

# (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013

## Final Evaluation Report

Researched and written by

Dr. Caroline Murphy



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*'If you forget your language you forget who you are...'*

Pupil, Cardinal Heenan High School

*'I think these poems, the reason that they're so good is because that I think we kind of let our soul out into it. We basically make it that we gave our inner thoughts, our proper deep thoughts and actually to think, like for the first time in my life I was actually forced to sit down and to think who am I, why am I here, what is life...I think that week actually just by finding myself I think it didn't just change me but it helped change others around me and gave me a new perspective about life, and yeah I think we came there as friends and acquaintances and I think we left there as almost brothers.'*

Pupil, Lilian Baylis Technology College

*'What I think is that we are strong, and we can show each other we are strong, that is what it showed me.'*

Pupil, Cedar Mount Academy

*'I never believed that we would be able to do this, to make a play together of our story with our language. It makes me proud of everyone.'*

Pupil, Leeds Co-operative Academy

*'The students were full of potential, some brilliant, and we made a point of telling them so on the last night, reminding them what a gift it is that they have two languages and two cultures. We urged them all to keep writing and we just hope they are encouraged to do this back at the school.'*

Centre Director, Totleigh Barton, Lilian Balylis Residential Week

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Abbreviations	
CHCHS	Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School
CAL	The Co-operative Academy of Leeds
CMA	Cedar Mount Academy
LBTS	Lilian Baylis Technology School
INA	International New Arrivals, Travellers and Supplementary Schools Team, Manchester City Council

### Biographical note

Dr Caroline Murphy is an independent consultant who specialises in assessing the impact of creative projects. She has over 25 years of experience in education, the arts and the cultural sector. She has been a teacher, drama worker, education officer, and senior arts manager before establishing a consultancy practice that focuses on the social and educational impact of participation in the arts and creative practice. Caroline has had a strategic role on a number of national arts and cultural programmes, and has extensive experience of partnerships between cultural organisations and education settings including primary, secondary and higher education. Her interest in creative writing as a social and educational tool was deepened through doctoral research into the pedagogy of creative writing, which examined how writers learn and teach their art, and explored the impact of creative writing on teachers' classroom practice. Caroline regularly designs and leads bespoke training in schools and cultural organisations, and is a visiting lecturer at Northumbria University where she helped to establish the Post Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing in the Classroom.

# 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations

## 1.1 Arvon

Arvon, established in 1968, is a flagship literature organisation that aims to create the conditions that allow creative writing and learning to flourish. Arvon's programme centres around residential creative writing courses, run at four historic centres: The Hurst in Shropshire; Moniack Mhor in Inverness-shire; Lumb Bank in Yorkshire; and Totleigh Barton in Devon. The vision for learning at Arvon echoes the organisation's vision to offer inspirational and inclusive courses within and beyond the writing centres. Learning is a central part of the organisation's business, and is key to Arvon's aim of ensuring that its programme is accessible to all, and that the organisation fully enacts the four values that inform its work:

- To be **welcoming**, enabling all participants to contribute fully and explore their capabilities
- To be **inspirational**, working with people and in environments that stimulate participants' imaginations, emotions and creativity
- To be **supportive**, balancing one-to-one support with collaborative and group workshops; structured activities with freedom and informality; and fun and engagement with stretch and challenge
- To be **transformational**, creating the conditions that enable participants to reflect, grow and change, strengthening their capacity to achieve their full potential

## 1.2 (M)Other Tongues

(M)Other Tongues is a creative writing programme led by Arvon to encourage and support young people from communities in the UK to write in their mother tongue and English, exploring both language and culture. The programme has been developed with funding from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. A pilot (M)Other Tongues programme (2009-2011) benefited 48 young people from Lambeth in London. Building on the success of the pilot, the next phase of the project aimed to target the students most in need and to ensure even greater quality of facilitation, sustainability and legacy for the project. (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 engaged four groups of young people from Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School (Leeds); Cedar Mount Academy (Manchester); The Co-operative Academy (Leeds); and Lilian Baylis Technology School (London). The principle languages explored through the programme were Somali, Mirpuri, Urdu, French, and Romanian Roma.

### 1.3 Evaluation

Caroline Murphy was appointed as external evaluator in May 2012. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the impact of (M)Other Tongues on participants and organisations, and make recommendations for future developments. The evaluation used both quantitative and qualitative data collected through questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and reports. The evaluation also collected attainment data where possible for young people involved in the project, identifying pre- and post-project levels of attainment in writing. The approach to evaluation has been to focus attention on the impact of (M)Other Tongues on young people who have participated in the programme, and to explore complex outcomes such as impacts on personal and social development as well as more straightforward impacts on attainment. The evaluation also aims to go beyond *what* is achieved by increasing understanding of *how* the (M)Other Tongues approach to creative writing achieves such impacts. The report presents a thematic analysis of data, identifying impacts across four key themes:

- Engagement in and enjoyment of creative writing
- Personal and emotional development – Confidence, attainment and achievement
- Impact on social and cultural development
- Impact on perceptions of multilingual learners

These four impact themes relate to Arvon's overarching aims for the programme, which have informed the evaluation:

- To develop young people's understanding of and confidence in their own writing and learning ability
- To contribute to greater community cohesion
- To contribute to improved educational achievement and social skills for young people with dual heritage background
- To develop a robust, replicable model to support bilingualism through creative writing

#### **1.4 (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 Summary of Programme Outputs**

- Arvon commissioned research from the Institute of Policy Studies in Education which provided information about which language groups are under-achieving in education, and where they are located.
- Partnerships were established with 4 schools (see 1.2) and with relevant local authority teams in Lambeth, Leeds, and Manchester.
- 52 young people from these schools took part in preparatory and follow-up workshops; a week-long residential at an Arvon writing centre; and celebratory events to share their writing with their communities. Each group also produced anthologies of their writing.
- Arvon created a database of international writers and tutors who are able to facilitate creative writing with bilingual young people within and beyond schools.
- A further 125 students were involved in extended workshop opportunities through the programme, working with writers in schools and cultural settings.
- Approximately 2,450 local school pupils, parents, teachers, arts and education professionals attended (M)Other Tongues events including school showcases, school assemblies and local or national celebration events.
- 48 teachers attended one day INSET events in Leeds and London
- The Co-operative Academy of Leeds (M)Other Tongues project film has been seen by an estimated 600 viewers to date online or at conference events.
- A strong dissemination delivery plan has profiled (M)Other Tongues at 6 conferences and professional development events between May and November 2013, reaching over 300 education and arts professionals.
- By December 2013, Arvon will have published a (M)Other Tongues anthology of work from the last two years, and a learning resource for teachers and writers to develop creative writing with multilingual young people. To date, approximately 50 teachers have indicated that they want to receive a learning resource pack.

## 1.5 Summary of Findings

**(M)Other Tongues has successfully developed young people’s understanding of and confidence in their own writing and learning ability.** Enjoyment and engagement in creative writing lies at the heart of all other impacts achieved in the programme. Creative writing emerges from the project as a significant tool in the personal, social and cultural development of multilingual young people. The anthology of young people’s writing that has emerged from (M)Other Tongues, *Beautiful Like a Traffic Light*, is a powerful expression of participants’ creative voices, demonstrating complexity of themes and confident exploration of form and voice. Three key strands emerge in young people’s conceptions of creative writing in (M)other Tongues: creative writing as a space for reflection; creative writing as self expression; and creative writing as a reciprocal act (see 4.2.1).

**(M)Other Tongues has contributed to achieving greater community cohesion.** The (M)Other Tongues programme encouraged young people to celebrate their community languages, and promoted the development of social interaction. Participants’ joint participation in creative writing activities that explored both language and culture enabled them to develop strong social bonds, and acquire new knowledge of themselves, each other, and the world around them. Community events have enabled others to understand and celebrate participants’ languages, cultures and creative achievements (see 4.2.3, 4.2.4).

**(M)Other Tongues has contributed to improved educational achievement and social skills for participants.** Data collected through the evaluation demonstrates raised attainment of one sub level or more in English for 50% of participants across the programme. As is the case with any intervention, this cannot be wholly and solely attributed to the impact of (M)Other Tongues; however, it was the professional judgment of teachers involved in the programme that (M)Other Tongues had a significant influence on raising attainment, and that the participants may continue to see the impact on attainment as they develop and mature. (M)Other Tongues had a demonstrable impact on young people’s emerging personal identity, strengthening self image, aspiration and confidence. Raised self confidence and self esteem also had positive consequences for young people’s social interactions, enabling them to work together successfully and celebrate each others’ achievements (see 4.2.2, 4.2.3).

**(M)Other Tongues has developed a robust, replicable model to support bilingualism through creative writing.** (M)Other Tongues can be perceived as replicable and robust in two ways: firstly, as a *model* that can be repeated with other groups of participants who take part in workshops and a residential course with Arvon (see 2.3). Secondly, (M)Other Tongues can be seen as an *approach* to working with bilingual students, supported by the materials available in the learning resource, and professional development and networking opportunities. The (M)Other Tongues model provides good value for money (see 2.4), although it is recognised that the future implementation of the model will continue to require investment. Learning from (M)Other Tongues has already been disseminated widely (see 1.4), and a learning resource for teachers and writers is in production for publication in December 2013. This will support educational professionals to work in partnership with writers to support the (M)Other Tongues approach to creative writing in schools.

**(M)Other Tongues has embodied Arvon's values.** Participants engaged in (M)Other Tongues were made to feel extremely **welcome** at the centres; for some groups the respect that was paid to their cultural needs and preferences was a significant part of the programme's success. Centre staff went to great lengths to ensure that participants felt relaxed and comfortable. Many of the participants commented on feeling at home in the space, and wishing that they could stay longer. The programme **inspired** participants to explore their lives, stories and imaginations through creative writing. For many, the environment was inspirational, but participants also took inspiration from the writers they worked with, the activities they engaged in, and from each other. Participants felt **supported** throughout the (M)Other Tongues programme: from early workshops in schools, throughout the residential and in follow up activities. Writers were critical to this, offering support in one to one and group sessions, and encouraging young people's contributions and development. (M)Other Tongues has been a **transformational** programme for some participants, creating change in young people's lives. For many participants, this has been deeply connected to the reflective, self expressive and reciprocal acts of creative writing, enabling young people to consider their lives seriously, share important stories (often for the first time), and make connections that celebrate their language and culture.

