

Calderdale Theatre School Association

Report of the trustees for the year ending 31st July 2021

Our purposes and activities

The purpose of the charity is to advance the education and skills of young people in Calderdale by developing their understanding, knowledge and appreciation of the arts and culture through theatre, drama and other activities.

In planning our activities for the year, we kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and fee charging. Calderdale Theatre School relies on the income from fees and charges to cover its operating costs. In setting the level of fees, charges and concessions, the trustees give careful consideration to the accessibility of the charity for those on low incomes.

This year the main activities were all delivered via Zoom as the Covid pandemic prevented face to face sessions. The workshops were delivered by our team of freelance professional drama practitioners.

- Two week-long drama workshops during the school summer holidays, each culminating in a live online performance.
- Saturday morning drama workshops during school terms including 3 live online performances.
- Two day-long face to face drama workshops in July when restrictions eased.

These activities benefited young people by building confidence, developing creativity, improving verbal and non-verbal communication skills, developing empathy and concentration and encouraging teamwork and collaboration. The activities were especially important during the lockdown as they provided a valuable opportunity for students to interact with other younger people with similar interests.

We welcome all young people, aged between 11 and 18, regardless of personal background, faith, gender or personal circumstances. We offered fee remissions for families whose earnings had been adversely impacted by the lockdowns.

We are greatly assisted by the work of our volunteer trustees and parents. They do a lot of the administration work of the charity and work behind the scenes making and maintaining costumes and creating props. They also work alongside volunteers at Fire and Water in Sowerby Bridge developing the building which we hope will provide a future home for us.

Achievements and performance

28 students engaged with one or more of our online activities. It was remarkable how quickly the students adapted to working within the constraints of a screen and their creativity during the workshops and in developing the performance pieces was a credit to them. The online performances were a particular highlight. During the summer holiday workshops the year 7 - 8 students created and performed Legends of Lockdown (exploration of myth), the year 9 - 10s created and performed Utopias, Dystopias and the Here and Now and the year 11 - 13s created and performed Facing the Strange (reflections on lockdown). These were powerful and thoughtful pieces giving students the opportunity to explore the issues around the impact of the covid restrictions. One of the students summed up the experience:

AMAZING!!!!

So funny and entertaining to watch, made my day!

Everyone was so incredible (as always)

So proud to be a part of CTS. Thanx for the amazing break from reality.

During the Autumn term students celebrated Halloween with Spooktacular a devised performance piece complete with fantastic home-made costumes and back-drops to create the right atmosphere. An enthusiastic audience of family and friends really enjoyed it:

We loved your Spooktacular Show. It was so clever and creative to do this online. We were so impressed with the young people.

Oh WOW!!! That was incredible!!! Thank you SO much for taking the time and hard work to put the performance together!! M loved performing in it and I have loved watching it!

The term finished with a festive performance of Panto at the Pole complete with elves and reindeers. This was a more ambitious collaboration between students and staff and was hilarious. In the run up to the performance students created a short video of themselves dressed as an elf getting up to mischief. These were released to our Facebook page each day in December. The response from the audience was excellent:

What an amazingly creative show - it is just fantastic what the CTS has achieved online...the young people are so fabulous. We feel so proud that A is a part of this.

What a super Christmassy show. Loved it. Thank you for all the work you all do and for allowing these talented children to still perform and for us theatre starved people to still enjoy live performance. Watching again tonight for sure.

The final lockdown performance was at Easter when the students created and performed Murder at the Manor - The Buttered Knife. This was an interactive performance lasting 1.5 hours with the audience joining in to

ask questions and the student characters improvising answers. As ever a great response from the audience:

I absolutely loved Murder at the Manor this evening! How clever and courageous of the whole team, cast and staff to put this out for us all. Fabulous characters with equally fabulous names.

Thank you for another awesome performance, CTS! Every time we think we know the format you add in something new to amaze us all and this time it was audience participation and improv!! Really impressive performance tonight.

Although safety requirements meant we could only open the live performances to people known to our students and trustees, one positive outcome was that family and friends who lived too far away to attend in person were able to join online and enjoy the performances.

Financial Review

The reduction in the number of students registering for the online workshops meant we had a significant drop in income. We did not charge for people to watch the online performances but instead set up a 'GoFundMe' page for donations. This raised just over £1,000. Fortunately, we had built up healthy reserves from the previous few years and were able to use some of these to help us cover the loss in income. At a time when many families had reduced income, we did not want to increase our fees. Cash at bank at 31/07/2020 was £15,600k in unrestricted funds. The main financial risk to the charity is a sustained reduction in student numbers and we expect to have to dip into the reserves next year while we rebuild student numbers. We are also finding it increasingly difficult to find suitable premises to rent for face-to-face sessions. The Covid pandemic has caused the permanent or temporary closure of several of the venues that we previously used. We are hoping that the Fire and Water building in Sowerby Bridge will provide a long-term home for us once the building work is finished. We aim to keep enough reserve funds cover 4 months expenditure and to meet any unforeseen expenditure that may occur.

Structure, Governance and Management

Calderdale Theatre School Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed by its constitution dated 26th January 2013. The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity. The board meets every 2 months. The board engages the services of freelance drama practitioners to deliver the drama workshops and other activities. In accordance with the constitution one third of trustees retire each year but they are eligible for re-election. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefit.

The charity has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and an Equality and Diversity Policy. All freelance staff who work directly with the students are required to have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Trustees

Rachel Smith – Chair
Tony Clark – Vice Chair
Gerry Powell – Treasurer
Paul Cotton – joint Secretary
Sarah Cotton – joint Secretary
Adelle Beswick
Frances Dowson
Michael O’Sullivan
Alison Roberts
Janet Spooner

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Treasurers Report

1st August 2020 to 31st July 2021

The financial year 2020/2021 has been impacted by Covid-19 and lockdowns with the classes having to be completed via zoom. This has meant a reduction in the number of students, leading in turn to a reduction in the level of fees received. We have to an extent managed to offset this position with a reduction in the amount of wages required to pay teaching staff for their time. Having said that, we have still had an overspend for the year because of various running costs that have not been covered by the fees that have been received. Fortunately the School Association has had sufficient funds already held in savings to cover this situation. The School Association remains financially sound.

Opening Balance 01/08/20 **£20662.77**

Income for the year 2020/2021

Bank Interest	£ 2.01
Donations	£ 1067.40
Fees 2019-2020	£ 70.00
Fees 2020-2021	£ 6910.00
Fundraising	£ 25.00
Total Income 2020/2021	£ 8074.41

Expenditure for the year 2020/2021

Administration	£ 1683.95
Donations	£ 132.50
ISTA Membership	£ 485.00
NAYT Membership	£ 80.00
Wages 2019-2020	£ 2350.00
Wages 2020-2021	£ 7635.00
Wardrobe	£ 973.98
Total Expenditure 2020/2021	£13340.43

Total Expenditure over Income **£ 5266.02**

Closing Balance 31/07/21 **£15396.75**