
**SOUTHWARK THEATRES' EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (STEP)
ANNUAL REPORT
Year ended 31st March 2008**



Reference and Administrative Details:

Registered Charity Number: 1121201
Date of Registration: 15th October 2007

Company Number: 6069864
Date of Registration: 26th January 2007

Principal Office: c/o Theatre Peckham, Havil Street, London SE5 7SD

Staff (April 2007/March 2008):

Aimee Forrester ~ Creative Director (April 2007 – August 2007)
Beccy Allen ~ Creative Director (November 2007 – March 2008)

Trustees (April 2007/March 2008):

Andrew Dewdney (Head of Arts, Media and English, LSBU) ~ **CHAIR**
Martin Ridley (Head of Product Management, BT) ~ **VICE-CHAIR**
Chris Lawrence (Administrator, London Drama) ~ **TREASURER**
Sonia Hyams (Associate Director, Education, London Bubble Theatre)

Advisory Group (April 2007/March 2008):

Suzy Smith (Executive Director, Theatre Peckham)
Nina Birch (Drama Consultant, Southwark Children's Services Arts Team)
Coral Flood (Culture Development Officer, Southwark Culture Service)
Catherine Greenwood (Education and Youth Director, Unicorn Theatre)
Johanna Elworthy (Southwark Community Projects Manager, Shakespeare's Globe)
Fionnuala Lynch (Associate, Reed Smith Richards Butler LLP)
Sarah Nunn (Creative Arts and ICT Coordinator, Charles Dickens Primary School)

Chair's Report:

Southwark has the most numerous and illustrious group of theatres of any borough in Britain and its artistic riches are there for everyone to see. Southwark also has one of Britain's most diverse populations amongst whom live communities and groups who continue to experience economic hardship and in some cases outright poverty along with associated forms of educational and cultural deprivation. Thus a particular challenge in Southwark is to engage the creative force of the arts with the lives of the many young people in need of greater positive, directed and meaningful activity. This is the central mission of STEP.

With all the many possibilities for punning contained in the acronym of Southwark Theatres' Education Partnership, I can say with complete seriousness that, over the past twelve months, the organisation has taken a qualitative STEP forward. Many of the reasons for the development of STEP are contained in this report, which I commend to the reader as essentially the account of an organisation that continues to perform a crucial function in connecting the powerful work of Southwark theatres with the cultural and educational needs of young people. This report demonstrates the innovative character of STEP in being able to continually instigate more effective ways of engaging young people in theatre skills through creative partnerships and astute arts brokerage.

In 2007 STEP went through a major structural change from being a project within the Southwark Culture Service, to becoming an independent arts charity, serving the needs and interests of Southwark communities. This was a testing moment and through a combination of the work of exceptionally committed Board members, the steady hand of Southwark Culture Development Officer, Coral Flood, and the diligence of the previous STEP Creative Director, Aimee Forrester the transition was successfully made. Southwark Children's Services were pivotal in securing the funding to make the transition smooth and successful and the continued dedication of Nina Birch, Southwark's Drama Consultant, has aided STEP's development extensively. As a result of becoming independent STEP was strengthened and was able to appoint a new director, Beccy Allen in November 2007, to lead the strategic direction of the organisation through the development of a five year business plan.

In the development of STEP's business plan it is possible to see the change from a project which came into existence to deliver an annual festival of young people's theatre work to an organisation focused upon a number of larger educational aims in exploring and maximising the value of theatre and performance work for young people through the partnership of Southwark theatres and schools and community organisations.

In addition to overseeing the ongoing projects of STEP over the past year, the Board has been preoccupied by the need to achieve more secure revenue funding and has started discussions with its main funders to achieve this. This remains a central challenge for STEP in achieving its full potential, but in the current composition of the Board, the continued involvement of the Theatre partners and the growing confidence of the current Creative Director we are confident that this can be achieved.

Objectives and Activities:

STEP – Mission Statement

STEP aims to engage young people in the exploration of significant personal and social meaning that is relevant to the demands of an inclusive and diverse society. STEP aims to extend and deepen the theatre and drama experience of all young people living in Southwark through the development of strategic partnerships between schools, youth groups, theatres and performing arts organisations.

STEP – Objectives

STEP's objective is to work closely with Southwark schools, theatres and performing arts organisations to provide creative approaches to learning and develop innovative projects which stimulate children and young people's personal development and contribute to their educational attainment. STEP works alongside the theatres and performing arts organisations in the borough to enable schools to approach all areas of the national curriculum in a creative way to ensure better retention of young people in mainstream contexts and encourage young people to achieve their full potential.

