

## Primary CultureMeet Notes – Monday 26 January 2026

A collaborative gathering of Nottingham’s arts & cultural organisations and primary teachers, hosted by **ChalleNGe**

[www.challengenottingham.co.uk](http://www.challengenottingham.co.uk)



*“What we really want is for you to feel more connected... so that by the end of today you know exactly who to contact, where to go, and what’s available to support your creative curriculum.”*

**Find the Culture Meet recording here:** [Culturemeet recordings | ChalleNGe Nottingham](#)

Many schools are connected to ChalleNGe through:

- **The Cultural Rucksack** (supporting all schools in Nottingham to actively embed a broad range of creative experiences for all their pupils) Update your details [Cultural Rucksack - Schools Network](#)
- The bi-monthly **Teacher E-Newsletter**, subscribe: [Contact Us](#)
- Past CPD, events, or a “friendly nudge” from colleagues or simply curiosity about what’s happening creatively across the city.

There are five strands of the **Child Friendly Creative City** programme:

- **Cultural Rucksack:** ensuring every child has cultural experiences woven across their school life.
- **Loud & Clear:** Family programmes with arts partners; local arts festivals and youth voice projects, like Primary Parliament
- **Creative Taskforce:** opportunities for networking, training and communities of practice between teachers, creative practitioners and access specialists
- **Nature Connections:** art, nature and wellbeing community of practice with action learning projects
- **Children’s Fund:** A shared fund to enable extraordinary experiences and address barriers to children’s and young people’s participation, under development.

ChalleNGe continues to:

- Support **Primary Parliament**, keeping it free for all schools
- Support the city-wide **RSE Day Creative Project** (this year: *a brand-new song co-written by city children with the Music Hub*)
- Offer the creation of a **Voice Box** for pupil voice in schools & communities
- Make short-form **taster videos** for teachers, in collaboration with arts partners to support visit planning.
- Lead the annual **Creative INSET** (2 July), this year’s theme is *Creativity, Inclusion & Belonging*

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**Nottingham City Libraries:** Charlotte Blount [charlotte.blount@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.blount@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

**Nottm City Libraries School Groups & Resources** “*We’d love to welcome any primary-age group—from Foundation to Year 6. We’ll try to fit whatever you need. Just get in touch.*”

- **Free class visits** to the Nottingham Central Library Themes for 2026: **Gruffalo** (EYFS), **Space**, and **Ancient Egypt** (KS2) Includes story sessions, library introduction, and time in the **immersive room** with interactive walls. Sessions include crafts or sensory play depending on age. Flexible timing (usually Tues/Weds), accommodating up to 60 children

## Nottingham Music Service: [Nottingham Music Service](#)

Claire Nichols [Claire.Nichols@nottinghammusicclub.org](mailto:Claire.Nichols@nottinghammusicclub.org) *We promise we don't make you do anything scary... it's fun and practical."*

- **Music Network Meeting – 11 February:** A CPD session for anyone leading or supporting music in city primaries. **Citywide Recording: RSE Day Song:** Children across Nottingham submitted lyrics and musical ideas. The final song will be sent to schools by 1 February and mobile recording studio visits will take place in schools. A city celebration event planned at Broadway Cinema on 25 June, RSE day
  - **Opera Project with Royal Opera House – 24 June:** A chance for KS2 pupils to perform *The Magic Flute* alongside professional opera singers.
  - **Youth Orchestra Primary Tour – 2-3 July:** Free assemblies featuring inspirational performances by young musicians
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## Theatre Royal & Royal Concert Hall [Theatre Royal & Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham](#)

Georgina Donohue [georgina.donohue@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:georgina.donohue@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) *"It always breaks my heart when a child says, 'I didn't think the theatre was for me... We want to change that."*

- **Daytime learning tours** linking to the Victorians, theatre spaces, and creative careers
- **Craft workshops** where children design their own theatre set
- Suitable for up to 30 pupils, £150 per group, with strong availability Thurs/Fri

Partners can also contact **Becky Morris**, Learning Partnerships Manager  
[Rebecca.morris@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:Rebecca.morris@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

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## Nottingham Playhouse [Homepage - Nottingham Playhouse](#)

Sarah West [sarah.west.01@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk](mailto:sarah.west.01@nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk)

- **Backstage Tours:** To see how a *producing theatre* works from the inside out.
  - **Teacher CPD:** Strong recent uptake in CPD on oracy through drama.
  - **Shakespeare Festival** (1 space left!) Schools rehearse scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Playhouse directors and movement specialists support creative development and then schools come together to perform a combined abridged version on the main Playhouse stage
  - **Topic-Based Drama Workshops:** Practitioners can come into school—or host groups at the Playhouse—to explore curriculum topics through drama.
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## Ignite! [Ignite!](#) | [Ignite Futures | Nottingham](#) and **Festival of Science & Curiosity Home · Fosac**

Catriona Kelly [catriona@ignitefutures.org.uk](mailto:catriona@ignitefutures.org.uk) *"It's not a competition—just children learning from each other, sharing what fascinates them."*

- **FOSAC two-week festival**, celebrating everyday science. 9-20 Feb 2026.
- **Schools Symposium – 12 February, Council House.** An exciting opportunity for primary groups to showcase science projects: bring up to 15 pupils. Includes researchers from the University of Nottingham's Nano & Microscale Centre, plus industry guests delivering hands-on activities