## 1.6 Challenges

- (M)Other Tongues requires a significant amount of planning and lead-in time in order to build effective relationships. In most cases, the Arvon team were engaged in planning and preparation for almost a year in order to develop the partnerships. Planned partnerships can be defeated by internal school changes at a late stage in the planning process; this happened twice during (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013, and required the team to expend further energy and resources in establishing new partnerships with schools.
- The support of specialist EAL/equalities teams in local authorities was instrumental to the programme's success. Such teams are under significant pressure as local authority resources continue to be cut. In some local authorities, such services have been completely cut. This limited the places in which Arvon could establish (M)Other Tongues partnerships. It is likely that such services will continue to come under pressure in the coming years, which may continue to impact on Arvon's potential to engage in some areas of the UK.
- All of the schools engaged in (M)Other Tongues encountered significant challenges in recruiting participants to the programme (see 4.1). The original target was to recruit 64 young people; in the end, 52 participants engaged in (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013. However, the programme reached a further 2,575 young people through additional workshops and celebration events.
- It was sometimes difficult to find writers who shared participants' bilingualism and culture. The Arvon team overcame this challenge in most cases, and learned a great deal about the particular challenges that are present in connecting participants with writers who share their language and culture.
- The original programme outcomes indicated an aspiration to provide a virtual platform that would facilitate cross fertilisation of (M)Other Tongues projects, enabling participants to share their work and experiences. However, the amount of time and resource required in order for this to work effectively was perhaps underestimated in original planning. Substantial efforts were made by the Arvon team to realise this aspiration via existing social networking platforms. This was difficult to achieve during residential weeks both for technical reasons and because there was limited time available. The Arvon team also felt that there was a limited appetite for a virtual platform from participants, and that there may be more value in attempting to establish real contact between (M)Other Tongues participant groups.

## 1.7 Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations for the development of (M)Other Tongues aim to support the development of a sustainable future programme that maximises impact and embeds expertise. The recommendations seek to deepen the roots of the programme so that Arvon grows in its expertise and creates greater impact within local communities, rather than spread the programme thinly across a larger number of communities and language groups. Further information about each of the recommendations can be found in section 5 of the report.

- **Develop longer term partnerships with (M)Other Tongues schools.** It is not sustainable for the small team who manage (M)Other Tongues to continue to invest time and resource into continually seeking and establishing new partnerships with schools. It is therefore recommended that Arvon should limit the number of new schools it works with on (M)Other Tongues in favour of working with partner schools over a longer period (3-5 years) to embed the programme and maximise impacts. This approach has potential advantages for community cohesion, for individual achievement, for professional development, and for embedding classroom approaches to bilingualism.
- **Establish progression routes for (M)Other Tongues participants who demonstrate particular talent, commitment or interest in creative writing** by working collaboratively with writers and literature organisations who can provide local support and expertise. Longer term partnerships will go some way to supporting this recommendation, since Arvon will have continued relationships with schools. Other forms of support might include: supporting schools to work in collaboration with writing organisations to develop young writer's networks; peer to peer mentoring; and collaboration with local writers and literature organisations who can provide local support and expertise. Arvon should consider ways in which the organisation can directly support talented and interested students by directing them to local and regional writing groups, and suggesting grants for public courses as appropriate.
- **Develop and deepen expertise in the community languages that have been explored through (M)Other Tongues 2009-2013.** The knowledge that has been gained through working with these community languages has the potential to contribute to (M)Other Tongues programmes within the existing network of schools (for example, there are Roma communities within all of the (M)other

Tongues schools). The writers will benefit from the challenge of working with communities in different areas, and participants will benefit from writers' enhanced knowledge and experience. As new participant groups come on board the (M)Other Tongues programme, efforts should be made to find opportunities to continue to explore and develop expertise in this group of the same community languages.

- **Ensure that the (M)Other Tongues programme focuses attention on young people aged 14-18.** Many of the personal and social impacts of (M)Other Tongues relate to young people's emerging sense of identity, which relates strongly to young people from Year 9 and above. This is not to minimise the impacts that were achieved for younger participants, or to suggest that they should be excluded from the programme. However, greater impacts are likely to be felt with young people from year 9 and above, and this should be kept in mind when working with schools on the recruitment of participants.
- **Further disseminate the findings of (M)other Tongues in order to maintain and build interest and momentum.** Arvon should seek to share findings with teachers, writers, the wider cultural sector and education leaders in order to support the development of both the (M)Other Tongues model and the (M)Other Tongues approach to creative writing with bilingual students. Both the learning resource for teachers and writers and the seminar planned for early in 2014 should seek to connect writers and teachers, enabling them to share experiences and develop their understanding.
- **Develop and implement further professional development opportunities for teachers and writers,** introducing approaches promoted in the learning resource through a programme of workshops led by writers. Arvon should explore the possibility of working with other arts and literature organisations who share an interest in working with bilingual and multilingual young people to support this work. This approach may also help Arvon to find effective ways to collaborate with schools who are unable to engage students in a residential process.

## **2 (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013: Context and programme**

### **2.1 Background to (M)Other Tongues**

(M)Other Tongues is a creative writing programme led by Arvon to encourage and support young people from communities in the UK to write in their mother tongue and English, exploring both language and culture. The programme has been developed with funding from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. A pilot (M)Other Tongues programme (2009-2011) benefited 48 young people from Lambeth in London. In December 2009, 16 young people from Brazil, Portugal and Mozambique took part in a week-long residential led by two professional writers, who communicate in both Portuguese and English, at Lumb Bank, Arvon's centre in Yorkshire. Following this, a second Portuguese group took part in 2010, and a third group of Yoruba speakers of Nigerian heritage in March 2011. As well as taking part in a residential week, each of the pilot groups engaged in introductory school workshops, the production of an anthology of writing, and celebratory events to which young people's parents and peer groups were invited to share their creative achievements.

### **2.2 The Arvon model**

Arvon residential creative writing courses for schools, groups and individuals are at the heart of the organisation's programme. The key ingredients of the Arvon residential experience are:

- Gifted tutors – all are published writers, chosen for both the quality of their writing and their generosity and desire to support new writers
- Inspirational surroundings, away from the pressures of everyday life
- Communal living, in a supportive environment for writing and working
- Recognition that everyone has a voice that deserves to be heard

During an Arvon residential course a group of up to 16 participants write, cook and eat together over five days. Each morning two tutors, both published authors, lead workshops to help participants explore writing ideas, forms and techniques. Afternoons are for shorter workshop activities and then writing time and one- to-one tutorials with tutors. On Tuesday evening tutors read from their own work; on Wednesday evening a guest reader is invited along; and on Friday evening the group celebrates and shares everyone's writing.

### **2.3 (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013: Programme summary**

Building on the success of the pilot, (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 aimed to develop opportunities for groups across the UK to engage with (M)Other Tongues. During 2012-2013, four groups of young people from London, Leeds and Manchester were involved in (M)Other Tongues. The drivers for selecting groups and community languages are explored in section 4 below.

The principle languages explored through the programme were Somali; Urdu and Mirpuri; French; and Romanian Roma. The schools involved in the programme were:

- Lilian Baylis Technology School, Lambeth (15 participants: Somali)
- The Co-operative Academy, Leeds (14 participants: Urdu and Mirpuri)
- Cardinal Heenan High School, Leeds (10 participants: French Speaking African and Caribbean)
- Cedar Mount Academy, Manchester (13 participants: Romanian Roma)

In total 52 young people aged 11-17 took part in (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013.

Across the project, participants identified 20 languages other than English that they use regularly. These included Romani, Romanian, Spanish, Portuguese (Cedar Mount); Somali, Dutch (Lilian Baylis); Mirpuri, Punjabi, Sindhi, Urdu, Farsi, Dari (Co-operative Academy); French, Creole, Mende, Tigrinya, Twi, Amharic, Ishan, Benin (Cardinal Heenan). For some groups, identifying a 'mother tongue' or home language was complex; for others, it was straightforward.

Each of the four groups involved in (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 took part in preparatory and follow-up workshops in schools; a week-long residential at an Arvon writing centre; and celebratory events to share their writing with their communities. The groups also produced anthologies of their writing, and worked with two bilingual writers during the life of the project.

During the (M)Other Tongues week tutors led workshops that included creative writing exercises specifically designed to meet the needs of each of the (M)Other Tongues language groups. Professional writers were selected for the quality of their published writing, their bilingual/multilingualism, and their facilitation skills. Each tutor took part in professional development and planning sessions in order to reflect on facilitation skills with young people including: effective creative writing exercises; group work, individual feedback and support with reading aloud; encouraging conversation about identity and culture; considering effective approaches to working

with trauma; encouraging respect for difference; and working with mixed ability groups.

The courses aimed to create and hold a safe space in order to encourage an environment in which young people were comfortable and at ease. Centre staff played a critical role in helping to create an environment in which young people, tutors and staff could collaborate, and in which participants felt safe and welcome. Staff worked hard to ensure that participants needs and aspirations were met, working in partnership with the groups in order to gain a full understanding of how best to welcome participants:

*'We managed to accommodate the cultural needs, and it is imperative that everyone is aware of these. My thanks go out to the staff who accompanied the group and were methodical in briefing us and making sure we were prepared. Their calm presence throughout the week was an absolute pleasure to witness - their manner with the girls was amazing - they were exceptional communicators.'* (Lumb Bank Centre Director, Cedar Mount Residential Week report)

Tutors aimed to place young people's experiences at the heart of the creative writing process throughout the week. Creative writing exercises followed stages that include: generating material; exploring translation; looking at form and structure; encouraging multi-lingual writing; and helping with reading work aloud.

## **2.4 (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013: Management, funding and outputs**

### **2.4.1 Management**

(M)Other Tongues sits with the Learning & Participation team at Arvon, and has formed a major part of Arvon's Learning & Participation Strategy over the last four years. It has been supported by a dedicated Project Manager; administrative support from the Communication and Participation Administrator; and leadership and operational support from the Head of Learning & Participation. The Learning & Participation team includes centre staff, and the project has been supported by centre directors, deputies and administrators, all of whom have been involved in planning and hosting (M)Other Tongues residencies in the centres.

