

## LEAD ARTIST / CREATIVITY FACILITATOR BRIEF

### Imaginosity project – Mill Hill Community Primary School, Northallerton

<b>Fee:</b>	£4,400 (includes travel and VAT)
<b>Where:</b>	Mill Hill Community Primary School, Northallerton
<b>When:</b>	Between September 2021 and July 2022 – Monday mornings. Potential of further funding to continue project in next academic year.
<b>Duration:</b>	Minimum 20 days
<b>Budgets:</b>	A materials budget of £600 will be available to the artist
<b>Other:</b>	Separate £200 budget for seed funding events / productions
<b>Managed by:</b>	Elaine Burke, arts and health consultant

**Closing date for applications: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 - 12.00 midnight**

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### Introduction

*'A line is a dot that went for a walk'* Paul Klee

We believe in the power of imagination, curiosity and creativity. This kind of creative thinking is the foundation for confidence, risk taking, problem solving and making connections – the core skills children need to flourish in life and in learning. Developing creative thinking in schools isn't just about art – every curriculum subject benefits from children bringing their imagination, critical judgement, invention, lateral thinking and curious inquiry. Creativity is the best way we know to build these skills and to support children's confidence in themselves – rippling outwards and boosting their learning across all subjects and supporting each individual child's wellbeing.

Imaginosity is about all of this – a joyful, energetic celebration of children's imagination, and their freedom to express and explore ideas. We are looking for an imaginative, dynamic and experienced artist to build on, lead and further develop our Imaginosity creative thinking project at Mill Hill Community Primary School in Northallerton. Imaginosity has been at Mill Hill School since 2018. We've had three academic years to gain confidence, understand what creativity can offer, and open up potentials for further development. From September 2021, we are turning up the dial on creative inspiration, and weaving Imaginosity even further into the fabric of life at Mill Hill School! Our original lead artist has recently moved out of the area, and we are looking for the right artist to join us now as we evolve the project into Imaginosity - Learn, Thrive, Connect.

We are looking for an artist who is as passionate about creative thinking and learning as we are – who understands creativity, and can support children and teachers at Mill Hill School to go deeper, wider, further; aim higher, think bigger, make even more connections in this year's Imaginosity

project. Our lead artist will work with children and teachers at Mill Hill and support them to apply imagination, confident exploration of ideas and boundless curiosity to a wide range of curriculum areas. **This role is less about helping children and teachers create artistic products, and more about facilitating and infusing creative thinking across a range of subject areas.**

## Imaginosity - context

Elaine Burke, arts and health consultant, on behalf of the Central Northallerton Development Company (CNDC) is seeking the right artist for this project. CNDC is a partnership of Hambleton District Council and Wykeland Group and is leading on Treadmills – transforming the historic Northallerton prison in the centre of the town. Over the last few years, the former prison site has been transformed with new shops and digital sector workspaces. Cafes and a cinema are also planned at Northallerton's new Treadmills development - creating new opportunities for local people and the local economy. Mill Hill School is almost next door to this new development, and we have collaborated with the school on the Imaginosity project since 2018.

CNDC believes that regeneration isn't just about buildings – it's about making environments where people thrive. They are serious about socially aware investment that builds cultural and social capital, and think that creativity is the heart and soul of every town and neighbourhood. They believe in children and young people and want them to believe in themselves.

## Imaginosity at Mill Hill School

Over 160 pupils attend Mill Hill Community Primary School, situated in Northallerton centre. The school is committed to supporting children to be *'happy today, fulfilled in the future and to make their world a better place'*. Since 2018, we have collaborated with Headteacher Rebecca Bainbridge and her team of teachers, developing Imaginosity to respond to their specific aspirations for their pupils. Within the relative affluence of Northallerton, Mill Hill has a higher-than-average concentration of pupils from more deprived backgrounds – receiving a 58% pupil premium grant. The school is passionate about supporting children to be confident to take risks; be outward looking and embrace opportunities and experiences; to be ambitious for themselves.

### The Imaginosity story so far:

#### Year one – 2018-19

The aim of our first project year in 2018, was to introduce the programme and trial its ideas. A group of 12 mixed-age ambassador children worked with our lead artist, to learn new techniques and explore imaginative possibilities. Using our 'learn to share' model, these children then cascaded this knowledge out to the rest of the school, leading teaching sessions with other pupils and mentoring other children. Over this first year, the project included activities like every child making their own uniquely designed sketchbooks; a daily five-minute creative challenge to create new learning links and inspire imagination; 'Birds of Freedom' – transforming humble milk cartons into a huge flock of brilliant birds; a deep exploration of cardboard; and a final project to create an amazing giant bird sculpture developed by every child in the school.

#### Year two – 2019-20

This year's focus was on connecting with the community. Taking flowers as a metaphor for flourishing, 'Imaginosity Blooms' worked again with a new group of 14 mixed-age ambassador children who created fabulous flowers from recycled materials, plastics and fabrics and, again,

cascaded this knowledge to the whole school. The daily five-minute creative challenge continued. Ambassador children also visited two local elderly care homes where they taught residents how to make their own flowers from recycled materials. This group also gave similar lessons to local Northallerton residents at drop-in sessions at the library. The onset of the Covid19 pandemic placed the project on hold from Easter until the following Autumn.

