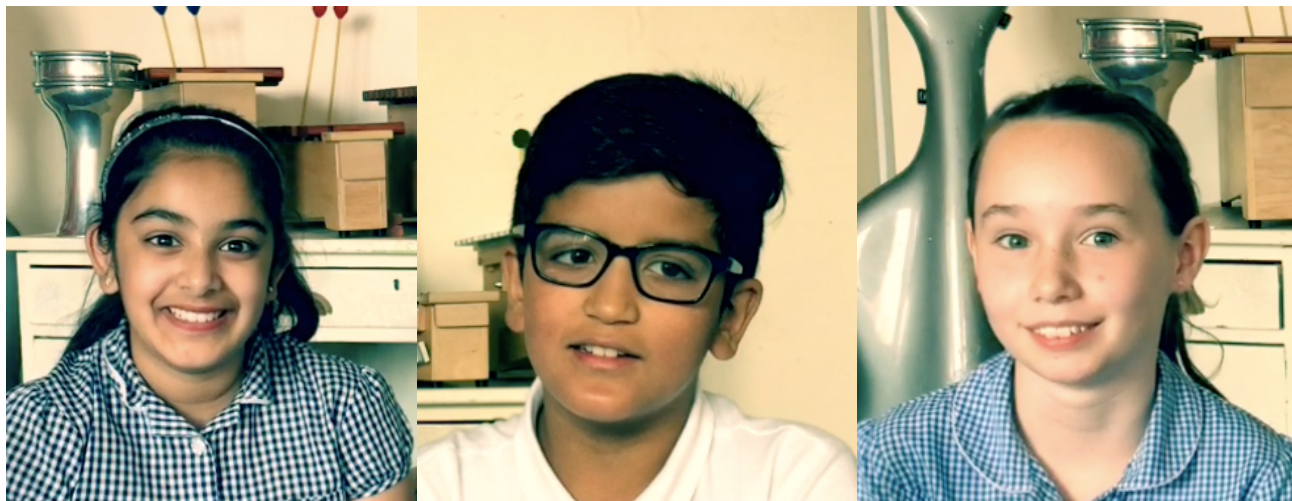


## Why does creativity matter?

Since 2014 The Stringcredibles have been the resident artists at Pinfold Street Primary School in Darlaston, Walsall. A state primary school in an area of multiple deprivation, we work with every child in the school twice a year to compose and perform their own new music. The creative process is starting to embed itself in the thinking of these children and the pupils themselves can now articulate the value of embracing creative learning. So why do the children of Pinfold Street Primary School think a creative education is so important?



Sameera

Riteak

Holly

### Reason 1: Generating New Ideas

“Creativity is about using your imagination, getting messy a bit and trying out randomly weird ideas that actually turn out to be good.”

Sameera, age 10

Human civilisation exists in an evolution, a process whereby ideas are generated, developed, used until they are no longer valuable, and then finally rejected. Every new idea stands upon the shoulders of its predecessors in a continuum of concepts jostling for relevance and dominance. New ideas are vital to so many human activities - science, medicine, manufacturing, politics, business, art, education. Understanding how to create that illusive new idea of value is an essential yet not easily defined process, until you have a go.

“Creativity is the process of having original ideas that have value.”

Sir Ken Robinson, Out of our Minds

## **Reason 2: Fulfilling Potential, with permission to make mistakes along the way**

“Creativity is important because you need it to find something independent in you, something that shows who you really are.”

Riteak, age 10

“It’s important to try out an idea because if you don’t, you won’t know if it might be a good idea or not.”

Holly, age 9

In “The Element” Ken Robinson argues that once a student finds the subject or idea that excites them, they will fly. But if you’re 8 years old, how do you know what excites you, how do you know what you want to spend the rest of your life doing? Ken argues that too many people proceed through an industrial model of an education system, without discovering their ‘element’ and end up in jobs that do not use or develop their potential. Working creatively challenges students to think about who they really are, what they think and how they can make a difference. It doesn’t matter which walk of life they end up devoting their time to, the creative process helps them to understand how they might be fulfilled by appreciating and using their own individual skills. And there will be mistakes along the way, if we do not fail at times we will not be truly challenging and developing our ideas or fulfilling our potential.

“Understanding that failure is simply success work in progress will give young people the mindset to be job makers, not just job seekers.”

Ian Livingstone, Author and Entrepreneur

“There is no success without risk and no risk without failure.”

Deborah Bull,

Director, Cultural Partnerships, King’s College London

## **Reason 3: Celebrating Individuality, Diversity and Collaboration**

“Everybody has great ideas. If everyone had the same idea, even if it is great, spectacular, magnificent, we would all be the same and we need different ideas.”

Sameera, age 10

Diversity in its simplest terms is different thoughts, different life experiences and different opinions. These diverse qualities can be the very ingredients that create new ideas. Using the metaphor of the board room, it is commonly understood that businesses need boards with a broad skills base, people of different ages, experience and expertise to provide the tools to scrutinise the product, to appeal as widely as possible and ultimately to be successful. Embracing diversity is also a key ingredient of a healthy democracy. Creating a collaborative piece of art is like watching that democratic process in action - we define our challenge, we pool ideas, we evaluate those ideas, we might combine some, or evolve them, we might disagree, we might find some new ideas and finally we create something of value that everyone owns. The skill

lies in understanding *how* the risk and uncertainty of that creative process can generate the new ideas, whilst managing the expectations and needs of those involved.

“Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else.”  
— Margaret Mead, Author and Cultural Anthropologist

### So is a creative education important?

“I would teach children music, physics, and philosophy; but most importantly music,  
for the patterns in music and all the arts are the keys to learning”  
Plato

“Maths *is* important....but so is music.”  
Sameera, age 10



Th Stringcredibles

The Stringcredibles, Catherine Arlidge, Bryony Morrison, Amy Thomas and Helen Edgar, are an independent string quartet of musicians from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, dedicated to inspiring creativity, supporting instrumental learning and connecting new audiences to culture.

Darlaston is an old 'Black Country' town in south Walsall, near the Sandwell and Wolverhampton borders. This once thriving industrial community (known for the making of nuts and bolts) has declined since the 1980s, causing high rates of unemployment and social deprivation.

Pinfold Street Primary School is one of eight in the locality and like neighbouring schools, the majority of families receive benefits and children qualify for free school meals. The pupil premium budget is high and is used in various ways to support children's learning and experiences. As a choice of the visionary Head Teacher, Sally-Ann Sinclair, creative learning is an essential component of the curriculum.

[www.thestringcredibles.com](http://www.thestringcredibles.com)

<http://pinfoldschool.co.uk>