STEP is a development agency which:

- Promotes the work of Southwark performing arts organisations to the education/community sector;
- Develops partnerships between theatre/performing arts organisations to maximise resources and build on the skills base within the borough;
- Engages in audience development;
- Develops educational partnerships between performing arts organisations and formal and informal provision;
- Works with Southwark Education and schools to embed performance arts in the curriculum;
- Works with Southwark Culture Service to strengthen links between young people and their families and experience of the arts;
- Works with partners to be at the forefront of innovation in the development of performing and live arts for children and young people.

Financial Review:

STEP's income for the year 1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008 was £111,960 and STEP finished the financial year with a surplus of £42,585, of which £28,310 is allocated and restricted for the Early Years Project (the completion of its first year and continuation in 2008-2009) and £14,275 is allocated for the Creative Director's salary. Expenditure was in line with the level of activities, with the main expenditure being the Festival and Early Years Project (£48,092 - 68%), and the Creative Director's salary (£18,067 – 26%).

STEP recognises the need to have in place sound and robust systems to secure STEP's medium and long-term financial viability. STEP has adopted a Reserves Policy which is specific to the risks and needs of the delivery of the STEP Programme and is in line with the Charity Commission suggestions. For 2007-2008, the designated reserves stand at £14,275 which is the surplus of the income from 2007-2008. STEP is aware that it may be unable to reach its targets set out in the Reserves Policy in the year 2008-2009.

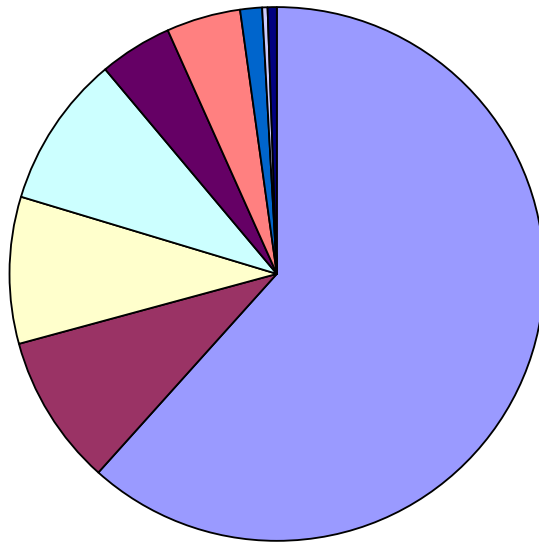
Funding for STEP from 1st April 2007 – 31st March 2008 included contributions from: Better Bankside, Financial Times, PriceWaterhouse Coopers, Jack Petchey Foundation, Agencies Supporting Schools Programme (ASSP), Southwark Children's Services, Southwark Culture Service and Southwark Regeneration.

The plans for the future include ensuring full cost recovery for projects, securing funds for core costs and developing projects which will generate interest from a range of corporate funders. The Creative Director will also facilitate income generation through management of projects, both for the Council and for partner organisations. STEP will continue to review its financial management policies on a regular basis, ensuring all transactions follow due process with integrity, allowing transparent accounting systems for the organisation and the STEP Board.

More detailed financial information in the form of the STEP Reserves Policy, STEP Financial Controls Policy, Accrual Accounts and a Balance Sheet is available on request

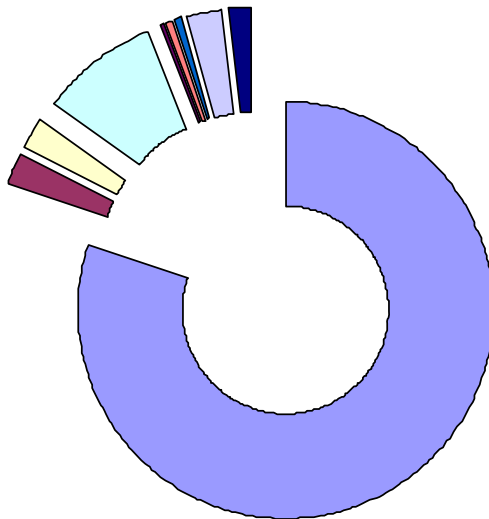


Voluntary Income



- Southwark Education Regeneration Initiatives
- Southwark Culture
- Jack Petchey
- FT
- PwC
- Better Bankside
- ASSP
- Children's Services
- London Drama

Governance Costs



- Salaries and NI
- Legal and Professional
- Website
- Recruitment
- Printing, Postage and Stationery
- Training
- Sundry
- Insurance
- Accountancy Fee

Achievements and Performance:

STEP Festival 2007

The STEP Festival 2007 ran from 1st – 13th July. The *Step up to the Mark* focus was to highlight the benefit of involvement in drama as a way of building self-esteem and confidence as well as key skills in team-working, empathising with others, empowering young people to make the right decision in a difficult situation.

