

SEND Voices Through Art

Henry Fletcher

SEND Participation Officer





Welcome!

Session Schedule

- Introducing the SEND Participation Team
- What is Voices Through Art?
- VTA Programme Overview
- Resilience case study
- The benefits of our approach



A bit about me

- Modern History MA, University of East Anglia
- Commissioning Coordinator, Independent Special School Review Project, Apr. '24 – Sep. '25
- Participation Officer since September 2025



SEND Participation Team

- Providing opportunities for children and young people with SEND in Norfolk to share their views, shape services and improve practice.
- We deliver participation sessions all across Norfolk, most predominantly in schools and libraries.



Jo Todd
Team Manager -
Voice and Impact



Karla George
CYP Participation
Coordinator



Lauren Scott
SEND Participation
Officer



Henry Fletcher
SEND Participation
Officer

What is Voices Through Art?

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 12:
“Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times...”
- VTA created in response to demand among CYP identified in SEND survey.
- VTA sessions are designed so that we can hear the views of SEND young people through the medium of creative expression.



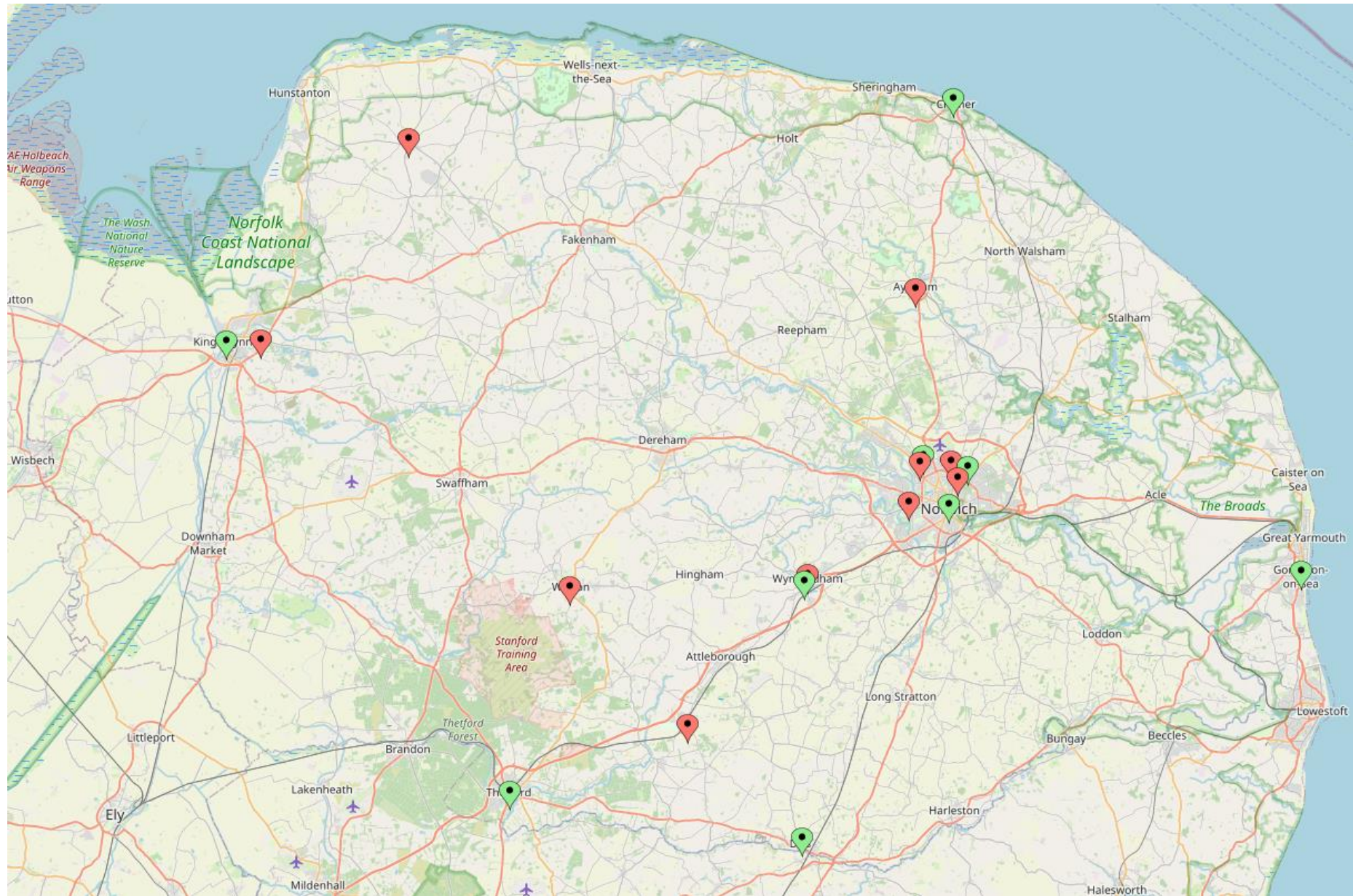
Who do we work with?

