

THEATRE FOR
EVERY CHILD



Launch Toolkit

September 2023



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About the campaign

Building the theatre audiences & workforce of the future

Theatre for Every Child is a new campaign for the UK theatre industry, launching in autumn 2023.

We believe every child has the right to experience and enjoy our country's world-class theatre sector, so we will be asking political parties to commit to provide funding and to support our aim in their general election manifestos: **that every child goes to the theatre by the time they leave school.**

Once we achieve political support for this campaign, we will work in partnership with schools and theatres to ensure that our aim is delivered, especially in schools and communities where theatre trips are currently not possible.

Our aim

Every child should
visit the theatre
before they leave
school





Assets



Launch: Video of Support

Monday 16 October will be the official launch of Theatre for Every Child. For us to gain political support and truly make waves outside of the industry, we need the word to spread beyond our own channels. And that's where you can help us.

We'd love all supporters to share content to their own channels where possible with the hashtag **#TheatreForEveryChild** from **4pm on Monday 16 October 2023**.

What we need

We need two very simple videos which can be recorded using your phone. Both videos should be just yourself speaking to camera.

Video 1 Statement of Support

'I believe every child has the right to go to the theatre, and that's why I'm supporting the Theatre for Every Child Campaign'

Video 2 Your first memory of going to the theatre

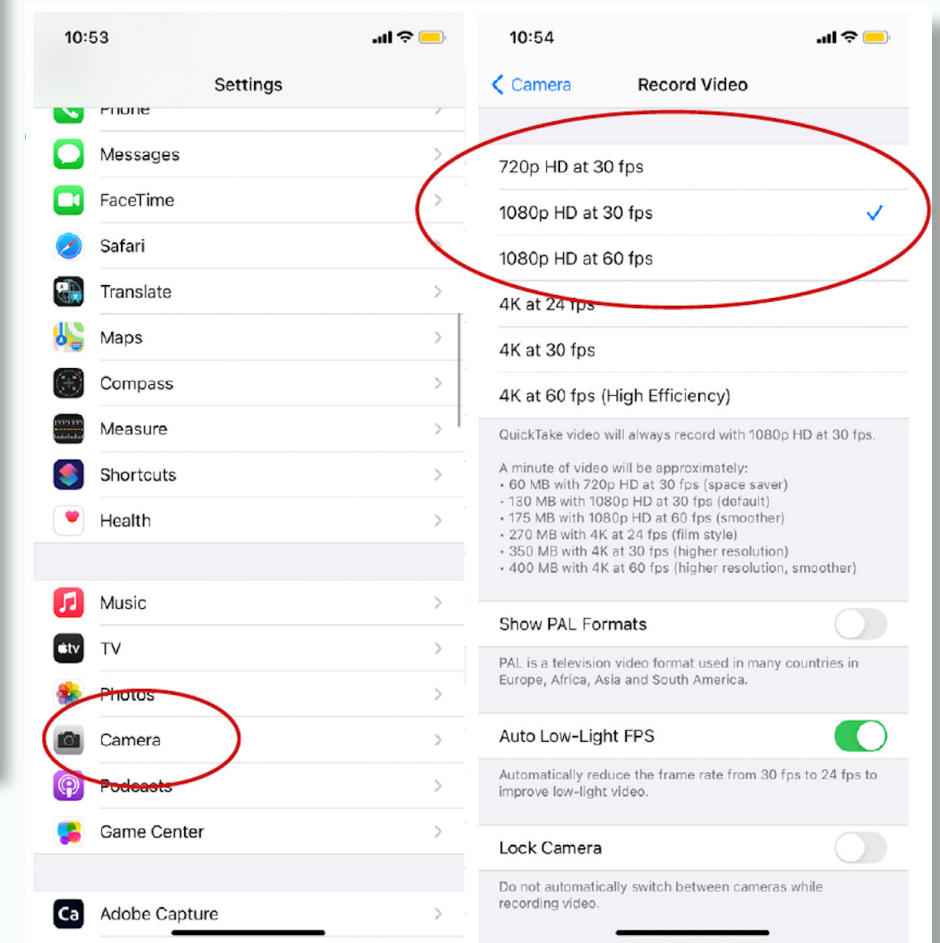
Please record a short video (less than one minute) of your first memory of going to a theatre - a bonus is if it was on a school trip!