During the Festival fortnight 21 theatre and artist partners provided 24 projects, resulting in 49 STEP funded activities for Southwark schools and communities. 36% of the 107 Southwark schools invited to participate took part (11 Early Years or Nursery schools, 71 Primary schools, 12 Secondary schools, seven Special schools, two Pupil Referral Units, one College and three youth groups were invited). 37% of these education partners were new to STEP and in total 1551 young people and 156 education staff took part.

STEP was able to work with 14 new education partners this year, broadening the range of partners that it engaged with to include more early years' centres, three youth groups and one university from out of the borough which attended INSET training. 21 schools that were involved with the STEP Festival 2006 participated again in 2007 due to the positive experience from the previous year, demonstrating that STEP is able to offer meaningful, positive and quality projects to schools.

Key areas for development, established on completion of the Festival:

- The Festival should take place at a different time of year, potentially during November as a showcase for the work of Southwark Theatres and establishing partnerships between schools and theatres for further development during the school year. Other projects can take place throughout the year in addition to this festival period, for example outdoor events are better suited to summer months;
- The majority of STEP Festival projects should be funded jointly by STEP and partner arts organisations, as was the case for most projects this year;
- Full time administration support is essential during the lead up to the Festival for effective outreach and marketing, as well as during the Festival to help with the running of events and ongoing relationship with the media;
- The STEP intern, a student from LSBU, was a great asset to the Festival and the possibility of extending the involvement of students from a range of courses should be explored, for example in web development and photography;
- A long-term strategy for development should be implemented, with an associated fundraising strategy which could look at consortium of partnership bids. This should include a strategy around delivering work for the Cultural Olympiad;
- The possibility of schools and youth groups becoming members of STEP to develop the partnership and ensure they commit to projects should be explored;
- STEP should review the way in which it contracts organisations;
- The STEP partnership should be reviewed and formalised further, in line with the long-term strategy.

STEP Year-Long Programme

Early Years

Southwark Education Regeneration Initiatives funded a significant Early Years project, which ran pilot workshops during the 2007 Festival and will continue until May 2008. The three theatre partners delivering the project are Oval House Theatre, Unicorn Theatre and In-Toto Theatre. This project has continued with a partnership approach to deliver training to early years' workers from some of Southwark's early years and children's centres as well as deliver workshops and performances. The need for INSET was highlighted in the evaluation of the pilot project and is a strategic way of transferring skills to local early years' contexts. The participating workers were required to embed the skills they learn into the staff base at their centre, with the continued support of the theatre partners. The three lead theatre partners shared skills and approaches during the project and some the final INSET provision will be open to other performing arts practitioners in the borough, enabling a further transfer of skills between partners.

Youth Theatre Showcase

STEP's Youth Theatre Showcase 2007 brought together the work of six local groups, offering the participants the opportunity to share and support one another's work as well as to demonstrate the quality of the work to invited supporters and funders. The event was highly successful with all participating youth theatres giving positive feedback. This event provides the opportunity to establish a network of support amongst youth theatre leaders. STEP will continue to make the Youth Theatre Showcase a part of the year-long programme as it is a chance for the youth theatre groups in Southwark to work in partnership and offers a performance element to help strengthen the links between young people, their families and experience of the arts.

Drama Champions

Southwark's Drama Consultant was successful in securing funding for the continuation of the Drama Champions project from Southwark Children's Services. The Programme enables strong partnerships to develop between the participating teachers and theatres, Southwark Education and STEP and will begin the process of embedding performance arts into the curriculum.

The Drama Champions undertake an action research project in their schools that consolidate and develop their learning through practise. STEP's Champions are currently all working on cascading the INSET training that they received throughout the rest of the staff in their schools, participating in consultation on the development of STEP and have received further INSET training from Southwark Children's Services. The feedback from the Drama Champions Programme will be disseminated to all theatre partners to help develop the provision offered by the theatres in Southwark for children and young people and schools. Academic research conducted within the Drama Champions Programme could be used to share good practice of the work of STEP to other boroughs and educational theatre practitioners.

Programme areas recommended for development

At the beginning of 2007 the then STEP Creative Director ran a workshop to invite local young people to become part of a **STEP Youth Forum**. The workshop was well attended and most of the young people were keen to develop their relationship with STEP and take up the opportunity to be involved. This project did not progress further than this due to lack of time to establish a structure for administrating and planning the group, as well as no dedicated funding or purpose for the group.

If STEP is to consult with young people on a regular basis on, for example, key programming and marketing decisions then the Youth Forum is a good way of engaging young people from across the borough; however it may require a specific project that the group delivers in order to establish the momentum of the group. For example, there is a need to publicise to local schools and youth groups the wealth of opportunities to become involved in youth theatre available across Southwark. The Youth Forum could be set the task of researching and visiting the different youth theatres, carrying out interviews and filming their work. Simultaneously the group could research what is missing from youth theatre provision in Southwark and make recommendations for development. This documentary could then be made available to local schools as a resource for promoting active and meaningful leisure time to their students. With a significant project like this to undertake the Youth Forum would consolidate as a group and could be offered the chance to do other such projects, or one off consultations, and input into funding bids and marketing decisions as the need arises.

