

Information for Schools 2020/21



What are the Children's Shakespeare Festivals?

"Our purpose is to unlock Shakespeare, to take him from his glass case that he may live among us again, so that he may question, challenge and provoke us"

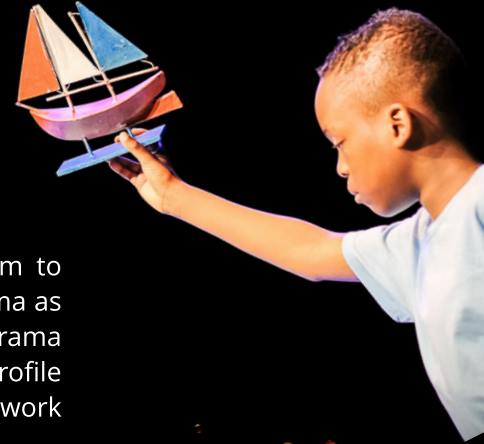
John Doona

Founder of North West Drama and The Children's Shakespeare Festivals

The **Children's Shakespeare Festivals** are large scale, inter-school festivals which aim to inspire an excitement for Shakespeare's plays and develop the use of educational drama as a tool for deep and active learning. This unique project combines high quality CPD in drama and cross-curricular classroom activity with performance by your pupils in high profile professional theatre spaces. Since our first festival in 2009, the project has grown to work with over 60 primary schools each year.

The project aims to **develop commitment to learning**, **raise attainment** and **build confidence** in your children, making them the owners of their learning and of Shakespeare's texts. Your teachers, through the **powerful and sustained CPD** embedded in the project, will develop their skills and expertise in the use of drama in the classroom and become, in time, your own in-house expert of this potent teaching approach.

The Children's Shakespeare Festivals were the brainchild of our much missed friend and founder John Doona. His work was built around the understanding that young people are actively seeking meaning in their own experiences. He knew that their world can be transformed in an instant, their eyes and minds opened with a carefully selected question or profound provocation. He couldn't imagine a world in which children and young people would not be challenged and invited to come to know their own humanity. John passed away in 2014 after a long illness. The project has engaged more than 15,000 children (plus their families and friends) and 400 school staff members with Shakespeare.



Images by Andrew Billington Photography

Why participate in the Children's Shakespeare Festivals?

The best learning comes from compelling experience; from experiences that are physically, intellectually, linguistically and emotionally rich. Our schemes of work, some of which are also published by Routledge, are just such rich learning opportunities. They are tailored for the primary classroom and fully accessible to the willing teacher who is ready to explore the creative possibilities of themselves and their pupils.

Our use of performance on professional stages is the final additional motivating element of the project; once our explorations are complete we have the material ready for building exciting and original plays to be seen by their peers, teachers, families and friends.

What impact does the project have?

The project has four key aims; to **raise pupil aspirations**, to **increase confidence and improve well-being**, to **increase engagement with the arts** and to **improve the use of drama in the primary classroom**.

In 2016, North West Drama undertook a major evaluation of the project against these aims*:

96%
of pupils told us
they enjoy school
and learning
more because of
taking part in the
CSFs

93%
of pupils told us
they now like
Shakespeare and
want to read
more of his plays
since taking part
in the CSFs

95%
of teachers told us
that their class
had clearly
developed in
confidence as a
result of taking
part in the CSFs

98%
of teachers told us
that the project
had positively
impacted on their
teaching and had
raised attainment
in writing

**400 pupils and 24 teachers took part in a pre and post project comparison, all of whom were participants in our Royal Exchange Theatre Children's Shakespeare Festivals.*



Image by Andrew Billington Photography

What do people say about the Children's Shakespeare Festivals?

"The best thing I have done as a teacher"

*Len Johnrose, teacher
St Silas CE Primary School*

"The richness of the experience, the confidence it builds, the impact on writing... this is a wonderful project"

*Keith Powell, headteacher
St Saviour's Catholic Primary School*

"It has given lots of the children in my class a real confidence boost and many who thought they weren't 'into drama' now love it"

*Amy Harding, teacher
Middlewich Primary School*

"It was an amazing experience for me as a teacher and for my class, not only academically but the impact it has had on their personal development"