The (M)Other Tongues Steering Group was established in 2011, and has been instrumental in providing the programme with support and challenge, ensuring that a rigorous approach is pursued. The Steering Group has grown and developed over

the last two years to include representation from funders; academics in multi-lingual education; local authority EAL expertise; EAL teaching expertise; writers; and literature organisations.

#### **2.4.2 Funding and value for money**

(M)Other Tongues programme activity in 2012-13 was funded by a £60,000 grant from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The full cost of the project including project management, the scoping study and external evaluation was £91,660. Contributions from schools, local authorities and partners and in kind support from Arvon totaled £31,660.

The four residential weeks at an Arvon Centre, including professional writers as tutors, guest writers, accommodation, staffing, travel and food totaled £54,400. The cost per participant engaged in the (M)Other Tongues programme was £850 (calculated on 64 target participants). Assuming 50 hours of contact during the residential week (including evening events) and approximately 10 hours of activity during pre and post residential activity, this works out at a cost of approximately £14.17 per hour per participant.

Additional workshops led by professional writers and the production of a national anthology totaled £4,720, and engaged the 52 (M)Other Tongues participants and 125 additional students. Cost per participant for this strand of additional activity was £26, based on 177 participants.

(M)Other Tongues is a unique and innovative programme. It is therefore difficult to identify reliable value for money comparators. In recent years, two significant national programmes of literacy intervention have been delivered in primary schools: Every Child a Reader and Every Child a Writer. These intervention programmes aimed to positively intervene with children whose reading and writing progress caused concern, based on a model of reading and writing recovery. Less information is available about the costs of writing intervention than the reading programme; however, the following extract from the House of Commons Evidence Check identifies some of the costs associated with the programme, and also the likely costs of young people's ongoing need for literacy support in secondary schools:

*'The cost of providing Reading Recovery is in the order of £2,600 per child. The average cost to a secondary school of providing special needs, behaviour and truancy support to a child entering Key Stage 3 at the age of*

*11 with reading difficulties is £3,800 over the five years to age 16.<sup>1</sup>*

These figures have been disputed by Policy Exchange, who claim that evidence from local authorities suggests that the intervention cost approximately £5,000 per child. This hourly cost of this national literacy intervention is therefore somewhere between £47.50 and £105 per hour per pupil<sup>2</sup>.

The correlation between spending and pupil outcomes when calculating value for money is never simple. The calculation becomes more complicated when the outcomes extend beyond raised attainment to include social benefits such as personal and emotional development and greater community cohesion. (M)Other Tongues provides value for money because it not only supports young people to improve their writing in English and their mother tongue through a programme of one to one and small group tuition and workshops, but it also has positive outcomes for personal, social and cultural development, and contributes to improved community cohesion.

#### **2.4.3 Programme outputs 2012-2013**

- In 2012, Arvon commissioned the Institute of Policy Studies in Education to carry out research into which language groups are underachieving in schools, and to identify where they are located. This research is now freely available to all interested groups and individuals.<sup>3</sup>
- Arvon successfully engaged four new language groups in schools in Leeds, London and Manchester, and established effective relationships with teachers in schools and local authority support teams.

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<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Science and Technology Committee (2009). Evidence Check 1: Early Literacy Interventions. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmsctech/44/44.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Burkard and Burkard (2009). Every Child a Reader: How top down education reforms make matters worse. Policy Exchange. <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/every%20child%20a%20reader%20-%20feb%2009.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> IPSE, 2012. *Language Diversity and Attainment in English Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study*. <https://metranet.londonmet.ac.uk/fms/MRSite/Research/ipse/Language%20Diversity%20&%20Attainment%20Report%202012.pdf>

- 52 young people aged 11-17 took part in preparatory and follow-up workshops; a week-long residential at an Arvon writing centre; and celebratory events to share their writing with their communities.
- Four anthologies of young people's writing have been produced and shared with local communities.
- The (M)Other Tongues project film has been seen by an estimated 600 viewers to date online or at conference events. The film profiles the engagement of young people from Leeds Co-operative Academy, highlighting their achievements and responses to the programme<sup>4</sup>.
- (M)Other Tongues has enabled Arvon to create a database of international writers and tutors able to facilitate creative writing with bilingual and multilingual young people within and beyond schools. Eight writers worked on the programme and took part in professional development and planning sessions to support their work.
- A further 125 students were involved in extended workshop opportunities including:
  - a creative writing workshop with Portuguese students from Norwood School at Southbank Centre
  - workshops in London with Somali students led by John Hegley in partnership with English PEN
  - workshops in Manchester and Leeds with Roma and French-speaking African and Caribbean students and Polish Students
- Approximately 2,450 local school pupils, parents, teachers, arts and education professionals attended (M)Other Tongues events including school showcases, school assemblies and local or national celebration events.
- 48 teachers attended one day INSET events in Leeds and London
- By December 2013, Arvon will have also published a (M)Other Tongues anthology of work from the last two years; and a learning resource for teachers and writers to develop creative writing with multilingual young people. To date, approximately 50 teachers have indicated that they want to receive a learning resource pack.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.arvonfoundation.org/8467/Mother-Tongues>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2luBndDTfE&feature=c4-overview&list=UUuSKGKOjPhOQs0DiEwwwoFg>

#### 2.4.4 Dissemination

A strong dissemination plan has profiled (M)Other Tongues at a range of conferences and professional development events between May and November 2013, reaching over 300 education and arts professionals. (M)Other Tongues participants have contributed to the delivery of a number of these events.

- Publication of an article exploring (M)Other Tongues approach and early findings in NAWE magazine (*I'd rather have signal than air*, Writers in Education, NAWE, Summer 2013)
- (M)Other Tongues students (LBTS) presented their creative work as part of Arvon's contribution to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's *British Futures* conference (May 2013)
- Keynote address and workshop at Northern Association of Support Services for Equality and Achievement Conference, including input from Roma and Somali students (May 2013)
- Workshop exploring how the (M)Other Tongues approach helps to overcome barriers to engagement at Owing the Arts conference (June 2013)
- Keynote address at Creative Literacy Network conference for head teachers and literacy leaders across Medway and Kent (June 2013)
- Workshop for teachers and writers exploring how (M)Other Tongues supports confidence, learning and achievement at *Children as Readers, Children as Writers* conference in Bath (October 2013)
- Two professional development days in Leeds and London working with teachers, local authority education professionals and a writer to explore EAL learning and creative writing in the classroom (October 2013)
- A further seminar event is planned for Summer 2014.

Dissemination has enabled Arvon to build and maintain relationships with a strong network of interested professionals focusing on sustained positive educational, social and cultural outcomes for bilingual young people. The network continues to grow and evolve, but includes:

- School staff, EAL Coordinators and senior management teams leading on community cohesion within each school
- Education professionals specialising in Ethnic Minority Achievement and supporting EAL learners
- National Association of Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC)

- Northern Association for Support Services for Equality and Achievement (NASSEA)
- English PEN
- Apples and Snakes
- ACE regional Bridge organisations
- Regional Literature Development Agencies
- The British Centre for Literary Translation (BCLT)
- National Association of Teachers in Education
- National Association of Writers in Education
- Partners in English (PiE) including thirty members from national organisations involved with the teaching of English

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 The evaluation framework

The aim of this evaluation is to collect, analyse and report on evidence that demonstrates the extent to which (M)Other Tongues achieves both agreed and unanticipated project outcomes. In doing so, the evaluation demonstrates the impact of the project on individuals and organisations. In this evaluation, impact is interpreted as changes in attitude (people's perceptions and ideas); achievement and attainment (young people's educational attainment and the broader achievements gained through the project); and action (what individuals and organisations do as a result of involvement in (M)Other Tongues). The evaluation aims to investigate how change is secured, identifying strengths and weaknesses of the (M)Other Tongues approach, and making recommendations for future practice. The evaluation focuses on the following anticipated outcomes, which were identified by Arvon at the outset:

- 1 A robust, replicable model to support bilingualism through creative writing
- 2 Development of young people's understanding of and confidence in their own writing and learning ability
- 3 Improved educational achievement and social skills for young people with dual heritage background
- 4 Greater community cohesion

A detailed framework for evaluating (M)Other Tongues was developed following discussion with the team leading the project at Arvon. It was agreed that the evaluation would employ a mixed methodology, using both quantitative and qualitative data, collected through baseline and end of residential questionnaires completed by all young people, teachers and writers. The questionnaires aimed to collect information about which languages participants used, and how young people related to and used their mother tongue or home languages in social, family, and school life. The evaluation also aimed to collect attainment data where possible for young people involved in the project, identifying pre- and post- project levels of attainment in writing.

The evaluation framework identified that the evaluator would work with a case study school in order to add depth to the learning available through the evaluation. Leeds Co-operative Academy was identified as the case study school, and a programme of additional evaluation activities was developed, focusing on face to face interaction with pupils, teachers and writers prior to the project, during the residential, at the celebration event, and post project completion. The case study approach enables closer inspection of the processes and actions that participants engage in as a result of involvement in (M)Other Tongues, and deeper exploration of attitudes and perceptions that relate to the project's areas of interest.

### **3.2 Implementing the framework: Responding to evaluation challenges**

The early stages of the project and evaluation process revealed some of the linguistic complexity that exists across the (M)Other Tongues communities. Many of the participants identified a number of languages as important in their lives. The idea that young people would be able to identify a 'mother tongue' was challenged. The concept of the 'mother tongue' was not always straightforward for participants, since the relationships that they have with their languages were frequently complex, dynamic and multi-faceted:

*'In some cases...it is not the first or second language, it may be the third language, the fourth language. So for example their mother tongue may be Mirpuri, which is a dialect, but then when you look at the national picture Urdu is their mother tongue. So Urdu is the national language, the national mother tongue, but their own mother tongue is different. Then they have to go to mosque to learn Arabic, to satisfy their religious needs, so Arabic becomes another mother language. Then they come to school and they have to learn everything in English. They have to learn English, and they have to learn everything in English, and there are probably 3 or 4 different languages. The amalgamation of these languages does sometimes complicate the situation...'*  
(Teacher, CAL)

The conceptual complexity of a 'mother tongue' or home language made it difficult for some participants to respond to the questionnaire. Low levels of literacy among one group (Cedar Mount) was also a concern. Establishing a timeline for collection of baseline evidence was also complex; the difficulties of recruiting participants (see

section 4 below) meant that the participants sometimes changed between the point when baseline questionnaires were completed and the residential. As the challenges of capturing data against this background emerged, the Evaluation Framework was adjusted in order to ensure that young people's voices were heard, and that their authentic experience of (M)Other Tongues was captured and communicated in order to develop full understanding of the project.