The 2006 **Young Critics** project was a great success, offering a small number of year eight students the chance to learn key journalistic skills and then review some of the STEP Festival activities. The young people involved expressed interest in developing their skills further and the project was well supported by participating schools. The Financial Times, as a current STEP supporter, has contributed funds to supporting this project in its future development, to reach more young people and to produce a high quality publication.

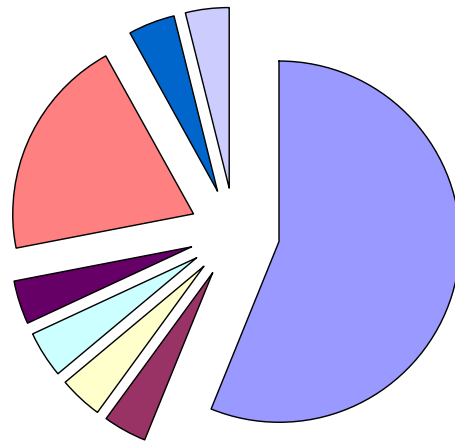
The previous STEP Creative Director drafted an Arts Council Grants for the Arts application to help facilitate the development of **arts partner skills and resource exchange**. The STEP partnership expressed interest in formalising the exchange of both resources and skills through a funded project and the interest and need is still apparent through this year's evaluation. Elements of this could potentially be linked into the development of the Drama Champions programme.

STEP Inclusion – Diversity – Participation

STEP Festival 2007 – Outputs:

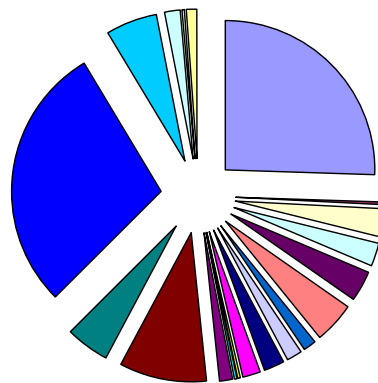
- **21** theatre and artist partners provided **24** projects, resulting in **49** STEP funded activities for Southwark schools and communities during the STEP Festival fortnight
- **15** performances and **100** workshops took place during and leading up to the STEP Festival fortnight
- **36%** of the **107** Southwark schools invited to participate took part (11 Early Years or Nursery schools, 71 Primary schools, 12 Secondary schools, 7 Special schools, 2 Pupil Referral Units, 1 College and 3 youth groups were invited)
- **37%** of these education partners were new to STEP
- **1551** young people and **156** education staff took part - Total participation: **1707**
- The age range of participating young people was **0 to 20**
- **9** projects took place over more than one week and delivered longer-term learning objectives than a one off activity
- **6** projects involved participants from different schools working together
- **100%** of education partners who completed evaluation said that the project had a positive impact on their own practice
- **86%** of education partners who completed evaluation said that the project was of high quality
- **40%** of practitioners delivering STEP activities were from an ethnic background other than White British
- **75%** of participants were from an ethnic background other than White British
- **42%** of participants have SEN
- **47%** of participants receive free school lunches

Ethnic Background - Practitioner



- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| White British | White Eastern European | White Other |
| Mixed White and Asian | Asian - Indian | Black British |
| Black African | East Asian Other | |

Ethnic Background - Participants



- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| White British | White Irish | White Eastern European |
| White Turkish Cypriot | Other White | White and Black Caribbean |
| White and Black African | White and Asian | Other Mixed |
| Asian - British | Asian - Indian | Asian - Bangladeshi |
| Other Asian | Black British | Black Caribbean |
| Black African | Other Black | East Asian British |
| Vietnamese | Other Ethnic Group | |

STEP Strategy

STEP is now in its fifth year and is going from strength to strength. It has developed from a two-week Festival led by Southwark Council into an independent charitable organisation with a much broader year-round programme of events and projects, which are enabling long-term sustainable partnerships between the theatre community and schools in Southwark. As an independent arts organisation STEP has the ability to manage its own forward strategy with continued support from the Council.

STEP is in the process of implementing a long-term strategy in order to solidify its work already happening across the borough. STEP's partnership work is intrinsic to this strategy. STEP will continue to work as a partnership with Southwark's theatres and performing arts organisations in order to develop a meaningful and cohesive programme of work and maximise resources and professional skills across the borough.

A copy of STEP's Business Plan (2008-2011) is available on request