

NCCL Evaluation Report Summary

Theatre of Law

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JOHN LYON'S CHARITY
PART OF THE HARROW SCHOOL FOUNDATION

NCCL Project Summary

- A Theatre Of Law at The Royal Courts of Justice is an innovative project run by the NCCL (National Centre for Citizenship and the law) and funded by the John Lyon's Charity. This is a fun and interactive project intended to introduce pupils to the contemporary justice system. A Theatre Of Law has been created to improve pupils' understanding of the law and the consequences of their actions. Sessions involve role play and the use of court rooms at the Royal Courts of Justice.
- Theatre of Law responds to the need for early intervention as outlined by the Government by identifying and working with schools which are in areas that have higher than average levels of recorded youth crime and deprived areas. The project has met specifically the need to tackle knife crime and gang crime by working with secondary schools in areas at risk and developing specific resources and educational material on knife crime and gang crime, which have been identified as key areas for intervention by the Government.
- Also, Theatre of Law meets the need to address crime in areas which suffer by poverty and deprivation. In 2013 Theatre of Law identified and worked with 20 schools from the boroughs of Harrow, Brent and Westminster. A core category was children who had been identified as most at risk of being involved in crime because of the areas that they live in. The Metropolitan Police Crime Capping shows that some of the boroughs above have been identified as areas with high percentages of crime, compared with the average for London. For example, Westminster has been identified as the borough with the highest rate of anti-social crimes.
- From March 2013 to date the **Theatre of Law** project has been delivered to 20 targeted schools across the Boroughs of Harrow, Brent and Westminster. Approximately 806 primary and secondary students have been engaged and further 90 students have been provisionally booked for sessions in October and November 2013. This, in addition to 892 students engaged in the previous year, reaches a total of 1,818 students out of the target of 2,000. The remaining 182 students are in the process of being recruited by December 2013.
- The aims of the **Theatre of Law** project as set by NCCL are:
 - To improve participants' knowledge and understanding of the Law and how the Law works
 - To give participants the opportunity to learn about the consequences of crime, how crime impacts on individuals and society and how they can learn to avoid it in their lives
 - To help participants gain an insight into the workings of the Justice system and the roles of professionals in it
 - To encourage participants to raise their aspirations to see the law and related areas as a future career possibility

Evidence of Generic Learning Outcomes and Generic Social Outcomes

The Inspiring Learning For All (ILFA) framework was used to analyse the evaluation results. The evaluation results show evidence that learning has taken place in 4 of the 5 Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) in the Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA's) "Inspiring Learning for All" (ILFA) framework: **Knowledge and Understanding; Attitudes and Values, Activity, Behaviour and Progression, Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity.**

Evidence also exists that the project met all three of the Generic Social Outcome Categories: **Stronger and Safer Communities; Strengthening Public Life; Health and Well-being.**

Generic Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

Participants demonstrated that they had increased their knowledge about certain topics and learned new facts and information about the Law and the Justice System as a result of taking part in the **Theatre of Law** project.

For example, in primary schools, the percentage of participants who were able to name the 5 types of Courts at the end of the first session increased by 77%; the percentage of participants who knew the order of the Courts increased by 55% and the percentage of participants who knew the difference between a Youth Court and a Criminal Court increased by 42%.

In addition to this, the knowledge retention activity at the beginning of the second visit showed that the majority of primary school participants retained their knowledge after the end of the project with 93% remembering that the Crown Court has a judge and a jury, 98% identifying that the usher is the only person in a Youth Court wearing a robe, 96% identifying the Youth Court as the court where no reporters are allowed, 95% identifying that the Barristers work in a Criminal Court and 95% identifying the Defendant as the person sitting in the dock.

Specifically in secondary schools, a sharp increase in the knowledge and understanding of participants about the criminal justice system is recorded throughout the project.

In the first session, the percentage of participants who were able to name the 5 types of courts increased from 14% to 99% after the session; the percentage of participants who knew the order of the courts increased from 16% to 98% and last, the percentage of students who knew the difference between a Youth Court and a Criminal Court increased from 36% to 98%. The majority of participants retained this knowledge after the end of the project with 87% answering that young people would go to a Youth Court, when asked at the beginning of the second visit.