In December 2012 it was agreed that in order to address these concerns the evaluator would carry out face to face visits with each of the participant groups at the end of the project. It was also agreed that the participants at Cedar Mount would engage in a discussion with the writers that covered some of the baseline issues, rather than complete the questionnaire. It was agreed that baseline and end of project attainment data would not be collected for the Cedar Mount group. This was for two reasons. Firstly, the project was managed not by the school, but by Manchester City Council's International New Arrivals, Travellers and Supplementary Schools Team. This team did not have direct access to attainment data. Secondly, and more significantly, it was felt that the very low levels of literacy among some of the group meant that analysis of attainment data would be less relevant, and may distract attention from the potential achievements made through engagement in the project.

### 3.3 The dataset

The evaluation report draws on the following data:

	<b>Cardinal Heenan</b>	<b>Cedar Mount</b>	<b>Co-operative Academy</b>	<b>Lilian Bayliss</b>
<b>Baseline Participant Questionnaires</b>	X		X	X
<b>Baseline teacher/staff questionnaires/interviews</b>		X	X	X
<b>Residential questionnaires: participant</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Residential questionnaires/interviews: teachers</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Pre-project focus group with participants</b>			X	
<b>Post project focus group with participants</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Post project interviews with staff</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Writers' feedback reports</b>	X	X	X	X

Interviews and focus group discussions were audio recorded. Quotations from recordings have followed an intelligent verbatim transcription methodology, omitting 'um', 'er' 'you know' etc, and transcribing for best clear meaning.

In addition, emails, conversations and meetings with the Arvon team leading the project have informed the evaluation and formed part of the dataset.

### 3.4 A complex, complicated narrative

It is important to recognise that the evaluation framework presents only a partial picture of (M)Other Tongues, and perhaps a misleading one. It implies a linear process; a causal model inputs ('creative writing workshop' or 'residential week') and outputs/outcomes ('increased confidence' 'average raised attainment 2 sub grades'). While such an analysis of evidence may be literally and factually correct, it misrepresents the project by failing to capture its complexity. This is present in the (M)Other Tongues narrative, the story of the project as a lived experience. The evaluation therefore attempts to capture something of this narrative through the experience of those who have lived it; particular emphasis is given to the voice of young people.

(M)Other Tongues is both complex and complicated. Complicated in that it has multiple components (participants, languages, settings, activities), and complex in that it is uncertain, changeable and emergent<sup>5</sup>. The complexity and complication of the project are significant in evaluating outcomes. (M)Other Tongues brings together four projects under one overarching aim – to encourage and support young people from communities in the UK to write in their mother tongue and English, exploring both language and culture. The evaluation takes account of changes across the programme, but it is important to note that each project is different: like is not always being compared with like.

For example, at Cedar Mount specific elements of difference and complexity include the fact that Romani is not a written language; levels of literacy were very low; and the group was exclusively female. At Leeds Co-operative Academy, participants were multilingual (orally only in some languages, oral and written in others); and the profile of the group was younger than the other 3 projects. Such differences are significant in interpreting outcomes. It is similarly important to note that some of the community language groups were a significant presence and well established within their learning and wider communities (eg Leeds Co-operative Academy) while others were emergent, more recent, or had a less significant presence.

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<sup>5</sup> Rogers, P (2008). Using Programme Theory to Evaluate Complicated and Complex Aspects of Interventions. *Evaluation* Volume 14 (1).

Some of the most significant outcomes of the project are connected to young people's personal and social development. These are emergent outcomes; they are unfinished processes rather than completed actions. In addition, it is recognised that every young person is unique, and that even when their linguistic and cultural context and circumstances are similar they must be understood as an individual. The evaluation can therefore only track where participants have been and where they have arrived at particular points in the evaluation process.

The complexity of (M)Other Tongues is also present in the participants' interaction with the project. Linear input → output models of evaluation imply that participants 'pass through' the intervention and emerge when it has been completed, at which point the intervention is complete and impact on outcomes can be assessed. Many of the (M)Other Tongues participants expressed an alternative experience. They experienced (M)Other Tongues firstly as an external intervention – the project, the workshops, the residential – and then as an internal, ongoing process:

*'One of the best things I learnt...even though my days are clustered, I do athletics, I go to school, revise and then go to athletics again...but now in a way in my head I feel like I'm calm, I just sit back for a while and then relax and enjoy just being there in deep calm. You can only appreciate something when you're not in it. You have to go outside and see it from a different perspective so now my days I appreciate what I do for my school, athletics, everything I put effort into it. I just sit back then appreciate it for a while because every other day I take 20 minutes to sit back and appreciate whatever I did so it... bring that bit from Devon inside, that calm.'*

Participant, LBTS

In order to understand the project's outcomes fully, the context in which it is delivered must also be understood. This evaluation therefore seeks to acknowledge the variables that exist in (M)Other Tongues, including the implementation context and the characteristics of individual groups. Despite multiple variables, it has been possible to identify common outcomes and impacts across the programme. The analysis of data articulates the connections that exist across the projects, whilst recognising that multi-site, multi-agency complexities and complications are evident in all aspects of the programme. In order to address this, considerable attention is given in section 4 to a narrative summary of how projects were selected, and how

individual projects were managed and implemented. Section 4 explores the impacts on participants that the programme has achieved across the four projects. This section in particular draws on quotes from participants and others involved in the project, in order to communicate the texture of the emotional connection with (M)Other Tongues that has been a hallmark of the programme, and ensure that young people's voices are authentically articulated in the report.

### **3.5 Approach to data analysis**

The methodology produced a considerable amount of data, particularly qualitative data relating to young people's own perceptions of the impact and success of the project. This report presents a thematic analysis of the data, which draws on the key concepts and ideas that have emerged from the evidence. The key themes emerging from the data are:

#### **1 Engagement in and enjoyment of creative writing**

Creative writing emerges from the programme as a significant tool in the personal and social development of multilingual young people. This evaluation examines the specific and particular influence of the (M)Other Tongues approach to creative writing as a tool in this process.

#### **2 Personal and emotional development: Confidence, attainment and achievement**

This theme explores the programme's impact on young people's emerging sense of self, and the relationship between language and culture in participants' evolving identities. Personal development also incorporates ideas concerned with aspiration and self-esteem, and connects with the project's anticipated outcomes in relation to raised attainment and self-confidence.

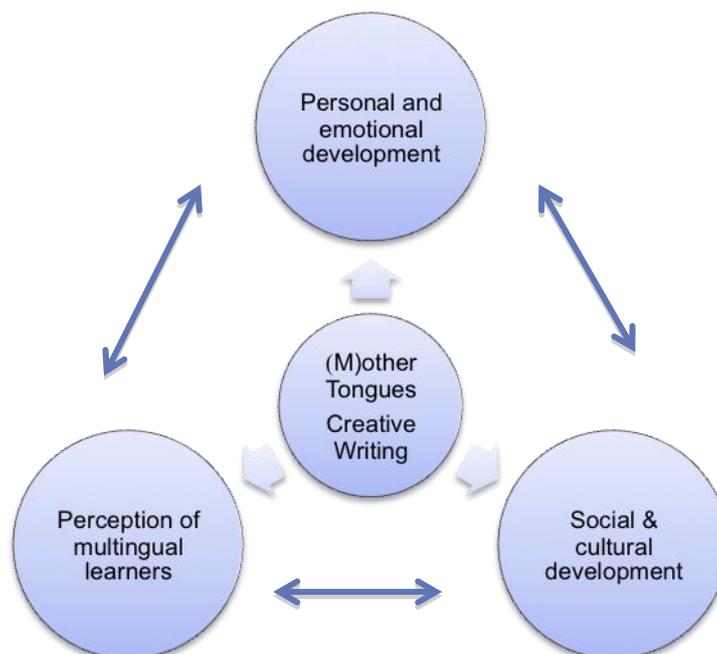
#### **3 Impact on social and cultural development**

The (M)Other Tongues programme encourages young people to celebrate their community languages, and promotes social interaction. From this perspective, the evaluation examines how learners' joint participation in creative writing enables them to develop strong social bonds, and acquire new knowledge of themselves, each other, and the world around them. This connects with the project's aims to improve social skills and support community cohesion.

#### 4 **Impact on perceptions of multilingual learners**

This theme is related to social and cultural development, insofar as it explores how the community of young learners sees itself. However, the analysis extends to explore how the project has influenced ways in which the language community is perceived by others, specifically within schools, and considers how the project has instigated action that explicitly values young multilingual learners.

These themes are inter-related and connected to each other, and do not sit in isolation. Rather, the thematic analysis seeks to explore the connections between each of the areas, and to expose ways in which impact in one area feeds into another. The analysis seeks to draw out ways in which the acts and actions of creative writing lie at the heart of impact.