- Children and young people with SEND in Norfolk
- Age 0 – 25
- Across the range of SEND – no formal diagnosis required
- Variety of schools:
 - Mainstream
 - Independent special
 - Complex needs
- Home educated, EOTAS, PEX etc.



Schools

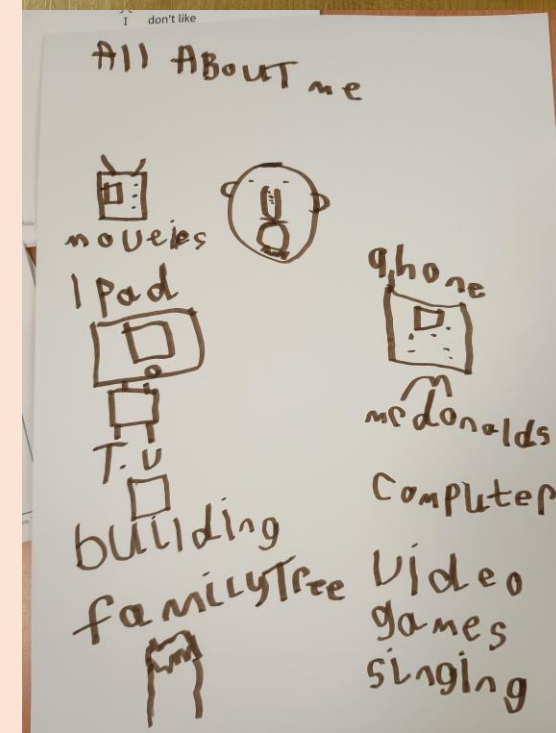
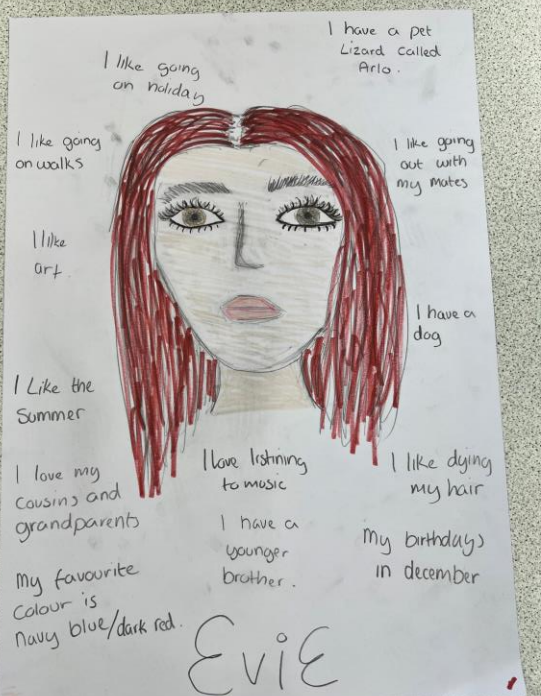
Libraries





