



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

2020-2021





Click the link where you see this symbol throughout the document

## OUR VISION

Is that our youngest children, those from birth to 5, fulfil their right to access arts and creative experiences that give inspiration, joy and wonder to early childhood in Scotland.

## OUR MISSION

Is to inspire babies, toddlers and young children by including them in high quality live performances and creative experiences that fulfil their right to access a rich arts and cultural life in Scotland regardless of where they live or their background.



## OUR VALUES

### Creative and Curious

We believe in the innate creative capacity we all have. We know that by nurturing curiosity and by asking questions it allows us to create and deliver exciting, innovative work.

### Bold and Brave

We are unafraid of new ideas and taking risks. We want to be pioneers, challenging perceptions of what can be made and shared with babies, toddlers and young children.

### Collaborative and Connected

We celebrate our existing partnerships and seek out new relationships in the knowledge that our work is stronger because we are working with others who have differing expertise. We are open and care about those we work with, ensuring that everyone is able to have their voice heard and respected.

### Reflective and Responsive

We are a reflective organisation. We want to learn from the work we have delivered, understanding the successes and challenges to inform what we do next, and sharing our experience openly so that others can also learn from what we have done.

## CONTENTS

### PAGE THREE

Introduction

### PAGE FOUR

Our Impact

### PAGE FIVE

Our Audiences

### PAGE SIX

Wee Inspirations

### PAGES EIGHT AND NINE

Activity Timeline

### PAGE 10

Our Reach

### PAGE 12

Understanding Impact

### PAGE 13

Community Engagement

### PAGE 14

Creative Skills

### PAGE 15

Productions & Artist Development

### PAGE 16

Advocacy

### PAGE 17

Finances

### PAGE 18

Artists, Partners and Funders

### PAGE 19

The Starcatchers' Team

Cover image: Wee Inspirations, Air Drawing



## INTRODUCTION FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE, RHONA MATHESON



After what has been the most unusual year, I am delighted we are sharing our annual report for 2020-2021.

When I reflect on everything that has happened in this time, I am filled with admiration and pride in the whole Starcatchers team – the staff, the freelance artists and practitioners, and our Board – without whom we would not have been able to deliver all the work that is outlined in this document.

In March 2020, just before the end of the last financial year, we had shut our office and started to make plans to postpone or cancel activity. It was worrying, uncertain and at times a little chaotic as we moved to respond to the changes that were taking place. As we settled in to living and working in lockdown we were able to reassess and reaffirm our purpose whilst adapting or initiating activities that would allow us to connect with babies, toddlers, young children, their parents, carers and educators in communities across Scotland, as well as in other parts of the world.

As can be seen in this Annual Report, Starcatchers made things happen. It delivered in 2020-2021. Whilst we had to pause much of our production activity, we rose to the challenge of retaining or making connections. Our Wee Inspirations provide parents, carers and Early Years professionals with simple, low/no cost creative activities to share with their children. We shared more than 2,000 creative play parcels to families across six local authority areas, providing both Wee Inspirations cards alongside arts materials.

A positive we have taken from COVID working has been the increase in our ability to connect digitally. Our pioneering Creative Skills programme for the Early Learning and Childcare Workforce has been refreshed with podcasts, online resources and zoom meetings with artists.

At the same time, being able to continue face-to-face engagement with the families in the communities where we work has been an essential to our activity this year. Our resourceful community engagement team took every opportunity to find ways of connecting, leading to a new outdoors-focused approach which was warmly welcomed by the families, even in winter!

A fundamental part of our activity over the last year was to find ways to support the artists in our community for whom the impact of the pandemic has been catastrophic. We provided virtual spaces to connect, share practice and create new work, and also supported artists to work with children in their local communities. By working with artists across all our pillars of activity, it was possible to create a new understanding of how to work safely and effectively. We are not able to deliver our work without the creativity and inspiration of these artists and thus it was essential to focus our resources on providing support wherever possible.

2020-2021 also provided us with the time to reimagine the organisation – interrogating how we work, where we work and who we work with. We created new Strategic Priorities for the next five years which will help guide us with purpose and clear vision.

As we move into 2021-22 and celebrate 15 years of Starcatchers, we are in a good place. Despite the challenges we have faced we can look forward to a future that is filled with arts and creative experiences for our youngest children, created by artists and practitioners, bringing inspiration, joy and magic to early childhood in Scotland.





# OUR IMPACT

202,317

## AUDIENCE REACH

Across all Starcatchers' activity. This figure includes audiences at Starcatchers' presentations, digital reach, and the estimated figure of very young children who benefitted from Creative Skills training via their early years practitioners.



## 6 NEW WORKS IN DEVELOPMENT

Exploration of these works will continue into 2021-2022 with touring plans in place for SPIKE! a dinosaur tale.

5

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

Expecting Something took place in **Edinburgh** and **Fife**, Creative Kin in **North Ayrshire**, Girvan Creative Babies in **South Ayrshire**, Move + Make in **Glasgow**, and Once Upon an Egg in **Dundee**.

242

## FAMILIES ENGAGED

Across Big Inspirations and community projects in 2020-2021, 242 families were directly engaged in Starcatchers' activity either in-person or in a digital environment. An additional 2,000 families received a Wee Inspirations Creative Pack.

124

## ARTISTS ENGAGED

Through Playspace opportunities, including commissions, development funds, training sessions and funded places at conferences.

3

## NEW PRODUCTIONS

Funded by Starcatchers in a programme called Big Inspirations. These events took place online and in communities.

2,271

## CREATIVE PACKS DELIVERED

Starcatchers' Creative Play Packs were accessible, low-stress, interactive activities shared with families and participants across all the pillars of activity in 2020-2021. The packs ensured continued access to creative experiences for the very young during lockdown.

28

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES REACHED

Through Wee Inspirations and delivery of creative play packs, as well as the pivot to online delivery of Playspace and Creative Skills, Starcatchers reached 28 Local Authority areas in 2020-2021.

108,180

## WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

Wee Inspirations drove high traffic to Starcatchers' website in 2020-2021 with page views totalling 6,426 between April and August alone.

1,231

## NEW FOLLOWERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Starcatchers' digital presence increased rapidly at the beginning of lockdown, supported by Wee Inspirations being featured on a multitude of platforms and by a variety of organisations.

627

## EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONERS

Engaged in online and in-person Creative Skills sessions. On average, each participant has direct engagement with approximately 40 children in their settings = 25,080 children benefitting from Creative Skills.

## 4 INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Despite the pandemic restricting our ability to deliver in-person international activity, we were able to adapt and utilise digital technology to continue to engage with international colleagues.