In order to make a real impact we ask that you post these on your own social media channel. However please send all video content to jess@soltukt.co.uk via WeTransfer or iMessage on **07872 501 991** so that we can repurpose on our own channel. Please do not send via WhatsApp as this compresses the video.

Examples of previous content: **Theatre Artist Fund**

Filming Specifications

- Film in wide, landscape. Please make sure you are positioned directly in the middle of the shot with space either side of you. This means we can crop it later to portrait.
- Please film in HD at a minimum of 720/1080p at 24 or 30 fps - use the highest quality your device allows. For an example of how to change settings on an iPhone please see reverse of sheet.
- Please film somewhere quiet with minimal background noise. Please use a microphone if you have it.
- Light from the front. Please avoid being lit from behind as this can cause a silhouette. If you don't have a camera light, you can film in front of a window for the natural lighting.



Launch: Social Cards

If you are unable to post a video, we have created a range of static assets for you to post across your channels.

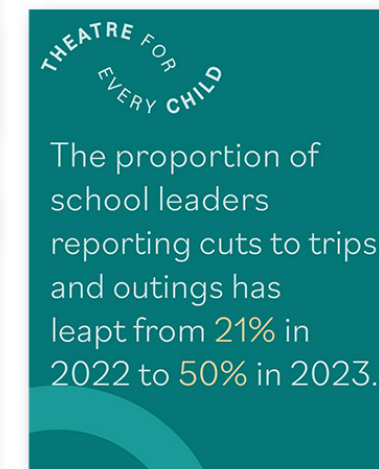
This includes:

- Landscape asset for Facebook, X, LinkedIn
- Portrait carousel for Instagram
- Square assets for Facebook, Instagram, X and LinkedIn



Download Social Assets

Download our Brand Guidelines



Launch: Copy

We've created some copy you can share across your channels, these could be posted on your social media sites or in newsletters and emails.

Short Copy

This contains no more than 280 characters so can be shared on your X/Twitter channel. Because the copy is so short it should always link to further information on TheatreForEveryChild.org

Long Copy

This contains more than 280 characters and includes a little more detail about the campaign. This can be used for newsletter copy, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. This should always link to TheatreForEveryChild.org

Download Copy



UK Theatre @uk_theatre

We believe that every child has the right to experience and enjoy our country's culture and world-leading theatre which is why we are proud to support SOLT & UK Theatre's [#TheatreForEveryChild](https://TheatreForEveryChild.org) campaign.

For more information on how you can support visit TheatreForEveryChild.org

More ways to get involved

To ensure you feature on our TheatreForEveryChild.org website you can:

- Use the hashtag [#TheatreForEveryChild](https://TheatreForEveryChild.org) on social media, or
- Email us at TheatreForEveryChild@soltukt.co.uk



MP Template

Ask your local representative to pledge their support for the Theatre for Every Child Campaign by:

- Emailing your MP/Metro Mayor/Council Leader & Cabinet/Councillors (and any peers with whom you have a relationship) to
 - ◊ Ask for them to publicly support the campaign on social media using **#TheatreForEveryChild**
 - ◊ Call on their political parties to include the commitment in their manifestos ahead of the general election in 2024 to ensure all children can attend theatre before they leave school
 - ◊ Invite them to participate in events you're running as part of the Theatre for Every Child Campaign.
- If you are not planning an event, please do still write to them to highlight the campaign.
- If you don't know who your MP/Councillors are you can find their details here: www.WriteToThem.com, by entering your postcode.
- Always ensure that your address and postcode is at the top of your email – politicians' offices receive 100s of emails in a week and will require this information before they respond/take action.
- Please cc TheatreForEveryChild@soltukt.co.uk into your email, so we can track engagement on this issue.

