

APPENDIX 3: Partner Support for Children's Capital of Culture

Strategic Partners

Members of the Cultural Partnership Board with strategic oversight of the programme. Strategic Partners will also host their own events and activities as part of the festival year. They include:

- Flux Rotherham
- Grimm & Co
- Yorkshire Sport Foundation
- Wentworth Woodhouse
- ROAR
- Arc Cinema
- Gullivers Valley Theme Parks
- Rotherham Leisure Complex
- Sense
- Rotherham Creative Network
- RNN Group
- RMBC – Culture, Sport & Tourism
- RMBC – Public Health

“It has been inspiring to have been part of the planning and development of Rotherham's Children's Capital of Culture since its conception five years ago. The energy, creativity, innovation and sheer imagination of the initiative has been created by placing children and young people at the heart of everything. In doing so it has brought about a genuine collaborative spirit of the many agencies, organisations and people involved in its planning and delivery.

We are particularly pleased that the value of sport and physical activity has been recognised as part of the wider cultural offer; bringing about opportunities that are tailored to the infinite number of wants and needs of a diverse young population. It really has felt like everyone playing their part.

We are looking forward to a rich programme of activities next year which we are sure will provide a real buzz around Rotherham. We know this will only be the visual tip of the iceberg whilst underneath the skills training and experience gained by the young people involved will have a lasting effect on their careers and lives for years to come. We know that next year is only the start.”

**Nigel Harrison, Chief Executive
Yorkshire Sport Foundation**

Commissioned Partners

Directly commissioned by the Children's Capital of Culture programme team and/or other Strategic Partners to undertake key activities such as the delivery of Opening and Closing Programme events and hosting of traineeship. They include:

- National Videogame Museum
- Royal Opera House
- Royal Horticultural Society
- WoW Foundation
- British Cycling
- Breakin' UK
- Emergency Exit Arts
- Pif Paf Theatre
- Kaleider
- Ommatidium
- Contact Theatre
- Sheffield DocFest
- Children's Media Conference

This list will grow as more programmes are commissioned e.g., Opening Programme, Closing Programme, major events and festivals throughout the year.

“Children's Capital of Culture is such a brilliant idea - to empower the young people of Rotherham, ignite creativity across the borough, and to bring together communities to celebrate, connect and be proud!”

Access to cultural and creative opportunities is something that should be open to everyone, no matter where they're from, or what their background is. Children's Capital of Culture is a wonderful initiative to kick start and embed change in Rotherham that will impact generations to come.”

**Imogen Bond, National Schools Partnerships Manager
Royal Opera House**

“Working with the team from Children's Capital of Culture enabled WOW to tour the bus to Rotherham in May 2024, where we heard from over 500 school students and families about things they cared about, and their hopes for the place in which they live and can already see the impact the team are able to have on programmes and passion within the team.

Children's Capital of Culture in Rotherham will be a vehicle for young people to write their own story and have their say. The WOW Foundation is excited to work with Children's Capital of Culture for WOW Rotherham in 2025, centring the voices of young people.”

**Cathryn Fenton, Project Manager
WoW Foundation**

“We believe that young people have such an important role to play in helping shape, programme, produce, perform, make, create and evaluate cultural activities. Rotherham is leading the way in creating the Children’s Capital of Culture, and Emergency Exit Arts are delighted to be partners in it!”

**Daniel Bernstein, CEO
Emergency Exit Arts**

“Children’s Capital of Culture is an incredibly important initiative for Rotherham and South Yorkshire, because the festival, events and programme have the potential to greatly increase a sense of pride in place amongst young people and their families in region.

Because young people are leading and informing the activities, there will be much greater sense of ownership in terms of what culture can be, who culture is for, and how children’s own hopes and vision for the future can be valued and realised - increasing aspiration.

Our organisation, the National Videogame Museum, and charity (The BGI), are proud to support and be part of this initiative because young people now are highly likely to experience art, design, story and music that resonates with them for the first time through videogames - so celebrating videogames with young people in Rotherham and South Yorkshire through “Plug in and Play” reflects back to the community ideas about culture and value that make sense, and can connect across cultural and economic barriers.”