## 4 Findings 1: Partnerships

### 4.1 Identifying partner schools

The four participant groups that took part in (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 were identified through school or local authority contacts, in locations that built on Arvon's research into language group needs and demographics. Arvon commissioned IPSE to carry out research into language diversity and attainment in secondary schools<sup>6</sup>. The research identified *'a real dearth of information on which specific linguistic groups are attaining less well at school, and where they are located in the country...this data is generally not systematically collected, and where it is collected, attainment is often not analysed by linguistic group, only ethnicity.'*<sup>7</sup>

The report made recommendations that helped Arvon to identify community language groups and localities that respond to greatest need, and where it was felt that young people may be at a particular disadvantage. While the 2012-2013 programme has not been able to respond to all of the report's recommendations, each of the four partner groups relates to a specific issue raised by the research:

- The research identified that the largest attainment gaps between English first language and other first language speakers are in Yorkshire and the North West. Three of the (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 projects are in these areas: The Co-operative Academy of Leeds; Cardinal Heenan High School, Leeds; and Cedar Mount Academy, Manchester.
- The report strongly recommended that the project's resources would be of particular benefit to Urdu/Punjabi/Mirpuri speakers. This recommendation was enacted through the partnership with Leeds Co-Operative Academy.
- The report identified that Somali speakers were likely to suffer from multiple disadvantages that effect educational attainment, and that French speaking African pupils were likely to perform much less well than other African language groups (e.g. Igbo and Yorubo). It was felt some Black African ethnic groups from recent migratory flows (e.g. Congo) were at particular disadvantage. The Black

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<sup>6</sup> IPSE, 2012. *Language Diversity and Attainment in English Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study.*

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.22

African ethnic category is one of the most linguistically diverse, and has some of the highest and lowest achieving groups. French and Somali speakers tend to have among the lowest achievement. (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 worked with Somali speakers in Lilian Baylis, and with French speakers in Cardinal Heenan.

- The report gathered information from Manchester City Council that identified the ethnic category Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) to be by far the lowest attaining group in the city. The complexity of ethnic categorisation that does not take account of linguistic diversity is evident in the report's comment that *'it is not possible to say whether English is an additional language for this group, however one school....does cite Romany as one language group<sup>8</sup>.*' (M)Other Tongues worked with a group of Roma and Romanian young women at Cedar Mount Academy, whose mother tongues were Romani and Romanian.

The research exposed the complexity of cultural, linguistic and social diversity in school populations, and aimed to inform Arvon in the choice of community languages and localities, placing the project in those environments and with those groups who were likely to be at the most significant disadvantage.

Arvon worked closely with each of the partners throughout the programme, offering guidance and support, and attending information events and meetings to support participant recruitment and celebrations. All of the partner school contacts were highly complimentary about the professionalism and commitment of Arvon team members in ensuring that the projects had the best possible chance of success.

*'They have been wonderful, they always let me know what is happening, they keep the communication going all the time. We are very happy to have this partnership with Arvon, they are a great organisation.'* (Teacher, CAL)

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.19

#### 4.1.1 Lilian Baylis Technology School

Lilian Baylis Technology School (LBTS) is a smaller than average secondary school serving a culturally diverse community in Lambeth. A higher than average proportion (58%) of the student population are boys. Over 90% of the students at the school are eligible for the pupil premium. Most students are from minority ethnic groups. The largest group, at around 30%, is Black African. Approximately 10% of the population is from the Somali community. Over half the school's population speaks English as an additional language.

LBTS was keen to work with Somali students since *'I felt that as a school we have done very little for this cohort'* (Teacher). It was also felt that, perhaps because the Somali students are a relatively small group within the school, they did not have a strong collective identity, and the school hoped that (M)Other Tongues would strengthen this. The school hoped that the project would improve pupils' writing; improve the cohesion between Somali students in the school; contribute to developing the school's knowledge and understanding of the Somali community; encourage greater involvement of parents in school life; empower students to embrace their mother tongue; and increase pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

The project was managed internally by a Deputy Headteacher, who took responsibility for recruiting pupils; liaising with Arvon and with parents; and representing the project internally. (M)Other Tongues therefore had a high profile among the Senior Management Team in the school. The Deputy Headteacher also took on the challenge of convincing staff that the benefits of pupils' engagement in the project would outweigh the cost of missed lesson time. Sharing project outcomes across the whole staff was identified as critical in securing future support for innovative projects with bilingual students. The project was strongly supported by an English & Media Teacher and a Teaching Assistant.

The school faced considerable difficulty in recruiting students. The residential week presented a barrier for parents who were reluctant to allow their children to stay away from home for a week. The majority of the participants had not stayed away from the family home for more than a night. A prolonged stay in a rural location some distance from the family home therefore concerned some parents. The Deputy Headteacher

spent considerable personal time talking to parents in order to gain trust, and enlisted the help of the local Somali Language School Teacher– a trusted member of the community – to reassure parents who were *‘petrified that something was going to happen to their kids...On the day, I had no idea whether we’d get 5 or 15 turning up really. And it’s not like other residentials, a science trip or something, where you can open it up to other pupils if you don’t get the number. This was really specific, and it was hard.’* Some students who had signed up for the project withdrew at the last moment:

*‘I do think you need right at the start to show them who the poets are that they’re going with, because we’d recruited the children and then when they met the poets there were two sets of parents who said ‘I’m not letting my daughter go with somebody who doesn’t wear an hijab’. Fortunately, two other girls were able to come, whose parents were able to say, well, okay.’*  
(Teacher, LBTS)

The school recruited 15 pupils from years 8, 9, 10 and 11. The group consisted of 3 female and 12 male students. Some had lived in England most of their lives; others had only been in the country for less than a year. Although recruitment had presented challenges, the school felt that the success of the project was such that future activities were likely to present less of a challenge.

All participants spoke the participant group’s community language, Somali, and Arabic and Dutch were also spoken by one participant. 11 young people completed baseline questionnaires. The questionnaires indicated that 5 participants thought of English as their home language; 5 Somali; and one participant thought of both as her home language. This was sometimes, but not always, connected to whether the participant had been born in the UK or had moved here more recently. Rather, the concept of a home language tended to be connected to where/with whom the language was used. For some young people, although Somali was spoken most of the time at home with family, they thought of English as their ‘home’ language because it was the language they used most of the time in social situations and in school.

#### 4.1.2 Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School (CHCHS) is a voluntary aided 11–16 faith-based specialist language college. It is a slightly smaller than average sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is in line with the national average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is slightly above the national average, with those who speak English as an additional language being broadly in line with the national average. The school has gained the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard, a Leeds City Council initiative to reward schools that demonstrate knowledge, understanding and evidence of promoting inclusion and race equality.

The school was invited to take part in the project by the EAL consultant for the Equalities and Entitlement team at Leeds City Council. This built on the team's involvement in the project, which had been established through the relationship with the Co-operative Academy. Arvon approached the team when a partnership with a school in Peterborough fell through. CHCHS therefore came on board later than the other schools (January 2013), and so had less time for recruitment and to prepare for the project. After some consideration, the school chose to focus on recruiting French-speaking African students as project participants:

*'The difficulty to begin with was ideally we wanted one group with one mother tongue, and we've got 128 children on the EAL list, about 31 languages spoken in the school. We considered Polish and French and it would have been beneficial to both of those groups. The temptation was to go for the Polish because there are more Polish children, so it would have been easier to recruit. But they do get supported, there's quite a supportive community, we work with the Polish Supplementary School, in terms of the support networks there's quite a lot there. And then we looked at the French speaking children and they probably get less support. I felt that was where we might have most impact.'* (teacher, CHCHS)

As in other schools, recruitment was a challenge. A Teaching Assistant was integral to the success of recruitment at CHCHS. The Teaching Assistant is also a writer, and therefore placed a high value on the role of creative writing in young people's lives. She had knowledge and experience of Arvon through previously attending Arvon courses herself, and took a lead role in talking to pupils and their parents about the

project, dedicating considerable amounts of her own time to getting the project off the ground:

*'Just trying to encourage the pupils that this is a great thing to do, I was "come on, you know, you need to do this, you need to do this for yourself." And of course they think writing equals work, and it does but it also equals creativity and expression and all these great things, so my job was to kind of just try and encourage them first and foremost.'* (Teaching Assistant, CHCHS)

Late entry to the project was compounded by the school's preparations for an anticipated OFSTED inspection, which placed additional pressures on the school's management team. At one point, the partnership was threatened as the school felt uncertain that it could confirm numbers. However, the Teaching Assistant's determination to enable young people from the school to experience this opportunity resulted in 10 young people being recruited. The participant group comprised of pupils from Years 7, 8, 10 and 11. The majority of pupils were from Year 10, and the gender divide was even.

The participant group was linguistically diverse, identifying French, Creole, Mende, Tigrinya, Twi and Amharic as languages that were spoken regularly. Not all participants identified French as one of the languages they use regularly, although all participants had been identified as French speakers by the school. There were diverse responses to the idea of 'home' language among this group:

<b>Home language</b>	<b>No of participants</b>
English	2
English and Creole	3
French	2
Lingala	1
Twi	1
Tigrinya	1

The participants who identified a language other than English/English & Creole as their home language all indicated that this was the language they used to communicate with family members. The English/English and Creole home language

group, like their peers at LBTS, were influenced by their social interactions and the language they used in school. However, multilingual participants recognised that their linguistic responses were complex, and that their linguistic choices often existed on an instinctive and emotional level:

*‘Sometimes Creole is the best language to use – when I am in the mood I speak Creole, or French, or Lingala.’ (Participant, CHCHS)*

#### **4.1.3 Cedar Mount Academy, Manchester.**

Cedar Mount is a smaller-than-average size secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is well above average, as is the proportion of students whose first language is not English. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the number of those with a statement of special educational needs. Well-above-average numbers of students join the school at times other than at the start of the school year.

Arvon’s partnership with pupils from Cedar Mount was established via Manchester City Council’s International New Arrivals, Travellers and Supplementary Schools Team (INA team). Two officers who work closely with the Romanian and Roma communities in the school (and across the city) took lead responsibility for promoting the project to pupils and their families, and for managing all aspects of the project with the school. They had clear aspirations for the project, and reasons for wanting to focus attention on Roma girls:

*‘Roma girls have limited choices in life...I hope that this project gives them chance to think about themselves, to dream, and to reflect on the value of their skills and learning. I hope that the project allows them to be together in a stress free environment, to have fun...and they know how impressive they are.’ (Team member, INA)*

The involvement of the team in this project was critical, since they had already worked with and gained the trust and respect of the community. They engaged with all aspects of the project, visiting families in their homes, attending workshops and the residential, securing translation support when appropriate, and supporting Arvon by sharing information and knowledge about the community that helped to make the project a success.