In regards to knife crime, which was the project's focus in secondary schools, 92% of the participants stated that the first session gave them a better understanding about the law concerning knives. Participants showed that they retained this knowledge in the second visit with 87% answering "no" to the Question "is it legal to carry a knife in public?" and 7% answering "*depends*" and explaining their answer by citing examples where carrying a knife is allowed i.e. "*it's allowed when the blade is 3 inches long*", demonstrating a detailed knowledge of the law about knives.

At the end of the project, a big percentage of the participants have stated that the visit gave them a great understanding of how the law works with 62% of the participants rating their knowledge and understanding of what happens in a court room as "excellent" and 37% as

“good”; 62% rated their knowledge of the people who work in a court room as “excellent” and 36% as “good”.

Attitudes and Values

All participants demonstrated significant changes in their attitudes and values as a result of completing the Theatre of Law project.

In primary schools the percentage of the participants who stated that they understand how a victim feels increased from 77% before the session to 92% after the session, and the percentage of participants who understood how their choices can affect others increased from 77% to 87%, demonstrating an attitude change about crime and the consequences of their actions.

This change in attitudes and values is recorded throughout the project, with 83% primary pupils answering that committing a crime would affect their whole life; 45% of them explained their life would be affected because they would get a criminal record, 23% because it would affect their relationship with other people/the community, 21% because it will increase the chances of getting in more trouble in the future and 11% because they wouldn't be able to forget the crime and/or they would be unhappy. Responses demonstrate a deep understanding of the possible consequences of their actions, emotional and physical, together with an understanding of the effects crime would have on the participants' future, as well as on the wider community.

Responses stating that the project helped 17% of the participants to learn something new, show that the new fact was about moral implications of crime, i.e. *“learned there is more than one choice”*, *“I learned what to do if someone persuades you to be bad”*, *“learnt a lot about what is illegal”*. These responses suggest that the project caused a significant shift in attitudes and values.

It's also worth noting that 7% of the primary school participants gave as a reason for enjoying the role-play the fact that they “understood the characters of the story”, which suggests that they engaged deeply with the characters they played, such as the young offenders, the victim and the community affected by the crime.

In terms of secondary school participants, the evidence suggests that the project significantly strengthened their attitude against knife crime. At the end of the first session participants stated that they learnt that knife crime is punished severely, e.g. *“it's illegal to carry a knife even for self-protection”*, *“you can get 4 years for carrying a knife”*, whereas, the majority of participants (62%) said that knowing the law helps to strengthen your attitude against crime, e.g. *“it helps so you don't make mistakes like them”* (them=the characters in the knife crime story), *“knowing the law means I know what not to do”*, *“so you don't become someone like Mo in the future”*. (Mo= the defendant in the knife crime story). These responses indicate participants' desire to adopt a positive attitude in being a good citizen and highlight a clear negative view of crime.

Activity, Behaviour and Progression

Results suggest that at the end of the project the behaviour of the majority of the participants has been strongly influenced, with 83% of the primary school participants saying that committing a crime would affect their whole life, and therefore suggesting they would avoid breaking the law or getting involved in criminal activities. The majority found that knowing the law is useful so that they don't break it, which suggests a strong intention to comply with the law, e.g. *“it helps me know what not to do”*. Some of the participants said that knowing the law helps them to resist peer pressure (3%) e.g. *“so that you know what to do when*

someone tells you to be bad” and some stated it’s useful for their future (8%). This indicates a strong influence on their behaviour, in terms of them acting as law abiding citizens.

Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest participants have been encouraged to consider law as a career possibility thus expanding their career options. 17% of the secondary school participants cited a fact they learned about the Jobs that people do in court, suggesting an interest in the skills necessary for this career, such as *“In order to become a judge you have to be trained in law and practice law for many years”* and *“I learned that to become a lawyer you have to be good in arguing a case”*. A small percentage of participants said that knowing the law is useful for their future career, suggesting that they have been encouraged to think of it as a career option, e.g. *“you might want to work in law and it is very useful to learn how law works”*.

Also, comments in the feedback section mention that taking part in the project helped participants consider law as their future career and for this reason they would recommend it to friends: *“That they should go next year and it really is beneficial knowledge, you never know what your future holds! You could become a judge, jury or someone else working in the court and before you start the course in Uni, you’ll know something at least!”*.

Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity

Results suggest that for primary schools the level of enjoyment was very high as all the participants (100%) cited at least one activity they enjoyed, with the majority (72%) stating that there was nothing they didn’t enjoy.

The second session was also rated as great fun by 83% of the primary school participants and none of them (0%) found it boring. The majority (56%) enjoyed mostly the trial (56%) followed closely by the tour (36%) which suggests that the combination of the project content appealed to the majority of the participants.

In secondary schools, the results suggest that the level of enjoyment and inspiration was also very high; in the first session 100% of the participants citing at least one part of the session as enjoyable (65% enjoying the Youth Court Activity, 17% enjoying the Crime Histories, 8% enjoying the Film activity about knife crime, etc). Fun and engagement were the main reasons students enjoyed the activities with 63% enjoying the activities because they found them fun/interactive (knowledge being the second highest reason). Also, to the question “What you least enjoyed” a big percentage of the participants (59%) gave answers such as *“nothing, we were lucky to be chosen for this project!!!”* and *“I liked everything”*.

The second visit was equally enjoyable with 100% of the participants finding enjoyable either the mock trial (65%), or the tour (20%) or the Q&A (8%) and 7% enjoying everything, e.g. *“It was all amazing, BEST TRIP EVER”*.

Participants’ feedback at the end of the project shows that they rated the project as fun and enjoyable, e.g. *“It was inspiring, very well organised and a lot of fun”* and *“Really recommended, very enjoyable and very informative”*.

Generic Social Outcomes

Stronger and Safer Communities

The statistics mentioned above suggest that the GSO aims of tackling the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and contributing to crime prevention and reduction have been met by the participants. Specifically, 83% of the primary school participants felt that crime would affect their whole life, 41% of them stated that knowledge of the law is important so that *“you don’t break it”* and 31% so that *“you stay out of trouble”*. Responses stating that knowledge of the law prevents people from breaking it, i.e. *“because if you do not know about the law you can break it and be arrested”*, *“it is important (to know the law) because if u did something and you broke the law you will go to court”*, *“so we don’t make bad choices when we’re older or now”*, demonstrate that participants have increased awareness about crime and intend to contribute to its reduction by not breaking the law.

Also, a clear understanding of consequences of actions and how a victim feels underpins the majority of participants’ responses throughout the project, a stronger awareness of the importance of communities (i.e. 23% of the participants’ response to why a crime would affect their life was *“it would affect my relationship with the community/ other people”*).

Strengthening Public Life

The sharp increase in knowledge and understanding of the law by the overwhelming majority of participants from both primary and secondary schools, as demonstrated above, indicates that participants’ awareness of local decision-making has increased. Activities such as the Jobs in Court and Courts in Order have encouraged participants’ awareness of the structure of the Courts, including the process of decision making in a court, e.g. *“I learnt the names of the different courts and what each court does and who makes all the decisions in each court”*. This indicates a higher likelihood of wider civic and political engagement.

Health and Well-being

Participants’ positive remarks about the project show a rise in aspirations, e.g. *“you never know what your future holds! You could become a judge, jury or someone else working in the court”*. This, along with the percentage of participants who deemed knowledge of the law important so that they could avoid breaking it (41%) and staying out of trouble (31%), indicates that the project meets the GSO objective to help children and young people to enjoy life and make a positive contribution to society.

Evidence of Project Outcomes

The evaluation results provide evidence that the project outcomes as set by NCCL were met.

Improve knowledge and understanding of the Law and how the Law works

Evaluation results demonstrate that participants have increased their knowledge and understanding of the Law and how the Law works. For primary school participants, knowledge of the 5 types of courts increased by 77%, knowledge of the names of courts increased by 58%, knowledge of the order of the courts increased by 51%, knowledge of the difference between Criminal courts and Youth courts increased by 42%.

For secondary school participants, the percentage of participants who were able to name the 5 types of courts increased by 85%, the percentage of participants who knew the order of the courts increased by 82% and the percentage of students who knew the difference between a Youth Court and a Criminal Court increased by 62%.

The knowledge retention questions on the second visit for both primary and secondary school participants demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of participants retained the information after the project with the majority gaining 80-90% of the answers right.