Download Template

Subject: Theatre for Every Child Campaign: please pledge your support [and join **[Your Organisation]** at our **[Event]** on **[Date]**]

[Your Name]
[Your Organisation]
[Your Address]
[Your Postcode]

Dear **[MP/Peer/Councillor Name]**,

Theatre for Every Child Campaign: Please pledge your support [and join **[Your Organisation] at our **[Event]** on **[Date]**]**

If you represent a theatre or performing arts venue, please refer to it here

As you may know, **[Your Organisation]** is based in your constituency.



FAQs



FAQs

What is the campaign?

The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) & UK Theatre want every child to attend the theatre by the time they leave school.

We want children and young people to experience as much theatre and live performance as possible at every age, as we believe every child has the right to experience and enjoy our country's world-class theatre sector.

As a minimum benchmark, our Theatre for Every Child (TFEC) Campaign asks for all political parties to ensure that all children have the chance to see a professional theatre production before they leave school.

Ahead of the next general election, we are asking all political parties to make this commitment in their manifestos.

How will it work?

Ahead of the next general election, we will ask all political parties to commit to this pledge by ring fencing funding.

SOLT & UK Theatre's initial costing work indicates that this would cost the government a maximum of £42.33 per child, or a total cost of £34m per year.

This figure assumes that theatres charge £25 per ticket. However, costs could be reduced further through voluntary contributions from theatres, private sector sponsorship and parents. With these voluntary contributions, we believe that the maximum cost would fall to around £14-18m per year.

What are the aims of the campaign?

The primary aim is to secure a funded commitment from political

parties that every child goes to the theatre by the time they leave school.

The secondary aim is to shine a light on the work our members are already doing to engage with school pupils and inspire more schools to engage with their local theatre.

What are the key messages for the campaign?

- Every child has the right to experience and enjoy our country's world-leading theatre.
- SOLT & UK Theatre want every child to attend the theatre by the time they leave school.
- Ahead of the next general election, we ask all political parties to commit to this pledge by ring fencing funding, to support schools to bridge the funding gap that currently exists for theatre trips.
- There is strong evidence that going to the theatre provides cultural enrichment, has educational benefits, helps to build empathy, promotes well-being, and supports the growth of our economy.
- For the theatre sector, ensuring that all young people have the experience of going to the theatre will inspire future audiences and our future workforce, helping to address skills shortages.

Calling for a fund to ensure that children visit the theatre just once before they leave school doesn't seem very ambitious. Why are we not asking for more?

SOLT & UK Theatre want children and young people to have as many opportunities to visit the theatre as possible. Given that many children have never visited a theatre and state schools' ability to offer theatre visits has been severely curtailed due to the cost-of-living crisis, it is important to establish a **minimum benchmark**, which will enable us to measure progress over time. Securing a pledge from political parties to ensure that every child visits the theatre at least once before they leave school represents this minimum benchmark. This initial ask will be part of an ongoing campaign working with partners and policy makers to improve access to theatre for all children.

How long will the campaign run?

The initial phase of the Theatre for Every Child Campaign asks political parties for a manifesto commitment to pledge that all children have the chance to visit a theatre before they leave school. The campaign is currently focused on the next general election but will continue until we achieve our goal.

Why does the proposed fund only cover one visit to the theatre per child?

As the trade associate for theatre in the UK, we want children and young people to experience as much theatre and live performance as possible at every age. This campaign acknowledges the fact that access to the theatre varies greatly, with many children missing out entirely on the joyful and enriching potential of live performance. That is why we are calling for a fund to ensure that as a minimum, all children have the chance to visit a theatre before they leave school. We consider this to be a baseline from which we will plot progress over the years to come.

What is happening now?

In 2019/20 only 25% of 11-15 year olds engaged in theatre and drama 'outside of school'¹.



FAQs

The National Curriculum **requires every state-funded school to promote children's cultural development**, preparing them for the experiences of later life. Whilst the private school sector is **able to** invest in cultural education, the state sector has **suffered** a significant reduction in provision, due in part to the marginalisation of arts subjects in schools over the last twenty years².