### Year three – 2020-21

Able to resume in late Autumn 2020, the Imaginosity project changed shape and adapted to Covid restrictions and needs. Our treasured creative challenges became weekly resources for children to take home to do together with their parents – create a flower; make a bug etc. This meant that even more people participated in the project, and that Imaginosity was key to Mill Hill’s ability to continue to connect positively with families during the worst of the pandemic. Having collected hundreds of flowers created by Mill Hill children, their families, local care home residents and Northallerton people, Imaginosity took to the streets and ‘flower-bombed’ the façade of the Town Hall in a wonderful week-long public art installation in July.

### The next step: Imaginosity - Learn, Thrive, Connect.

Imaginosity is now firmly part of everyday culture at Mill Hill School. Children are encouraged to ‘use your Imaginosity thinking’ when encountering a tricky maths problem or when they think a history question is too hard to try. The transformative impacts of the project are so great that, together with Headteacher Rebecca Bainbridge, we are confident that we can develop the programme further to harness its benefits even more. From September 2021, we are launching an evolved version of the project: Imaginosity - Learn, Thrive, Connect. From September 2021, Monday mornings will be Imaginosity mornings, and the programme is designed in two phases over the school year – firstly ‘explore, ideate and test’, followed by ‘produce and deliver’.

In the first phase (September till Easter), the whole school will be divided into 8 mixed age groups, where older and younger pupils will work together to explore themes and ideas like ‘connecting with others’, ‘being’, ‘future’ and express them into subjects that connect into the curriculum like sound, structures, food, animation etc. With the support of the lead artist, children and teachers will explore and test ideas, make connections and use their imagination to investigate how, for example, sound can be used to connect with others, or what does future mean, when we think about food? Phase one will culminate in a big celebration of ideas, and a whittling down of concepts to four big ideas which will be delivered in phase two.

Themes for exploration	Curriculum subject areas
<p>Each of the 8 groups will be allocated <b>one of the following themes</b> to explore for the duration of phase 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Connecting with others</b></li> <li>• <b>Skills</b></li> <li>• <b>Being</b> (finding calm and taking notice)</li> <li>• <b>Imagination</b></li> <li>• <b>Me!</b> (making choices, having agency, understanding self)</li> <li>• <b>Future</b></li> <li>• <b>Nature</b></li> <li>• <b>Fun</b></li> </ul>	<p>Every group will explore <b>all of the following curriculum areas</b>, through the ‘lens’ of their allocated theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3D</b></li> <li>• <b>Sound</b></li> <li>• <b>Structures</b></li> <li>• <b>Food</b></li> <li>• <b>Materials</b></li> <li>• <b>Photography</b></li> <li>• <b>Movement</b></li> <li>• <b>Animation</b></li> </ul>

Themes for exploration chosen due to their evidence-based links to children’s flourishing, learning and wellness.

During this first phase, our lead artist will be the golden thread that supports, challenges, helps problem solve, champions and encourages all eight groups to squeeze out every drop of creative thinking as they make their explorations. We need an artist who can juggle several ideas (and groups!) at once; is able to quickly spot when ideas or processes have run their course and can swiftly offer springboards to help open up new avenues of exploration; can empower children and their teachers to be courageous and extend their thinking as far and wide as possible. It's a big challenge, and it's not really about making art – it's about using creativity to explore ideas.

In the second phase (produce and deliver), the four big ideas distilled from phase one will take centre stage. Our previous 8 groups will change shape into 4 larger groups - each group responsible for delivering an event, or a 'happening' from their allocated big idea, and they will be supported by mentors from the local community. This is a creative process, truly led by the children, so we have no idea yet of what these events / happenings might look like! The only rule is that they must connect with the community. Perhaps one group might produce a special afternoon tea for local elderly people; or another might take photographic portraits of their pets and produce an exhibition at the local gallery; another might make items to sell at the market; or produce a publication of family funny stories. We don't know yet! But the principles are that each of the four groups will operate almost as a 'mini company' – working together, making plans, considering details, pricing and marketing their production etc. Phase two will culminate in four individual 'happenings' led by the children, with the support of teachers and the lead artist.

During this second phase, our lead artist will again be the champion of creativity – supporting children and teachers to hone their ideas, get started, get unstuck, aim high and look at all the angles. They will model their own creative thinking and confidence in action – to lead by example, inspiring children and teachers to experience the power of bringing their ideas to life.

