forum theatre, we look at conflict and tension, integration and cohesion, and how these affect us in our own lives. Activities link together other curriculum subjects including English, Geography, History and ICT, and we can provide plenty of opportunities for reading and writing.

We are also able to look at aspects of certain cultures, such as festivals, language, customs, food, religion and clothes. We are in the middle of talks about bringing in asylum-seekers, refugees or foreign students to talk about their cultures, and demonstrate dancing, music or storytelling. We can also explore and develop SCA's ties with Latin American schools and community groups, if working on a longer-term project.

More about our services



Length, duration and frequency of sessions: We will endeavour to fit in with your timetable. However, we recommend half a day per session over at least half a term, depending on the year group and topic.

Although we are flexible, the shorter the time-scale, the less depth we will be able to go into. We offer a free half hour taster session so that we can get to know the pupils, and you can be sure of the quality of our service. We also request the opportunity here to discuss the plans and learning outcomes with you at no extra cost.

Numbers: Sessions are delivered by one facilitator one class at a time.

Direct links with National Curriculum in every session: We fill out regular detailed session plans outlining activity aims, student learning objectives AND links to the National Curriculum, which will be submitted to you in advance. We can link in with your weekly planning if given these in advance to incorporate in our own planning. Progress is regularly monitored and reviewed and key achievements recorded.

Bespoke services tailored to individual needs: Sessions are challenging and matched well to the needs of the class, including the more able and those with SEN. If working on longer term projects, we will endeavour to work with the teacher to identify targets and find the best way to address these using drama. We can also work with a specifically selected group of students (e.g. to support learning, emotional or behavioural needs) within lesson times or after-school with the Count Me In programme.

Work with children with SEN: Square Circle Arts is experienced in working with children with Special Educational Needs. Our sessions are

inclusive and we are skilled at involving them sensitively in our planned activities, giving them ownership, confidence and a sense of achievement. We can also work separately with children who have been placed at School Action, using multi-sensory and interactive techniques which aim to improve communication and social skills. If interested, please ask for our [Special Schools guide](#).

Develop staff capacity: As well as working closely with the teachers during lessons to transfer skills and ideas, we offer staff training and consultation in: Creative literacy techniques, drama and multisensory storytelling, forum theatre, languages through drama, and creative approaches to the curriculum. These can be delivered during staff meetings or inset days.

Develop links with parents and carers and the community: We can provide ways to further develop relationships with parents and carers, encouraging them to support and contribute to their child's learning and helping them to develop their own skills, as a catalyst for pupils' more regular attendance. We do this by inviting them to performances and the occasional session, and providing opportunities for them to get involved in the topic at home (e.g. setting interesting tasks or reading activities for them to do with their child etc). Members of the community are also invited to sessions and performances.

Prices: £100 for half a day, £200 for full day, £50 for after-school clubs or staff training, inclusive of planning and preparation time and materials.

We are fully insured and CRB checked, and can provide references.

Experience and expertise

Square Circle Arts is run by Drama and Storytelling practitioner Shuna Beckett. All sessions are currently designed and delivered by her.

Shuna has fifteen years' experience of working with children in both school and community settings, including four years in South America. There, she trained with Centre for Theatre of the Oppressed, Rio de Janeiro. Shuna has a Masters degree in Theatre and Development Studies, for which she researched how the performing arts can empower children and young people. She also has a Diploma in Child Psychology.

Shuna has extensive experience of working with children with SEN and emotional and behavioural issues, as well as Black and Minority Ethnic children, children of refugees and asylum seekers, and those with English as an Additional Language. She has worked as Creative Partner in seven Creative Partnerships schools, six of which had a literacy focus.

She founded and project managed the community arts organisation, Side by Side, which aims to promote intercultural understanding, integration and cohesion between people of all social, ethnic, cultural and faith backgrounds, whilst raising awareness about the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers, and the positive contributions they can make.

Having spent over four years living and working in various South American countries, many summers in Spain as a child, and completed her first degree in English Literature and Hispanic Studies at the University of Sheffield, Shuna speaks and writes Spanish fluently. She is knowledgeable about grammatical structures and has excellent pronunciation. She also has a deep understanding of, and passion for, the Latin American culture and people.



Examples of past projects in schools

Marlcliffe Community Primary School: A project with Year 4 pupils exploring the many different aspects of life in India. Using as a base the lead teacher's visit to an orphanage in Patna, India, we brought the experience alive and celebrated diversity by putting ourselves in real children's shoes. Both the children and teachers grew in confidence and developed new drama skills over the weeks.

All Saints Church of England Primary School: We worked with reception, years 1 and 2, to explore the way in which human settlements develop. The aim was to provide an imaginative, engaging and cross-curricular teaching and learning tool for the delivery of the national curriculum, including literacy, science and geography. Children ended up performing and writing their own creative stories.

Quotes

"I will remember that I did a beautiful drama with Shuna and always know about India from all of this drama". Year 4 pupil

"I have developed a whole new insight into creative development, creative thinking and creativity as a whole." Foundation stage teacher

"It's been a pleasure working with Shuna. The children enjoyed doing drama so much that they worked really hard without realising they were working at all. How refreshing!" Year 6 teacher

Please call or email for a chat: 0114 250 8075 / 07969 433665

Email: shuna@squarecirclearts.co.uk www.squarecirclearts.co.uk