**John O’Shea, Co-director
The National Videogame Museum**

“After 21 years curating the Children’s Media Conference (CMC) in Sheffield, the idea that Rotherham might stage the inaugural Children’s City of Culture is tremendously exciting. I knew at once that we should do everything we can to support the project. We will promote it at CMC in July 2024 and encourage our attendees - all media professionals working in various sectors of children’s and youth content - to become involved in whatever ways are appropriate.

The Children’s Capital of Culture plan is a practical and child-focused way of extending the South Yorkshire region’s commitment to the young audience. A perfect extension of the long-time association with children’s television, games, publishing, audio and film that are promoted at the conference in Sheffield annually, and the connection with young people at the CMC’s digital art exhibition, [Playground](#), which has taken place in Sheffield each summer since 2016.”

**Greg Childs OBE
Editorial Director
The Children’s Media Conference**

“Chloe and Cait [Children’s Capital of Culture trainee Young Producers] have rapidly embedded themselves in the festival team and have excelled in their roles, picking up a huge amount of information, relationships and production skills in just a few short months. We are so happy seeing them grow in their roles and to be partnering with Children’s Capital of Culture on this programme.

DocFest is proudly northern, and a firm believer that talent is everywhere, even if opportunities for creative industries are often concentrated in the South. Our Children’s Capital of Culture trainees have shown us how true this is, immersing themselves in our work and creative community with grace and grabbing all opportunities with enthusiasm. We can’t wait to see the programme of films they select for Rotherham audiences later this year, and to bring cinematic docs more widely to young people across South Yorkshire.”

**Annabel Grundy, Managing Director
Sheffield DocFest**

Associate Partners

Anyone can submit ideas for the festival year, Associate Partners are those who will be allowed to utilise the brand in return for delivering a project of benefit to Rotherham. These partners will largely be sourced through the Open Call and the EOI process, however we know of some partners who are already developing ideas ahead of the open call for proposals being launched in July including:

- Rotherham United Football Club
- Apna Haq
- Barnardos
- Magna
- Harthill Carnival
- Clifton Learning Partnership
- Ferham Festival
- Jade
- Rotherham Opportunities College
- Young Minds Together
- REMA
- Voluntary Action Rotherham
- Our Favourite Places

“Harthill Carnival Society is delighted to be already building a working partnership with Children’s Capital of Culture as we head towards 2025. Harthill Carnival & Show celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, and children have and always will play a major part of this annual community event. Our values are clearly aligned with those of Children’s Capital of Culture in creating opportunities for children within our communities and to create lasting legacies which our children can carry forward in life.

As a society we felt it would be a fitting tribute to dedicate the Harthill Carnival Parade theme in 2025 to “Children’s Capital of Culture”, and we are very excited to

work together to mark this special occasion, through a multitude of inclusive activities for all children.”

**Paul Brookes
Harthill Carnival**

“We value and appreciate the work of Children’s Capital of Culture in Rotherham. The work has provided new and exciting opportunities for the young people that we work with. Many of our young people come from deprived backgrounds and the work of Children’s Capital of Culture has enhanced their experiences and raised their aspirations.

As a small organisation we would have struggled to give this range of opportunities to our young people, and the skill and dedication of the staff at Children’s Capital of Culture has provided so much for us as an organisation as well as the young people.”

**Helen Littlewood, Chief Executive
Clifton Learning Partnership**

“Magna is and always has been huge supporter of Children’s Capital of Culture. We were an active participant in the first traineeship programme in 2023 and have continued to support the events in 2024 in the lead up to what we hope will be a hugely successful 2025. As a major player in the Local Visitor Economy of Rotherham we fully understand the huge benefits that Children’s Capital of Culture can bring to the children of Rotherham and the wider South Yorkshire area.