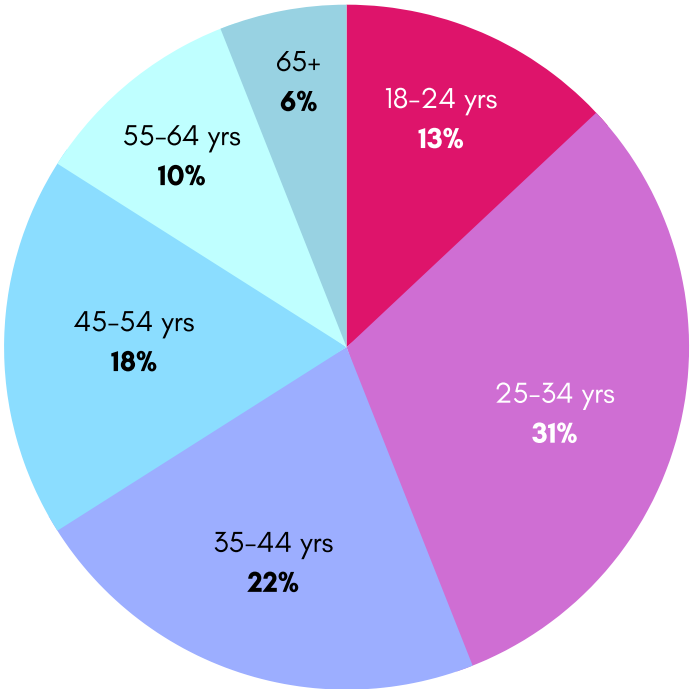




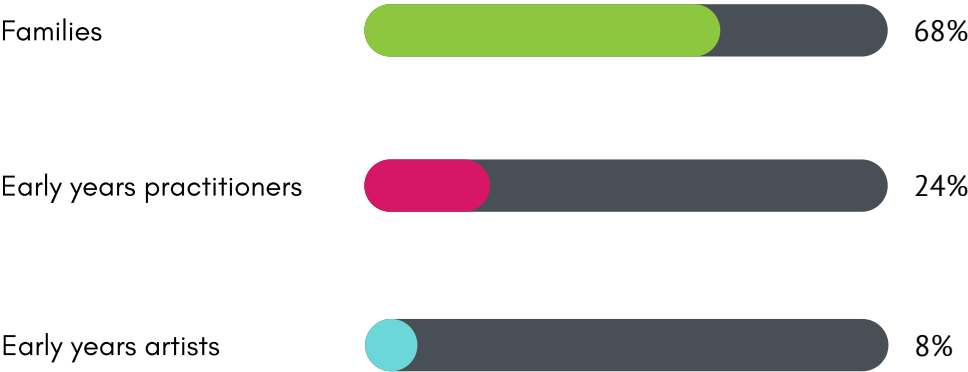
Wee Inspirations: Chalk Puddles

# OUR AUDIENCES

WEB VISITS BY AGE



MAKE-UP OF IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENTS



IN-PERSON AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT BY LOCATION (SCOTLAND)





# WEE INSPIRATIONS



"I HAVE TWO LITTLE BOYS WHO ARE AUTISTIC SO IT CAN BE VERY DIFFICULT TO KEEP THEIR ATTENTION SO THE ACTIVITY PACK WAS SO HELPFUL IN TRYING LOTS OF NEW THINGS THEY HADN'T DONE BEFORE AND THEY ENJOYED ALL OF THE DIFFERENT TEXTURES OF ALL THE PACK CONTENTS, THEIR FAVOURITES WERE THE CONFETTI AND PEGS!"

At the start of the year, as the global pandemic necessitated a period of lockdown, Starcatchers created a new programme of online resource to be universally available to families, for free. Wee Inspirations were shared frequently across our social media channels, encouraging families and sharing fun, low-cost, low-fuss ideas for playing creatively with their very young children at home. By sharing artists' ideas we engaged with thousands of families across Scotland, as well as with those in the early learning and childcare workforce. Starcatchers continued to produce Wee Inspirations throughout the year, tying in to key milestones and cultural celebrations, as well as linking to other pieces of the company's activity.

IN SUMMER 2020, THE WEE INSPIRATIONS CAMPAIGN WAS DEVELOPED INTO CREATIVE PLAY PARCELS, DELIVERED THROUGHOUT AREAS DEALING WITH SOCIAL INEQUITIES AND POVERTY. STARCATCHERS WORKED WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY ELC STAFF AND THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS TO IDENTIFY FAMILIES IN NEED AND ENSURE THEY EACH RECEIVED A PACK.

Glasgow East  
Edinburgh  
East Renfrewshire  
Falkirk  
North Ayrshire  
South Ayrshire



Delivered to  
**2,000 families.**  
Over **4,500 people**  
across **six local**  
**authority areas**  
benefitted

## Each Creative Play Pack included:

Wee Inspiration ideas cards, a welcome letter, envelopes, pad of paper, balloons, Blu Tak, paint brushes, food colouring, pipettes, tape, chalk, pens, confetti, pegs, an evaluation card with pre-paid envelope.

92%

Read the Wee Inspirations idea cards and tried some of the activity cards.

89%

Used the materials in the pack with their children

90%

Said their children showed interest in the activities that they tried

88%

Felt close to their children whilst doing the activities

94%

Had fun doing the activities with their children

**Starcatchers' #WeeInspirations**  
Have some fun, save your sanity

**YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED**

**THE BASIC IDEA**  
Create a piece of art by laying out natural materials (leaves, sticks, stones etc) in a frame on the ground. The frame can be made of sticks, tape, anything that that helps focus the eye.

**OVER TO YOU, WEE ONE**  
Long before they talk, wee ones communicate with us by handing us objects. Have a pile of materials for you, and a pile of materials for you wee one to play with. Chat as you work away and make a big deal of thanking them for whatever they hand you.

**CHEEKY BONUSES**

- decision making builds agency
- fine motor development
- exploring the outdoors

**VARIATIONS**

- Older wee ones can have a scavenger hunt to collect their natural materials
- If you don't have a garden, collect materials on your walk and build your art at home
- Add paint and use leaves etc to print on paper

**AND REMEMBER...**  
Take a picture of whatever you make together! It doesn't have to look like anything, just value the experience. Oh, and if your wee one keeps wrecking the art, treat it like building towers - build to knock down, again and again.

@StarcatchersCS  
 @StarcatchersUK  
[www.starcatchers.org.uk](http://www.starcatchers.org.uk)

6,426

People visited the Wee Inspirations webpage between March - August 2020.

127

Settings shared Wee Inspirations on their social media and websites



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

In only two months from February to April 2020 there was a **236%** increase in the number of visitors to Starcatchers' website, with **2,999** visitors in total in April alone.

**1,350** of these visitors (45%) were looking at Wee Inspirations.

Since launching Wee Inspirations, Starcatchers' Twitter has gained **261** followers.

Creative Skills Twitter gained **194** followers.

Facebook increased from an average of **200** page visits in February, to over **500** in April.

Wee Inspirations was featured in HR lockdown wellbeing newsletters for West College Scotland and Hilton Group, reaching **2700** employees.

Wee Inspirations is now featured on **BBC Scotland Learning from Home website**.

159

Organisations\* shared Wee Inspirations on their social media and websites

\* Including BBC Scotland, Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare, Early Years Scotland, Play Scotland, Children 1st, Parent's Network, Imagine, The Children's Parliament, Upstart and local authorities from Shetland to the Borders.



**WEE INSPIRATIONS IDEA CARD**



"MY CHILD WAS VERY EXCITED, ASKED TO DO THEM ALL. ONE DAY SPENT HALF AN HOUR PAINTING HER FEET, FACE, HANDS, EVEN MUMMY HAD A MAKEOVER TOO. LOVES MAKING STORIES WITH HER DAD AND TEDDIES READING THEM STORIES USING LITTLE PROPS AROUND THE HOUSE. SHE WAS IN CONTROL, VERY INDEPENDENT WAS GREAT TO WATCH"







# ACTIVITY TIMELINE

Expecting Something moved to online delivery, which included sending creative parcels to participants. Delivered by artists [Katy Wilson](#), [Marion Geoffray](#), and [Kerry Cleland](#).

[Big Inspirations](#) launched to support early years artist development and explore new ways of connecting with and inspiring young children when face-to-face engagement is not possible.

Rainbow-coloured creativity packs were delivered to Expecting Something families to launch a new block of sessions in the spring.

Mixed Up by Katy Wilson was commissioned by [Imagine](#) for the 2021 Edinburgh International Children's Festival. This was then reworked into a film with a playground experience for delivery in 2021/22.

[Big Inspirations: Move + Make](#) with [Rebecca Fraser](#) in Tollcross, Glasgow.

Expecting Something in-person sessions restarted in an outdoors setting.

[Big Inspirations: Teddy Bears Picnic Adventure](#) with [Niamh O'Loughlin](#)

[Big Inspirations: Once Upon an Egg](#) with [Amy Hall-Gibson](#).

Creative Play sessions began in Lochgelly, Fife.

Expecting Something at Wester Hailes

APRIL

New series of Wee Inspiration idea cards for parents at home with young children. These are fun, creative ideas to engage little ones without a lot of kit, stress, nor pressure to 'achieve' anything. They are inspired by artists who work across [Starcatchers](#)' different areas of work.

25 Playspace Bursaries issued to artists as part of our Covid response, each offering £250 towards training and practice

MAY

Five [Big Inspirations](#) commissions of £1000 were awarded to early years artists in Scotland to explore ways of connecting with and inspiring very young children aged 0-5 when face-to-face engagement is not possible.

JUNE

[Big Inspirations: Up and Down](#) by [Ipdip Theatre](#) brought little ones together with their extended family inside the colourful world of [Troggle](#) and [Mira](#) – an interactive online theatrical experience for children under 5 and their grown-ups near and far...