### **Guiding principles: Imaginosity - Learn, Thrive, Connect.**

Imaginosity is multi-dimensional and aims to do several things well – supporting children to thrive and flourish. These are the pillars that underpin our evolved Imaginosity programme:

#### **LEARN**

- **Curriculum connections:** the project structure and format has been specifically co-designed with Mill Hill School to drive the delivery of their curriculum – across a wide range of subjects. The lead artist will model their core skills of adaptability, making connections, using imagination to support and facilitate pupils and teachers to gain confidence in their own creative thinking and apply these transferable skills across all of their learning at school.
- **Our creative challenges** have been an integral part of Imaginosity since inception. They have offered powerful but fun and often silly ways to encourage children to take creative risks and be inventive. The format has proven flexible and adaptable in the face of challenges, and we want to keep evolving this aspect of the project. We want our lead artist to consider how to make this their own and continue to develop this thread of the programme.

#### **THRIVE**

- **Imagination and curiosity** are at the heart of this programme because they are the foundations of flourishing for each individual child. Taking risks, thinking creatively, bringing ideas to life promotes confidence, agency, sense of self and wellbeing. Our lead artist will be committed to championing creativity and creative thinking for the benefit of each child at Mill Hill School.

## CONNECT

- **Creating social capital** by connecting Mill Hill children to their community is integral to Imaginosity. We will continue to evolve opportunities to reach out to the community, bring parents and others into the school – celebrating and showcasing children’s creativity. We are committed to making lasting impacts by inspiring, encouraging and raising the aspirations of Mill Hill children, and giving them a strong sense of place and connection to their community.

## Practical Information and Support

### Project management

The artist will be managed by Elaine Burke, creative consultant, who also acts as overall project manager for Imaginosity. Elaine will support the artist on all project-related issues and will work with them as they support the project. The artist will also be required to have an up-to-date DBS check, and valid public liability insurance.

The artist will be required to complete simple, brief evaluation summaries of sessions they are involved in, to help understand and track the project’s impacts. Additionally, the artist should photographically document the project as it progresses etc. This documentation is required only to be brief and indicative, rather than exhaustive.

### Resources available to the artist include:

- Places and spaces (indoor and outdoor) in Mill Hill School
- Basic art materials (paper, paint, glue etc) at school
- £50 basic budget for each of the four ‘production’ groups (£200 in total) to deliver their event / happening etc. Groups can use this as seed funding to draw in other resources as they wish.
- £600 budget for materials at the lead artist’s discretion, should they need to facilitate creative thinking processes during the project.
- Support, help and signposting to other professionals with specific knowledge and skills.

### Lead artist role – detail and outcomes:

1. Be a creativity ambassador by supporting, modelling creativity and planning with teachers so that Imaginosity sessions are as creative as possible, balanced with curriculum delivery needs.
2. Flexibly advise, support, facilitate creative thinking within Imaginosity sessions – help pupils and teachers get started, keep moving, get unstuck, be ambitious in their processes - communicate with energy, empathy and sensitivity as needed.
3. Work with Elaine Burke, Headteacher Rebecca Bainbridge and school staff to continue to develop appropriate creative challenges throughout the project.
4. Support pupils and teachers with practical creative skills as required, to help them realise their ideas and deliver their events / productions / happenings.
5. We have allocated a minimum of 20 days for lead artist input. We expect that after an initial, more concentrated involvement at the beginning of the project (likely one day a week in September), these days will be more spread out – potentially inputting every 2-3 weeks. However, we would like to work flexibly with the lead artist to respond to project need as the programme progresses.
6. We are open to applications from artists from a range of artforms and backgrounds. However, artists need to evidence a breadth of practical skills, so that they can help advise and problem solve if needed across a range of creative approaches and productions.

### Timescale:

The project will run across three school terms, starting in early September 2021 and finishing in summer term before the school breaks for the holidays. See significant project dates below:

Date	Project Activity
12.00 midnight on Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2021	Deadline for submission of application
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	Interviews (in person at Mill Hill School or online)
By Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	Artist appointment notification
Early September 2021 – June / July 2022	Project duration. Ideal start date 6 <sup>th</sup> September.

### Budget

- We are offering a fee of £4,400 inclusive of VAT. The fee is inclusive of all expenses.
- There is an additional budget of £600 for material costs, if required.
- There is a separate small budget of £200 available as seed funding for each of the four production groups' event / happening etc.

### Application and selection process:

#### Selection Criteria

We will appoint the Imaginosity artist based on your application material and interviews. Selection for interviews will be based on how well you address your approach to the key outcomes described in this brief.

#### Making an application

If you are an experienced artist who is excited and inspired by this project, we would be delighted to receive your application. Please make sure to include the following:

- **A document (max two A4 pages) which:**  
outlines your proposed approach to this brief and your starting points for inspiration.
- **An additional single A4 sheet which:**  
indicates the amount of time (number of days) you anticipate being able to commit to this project, and how these could potentially be spread over the project's lifetime.
- **A CV** which demonstrates your previous relevant experience and working practice.
- **Appropriate images / film / audio clips which:**  
demonstrate relevant work or projects you have worked on, please supply up to a **maximum of 15 jpeg images or clips, presented with in a SINGLE PDF document.** Please note that we are not able to accept internet links.

**Please submit your application electronically to Elaine Burke via email at:**

**[ImaginosityNorthallerton@gmail.com](mailto:ImaginosityNorthallerton@gmail.com)**

**by 12.00 midnight on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021**