*'We could never have done that project and worked with that group without them, they were so completely vital at every turn.'* (Arvon team member)

The INA team faced considerable difficulties in securing parental support for the residential element of the project, in this case perhaps compounded by the fact that the Roma community dislikes prolonged periods of separation from the family, so a week away from the family home raised anxiety. The INA team thought that it was possible that the prejudice and racism faced by Roma people could also have been a factor in the difficulty in recruiting participants. Romani people face persecution across the world, and some members of the community may not self-identify as Roma in order to avoid victimisation. This added to the difficulties of engaging participants since *'it was extremely hard for us to find enough girls who were happy to say that they were Roma and come away.'* (INA team member).

The INA team spent a great deal of time talking to pupils and their families in the school and in their homes to gain consent for involvement in the project. In the end, thirteen young women were recruited for the (M)Other Tongues project, 9 of whom identified as Romanian Roma, and three as Romanian. Three participants stated clearly (as did their families) that they are not Roma, although some had links with the Roma community through marriage and friendship. The challenge of persuading the girls to engage with the project is not to be underestimated:

*'To have achieved the successful completion of this course was an extraordinary achievement. Roma are famously difficult to work with, and Romanian Roma are the hardest group to reach. It is important to acknowledge that to get a group of Roma girls on a residential is nearly impossible.'* (Writer, CMA)

All of the participants spoke Romanian, and 9 spoke Roma. While the (M)Other Tongues programme aimed to connect young people with bilingual writers who could support written and oral communication in their own language, this was complicated for the Cedar Mount project as the Romani language has been an almost entirely oral language for most of its history; it was therefore not possible to work with writers who write in Romani.

The two writers who worked with the group brought a wealth of experience of working with Roma groups. One of the writers was Roma, and one was an experienced Arvon tutor. Another complexity of the project is that Romani has many

different dialects, and the dialect spoken by the tutor was barely understood by participants. The tutors did not speak Romanian, but translation was available during the project. Importantly, however, the tutors had a very clear understanding of the complexities of working with the group, and understood the social and cultural contexts that the girls came from. Their experience of working with the Roma community gave them a full understanding of the challenges they faced in engaging participants during the residential:

*‘Very little to do with the Roma community is straight forward and the biggest challenge when working with Travellers or Roma is similar whether they are English or European. It’s keeping them in the room. Roma tend not to argue as such - they will either stay or go – end of story. And they usually make their minds up very quickly. If they go it tends to be with little or no explanation and they seldom return. So having the whole group stay for the full course was genuinely extraordinary in itself.’ (Writer, CMA)*

During the project, participants worked in Romani, Romanian and English, and were always free to choose which language they wanted to focus on. The participants in the group did not complete a baseline questionnaire, but the tutors facilitated a discussion that embraced many of the ideas that were covered on the questionnaire. The languages spoken at home were usually Romani and Romanian, although some participants spoke about the fact that younger brothers and sisters were more likely to speak English at home.

#### **4.1.4 The Co-operative Academy of Leeds**

The Co-operative Academy of Leeds (CAL) opened in September 2011. It has two sponsors: The Co-operative Group and Leeds City College. The school is a specialist Enterprise and Communication Academy. It is a slightly smaller than average sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. 75% of students are from ethnic minorities and 56% of students have English as an additional language: these figures are well above average. Over 70 languages are spoken in the school.

The project was introduced to the school by the EAL Achievement Consultant for the Equalities and Entitlement team at Leeds City Council. The project was led and

managed internally by a Deputy Headteacher, who is himself bilingual and was passionate about supporting young people to keep their mother tongue alive. He saw this as being specifically connected to young people's pride in their cultural roots: *'To be able to celebrate your culture you have to have your language alive.'* In addition, the school hoped that the project would influence young people's creativity and ability in written English, their confidence and self-esteem, their positive engagement in school life, and their interest and ability in Urdu.

The school focused on Urdu as the community language that would be explored through (M)Other Tongues. Like all of the other settings, CAL faced significant challenges in recruiting young people to the project. The project focused on young people in years 7,8 and 9. The school was keen to recruit both boys and girls, which in itself caused some concern for parents contemplating a residential trip. Again, most of the young people had not been away from home for any extended period of time, and parents were anxious about their safety and wellbeing.

The Deputy Head held information events in school, talked to pupils individually, and talked to family members to secure the recruitment of 14 participants. The profile of the group was younger than the other projects; 10 pupils were from Years 7 and 8, three from Year 9 and one from Year 12. Six boys and eight girls took part in the project.

This participant group initially found it difficult to understand the concept of a home language or mother tongue. This may in part have been due to the younger profile of the group compared to other projects, but may also reflect the linguistic diversity of the group and the multiple languages at play in their lives. There were therefore a range of responses to the idea of a home language:

<b>Home language</b>	<b>No of participants</b>
English	3
Mirpuri and English	2
Urdu	4
Urdu and Mirpuri	1
Urdu and Punjabi	2
Farsi	1
Dari	1

The most significant influence on the identification of home language was family: those pupils who identified English as the sole/one of the home languages were likely to use English with family some of the time, while those for example who identified Urdu/Mirpuri/Punjabi as their home language tended to use this language all the time when communicating with family. For most pupils, English was the most significant language for communicating with friends and in school.

## 4.2 Findings 2: The impact of (M)Other Tongues on participants

As outlined in 2.4, the evaluation identifies four major themes that are explored when considering the impact of (M)Other Tongues on participants:

- Engagement in and enjoyment of creative writing
- Personal and emotional development
- Social and cultural development
- Changing perceptions of multi-lingual learners

### 4.2.1 Engagement in and enjoyment of creative writing

Enjoyment and engagement in creative writing lies at the heart of all other impacts. Creative writing emerges from the project as a significant tool in the personal, social and cultural development of multilingual young people. This evaluation explores the specific and particular influence of creative writing as a tool in this developmental process.

Many of the young people engaged in the project spoke with pride and joy about their creative writing achievements, and those of their peers:

*'You see something else in a person, something they show you in their writing, and you think, wow, I did not know you could do that.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

*'I think now that the work we've done, the way we've made the characters, thought about the story, really thought about it deeply, I am impressed that we've done that.'* (Participant, CAL)

*'In school if you write something you don't want to tell the whole class because you think they might laugh but there anytime we read our work everyone was wanting to listen, you were interested, it was something special.'* (Participant, LBTS)

*'I trust myself now to write the things that are in my mind, I enjoy doing that.'* (Participant, CMA)

Young people expressed high levels of engagement and enjoyment in creative writing across the programme. This was evident in participant's own testimony, and

in the accounts given by writers, teachers, teaching assistants and other staff who worked with and supported young people during (M)Other Tongues. This is of particular interest since many of the participants involved in (M)Other Tongues had been identified partly due to low literacy levels (sometimes in English only, sometimes in English and their mother tongues). It is reasonable to assume that these participants might not enjoy writing programmes. Given this context, it is relevant to examine the specific and unique characteristics of creative writing as it has been conceived in (M)Other Tongues.

Just as the groups engaged in (M)Other Tongues are diverse and complex, so the creative writing programmes they undertook were varied, responding to the interests, ages and circumstances of the groups and the skills and expertise of the writers. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to examine each of these programmes; rather the analysis focuses on participants' conception of creative writing as expressed through their engagement with (M)Other Tongues.

While creative writing may be routinely associated with its outputs (poems, stories, plays), the participants were equally concerned with the creative writing activities and actions that they undertook during (M)Other Tongues – workshop processes, discussions, and, for some, iterative writing processes; as well as hearing work made by others (peers, tutors, guests). For some, the value of the project lay well outside any idea of a 'finished' text:

*'This book they did, they were happy doing it but none of them wanted to take it away with them and it's not that it wasn't important at the time, it's more why would we want to keep it? We've got it all in our heads, in our memories.'* (INA team member, CMA)

For the participants across the programme, creative writing was not conceived simply as an activity that led to a text, but a series of processes of reflection and interaction that involve a text or texts. Three key strands emerge in young people's conceptions of creative writing in (M)Other Tongues:

- Creative writing as a space for reflection
- Creative writing as self expression
- Creative writing as a reciprocal act

#### 4.2.1.a Creative writing as a space for reflection

Participants – particularly older students from Year 9 and up - frequently identified the value of creative writing as an opportunity for deliberate consideration, enabling them to step back from their everyday lives to consider themselves more deeply. This was achieved in various ways: collaborative workshop activities, dialogue and discussion, and opportunities to think and write individually:

*'When we did the river [workshop exercise], I have a chance to look at my life, to think about myself and all the things that happen to me, for the first time really. It changed the way I think, made me stronger to see myself this way.'*  
(Participant, CMA)

The river activity – in which participants were encouraged to visualize their life as a river was mentioned by a number of the participants as a significant point of reflection in exploring their life story, and seeing it at a distance. Participants from other schools referenced similar responses:

*'I've come to this country and started my new life, this is the future, that's where I'm looking all the time, what's next, what's next. And in school you have all these targets and stuff, always. But this was a time to look back. Yes you have to look forward but sometimes it is good to look back at your life then, before you came here.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

This conveys a sense that creative writing activities enable participants to see connections between the different stages of their lives. There is also a sense here that recent migrants may feel under considerable pressure to focus almost exclusively on the future, with consequences for their sense of identity. As adolescents explore their sense of self, connecting these different stages of their lives becomes an important aspect of self-knowing, and the reflective opportunities afforded by the project facilitated and exposed this process for some participants:

*'These days you have lots of targets, you've got exams coming, you've got this, you've got that. Your time at home maybe you've got not an awful lot of freedom at home, because you're the age when you've got some free time but is free time the same as freedom? So the freedom is important to you so that that you can think about yourself, you could be yourself, be truly yourself.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

A growing body of research acknowledges not only the role of emotion in shaping identity, but the power of stories, dialogue and reflection in constructing identity<sup>9</sup>. Participants enjoyment and engagement in creative writing during (M)Other Tongues was often characterized by a strong emotional response to the activities that was rooted in reflective acts and actions:

*'From small things we made a lot of meaning. What I mean in this is there are big things in little words, deep feelings that we have, powerful, in these small words in our language we have a lot to say.'* (Participant, CMA)

The rural isolation of the residential setting was also seen as an important element of reflective practice for many of the participants.