Received confirmation of Erasmus+ funding for Arts and Early Childhood, a new creative exchange project for Early Years professionals from Scotland, France, The Netherlands and Catalonia. Full delivery will take place from Summer 2021.

JULY

[Wee Inspirations Creative Play Packs](#) distributed to [babies, young children and their families across Scotland](#) to encourage fun, creative play between adults and little ones.

Worked with [Articulate](#) to deliver creative parenting online support to families in Scotland. The sessions helped to build parental confidence and develop stronger bonds between parents and their wee ones through shared creative play.

AUGUST

[Big Inspirations: The Refs Ultimate Obstacle Course](#) by [Sarah Rose Graber](#) and [Ruxy Cantir](#).

[Rhona Matheson](#) gave presentations about [Starcatchers](#) to students at the Arts Education Centre at [Seo Kyeong University](#) in Seoul and contributed to the [Change-Up Program](#) for young creative entrepreneurs delivered by [Seongbuk Cultural Foundation](#) in Korea.

Started participating in Arts in Education Recovery Group.

[Participated in Children In Scotland's 25 Calls and Up](#), one of 12 organisations calling on the Scottish Government and local authorities to ensure arts and creativity are at the heart of every child's life.

“NEVER BEEN TO A GROUP BEFORE. I HARDLY EVER LEAVE THE HOUSE. I’VE REALLY BAD ANXIETY. HERE I AM HERE IN THE POURING RAIN. I AM REALLY PROUD OF MYSELF AND I’LL COME NEXT WEEK.

Expecting Something participant



Girvan Creative Babies Play Packs





SPIKE! development took place with creators [Andy Cannon](#) and [David Trouton](#).

SEPT

Creative Kin 2020-2023 began with new project team hired.

OCT

Professional Encounter, at the El Mes Petit de Tots Festival. Four artists supported to attend online

NOV

First Creative Kin pack delivered.

DEC

We supported and mentored an Edinburgh College student studying a BA in Applied Theatre, through a placement with Expecting Something.

JAN



[Creative Skills goes online](#)

Rhona Matheson and artist Heather Fulton contributed virtually to a week-long programme of artist development with artists as part of a new Taiwan Baby Theatre Lab initiative.



[Artwork created by Expecting Something families unveiled at Fife Exhibition](#)

Dundee based dance organisation, [Shaper/Caper](#) commissioned to create new work for early years audience.



[Starcatchers team move fully to a remote working model leaving our office space in Summerhall, Edinburgh.](#)

A series of 5 sessions led by Dr Suzanne Zeedyk reflecting on the movement now underway across society for individuals and sectors to become trauma informed.

Cozy Skills started in Wester Hailes, an online support group for new mum's in partnership with Gate-55 Lifelong Learning.



[Girvan Creative Babies](#) project began delivery in South Ayrshire in partnership with [Children 1st](#) and led by artist, [Corrie McKendrick](#).



Premiere of the film [PomPom](#) by artists Rebecca Fraser, [Geraldine Heaney](#) and [Matt Addicott](#), commissioned for [UNCON](#), an event designed to showcase and celebrate the best of youth arts and creativity in Scotland. [PomPom](#) explores the curiosity of children, and discovers, by simply listening to them, how much children tell us through their play.

13 Artists supported to attend [ASSITEJ](#) World Congress & International Performing Arts Festival for Children and Young People / MIRAI 2020.



[Starcatchers, Imagineate and Lyra join forces for new creative project, Where We Are](#)

Rhona Matheson chairs an online discussion for the [Smallsize Network](#) as part of the ASSITEJ World Congress about the importance of Early Years artists in the recovery from COVID

FEB

Creative Kin creative parcels delivered to kinship families.

Girvan Creative Babies creative parcels delivered to participants.

Two online sessions of Supporting Anti-Racism in our lives and practice with Lewis Hou of Anti-Racist Educator Collective.

MARCH

First Creative Kin Doorstep Performance of [Human Jukebox](#) performed for kinship families.

Alex McCabe and Suzie Cunningham of Buff & Sheen were supported to develop their show specifically for ages 0-2s.



[Starcatchers joins national celebrations as MSPs vote for UNCRC Incorporation.](#)

Pete Baynes supported to develop Forever in the Moment



**"THE ARTIST GAVE ME THE SPARK I NEEDED TO EMBRACE MUSIC MAKING IN THE NURSERY AGAIN. HER IDEAS WERE WONDERFULLY SIMPLE, ACCESSIBLE AND BRING BACK INTO FOCUS THE JOY OF MUSIC MAKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN."**

Creative Chat attendee





# OUR REACH

## CREATIVE PACKS DELIVERED



South West Edinburgh  
City of Edinburgh  
North Ayrshire  
South Ayrshire  
East Renfrewshire  
Falkirk  
Glasgow East

## BIG INSPIRATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY



Once Upon an Egg, **Dundee**  
Move + Make, **Glasgow**

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (IN-PERSON)



Expecting Something, **Wester Hailes, Edinburgh** and **Lochgelly, Fife**  
Girvan Creative Babies, **South Ayrshire**  
Creative Kin, **North Ayrshire**

## CREATIVE SKILLS

### PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY (ONLINE AND IN- PERSON)



Training delivered in partnership with colleges and local authorities. These sessions were developed to address the local authority and student's specific needs in their settings.

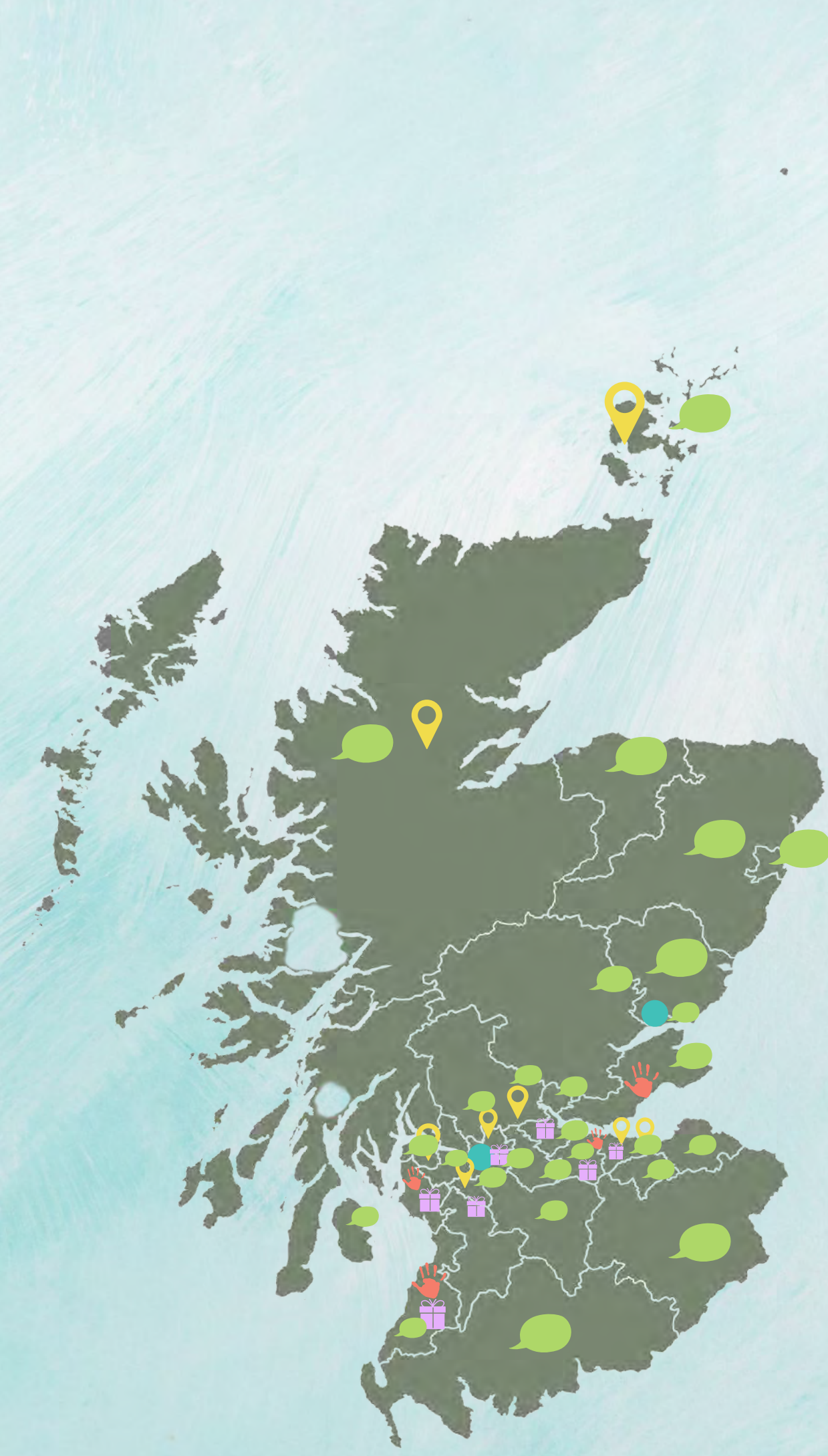
East Renfrewshire Council  
Orkney Islands Council  
Edinburgh City Council  
University of Highlands and Islands  
Glasgow Kelvin College  
Edinburgh College  
Kilmalcom Nursery, Inverclyde  
St. Patrick's Family Learning Centre, North Lanarkshire