All About Me

- Chance for the young people to introduce themselves to us
- What is important in their lives?
- How young people view themselves
- Likes and dislikes





Toilet Roll Creatures

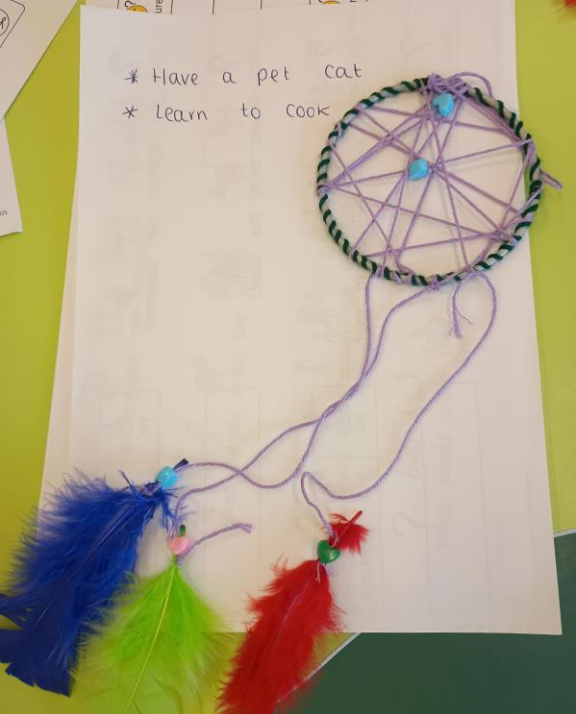
- Creativity and imagination
- Fine and gross motor skills
- Passions and interests
- Sensory materials and freedom to explore



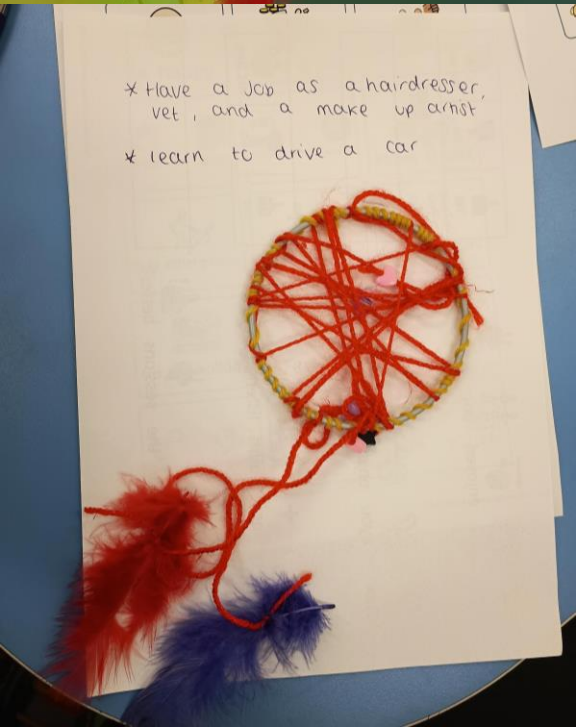
Dream Schools

- What would school look like if you could design it yourself?
- Who would attend?
- What could you add to school to make it more accessible?
- Realistic and unrealistic ideas



