Be part of our Community & Education appeal
We strongly champion the right of every young person to engage with their world through drama. We support their education, inspire their imagination and develop key social and employment skills.

In particular, we want to provide creative opportunities for those who are marginalised, isolated, not achieving their full potential, or at risk of exclusion from school.

Fifty years ago, we pioneered the Theatre in Education movement, using theatre as a means to inspire curiosity in young people and support their learning about the world around them. We have remained a leader in the provision of participatory community arts ever since.

We want to ensure that we continue this work, and have already secured £250,000 towards the £500,000 target for the next three years.

With your support, we can continue to make a real difference to the lives of children and young people in Coventry & Warwickshire. Help us to develop their talent and improve their future.
Big School

Imagine moving from being part of the oldest year group in a familiar school to being one of the youngest and smallest in a daunting new environment.

Big School is the annual Theatre in Education (TiE) production which supports children with their transition from primary to secondary school, harnessing the power of drama in a performance and interactive workshop.

It reaches around 2,000 schoolchildren annually in Coventry and Warwickshire. It gives pupils the opportunity to discuss their concerns in a safe environment and explore as a group the ways in which they can overcome them.

This has been a key part of young people’s preparation for transition in the region and achieves greater engagement than traditional teaching methods alone.

But due to funding cuts, Big School is currently unable to tour in and beyond 2015. It is important that we are able to continue tackling the challenging issues faced by young people in our community.

“I was scared that I was going to be late and I was going to get told off but instead after watching Big School, it made me a lot less nervous. My little brother goes to primary still and I think it would be really helpful if he could have something to talk him through secondary because it’ll be hard for him as well. I think Big School would help.”

Max Harvey
Big School audience member
Acting Out

This ground-breaking work-related learning project is aimed at students in years 10 and 11 who are not achieving their full potential in mainstream education.

The programme gives students, who are referred from schools across Coventry and Warwickshire, the opportunity to take part in drama, dance and performing arts by attending the Belgrade Theatre one day a week.

The course gives teenagers the chance to study for a BTEC Certificate in Performing Arts whilst improving their confidence and communication, and their academic performance at school.

Following the extension of the school leaving age, we would love to extend this programme to young people in Years 12 and 13, providing more support to students during this transitional time in their lives.
Youth Theatre

Our Youth Theatre groups give young people in Coventry and Warwickshire the opportunity to develop their theatre techniques both on stage, singing, dancing and acting as well as back stage, writing and directing.

These activities play an important role in encouraging positive social development as they teach young people transferable life skills and allow them to learn and explore ideas.

They provide an avenue for people from all different age groups, cultural and social backgrounds and of opposing ideas to explore challenges together.

We have two ‘in-house’ youth theatres:

- **Middle Youth Theatre**: 11 to 15-year-olds
- **Senior Youth Theatre**: 16 to 25-year-olds

"I’ve been at the Belgrade for about 3 years. I’ve gained lots of new friends that share the same interests as me and are from different backgrounds, so I’ve learnt about different cultures."

**Ruth Mudhai**
Youth Theatre participant

**The Youth Theatre has served the young people in our community since the 1960s.**

| Famous names who started out as part of the Youth Theatres include Clive Owen, Chris O’Connell, Manjinder Virk, Nitin Ganatra and Lawrence Boswell |

**Black and Asian Youth Theatre**

Our Black Youth Theatre and Asian Youth Theatre groups provide a platform to explore and articulate the cultural experiences of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

People from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are among the least likely to take part in the arts, which is why we have focused on developing strong links in our local community to ensure no voice goes unheard.

"A wide range of cultures work together which I think is a fabulous thing. It’s kind of changed me as a person as I’ve become more confident in myself and more mature. It made me the person I really wanted to be."

**Amritpal Dhillon**
Senior Youth Theatre participant and Asian Youth Theatre mentor

Our Black Youth Theatre and Asian Youth Theatre groups provide a platform to explore and articulate the cultural experiences of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.
Outreach Youth Theatre

Canley is one of Coventry’s most disadvantaged areas in social and economic terms.

The outreach youth theatre programme gives young people in this community free access to activities that support their personal development, inspire their imaginations and provide them with the skills that will allow them to take ownership of their future.

We believe that creating shows in, and often about, the local area builds local pride, nurturing a sense of community, developing employability skills and supporting the regeneration agenda of the city. Running activities in outlying areas of the city also often attracts participants and audiences from further afield, building networks of relationships across the city and reducing isolation.

We have been running activities in Canley for around 10 years, and have strong relationships with local schools and services. We would like to capitalise on these relationships in the area and continue to grow the impact of the programme.

“I’ve been involved with the Belgrade for eight years. It’s great to start with groups like Canley. We used to put on small community shows and that was a really good opportunity.”

Bethany Kavanagh
Previous Canley outreach participant
INSPIRING
the next generation

How you can help

“As a local businessman and board member at the Belgrade Theatre, I have seen the hugely positive effects and invaluable life skills that are taught through its Community & Education Company.

“These pioneering projects provide thousands of youngsters with the opportunity to turn their lives around and improve their self-confidence but due to nationwide funding cuts in the Arts, this vital work is under threat.

“Please join me in helping to allow this valuable work to continue and thrive by securing the future of the Belgrade Theatre’s Community & Education Company to benefit many young people in this region of Coventry and Warwickshire. For more information, please return the form below and we will be in touch. Thank you.”

Peter Deeley, managing director of the Coventry-based Deeley Group

Please complete the form below:

Title  [ ] First name  [ ] [ ] Surname  [ ]
Address  [ ]
[ ]
[ ] Postcode  [ ]

Telephone  [ ]

Please send completed forms to:

Claire Simpson, General Manager
Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Corporation Street, Coventry, West Midlands, CV1 1GS

For further information, please email csimpson@belgrade.co.uk or telephone Claire on 02476 846759.