### LIVE CREATIVE CHATS: NATIONAL REACH



Live online events hosted by our artists where they share practical ideas and create a space for the early years workforce to connect and ask questions. These sessions were open to all early years professionals in Scotland. **209 attendances across 25 online sessions reached 28 local authorities.**

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Aberdeen City         | 15. Inverclyde        |
| 2. Aberdeenshire         | 16. Midlothian        |
| 3. Angus                 | 17. Moray             |
| 4. City of Edinburgh     | 18. North Ayrshire    |
| 5. Clackmannanshire      | 19. North Lanarkshire |
| 6. Dumfries and Galloway | 20. Orkney Islands    |
| 7. Dundee City           | 21. Perth and Kinross |
| 8. East Dunbartonshire   | 22. Renfrewshire      |
| 9. East Lothian          | 23. Scottish Borders  |
| 10. East Renfrewshire    | 24. Shetland Islands  |
| 11. Falkirk              | 25. South Ayrshire    |
| 12. Fife                 | 26. South Lanarkshire |
| 13. Glasgow City         | 27. Stirling          |
| 14. Highlands            | 28. West Lothian      |









# UNDERSTANDING IMPACT

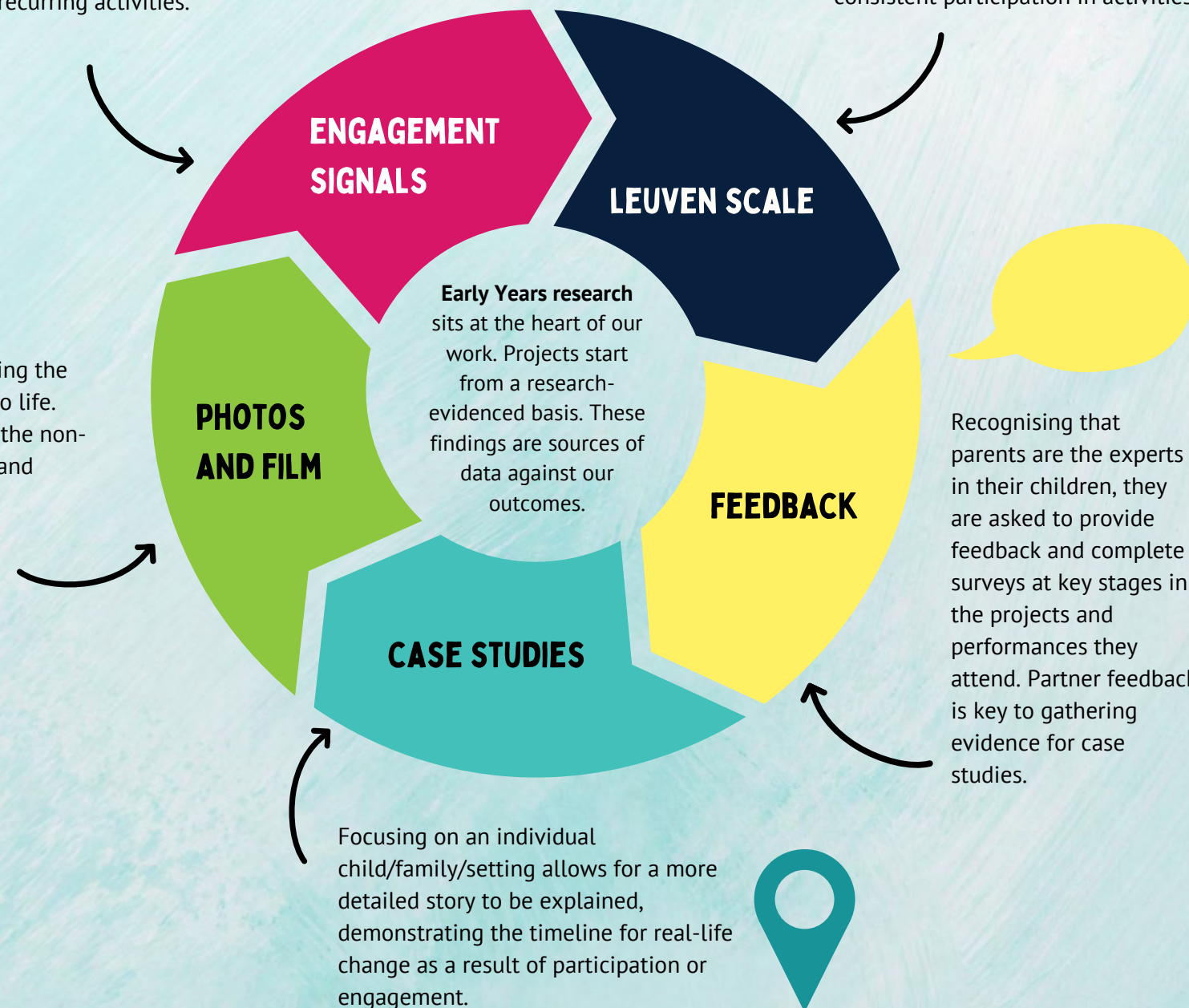
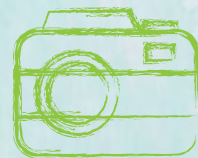
## GATHERING EVIDENCE

Our team makes careful observations of the children during face-to-face activities based on the seven pre-determined signals. These signals can be used to assess engagement in both one-off and recurring activities.



By charting wellbeing we can witness the changes for individuals over periods of time; from the beginning to the end of one session, or over the course of a year's consistent participation in activities.

Visuals help to bring the stats and stories to life. They also convey the non-verbal responses and emotions of the individuals.