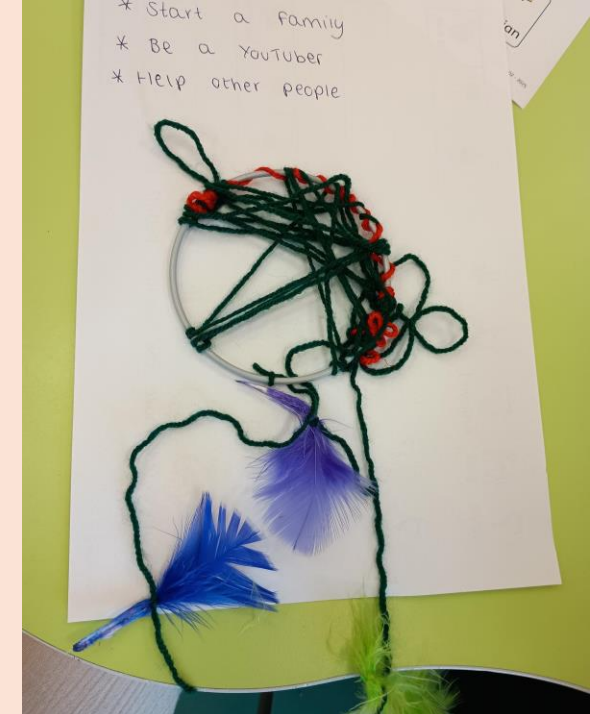


* Have a pet cat
* Learn to cook



* Have a job as a hairdresser,
vet, and a make up artist
* learn to drive a car

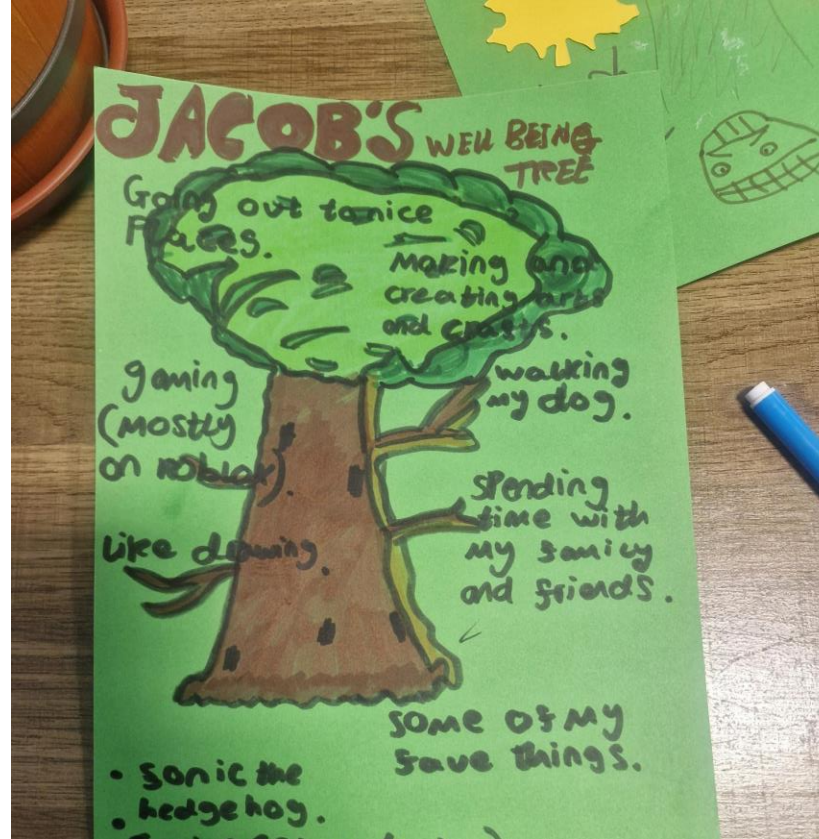
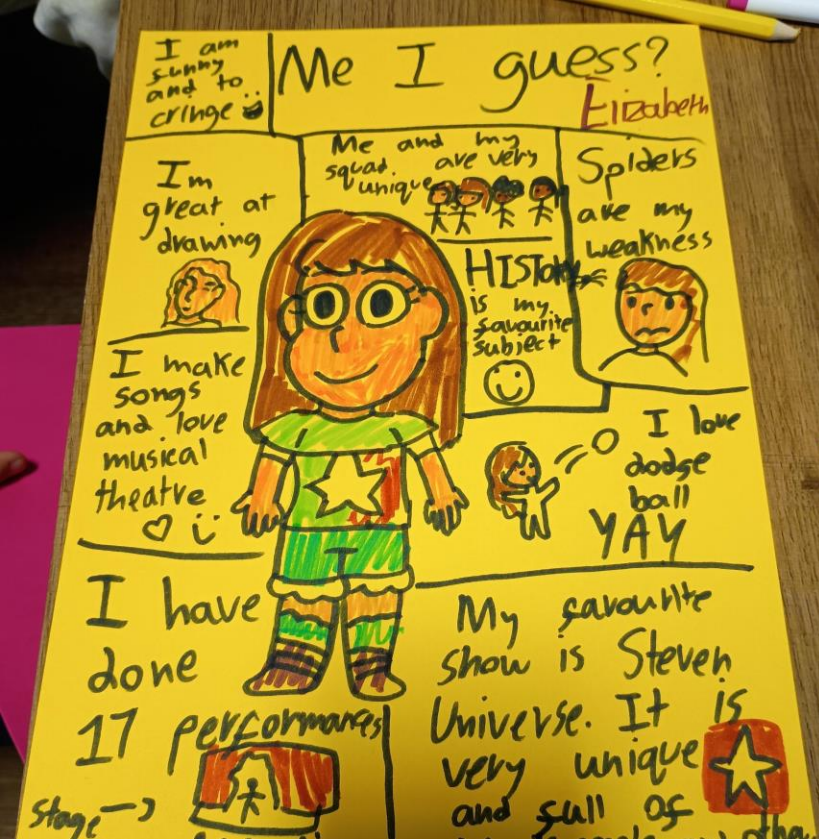
- Dreams and hopes for the future
- Fine and gross motor skills
- Following instructions and directions
- Forward-thinking and aspirational