We at Magna anticipate playing a full and comprehensive role in Children’s Capital of Culture during 2025 and we are working with the Council Team to ensure it’s a huge success for our children.”

**Kevin Tomlinson, Chief Executive
Magna Science & Adventure Park**

“Working with Children’s Capital of Culture has been awesome for our children and their families. The lovely Children’s Capital of Culture facilitator Maria came to our transition group of children going up to high school to help them make canvasses about things that they were scared of, which was a good place to start youth work with them. Then they produced paintings on easels that were part of the WoW Festival exhibition. Our children and their families then attended the festival and had a great time. Our kids have little access to arts and culture, especially in terms of participation, so this was brilliant for them.

For our organisation, working with Children's Capital of Culture strengthens our identity as a family hub and will mean we are providing long-term wraparound support for our community on lots of levels. The organisation of the whole programme by Children's Capital of Culture was spot on, and we're now moving forward with Children's Capital of Culture to offer the Bronze Arts Award – a brilliant opportunity for us and our kids!"

**Kathryn Reaney, Youth Worker
Jade, Dinnington**

Wider support for Children's Capital of Culture

The programme will be delivered in partnership with a range of organisations and participants from schools to community groups and wider networks and has the support of a number of regionally and nationally influential artists, educators, businesses and commissioners.

"Rotherham becoming Children's Capital of Culture is a massive opportunity and opens up so many possibilities for our children. It widens participation in creativity and culture and empowers these young people to make Rotherham the place they want it to be in the future. We're all really excited about it."

Alison Stenton, a teacher at Thorpe Hesley Primary School

"The idea of a Children's Capital of Culture immediately sparks flow in my mind thinking about and, to be absolutely honest, I'd never have thought of it myself! Every time there is a 'City of Culture' programme I always think "Oh! I hope they do something with children!" ...but the whole idea that you have a Children's Capital of Culture seems to be absolutely magic!"

To make everybody go through 180 degrees and think about culture and how that will work for children instead of what shall we do for children at one side of what we're doing over here with opera, and plays and music... it will turn people right round the other way and make them think "well I do this, but how could I do that for children?"

I think it's fantastic – an absolutely wonderful idea!"

**Michael Rosen
Children's Author, poet, performer, broadcaster and scriptwriter**

"It is simply amazing that Rotherham will be hosting Children's Capital of Culture. It is an investment in our young people, in Rotherham and in South Yorkshire. From our museums to our performing arts companies, to community networks who excite and enthral us all, culture and creativity are increasingly at the heart of Rotherham's strategic development.

Culture is about how we all live. Culture is the people of Rotherham's creativity, knowledge, traditions and passions. The imagination of our young people is without

limits. Culture improves our quality of life, wellbeing, and sense of place. It drives our economy. Let us empower, help and support our young people, they are our future, they are the future of Rotherham”.

**Martin McKervey, Director
AESSEAL plc**

These testimonials build on the support for the original idea when it was first formed by the ‘Embassy for Reimagining Rotherham’ programme in 2017 which included:

“What ambition, what joy and what care there is here. I celebrate their plans, find comfort in their solid and meaningful partnerships and 100% support their goals and vision”

Kate Willard, Previous Chair, Arts Council England North (2019)

“What you do is wonderful and transformative. Keep going. Stay brave!”

Pat Chapman, Previous Arts Council England North Committee Member (2019)

“Rotherham’s ambition to be the first Children’s Capital of Culture will create new reasons for local people, of every age, to be proud of Rotherham. It’s a bold, optimistic and exciting vision which will capture the imagination of visitors and funders alike, creating a new chapter in the unfolding story of the impact that these initiatives can have on the renewal of our towns and cities.”

Martin Green, Chief Executive, Hull City of Culture 2017 (2019)

“The idea of creating the Children’s Capital of Culture – the first ever such initiative in the UK – should not be underestimated. This initiative...will be part of creating Rotherham’s future self. Nowhere else in the UK is doing this, with this ambition or at this scale.”

Maggie Atkinson, Former England Commissioner for Children (2019)