- Ignite! also produces a **Festival Magazine** filled with puzzles, articles, and the Nature Connections survey.
- **Primary Parliament** – get registered, very popular! [Register for Primary Parliament 2025/26](#)

**University of Nottingham Languages** Nicola McLelland [Nicola.McLelland@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Nicola.McLelland@nottingham.ac.uk)

*“It all fits in the boot of a car—and the children absolutely loved it.”*

- **Portable mini languages museum**, *Our Words, Our World*. Activities include:
- **Lingo Bingo** (Nottingham dialect, home languages, and more)
- **Idioms game** (“In the year of the pear” – Spanish for “a long time ago”)
- **Blend-word creation** (like “brunch” or “smog”)
- **Crack the Code** (Chinese character puzzle)
- **Multilingual reading corner** (Mr Men, Gruffalo, Harry Potter in multiple languages)

Schools can borrow the set for several days.

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**Nature Connections & Nottingham Games:** [Nature Connections](#)

Rick Hall [rick@rehearsal.org.uk](mailto:rick@rehearsal.org.uk)

*“The possibilities of engaging with nature, imagination and creativity are almost endless.”*

#### Highlights:

- **Community of Practice** meeting this Friday, 30 January, 2-4pm at the Dryden Centre (NTU City Campus). Next one: 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2-4pm
  - Creative prompts for nature connections include sensory mapping, zines, special-place art, and curiosity boxes
  - Focus on wellbeing and nature experiences; and has been comparing local experiences with ‘children as researchers’ at Welbeck with a partner school in Finland.
  - [Nottingham Games](#) - the book and videos are due to be launched in March 2026; every school will receive a copy. The research was conducted by children about the games they play.
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**National Justice Museum** [Homepage | National Justice Museum](#)

Jo Ayris [joanne.ayris@nationaljusticemuseum.org.uk](mailto:joanne.ayris@nationaljusticemuseum.org.uk) *“We bring the courtroom to you—table covers, props, everything.”*

#### KS1 Offers

- Goldilocks on Trial / Robin Hood on Trial
- Object handling
- Local history
- Cave Detectives

**New KS2 Workshop: British Values in Prison:** Exploring how values are applied in the justice system, historically and today.

**Hate Crime Courtroom Workshops - In School (Summer Term):** Free sessions funded through Community Cohesion & Hate Crime grants, aiming to reach 600 Year 6 pupils in June and July 2026. Contact Jo to get involved.

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## Artist Workshops – Katie Sandoval [On-line Art Workshops | Katiesandovalart.com](https://www.katiesandovalart.com)

[info@katiesandovalart.com](mailto:info@katiesandovalart.com) Katie offers beautiful, nature-based creative sessions in your school.

These sessions are highly sensory, Suitable for **SEND**, including children with autism and available as staff CPD or pupil workshops. Katie also gives inspiring talks about her own artistic practice

- **Ink Worlds** – expressive ink experiments. *“When I made a mistake, I turned it into a masterpiece.”* – KS2 pupil
  - **Sun Prints** – analogue photography using natural materials
  - **Nature Lino Printing.**
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## Nottingham Shakespeare Company [Nottingham Shakespeare Company](https://www.nottinghamshakespeare.co.uk)

Michelle-Louise Wright [michelle@nottinghamshakespeare.co.uk](mailto:michelle@nottinghamshakespeare.co.uk) *“Shakespeare is the warp on which the weft of British language is woven... children deserve to feel it belongs to them.”*

Offers include:

- **In-school** Macbeth or Romeo & Juliet performances with 5–6 actors
  - Q&A plus demonstrations of stage combat and effects
  - A new **A Midsummer Night’s Dream** project involving pupils and staff in co-creating parts of the performance
  - The company’s summer outdoor shows are always free.
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## Lakeside Arts [Homepage - Lakeside Arts, Nottingham](https://www.lakesidearts.co.uk)

Rachel Feneley [Rachel.feneley@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Rachel.feneley@nottingham.ac.uk)

- **Andy Warhol** [Andy Warhol: Pop Icon - Lakeside Arts, Nottingham](https://www.lakesidearts.co.uk/andy-warhol) and **CPD – Tomorrow (3.30–5pm)**. A practical session with artist Sian Watson: Exhibition tour, Hands-on making and resources to take away
  - **Warhol Exhibition School Visits:** Rachel still has **four funded slots** (transport + workshops) for schools wanting to visit with up to 60 children.
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## SEND Galleries Group, ChalleNGe [Heidi.shewell-cooper@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:Heidi.shewell-cooper@ntu.ac.uk).

A city-wide network for SENCOs, teachers, and gallery staff. **Next meeting:** 4 March 2026, 1-3pm

Opportunities include:

- **Action Learning Proposals** for inclusive school trips (download the proposal form– [homepage](https://www.challengegallerygroup.co.uk))
  - New partnership with **Attenborough Arts Centre** to develop accessible practice; and ChalleNGe have recruited two SEND specialists to coordinate the community of practice.
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## Summary

Heidi encouraged providers to send new opportunities for inclusion in the **schools’ newsletter**, so teachers have plenty of time to plan. *“It’s always a joy to hear from you all. Let’s make sure every child in Nottingham has access to amazing creative opportunities.”* All primary schools were warmly invited to join the **Cultural Rucksack programme**, [Cultural Rucksack - Schools Network](https://www.culturalsackschools.co.uk) ensuring that creativity becomes an everyday entitlement for all children and young people in Nottingham.