Knowledge of the consequences of crime, how crime impacts on individuals and society and how participants can learn to avoid it in their lives

Results demonstrate that, through role-play, scripted mock trials and research resources on crime, all participants gained a clear understanding of consequences of crime and how crime impacts individuals and society.

In primary schools, understanding of how a victim feels increased by 15% and the percentage of participants who understood how their choices could affect others increased by 10%, demonstrating an attitude change about crime and the consequences of their actions.

Responses stating that the project helped 17% of the participants to learn something new, show that they learned about moral implications of crime, i.e. *“learned there is more than one choice”*, *“I learned what to do if someone persuades you to be bad”*, *“learnt a lot about what is illegal”* suggests the project brought a significant shift in attitudes and values and helped participants to find ways to resist to crime.

In secondary schools, 92% of the participants gained a better understanding about the law concerning knives and 85% acknowledged carrying a knife in public as illegal with the majority of participants (62%) acknowledging the importance of the law in strengthening your attitude against crime: to stay out of trouble, to know the consequences of your actions and to be a good citizen were cited as a result of knowing the law. This indicates the formation of a strong sense of what it is to be a good citizen and an increasingly negative view of criminal activity.

Gain an insight into the workings of the Justice system and the roles of professionals in it

Results showed that taking part in and creating performance mock trials in an authentic court room has helped almost 100% of the participants gain an understanding of the way the Justice system works.

In primary schools an overwhelming majority retained their knowledge of the Jobs in court after the project, with 98% of the participants identifying the Court Usher's job, 95% of the participants identifying the Barristers' job and 92% of the participants identifying the Legal Advisor's job.

62% of the secondary school participants rated their knowledge and understanding of what happens in a court room as "excellent" and 37% as "good" with only 1% rating it satisfactory; 62% rated their knowledge of the people who work in a court room as "excellent" and 36% as "good" (only 2% satisfactory).

To encourage aspirations to see the law and related areas as a future career possibility

17% of the secondary school participants cited a fact they learned about the Jobs that people do in court, suggesting an interest in the skills necessary for this career, such as "*In order to become a judge you have to be trained in law and practice law for many years*" and "*I learned that to become a lawyer you have to be good in arguing a case*"

Also, a small percentage of the secondary school participants (2%), said that knowing the law is useful for their future career, suggesting that they have been encouraged to think of it as a career option "*you might want to work in law and it is very useful to learn how law works*" and 8% identified as the best part of the first session the Court Activity because it gave them a better understanding of future careers "*It was good practice if you are interested in a law career*".

Furthermore, comments in the feedback section mention that taking part in the project helped participants consider law as their future career and for this reason they would recommend it to friends: "*That they should go next year and it really is beneficial knowledge, you never know what your future holds! You could become a judge, jury or someone else working in the court and before you start the course in Uni, you'll know something at least!*" (Year 11 student)

Evidence of other Project Outcomes

The evaluation results show that learning aims have been met within the **National Curriculum for Citizenship at Key Stage 2 and 3**, including:

- **Prepare to play an active role as citizens**

Results show that through activities such as the Jobs in Court and Courts in Order, there has been a significant increase in knowledge and understanding of the law by the overwhelming majority of participants from both primary and secondary schools. Thus, this indicates that participants' awareness of local decision-making has increased, preparing them to play an active role as citizens. For example, the percentage of participants who were able to name the 5 types of Courts at the end of the first session increased by 77% and the percentage of participants who knew the order of the Courts increased by 55% and the percentage of participants who knew the difference between a Youth Court and a Criminal Court increased by 42%. This shows that participants' awareness of the structure of the Courts, including the process of decision making in a court, has been encouraged.

- **Learning why and how rules and laws are made and enforced, why different rules are needed in different situations and how to take part in making and changing rules**

Results show that participants have demonstrated a more complex understanding of the Law and specifically how and why appropriate punishments are enforced in the Justice system, with 35% of the participants stating they learnt that there are different types of punishment and/or naming some of the punishments including a Curfew, Community Order and Youth Rehabilitation Order and 28% learning that Magistrates give out punishments depending on the nature of the crime and the background of the defendant. This shows the participants have developed specific knowledge in rule making and which specific punishments apply in different situations.