Welcome to Arc

"What happens here spills out into your whole world"

Arc is a creative arts organisation specialising in mental health, wellbeing and community development.

At Arc we help people to manage their mental health and increase their wellbeing by exploring what it means to live well, to experience meaning and purpose; to flourish and to make a difference. We provide opportunities for people to explore their creativity, connect with each other and learn new skills.

- Vulnerable adults & young people benefit from our structured programmes of support which help them on a journey through recovery to wellbeing and independence.
- For health partners and commissioners Arc offers a specialist service which uses the unique power of the arts to support recovery from mental ill health. We have unrivalled experience in the development of high impact, bespoke support programmes for people at all stages of recovery.
- For communities we offer the opportunity to experience, design and co-produce inspirational arts events which build capacity and change perspectives about where they live.
- We offer artists training, space, opportunities and resources to develop their practice in socially engaged settings.
- Members of the public with a creative interest are given the opportunity to develop their creativity and learn new practical skills.
Arc offers vulnerable adults & young people structured programmes of support, helping them on a journey through recovery to wellbeing, confidence and independence.

Challenge is a 6 month self development programme with 2 hour weekly sessions plus support outside the session. It is a creative arts programme, designed to support participants to develop not only their skills but also their confidence and general wellbeing. Challenge teaches practical skills as well as utilising creative opportunities to help aid psychological resilience.

The programme takes a personalised approach to participants who are experiencing ongoing difficulties associated with their mental health. Supported by staff, volunteers and social work students, the programme works with each individual to help them fulfil their aspirations.

New participants are given as much support as they need and we are happy to discuss anything that will help the person concerned join successfully.

"The Arc Challenge Programme has helped me to overcome feelings of isolation and the ongoing anxiety that I experience."

To discuss a referral or request a referral pack please call our Student Social Work team on 0161 474 1462 or email referrals@arc-centre.org
Health & Wellbeing - Arts for Wellbeing Programme

"The course has been a real eye opener. I am more confident in everyday life now and have a better outlook on life."

Arts for Wellbeing, our community outreach programme, is the ideal entry point into Arc with courses based in venues across Stockport.

With unrivalled experience in the development of high impact, bespoke support programmes, we include people who are in difficulty, vulnerable, excluded, ill or isolated, reaching in to neighbourhoods and working with partners to ensure access by as many people as possible.

Each project is designed to support people recovering from severe and enduring mental illness. Led by a professional artist alongside a volunteer and social work student, each workshop brings art making and team building together, to help participants improve their self-esteem, wellbeing and feel more connected to their local community.

Some participants begin their involvement with Arc by joining one of the community outreach courses and then progressing onto the Challenge Programme.

"Just this couple of hours a week gives me a lot of healing"

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Volunteering

"It’s been a year now since joining the team of volunteers at Arc. At first I was worried that my experience of the art environment would not fit but I was soon rewarded with the opportunity to lead and share my work with participants in the studio and also the hospital environment. It was a great decision to get involved."

We’re always looking for volunteers with great people skills who are enthusiastic and motivated. If you’re looking to gain experience of working in community arts or arts and health or if you want to make a difference in the community by supporting a charity then volunteering with Arc might be just right for you.

We have a large volunteer team who assist with all aspects of running our busy arts centre.

Volunteers assist with:

- Delivering arts sessions as part of our Challenge, Outreach and Young People’s Arc programmes.
- Opening the building to the public and running our gallery shop.
- Preparing and running exhibitions, displays and events both at Arc and at other venues to help promote us and widen our audience.
- Marketing and social media.

Whether you’d like to volunteer with us regularly or occasionally please contact Amy Whitehead amy@arc-centre.org to arrange an informal chat or an application pack.

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Young People's Arc, YPA, is a dynamic initiative reaching out to the most vulnerable young people, delivered in partnership with statutory and community agencies.

Since 2011, YPA has offered over 500 young people aged 5 to 25 the chance to be creative, have fun and meet others who share their experience. Projects range from creative days out to songwriting and music recording, ceramics to animation, illustration to photography. All are led by our team of professional artists who have the experience to connect the young peoples' ideas to arts skills and confidence-building. It is funded by BBC Children in Need and SMBC. Partner agencies include Signpost Young Carers, Mosaic, Jigsaw, the Pendlebury PRU, Ebony & Ivory Community Association, Refugee Action, Pure Insight, the Adoption Team and Disability Stockport.

“Open conversations, positive environment. The people are approachable, everyone listens.”

“I learnt about myself in good ways.”

“The animation project has seen a significant impact on the young people especially in terms of social confidence and developing teamwork skills.”

Matt Williamson, Deputy Head teacher, Stockport School

For more information about Young People’s Arc, YPA, please contact jacqui@arc-centre.org.
Since 2007 our gallery has regularly displayed beautiful embroideries made by women from Paddyfield School, which is located in the village of Bonhooghly to the south of Kolkata. Then, in April 2016, Arc initiated a new project, to share ideas, resources, expertise and information with Roshni, a community group located in the Rajabazaar slum. Here, in one of the poorest and most crowded parts of Kolkata, domestic violence is common, children are forced to work in local industries from a very young age, and women are denied any role in decision making. Now, our development coordinator is working closely with founder Shahina Javed to address these key issues, and has begun to establish programmes to raise awareness through community arts, teach English & ICT. By the end of the year-long project, we hope Roshni (which means ‘Light’) will be self-sustaining.

In the near future, we hope to explore similar relationships with other NGOs, develop mail art projects, exhibitions, exchange programmes, and an international blog where young people can share their stories. We hope this will lead to a flourishing network on both continents.

"My dream is to make an equal society, violence free"

Shahina Javed, Founder of Roshni