Children from low-income families are missing out the most because they are less likely to have access to cultural experiences outside of school³. Furthermore, the ongoing cost-of-living crisis has led to a reduction in school trips including theatre visits.

Recent research from the Sutton Trust shows that school leaders are reporting significant cuts to school trip and outings since last year⁴.

This campaign looks ahead to the publication of the government's first Cultural Education Plan which is expected by the end of 2023.

Why does this matter and what can be gained?

Provide cultural enrichment

Theatre broadens children's horizons, shaping their sense of the world and their place within it.

Offer educational benefits

The immersive experience of theatre helps children to learn⁵, whilst structured arts activities can increase cognitive skills across all subject areas.⁶

Children from low-income families who participate in arts at school are three times more likely to get a degree.⁷

Help build empathy

Watching theatrical performances helps children to develop emotional intelligence.^{8,9}

Promote well-being

Children and young people report that engaging in cultural and creative activities, such as drama, helps them to "relax and de-stress".⁴

Spark a lucrative career and address skills shortages

This campaign will raise awareness of the highly skilled off-stage STEM orientated theatre jobs open to young people at a time when the industry is facing significant skills shortages.¹⁰

Boost audience figures

This initiative would help to raise audience figures over the long-term, boosting economic activity, resulting in more jobs across the UK.

Support the growth of our economy

Theatre is a key component of the broader creative industries which, prior to Covid, contributed £116bn in Gross Value Added (GVA).¹¹

Our research indicates that the theatre industry alone generates £2.39bn GVA and supports 205,000 workers.

For every £1 spent on a theatre ticket, an additional spend of £1.40 is generated in local economies.¹²

Campaign Launch

To launch the campaign, we are holding an event for key stakeholders at a central London location. You can support the launch by posting our social media assets on your channels from 4pm on Monday 16 October.

championing the work already being done by UK theatres to ensure school children can attend the theatre.

To kickstart this, we have worked with Sita McIntosh of Inclusive Audiences to curate a month of special school performances and events across the country, particularly targeting schools with low

engagement in Arts Council priority areas. This will take place from 19 October until 20 November.

We will be inviting key politicians, including MPs, metro mayors, and local councillors to join us at these events so that they can witness the impact that they have on young people firsthand.

What can you do?

- We are building a strong evidence base for this policy ask. Please share details of the positive impact of your work with children and young people by emailing us at publicaffairs@soltukt.co.uk. We can then use this content when engaging with parliamentarians.
- You can also email your MP and candidates from other parties using this [template](#). You can find out who your local MP on the [UK Parliament website](#). Candidates for the next UK general election are in the process of being selected. They will be on the UK Parliament website once the general election is called (we know it will be sometime next year, but we don't know when). Some parties in some constituencies have announced their candidates, you will need to check the constituency website of individual parties to find this out before the election is called.
- Support the campaign launch by joining in with our [Social Media Campaign](#).
- Demonstrate your support for the Theatre for Every Child Campaign on social media using [#TheatreForEveryChild](#)



Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/taking-part-201920-annual-child-release/arts-taking-part-survey-201920>
- 2 <https://pec.ac.uk/blog/class-inequality-in-the-creative-industries-is-rooted-in-unequal-access-to-arts-and-cultural-education>
- 3 <https://www.ukonward.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Beyond-school-enrichment-report-onward.pdf>
- 4 <https://www.suttontrust.com/news-opinion/all-news-opinion/cost-of-living-crisis-hits-school-spending/>
- 5 <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0013189X18761034>
- 6 <https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/key-research-findings-the-case-for-cultural-learning/>
- 7 <https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/key-research-findings-the-case-for-cultural-learning/>
- 8 <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-021-11233-6>
- 9 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S002210312100038X#bb0050>
- 10 https://www.nordicity.com/de/cache/work/15/Nordicity_UK_Theatre_Workforce_Review_Report_2017.pdf
- 11 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dcms-economic-estimates-2019-gross-value-added/dcms-economic-estimates-2019-provisional-gross-value-added>
- 12 Economic Impact Assessment of UK Theatre Sector, Sound Diplomacy, June 2023