## LEUVEN SCALES

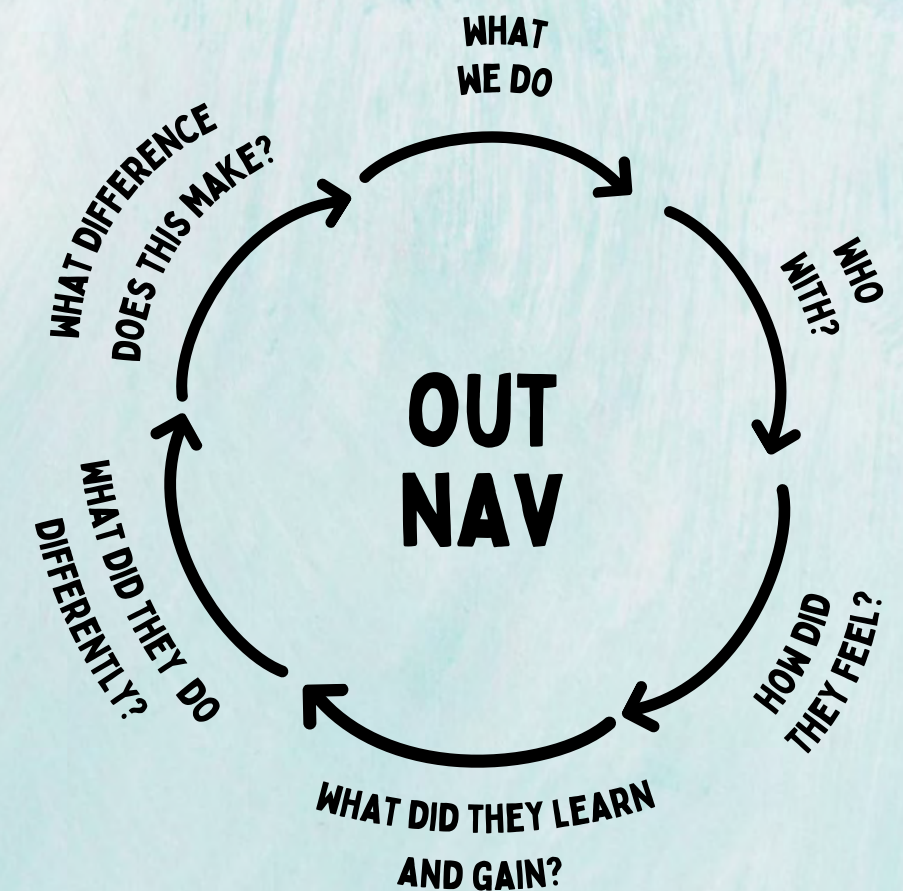
FOR WELLBEING AND FOR INVOLVEMENT

1. Extremely low
2. Low
3. Moderate
4. High
5. Extremely high

## ENGAGEMENT SIGNALS

Attuned  
Absorbed  
Mirroring  
Responsive  
Interactive  
Instigative  
Experimental

## EVALUATION



Starcatchers uses the Matter of Focus Out Nav platform to collect data and sources of evidence.



## EXPECTING SOMETHING Wester Hailes and Lochgelly

**Expecting Something** continued to support young mums and their families and, in total, the project provided 124 in-person sessions and 71 online activities. The artists and coordinator adapted their delivery model to the public health measures, embracing outdoor working and ensuring families had regular, meaningful, trusting connections.

**80**

Total Expecting  
Something  
sessions

**155**

Total  
participants  
reached

**36**

Families  
received x4  
Play Packs

[Click here for full  
20/21 report.](#)

"...the way they care and interest in you and your little one and have so much fun whilst learning is absolutely amazing and I am very thankful to have come along."

**Expecting Something parent**

"I love the location in the wood and all the nature."

**Expecting Something parent**

"Loved interacting with those of a similar age. He's an only child and around adults 95% of the time."

**Expecting Something parent**

"There is almost no crying. Young babies are so calm and often full of wonder in our environment."

**Expecting Something Lead Artist, Katy Wilson**

## MOVE + MAKE Tollcross, Glasgow ONCE UPON AN EGG Dundee

**Move + Make**, delivered by artist **Rebecca Fraser**, encouraged families outdoors to play, explore and connect with each other through the artworks they created. **Once Upon an Egg** was delivered by artist-in-remote-residence, **Amy Hall-Gibson**, and used storytelling to help ease children's transition back to nursery in August 2020.

**13**

Big Inspiration  
community events

**45**

Participants at  
Move + Make

**90**

Participants at  
Once Upon an Egg

"...been desperate to get her Dad involved as he has struggled mentally with lockdown and its almost as if she knew getting him involved would brighten things up, so as a family we can gladly say we love & appreciate these activities."

**Move + Make participant**

"So proud of our wee community coming together to make our weekly art work! We have loved it and it has for sure made us get up and around the area to look!"

**Move + Make participant**

"It's a 'triangle shape dinosaur with blue tentacles and a big foot on two legs that makes footprints' I'm delighted though as he's been dead set against returning to nursery and this has peaked his interest."

**Once Upon an Egg participant**

"An older lady in our community who is housebound and shielding told me how much she is enjoying seeing the children play from her window."

**Move + Make participant**



## CREATIVE KIN North Ayrshire

Starcatchers launched **Creative Kin**, a community project running until 2023 that facilitates arts-based activities to support families living in kinship arrangements. Working closely with staff at Children 1st, the project benefitted 74 participants in this year and is continually growing its reach.

**21**

Families  
received x3 Play  
Packs

**3**

Families enjoyed  
[Doorstep  
performances](#)

**341**

Views of  
digital  
content

"Surprised, cheerful, refreshed, engaged, great, happy."

**Survey respondent**

"We really enjoyed playing with our pack, especially creating giant bubbles."

**Creative Kin participant**

"We loved having a doorstep performance, it was wonderful and engaging."

**Creative Kin participant**

"I am in awe of our wonderful colleagues from Starcatchers who reached out and connected with kinship families. Music, singing, dancing and interactive elements brought so much joy to families."

**Creative Kin partner, Children 1st**

## GIRVAN CREATIVE BABIES South Ayrshire

Starcatchers **connected with families of babies and toddlers in the Girvan area**. Arts-based activities focused on family wellbeing and strengthening playful relationships during lockdown and were delivered digitally and to doorsteps by artist, **Corrie McKendrick**.

**395**

Total views of digital  
content in private  
Facebook group

**77**

Unique in-  
person  
engagements

**64**

Total Play Packs  
delivered to  
families

"We enjoyed it as a whole family."

**Girvan Creative Babies  
participant**

"S and F have been making clouds and slime with their activity packs. Perfect for a rainy day! Pictures taken before the pair of them looked like they came from a swamp."

**Girvan Creative Babies participant**

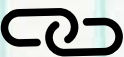
"We had fun making the chalk paint this morning although F preferred to use his hands rather than a brush. P.S. the extra wee something in the pack was much appreciated!"

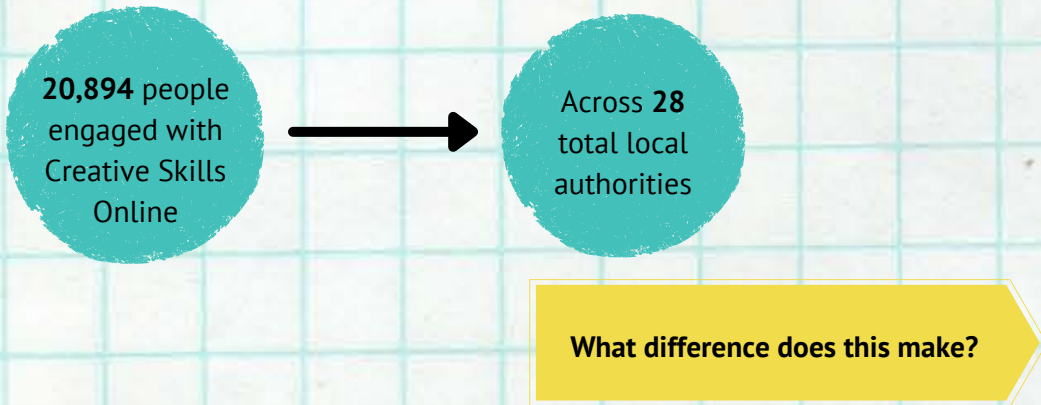
**Girvan Creative Babies participant**



# CREATIVE SKILLS

In 2020-2021, the Creative Skills programme delivered live training - both online and in person - benefitting approximately 22,480 children. Online resources reached in excess of 15,000 people. Training for the early years workforce was adapted to be delivered online using a variety of methods and, where possible, we worked outdoors, with early years staff from the same bubble, exploring a blended approach of in-person training supported by online reflective practice/mentoring.