*'I think once you get away from all the noise and distraction of London then you can actually hear yourself think so I heard myself think and I wrote that down.'* (Participant, LBTS)

*'It's so peaceful, it's not like Leeds man. At first I was thinking no internet, no signal, I'm going to be bored. Like when we went for a walk and I thought you're joking, how far do we have to go? But when you come back you feel good, and it makes you calmer. You can think more clearly.'* (Participant, CAL)

While younger students were, perhaps not surprisingly, less vocal about the importance of reflective space, they too acknowledged that (M)Other Tongues offered them opportunity to reflect on their lives:

*'When I listened to it [recording of a radio play] I was thinking all the time of people I know and what would happen next, and I thought the story reminded me of some things that have happened to people I know, and I haven't really heard anything like that before.'* (Participant, CAL)

Some young people identified that reflective creative writing processes enabled them to explore not only life events and life narratives, but motivations, aspirations and relationships:

*'When I think back about the journey that I had in that week I think the one thing that I will take back from it forever is the question of who am I because when I was there and just sitting down and thinking, like you sit in a field for*

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<sup>9</sup> Beauchamp and Thomas (2009). Understanding Identity. *Cambridge Journal of Education* 39(2).

*hours or you sit by yourself for hours and then you're out of your comfort zone and I think...I think these poems, the reason that they're so good is because that I think we kind of let our soul out into it. We basically make it that we gave our inner thoughts, our proper deep thoughts and actually to think, like for the first time in my life I was actually forced to sit down and to think who am I, why am I here, what is life...I think that week actually just by finding myself I think it didn't just change me but it helped change others around me and gave me a new perspective about life, and yeah I think we came there as friends and acquaintances and I think we left there as almost brothers.'*  
(Participant, LBTS)

The link between personal, social and cultural development is clearly expressed in this participant's response to (M)Other Tongues. The relationship here between reflection and self-expression sees creative writing as an act of exploration and meaning-making, and connects with the idea that creative writing is *'a way not only of expressing, but discovering the self'*<sup>10</sup>.

#### **4.2.1.b Creative writing as self expression**

Self-expressive approaches to creative writing are sometimes subject to criticism in both literary and educational circles for encouraging self-indulgence that is without rigour and ignores knowledge, skills and competence. Focus on self-expressive writing has been criticised for doing a particular disservice to young people who are already at an educational disadvantage through low literacy levels<sup>11</sup>. It is therefore important to identify how self-expressive approaches to creative writing have been developed in (M)Other Tongues, and to examine the impact that self-expressive writing may have on participants.

Participants across all four projects talked about the importance they attached to creative writing as a form of self-expression. The value that young people place on

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<sup>10</sup> Ritter and Vanderslice (2007) Can it really be taught?: resisting lore in creative writing pedagogy. Heinmann.

<sup>11</sup> Pondiscio (2012) How Self-Expression Damaged my Students. The Atlantic.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/09/how-self-expression-damaged-my-students/262656/>

self-expression lies in a sense of freedom to explore what matters on a personal level and share it with others:

*'We were encouraged to show what we have inside.'* (CMA)

*'When we were talking about Eid, we could just be open and say what you think because you knew they'd understand what you're going on about. No-one's going to laugh at you.'* (CAL)

Teachers and other staff who were present on the residential courses recognised that expressive activities such as freewriting opened up possibilities and potential for young people who had previously self-identified as non-writers/poor writers:

*'All of a sudden you had children talking about things that they would never talk about in front of a teacher or even to each other, it was totally liberating. Children were saying "Sir, I didn't know I could do that" because for them it's always been about the punctuation has to be in the right place, all of these things that are barriers for them, and so it brought them power, they could speak and write what was in their minds, not keep it trapped.'* (Teacher LBTS)

*'I have seen a difference, the way that some of them who will not open up, they are normally perhaps too quiet in the classroom, they are able to interact, to speak their mind, and I have seen them in the discussions actually be more articulate when they are conveying their ideas.'* (Teacher, CAL)

The one to one attention of writers during the residential also enabled participants to explore areas of their life that had remained hidden. In a powerful example of this, one pupil talked and wrote about a traumatic event in her own life for the first time, and shared the writing with the rest of the group *'As a teacher, I never knew the circumstances before, and she just opened up about it. She wrote about it, told everyone how it was. She'd never been able to talk about it before. It's a massive step.'* (Teacher, LBTS).

Participants acknowledged that the self-expressive approach to writing meant that, even with the support of writers, responsibility for the creative processes rested with the individual, and for some this represented a considerable level of sustained effort:

*'The hardest thing was writing what is in your heart and your mind on a paper so that was like one of the best things to see, actually it is like you wrote to*

*yourself. So when you read a poem you're kind of talking to yourself, it is more satisfying than just telling yourself to someone else, talking about your feelings to someone else. When you write it to yourself you know how it affects you and then you have a more deeper connection with your inner self and you understand yourself a lot better.'* (Participant, LBTS)

This recalls the idea of creative writing as 'a way not only of expressing, but discovering the self'<sup>12</sup>. For participants in (M)Other Tongues, this discovery embraced young people's use of their home and other languages. Baseline data revealed that most participants agreed that their mother tongue connected strongly to their sense of self, to the idea of 'who I am'. However, this is not to say that (M)Other Tongues encouraged the kind of uncritical self-indulgence in self-expression that often attracts criticism. The (M)Other Tongues approach to self expression supported participants to explore connections between mother tongues and English, heightening linguistic awareness and prompting a sense of curiosity and enquiry into their own use of language.

*'It made you think sometimes in the play you knew exactly the right word to use in Mirpuri, but there was no word the same in English. So they said, it's ok, you just use Mirpuri. And it makes you think how come there's not the right word in English? You can't translate everything exactly.'* (Participant, CAL)

This level of linguistic enquiry did not come about by accident. Writers' approaches to creative writing activities reinforced and encouraged the exploration of linguistic difference and choice, and enabled participants to think about how bilingualism exists in their lived experience and in their writing choices:

*'If we were to say well this play is going to be in English, or it's going to be Mirpuri, then when the mother comes in they'd be thinking well no actually, mother doesn't really talk like that, this is a bit out of place, it's not really about us. But the fact that they have to think hard, how would she say it, what are the exact words she would use. Then it's having the courage, giving them the permission to say ok leave that in the script and use it. Don't worry people won't understand, we'll get it, it's ok.'* (Writer, CAL)

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<sup>12</sup> Ritter and vanderslice, *ibid.*

*'We did manage to work in the three languages, English, Romanian and Romani. Many girls wanted to work in English as they felt it important to improve their written skills. We had good feedback about this and they said they had learned some valuable things about sentence structure etc. They were encouraged to work in the language they felt comfortable in, and we didn't dictate their choices.'* (Writer, CMA)

The (M)Other Tongues approach to self expression in creative writing, then, is located not in the unfettered outpouring of emotion, but in the considered exploration of how linguistic diversity informs participants lives and their production of texts. The fore-grounding of the self-expressive in (M)Other Tongues acknowledged that participants were more likely to be engaged, thoughtful, confident writers if they were able to explore ideas that mattered to them in the language of their choice. But this does not imply that the (M)Other Tongues approach to self expression excluded knowledge about the constructs and conventions of creative writing. Participants were variously engaged in activities that built knowledge about poetic form, dramatic structure, and narrative convention, as appropriate to the group. They explored language, sound and meaning through word games and texts in different languages. Some of the work that they engaged in explored the relationship between form and linguistic diversity, so that self-expression became contextualized in wider literary and cultural concerns. The approach is congruent with the theory that *'creativity and knowledge are two sides of the same psychological coin, not opposing forces'*<sup>13</sup>:

*'The first session was a group exploration of the cinquain because it is a form that illustrates in an immediate way all the basic principles involved in writing poetry. Doing it gave rise to a lot of animated discussion about the reason for the choice of words, and encouraged them to listen to the rhythms inherent in the simplest phrases....the principle being emphasized all the time is that the more unified a poem is, the more effective it is...The discussion was vigorous and fun. Their assignment was to create a cinquain for next day and use any of their languages or combinations...'* (Writer, CHCHS)

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<sup>13</sup> Boden (2001) 'Creativity and Knowledge' in Craft, Saffrey and Liebling (eds) *Creativity in Education*, London: Continuum,

Participants not only enjoyed the opportunity to express what mattered to them, but recognised that by working bilingually they were able to raise their game linguistically in both languages. This is exemplified in the box below, where a poem written first in Somali and then in English is discussed by the pupil who wrote it and some of the other project participants.

### **Poem for My Mother**

Hooyo hadii aad ilaato oo ilka lagudhigo ku macuno abooray ubad iyo badhaadhiyo  
ubax kurkooda lagugudhalay.

Intaa dunida joogtoo nolal aayatiin wacan aqirat fartoowsaa anbiyada agtoodanah  
aqalbiga la gugudhigay.

Mother if you were to die, if you were to be folded into the earth. The termites would  
not eat you, like those you birthed; they would place flowers by your feet.

But while you roam the earth, live hopeful and look forward to a perfect after life, a  
dwelling complete with saints.