* Start a family
* Be a YouTuber
* Help other people



* Have a job as a make up
artist and a police lady
* Have a pet



Other Session Ideas

- Wellbeing trees
- Create your superhero
- Mood collages
- Theatre workshops?

Resilience Case Study: Zoe

- Selective mutism
- Missing education for a year
- Verbal communication through her mum
- Use of art to unlock Zoe's voice



The power of participation through art

- The benefits:
 - No reliance on verbal communication
 - Can be adapted to meet the needs of young people
 - Fun, informal, no expectation of perfection
- Sessions help us to understand what is important for SEND young people
- We have built relationships with young people and parents/carers



Feedback

'These sessions have kept my child in contact with the outside world and helped her trust in people again. They have meant so much to her and she has looked forward to everyone-the sessions have been fun, relaxed, with people who love what they are doing and understood who they are working with.'

'The sessions had a very positive impact on our students. They were always happy to attend and looked forward to each visit. The activities were engaging and accessible, allowing pupils to express themselves creatively in a safe and supportive environment. Many students asked to return for more sessions, which is a clear reflection of how much they enjoyed and benefited from the experience'.

'Brilliant to get involved in. Amazing for the children. Opportunities we didn't realise were out there. Really inclusive and impactful without the children realising'

'The sessions allowed my daughter to interact with others during this time of uncertainty in her education journey. It allowed her to express herself in a guided manor. My daughter loved coming to these sessions. It was something she looked forward to every month. She loved the different activities. Her favourite was the dream catcher.'

'The sessions were highly engaging, with staff interacting well with pupils of varying learning needs and abilities. Activities were well-pitched, inclusive, and supported positive communication and participation from all students'

Shaping better services


- VTA sessions help us to understand what is important to SEND young people.
- This varies depending on their age, location, gender, level of need, experiences etc.
- These voices are recorded and collated, and then passed on to departments in the council in order to tailor and shape services accordingly.
- Importance of hearing from young people directly.



Contact us!

- If you are interested in what we do or would like to know more about Voices Through Art please contact us:
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Thank you
all for
listening!

Any questions?