 Creative skills 2020-2021 report coming soon at [starcatchers.org.uk](http://starcatchers.org.uk)



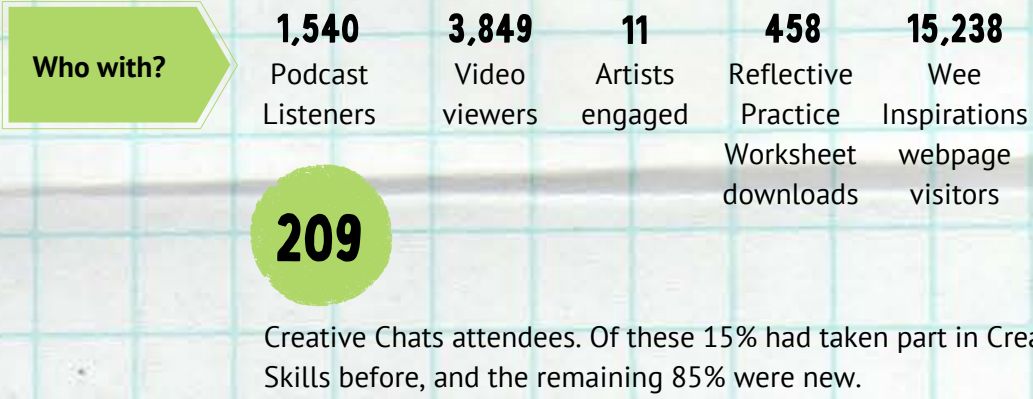
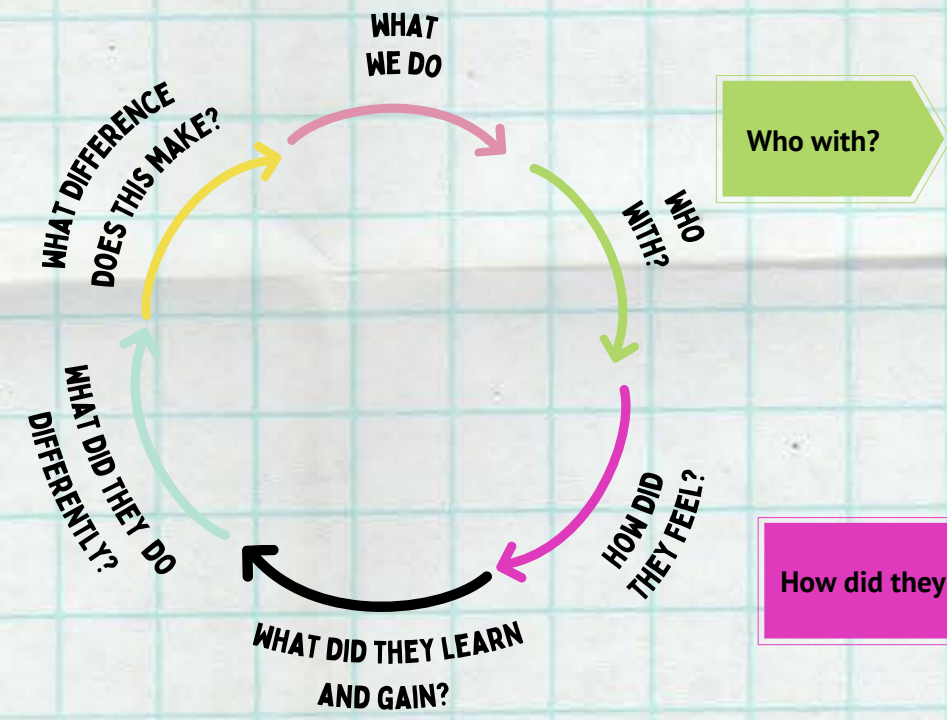
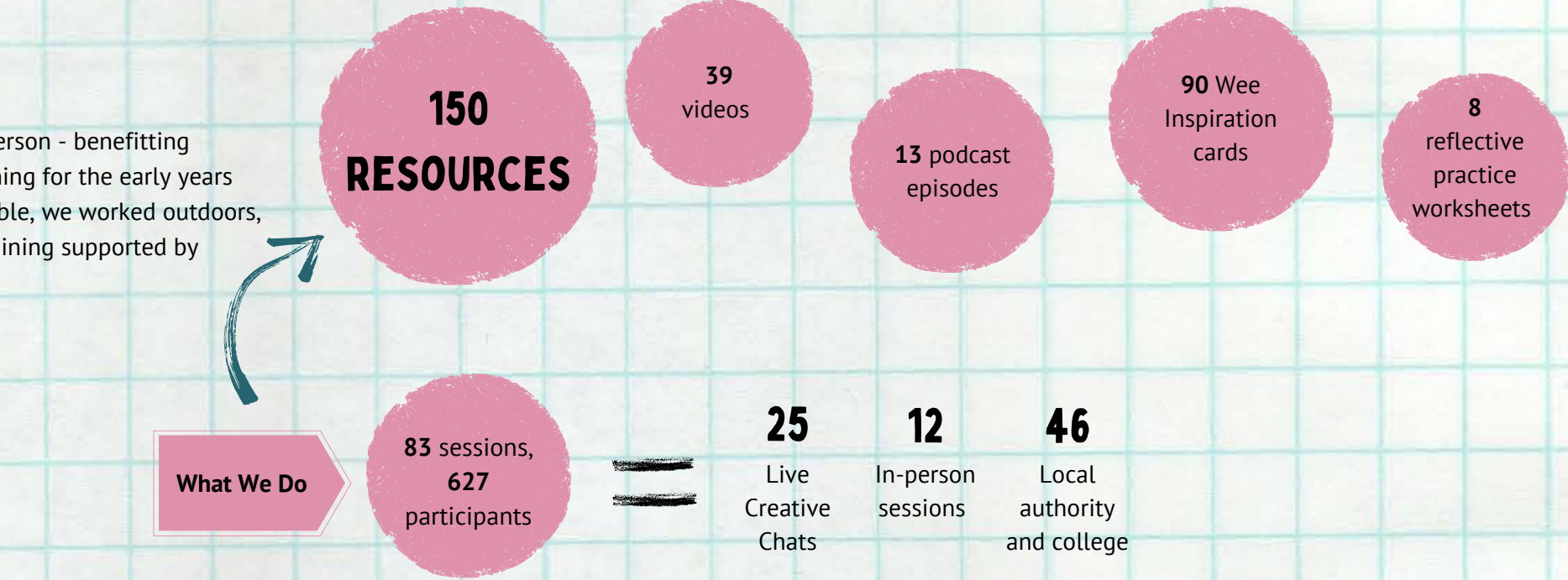
“SINCE THE COURSE I HAVE HAD MORE COURAGE TO GIVE IDEAS A GO! WE TRIED PAINTING BIG AND UNCONVENTIONALLY (WITH WELLIES ON IN TUFF TRAYS!) HAVE SANG SOME BOOKS TO THE TUNE OF WELL-KNOWN SONGS (SOCIALLY DISTANCED). I HAVE INTRODUCED THE MAGIC MASK RECENTLY AND EXPLORED MOVEMENT FURTHER SUCH AS USING IT WITH MUSIC TO CREATE IN THE BLOCK AREA OR ROLLING CHILDREN (AND SUPPORTING THEM TO DO THIS WITH OTHERS) IN AND OUT A LARGE SHEET.”

Edinburgh participant feedback

“MANY THANKS FOR ARRANGING THE EXCELLENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS THIS AFTERNOON. THE STAFF HAVE GONE HOME BUZZING WITH IDEAS AND HAVE LEFT SOME OF THE MATERIALS SET UP AS A PROVOCATIONS FOR THE CHILDREN TOMORROW. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING WHAT THEY MAKE OF THESE AND WHERE THE LEARNING WILL FLOW TO NEXT. THANK YOU TO BRIAN FOR INSPIRING SUCH ENTHUSIASM.”

Hazeldene Family Centre, East Renfrewshire

- 89% Of respondents said they have shared Creative Skills Online resources with colleagues.
- 95% Of respondents said they feel confident supporting the peers they work with to develop their own creativity.



“IT IS NOT AN EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT STARCATCHERS PHILOSOPHY AND IDEAS AND TIPS ARE INGRAINED IN OUR DAILY PRACTICE AND USED DAILY. THEY ARE GREAT TO SHARE WITH PARENTS, COLLEAGUES AND PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION.”

Stephanie Duncan, Frances Wright Nursery, Dundee

What did they learn and gain?

“IT GAVE AN INSIGHT ABOUT HOW TO GET CHILDREN THINKING ABOUT DRAMA, TURNING INANIMATE OBJECTS INTO A PERSON. GIVING THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE CREATIVE.”

Creative Chats attendee

20% Of Creative Chats participants attended more than one session

- 100% Of respondents agreed that Creative Skills Online helped them feel more confident about using the expressive arts in their setting.
- 100% Of respondents agreed that Creative Skills Online helped them understand the value and role of arts and creativity in early childhood.
- 100% Of respondents agreed that Creative Skills Online helped them understand the connect between key early years policy and delivering creative experiences.