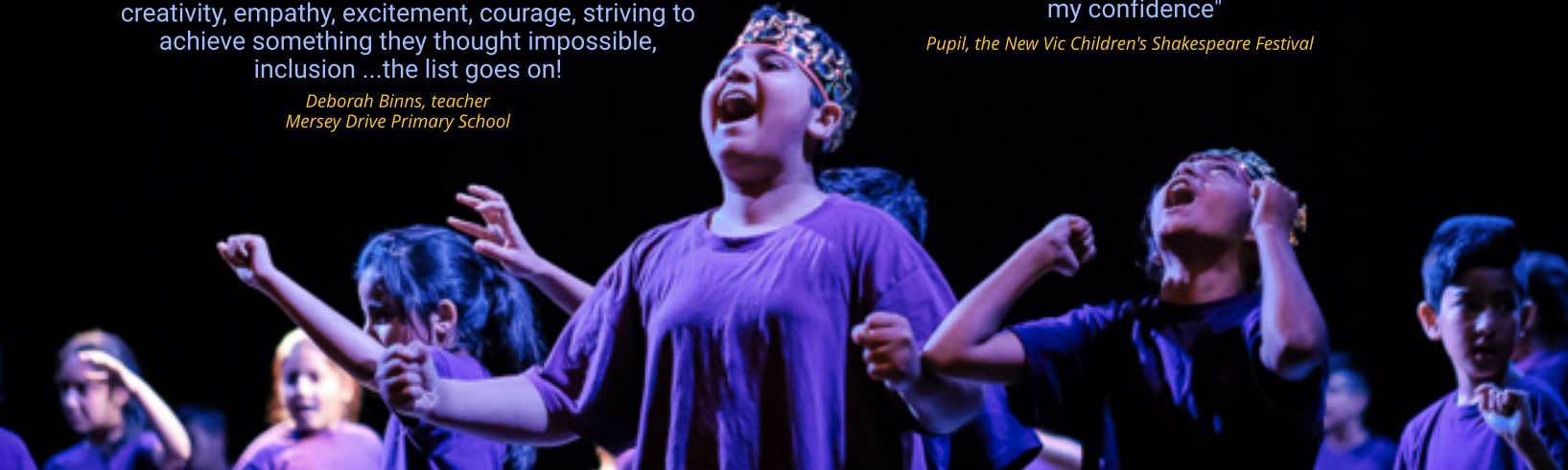
*Tim Lonsdale, teacher
St Anthony's Catholic Primary School*

My class have gained confidence, enthusiasm, creativity, empathy, excitement, courage, striving to achieve something they thought impossible, inclusion ...the list goes on!

*Deborah Binns, teacher
Mersey Drive Primary School*

"When we did Shakespeare, that was when I found my confidence"

Pupil, the New Vic Children's Shakespeare Festival



What is included in the project fee?

INITIAL CPD PHASE

- Attendance at the initial launch meeting for all staff attending the residential
- Places for 2 x school staff per class on the 26 hour teacher residential
- Delivery of the scheme of work in full by the North West Drama team
- Overnight accommodation for school staff during your residential
- Evening meal, breakfast and lunch during your residential
- Refreshments (tea, coffee) during your residential

EXPLORATION PHASE

- Full access to the scheme of work and all necessary resources
- Support from your festival director by phone or email as required
- Half day launch workshop per class with your festival director

DEVISING PHASE

- Attendance for 2x school staff per class at the half day midpoint meeting at the theatre venue
- Full access to music and sound effects to support devising and rehearsal
- Support from your festival director by phone or email as required
- A half day directing visit per class from your festival director prior to your final performance

PERFORMANCE PHASE

- Possible run through with all performing classes at a local venue prior to performance day
- Technical meeting with the theatre team to finalise sound, lighting and music
- Technical rehearsal on stage for each class prior to their final performance
- Risk assessment documents to support your own planning for the performance day
- Live musician during your technical rehearsal and final performance
- Exceptional professional photography of your class's performance, which is made available only to you



Are you ready to become a Children's Shakespeare Festival school?

Over the last 12 years the project has grown exponentially, but one thing remains unchanged: the compelling nature of the work. The Children's Shakespeare Festivals are truly exciting opportunities for primary school teachers and pupils to become immersed in Shakespeare's stories, through engaging and powerful drama experiences. Our success is built upon a highly accessible model of involvement and our unique approach to the text through drama.

If you are looking to provide significant and creative professional development for your staff alongside landmark experience for your pupils, then there has never been a better time to join this highly acclaimed project.

Recruitment for each academic year usually begins towards the end of the preceding summer term and continues through the autumn term (dependent on the festival timings). Places are limited for each festival and demand is high, so we recommend that you get in touch at the earliest opportunity.

The current cost of the project is **£1800 (plus reclaimable VAT)** for one class to participate. Additional classes are **£900**.

We are sometimes able to offer discounts for schools who join together, small schools or schools in areas of greater need, for whom the cost is a prohibitive factor.

Contact:

Matt Wardle, Creative Producer

matt@northwestdramaservices.co.uk 07890 724 917

A project by North West Drama in association with our theatre partners:



NEW VIC