# PRODUCTIONS AND ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

'The global pandemic caused the cancellation of the *Little Top* tour to Edinburgh International Children's Festival and the Assitej World Congress (Japan) in 2020. Workshops at the Edinburgh International Science Festival based on new production SPIKE! were also cancelled. Artist work on new productions called *Bounce* and *Two Little Ducks* was postponed until it was safe to resume their development activities. Despite the challenges Starcatchers continued supporting artists in several ways: Heather Fulton was supported to continue desk-based research on her show *Island*. Andy Cannon and David Trouton continued development of their show SPIKE!. All contracted artists were paid full fees for work that was cancelled. Due to the ever shifting Covid-19 landscape, our original plans for 2020-2021 were redesigned to achieve the following:

- Continued development of story and score for a new production, SPIKE!, by Andy Cannon and musician/composer David Trouton, ready for public performances In 2021-2022.
- Katy Wilson's new production Mix Up was developed into Mixed Up, an interactive film project to be presented publicly in 2021-2022.
- Five individual artists/groups of artists were awarded £1,000 to create simple performances or engagement projects that were shared with our audiences either in communities or online.
- Thomas Small/Shaper Caper was commissioned to create a new pop-up performance for under 5s. Due to the second lockdown in early 2021, the final delivery of this work took place in 2021-2022.

How many artists engaged in Playspace opportunities.

124

Total artist attendances at 17 practice sharing events.

304

Big Inspirations audiences.

444

Total number of artists at Playspace events.

494

6  
NEW WORKS IN  
DEVELOPMENT

4  
VIRTUAL  
PRODUCTIONS

17  
PRACTICE  
SHARING EVENTS  
ONLINE

“ THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON, AND DEVELOP MY PRACTICE HAS BEEN INVALUABLE.

Sara Gough, visual artist

## PLAYSPACE

Starcatchers' artist development programme has supported artists through training, mentorship and opportunities for networking and sharing practice. The artists are at different stages of their careers and specialise across different artforms. All demonstrated a commitment to working with, or developing work for, babies and young children. Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to visit international festivals, but artists were supported to attend digitally and engage in online meetings. In response to the first lockdown, Starcatchers launched Big Inspirations, through which five artists/groups of artists were supported to create new artistic work that could connect with children within the parameters of the public health measures. Later on in the year, Dr Suzanne Zeedyk led a series of linked training sessions exploring the role of the arts in trauma-informed practice.

## ARTIST OPPORTUNITIES

25

Recipients of Small Development Fund of £200 to allow space and time to explore artistic practice.

5

Big Inspirations commissioned at £1000 each, benefiting 8 artists across the project.

4

Long-term artist contracts working on the Where We Are project.

1

Commission, which funded development of a new early years work.

13

Funded artist spaces at the ASSITEJ 20th World Congress.

“ THIS WAS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE AND SOME OF THE FEEDBACK FROM AUDIENCES HAS BEEN TRULY HEARTWARMING. IT HAS HELPED ME PERSONALLY TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE AND RESILIENT IN THIS TIME. BY CONSCIOUSLY SHARING THE ESSENTIAL VALUE IN CONNECTION AND CREATIVITY - THAT THESE ARE THE QUALITIES THAT WILL GET US THROUGH, THRIVING AS WELL AS SURVIVING - I HAVE BENEFITED NOT JUST IN TERMS OF WORK AND SKILLS BUILDING BUT IN MY WHOLE SELF.

Artist, Charlotte Allan



# ADVOCACY

“THE ROLE OF STARCATCHERS IS TO CONTINUE THE CALL FOR EMBEDDING ARTS AND CREATIVITY IN EARLY YEARS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ACROSS SCOTLAND, AND ENSURE THE VOICES OF OUR BABIES AND TODDLERS ARE HEARD.

Rhona Matheson, Starcatchers' Chief Executive

## EVENTS & WORKING GROUPS

The Starcatchers team represents arts and early years work at local and national events, amplifying the voices of early years children in these discussions in order to extend opportunities across Scotland and internationally. In 2020-2021, we continued to participate at a wide range of events and engage with steering and working groups across the sector, including Time to Shine, Creative Scotland, Scottish Government's Right's café, IPAY, and the Culture, Tourism, Europe & External Affairs Committee inquiry.

### MEMBERSHIPS AND WORKING GROUPS

- Arts in Education Recovery Group (AiERG)  
Young Audiences Group  
Small Size Network  
Children In Scotland  
Federation of Scottish Theatre  
TYA UK
- Together - Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights  
Play Scotland  
Unfearties of the Children's Parliament  
Living Wage Association  
Lasting Difference Symbol holder organisation

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Starcatchers was approached by Creative Scotland to deliver a consultation project linked to Time To Shine and the annual UNCON event. Starcatchers engaged artists to work with families in the East of Glasgow and created a film that reflected their experiences of the last year and their hopes for the future. The resulting film was premiered at the UNCON conference. Starcatchers participated in the Arts in Education Recovery Group, the Young Audiences Group, and the Federation of Scottish Theatre's working group on Fair Work and Workforce Wellbeing.



## SUSTAINABILITY/CLIMATE

In March 2020, like many organisations and businesses, Starcatchers' work was moved online due to the Covid pandemic. Moving our delivery and operations online had a huge impact on the company's emissions, with travel forming the greatest proportion of our carbon footprint. This area of emissions reduced by 97% and we are now using this as a strong basis for building hybrid models of digital and in-person working that keeps us on track with our Carbon Management Plan and the Scottish Government's Net Zero targets.

### OUTDOOR PLAY SESSIONS

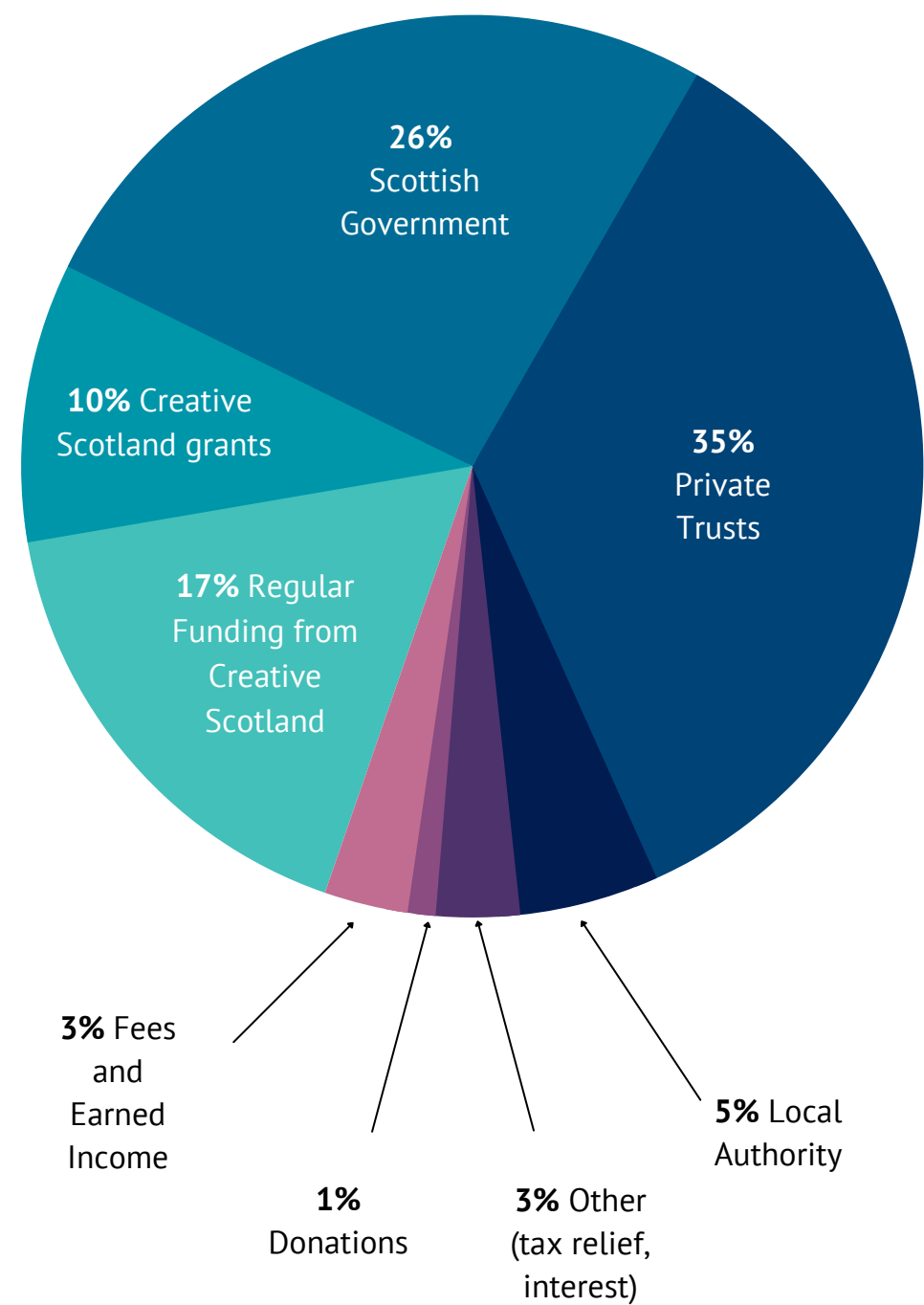
Once restrictions eased, all our projects moved outdoors. We noticed a number of health and environment benefits from working outdoors:

- Improved mental and physical health
- Exploration of local communities
- Deeper understanding of natural environment
- Reduced energy emissions



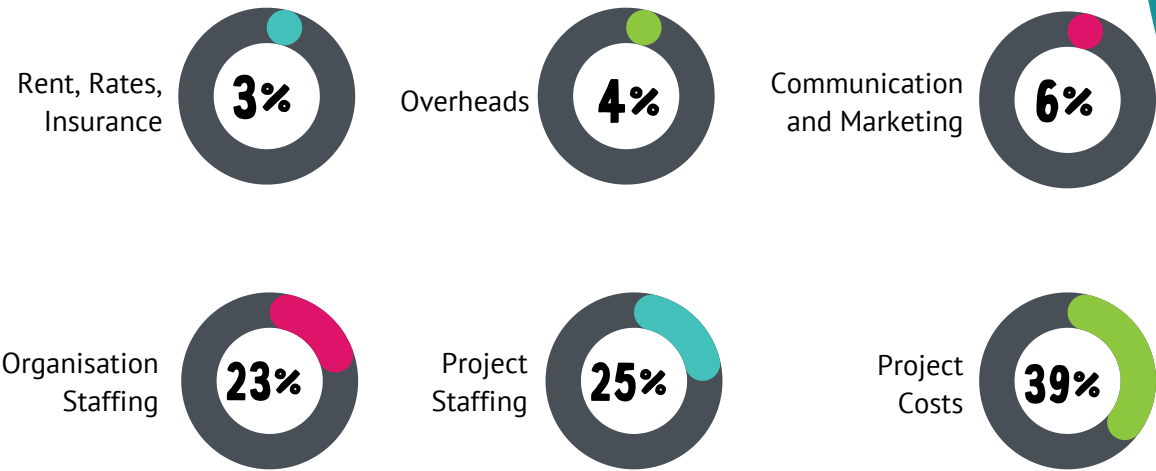
# FINANCES

## OUR FUNDING SOURCES



THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC CAN BE SEEN IN THE FEES AND EARNED INCOME FIGURE AT ONLY 3%.

## WHAT WE SPENT



OUR BIGGEST AND MOST TREASURED SPEND IS ON THE PEOPLE WHO ARE ACHIEVING THE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR ARTS AND EARLY YEARS, WITH 48% INVESTED IN PEOPLE DELIVERING THIS WORK.

	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS 2021	RESTRICTED FUNDS 2021	TOTAL FUNDS 2021	TOTAL FUNDS 2020
DONATIONS	£633	-	£633	£356
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES INCOME	£101,275	£529,215	£630,490	£444,818
INVESTMENTS	£408	-	£408	£675
OTHER INCOME	£40,444	-	£40,444	£10,206
TOTAL INCOME	£142,760	£529,215	£649,135	£456,055
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£70,166	£392,455	£462,621	£567,504
NET INCOME (EXPENDITURE)	£72,594	£136,760	£209,354	(£111,449)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	£49,754	£136,760	£209,354	(£111,449)
TOTAL BROUGHT FORWARD	£24,841	£21,021	£45,862	£157,311

An external audit was carried out by Chiene + Tait.



# THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS



We are grateful to the trusts, foundations and grant-making bodies that support our work. Please see our Annual Accounts 2020/21 for full details.

## PRINCIPAL FUNDERS



## MULTI-YEAR FUNDERS

Baillie Gifford, BBC Children in Need, Cattanach, Henry Duncan, The National Lottery, The Robertson Trust, RS Macdonald Charitable Trust, William Grant Foundation

Children 1st  
Gate-55 Lifelong Learning  
Articulate Cultural Trust  
WHALE Arts  
Fife Gingerbread  
Lyra  
Imagine  
East Renfrewshire Council  
Orkney Islands Council  
Edinburgh City Council  
University of Highlands and Islands  
Glasgow Kelvin College  
Edinburgh College  
Kilmalcom Nursery  
St. Patrick's Family Learning Centre

## PARTNERS

## PARTNERSHIP WORKING



Starcatchers' activity would not be possible without the support of our community partners. Our Community Engagement projects have strong links with Third Sector Organisations, the NHS and Health Visitors as well as with Social Work Departments. We work very closely to ensure a route for referrals to our sessions for identified participants.

## ARTISTIC COLLABORATION



The delivery of Starcatchers' activity would not be possible without the creative capacity and input from all the artists and freelancers across the sector who contribute to Starcatchers' vision.

## ARTISTS

Kirstin Abraham	Ursula Manandhar
Matt Addicott	Xana Marwick
Charlotte Allen	Fiona Mason
Marcus Britton	Alex McCabe
Gabriele Bruzzese	Alison McFarlane
Andy Cannon	Corrie McKendrick
Ruxy Cantir	Keith McLeish
Ursula Cheng	Jed Milroy
Cynthia Cheung	Daniel Mullins
Kerry Cleland	Morgan Njobo
Gabrielle Cook	Niamh O'Loughlin
Hazel Darwin-Clements	Tom Oakes
Stephen Deazley	Maria Onotu
Kim Donohoe	Nick Paget-Tomlinson
Dr Rachel Drury	Kirsty Pennycook
Ellie Dubois	Harri Pitches
Hayley Durward	Skye Reynolds
Matt Elliott	Thomas Small
Michaelle Fee	Arron Sparks
George Fellows	Zoe Squair
Rebecca Fraser	Jack Stancliffe
Clea Friend	Fraser Stone
Heather Fulton	Barney Strachan
Marion Geoffray	Frieda Strachan
Sarah Rose Graber	David Trouton
Amy Hall-Gibson	Hannah Venet
Phil Hardie	Katy Wilson
Brian Hartley	Ben Winger
Geraldine Heaney	Nathaniel Whittingham
Ashley Jack	
Pearl Kinnear	



A woman with a flower crown and a young child are touching a tree trunk in a forest. The woman is wearing a blue jacket and blue overalls, and the child is wearing a light blue jacket and white pants. They are both smiling and looking at the tree. In the background, there are other trees and a table with a blue and white polka dot tablecloth.

## STARCATCHERS' BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Stuart Farquharson (appointed 16 Feb '21)
- Ben Fletcher-Watson
- Mary Glasgow (resigned 22 Sep '20)
- Velavan Gnanendran
- Adrian Harris (Chair)
- Kirsten Hogg (appointed 16 Jun '20)
- Jane Miller (appointed 16 Feb '21)
- Gemma Statham
- Mhairi Taylor

## STARCATCHERS' TEAM

- Rhona Matheson, Chief Executive
- Heather Armstrong, Creative Skills Manager
- Kerry Cleland, Expecting Something Coordinator
- Anna Downie, Creative Kin Coordinator
- Natalie Gibson, Administrator & Marketing Assistant
- Nicola Pay (to Dec '20), Sarah Leary (from Jan '21), Communications and Marketing Manager
- Jennifer Phillips, Producer
- Catherine Wilson, Creative Skills Administrator
- Judith Walsh, General Manager





**STARCATCHERS.ORG.UK**

@starcatchersuk   @starcatchersCS



Starcatchers Productions is a limited company, registered in Scotland (SC392561), and a Scottish-registered charity (SC042222). Registered and mailing address: 64a Cumberland Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6RE