*P1: The saints, that was the best one, the best line*

*Interviewer: Why do you think it's the best one, what do you like so much about it?*

*P1: Because when he did it in Somali, then it was translated, but it's still got power. I liked it because he said stuff like the termites wouldn't eat you and a dwelling complete with saints and stuff.*

*P2: I like it because it touches your heart.*

*P3: Yeah touches, it's touching.*

*P2: The imagination and the imagery. It stays with you.*

*Int: Can I ask you, you wrote this in Somali first? Would it have been different if you had not done that?*

*P4: It was better to do it in Somali, I could think differently, I could say what was in my mind, then she [the writing tutor] helped me, worked with me to make it in English.*

For some participants, the self-expressive approach to creative writing inspired an interest in developing their writing further, exploring the iterative, recursive drafting processes that involve a more disciplined approach to compositional control:

*'One of the girls was a wonderful writer. She worked with focus and dedication throughout the week, and wrote a play based on her harsh life experiences. Without instruction, she rewrote the play and ended up with five drafts. She also wrote two full stories and a very good poem. I had a special tutorial where we laid her work out and discussed it. I felt strongly that she needs more support and encouragement when she returns home so that the week's energy isn't lost. I'll send a reading list as we talked about reading and how it feeds writers, and opens your mind. I told her about Arvon courses and said she would be eligible for a grant, and said she may want to do one years in the future.'* (Writer, CMA)

Participants also found that they could connect the ideas that they wanted to explore to the writing of others, seeing self-expression as part of a larger body of texts that engage in ideas that are culturally and personally relevant to their lives. A group of participants from The Co-Operative Academy of Leeds chose to spend some of their leisure time listening to some episodes of a radio drama written by one of the writers (the group had listened to one episode together earlier in the day). They then used this material to develop their own stories and scripts:

*'We just really wanted to find out what happened next [in the radio plays]. It was...it just really got you thinking what's going to happen next so I wanted to listen some more.'*

*'It's so relaxing to listen to, you can just let it all go into your head.'*

*'We just had an idea for a story, and when we started we were helping each other and it was kind of easy. Not easy, but kind of easy. Because I think it was our ideas of what we wanted to write about. We could do it how we wanted.'* (Participants, CAL)

Some participants were able to explore self-expressive writing by taking ownership of the writing techniques and conventions that had been introduced to them during workshops, and developed multilingual approaches that enabled them to more clearly articulate meaning and emotion:

*'It was an interesting session as we realised that some students had mixed two types of exercises. One girl had mixed an anaphoric poem paying tribute to her mother. Another had written a poem for her hero: she wanted to finish her text by writing a narrative short story using Lingala, French and English words. In short, I was amazed by their creativity, their dedication and their hard-working.'*  
(Writer, CHCHS)

The self-expressive approach of (M)Other Tongues enabled young people to discuss the ideas that they were interested in and explore the languages of their choice. For some participants, this in itself raised a sensibility about the relationship between the self and language. In addition, self-expressive writing enabled some participants to explore deeper connections between form, linguistic choice and meaning.

#### **4.2.1.c Creative writing as a reciprocal act**

Self expressive and reflective processes did not exist only in individual action in (M)Other Tongues. Participants were encouraged to engage in actions of give and take connected to creative writing – giving and receiving feedback, time, support, encouragement, trust and respect. Tutors fostered a sense that the participants shared common ground with each other and with the writers. Writers responded to participants' writing and discussion by giving close and serious attention to their intentions and efforts:

*'The poets instilled that what they [participants] were saying was the same quality as professional poets, and that idea that what they were saying was worthy of someone else reading...that gave them the reason, that built the confidence.'* (Teacher, LBTS)

Sharing work as it progressed helped participants to understand writing as a collaborative and social act, rather than a private, isolated activity. Participants recognized that sharing creative writing is potentially exposing, and can make the writer feel vulnerable. They expressed appreciation that their peers had chosen to share their stories, ideas and writing:

*'She was sharing something personal, it was personal to her; she was sharing it, so it was good, it included us.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

*'I saw people in a new way, I spoke from my heart and they spoke from their heart, we were together, we were strong together.'* (Participant, CMA)

The residential environment was identified as an influence on participants' willingness to engage in creative writing as a reciprocal act. The space existed as a safe, creative environment in which young people's ideas, stories and opinions were welcome; and the collaborative approach to living together encouraged a reciprocal attitude in which participants repaid each other's contributions with respectful responses:

*'I think also what's important and key to what we were doing there, they were in a creative space and they weren't being judged... they weren't going to be told off, they had ground rules and they were very simple ground rules. Get up, clean up and be at the workshop, that's all we ask of you, and just respect the space that you're in and they did that with great ease...give them the chance and the space and they'll share everything that is important in their lives.'* (Teaching Assistant, CHCHS)

Hearing each other's stories and writing sometimes changed participant's views of their peers, and as young people heard the work of others they became more deeply engaged with their writing and with each other:

*'It was so interesting to hear all their poetry because it gives you an idea of their thinking on the inside of their heads – it's different from what I expected from most of them...Sometimes more serious, sometimes I was surprised at how intelligent it was.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

*'I saw that I have talents and that other people have talents, that's what I mean Roma keep the talents to themselves.'* (participant, CMA)

The 'give and take' of creative writing activities gave young people the opportunity to reflect on the talents and abilities of their peers, and in doing so to reflect on the role that creative writing might play in enabling young people to discover and share abilities that may otherwise remain hidden:

*'I think that free writing showed me how smart anyone can be because they were all so good, and the range was so wide but when you think about it poetry isn't about who's smart and who's not, it's just about....it's about inside of yourself, it's about putting pen to paper and then just letting it write...I would recommend Arvon to any person to go on because you don't just find other experiences, I think you find yourself as a person.'* (Participant, LBTS)

Teachers recognised that participants responded positively to the trust that was placed in them by the adults around them, taking on responsibility and offering support to each other:

*'I can see a change even in the youngest students, after just a couple of days. They are more independent, not so worried and asking all of the time is this ok? They are supporting each other, helping each other. Students have to be able to be independent, to learn independently, and I see this week as a very important step in that process, something that will really make a difference for these students.'* (Teacher, CAL)

*'The support they gave each other was amazing, I was really touched by that. Practical things, like when they had to type up their work there wasn't enough computers so there was the sharing, and it was "okay let me help, let me type yours up for you". There was those kind of things, then sitting together in their free time, reading each others' work and that feedback that they were giving. You don't really see that so much in the classroom.'* (Teaching Assistant, CHCHS)

Participants responded to the challenges of creative writing by being generous in their support and encouragement of each other, and in doing so they gained confidence, knowledge and insight into themselves and their peers. The collaborative space that they shared – the give and take of domestic life – was echoed in writing practices, giving participants opportunities to see themselves and each other in and through their creative writing:

*'That week actually gave me the opportunities to know each of them more because in school they don't really show that side. When we had the poetry and the fables, they showed what is truly inside, because I've been here only a year and they showed me more about each of them. When you're at school you've got some other way to act than when you are at home, so that was like our home, you could be different.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

## **4.2.2 Personal and Emotional development: Confidence, attainment and achievement**

(M)Other Tongues had a demonstrable impact on young people's emerging personal identity, strengthening self image, aspiration and self esteem. In some cases, it was possible to see an impact on attainment. However, the adage that 'not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts' is relevant to the (M)Other Tongues outcomes. Young people's achievements included but also went beyond improvements in levels of progress. Non-cognitive skills and attributes such as confidence and resilience are widely recognised as the foundations of academic success, and were evident as impacts on (M)Other Tongues participants.

### **4.2.2.a Confidence**

Across all four projects, baseline data suggested that the majority (over 60%) of young people felt most confident about themselves when they were using their mother tongue rather than English. Almost all participants also expressed a desire to improve their spoken and written skills in their mother tongue, even when they did not identify the language as important for their future success. This suggests that young people may implicitly understand that strong mother tongue language skills contribute to building confidence and self-esteem.

As outlined in 4.1 above, writing is frequently identified as challenging, and success in this area is seen as difficult to achieve. Success in creative writing, then, has consequences on young people's faith in themselves and their own abilities:

*'I've learnt that I can be good at anything that I set my mind to. I never ever wrote poetry before. If I can do this, then I can achieve my goals.'*

*(Participant, CMA)*

*'I've come to this country and already I've changed, sometimes to hide my old self. But I know now to be more confident about your own language and to keep your culture and stuff, and to feel great about who you are.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

Participants identified that new experiences that challenged them and required them to step outside of their comfort zones had a significant impact on raising levels of self confidence:

*'When they said we were doing a play, I was thinking oh no, I don't want to do it. I hate people looking at me and I'm a shy person really, people might think I'm not because I'm chatty with my friends but I am really shy. It was hard to do, but then when we'd written the play, I did want to do it, it felt good.'*

*(Participant, CAL)*

*'Arvon changed the way I feel about writing. It made me feel more confident in myself when I am writing.'* *(Participant, CMA)*

Teachers also noted a positive impact on pupils' self confidence, demonstrated in their heightened interaction with each other and with the writers and with their peers:

*'Throughout the experience we saw such a growth in confidence coming from their sense of their own identity getting stronger...to begin with they were reluctant to speak...I remember one girl, she is very cautious to speak in school, and then to see her giving directions and instructions in the kitchen...At one stage I said "I've never seen you so lively." She said "Yes I'm more relaxed now." I think that epitomized the whole project. Seeing someone who was seeing herself as not fitting in, to see her part of it, comfortable in the group, happy.'* *(Teacher, LBTS)*

Self confidence was developed through participants feeling fully accepted, able to express their ideas, stories and world views. This enabled young people to develop increased resilience. Through the process of developing their own writing – with the inevitable false starts, hesitations, doubts and anxieties that are inherent in the creative writing process – pupils were able to develop a resilient attitude to learning. This in turn contributes to self esteem and self confidence, and develops the learner's trust in his or her own capacity. This process also revealed to pupils the unique knowledge that they each hold, demonstrating that their personal perspective shapes and constructs their writing:

*'I used to quit a lot when I'm doing stuff in my life. I just used to quit and then walk away. But when I was over there I just thought for a second and tried to write what I'm thinking about, doing it over and then trying to think about oh is that right, is that wrong. But then I learnt it's not is that right or it's wrong and I was trying to see what my heart is telling me. Listen to my heart.'* *(Participant, LBTS)*

*'I trust myself more, it's okay to speak what is in my mind and we discovered that our stories are interesting.'* *(Participant, CMA)*

Participants identified that the residential week had a significant impact on their confidence to act independently, and that this was achieved through the combination of creative activities and a first taste of independent living:

*'A few months ago I wasn't really confident. Every time I wanted to do something there was always that voice telling me don't do it, this could happen, a million different scenarios that occur in my head telling me why not to do something. I wouldn't come out of my shell. I was scared basically. So when I went on the trip I realised whilst everyone was working together and we were like a group, at the same time it was every man for himself, you had to take care of yourself, you had to know when the right time was to wake up. It was like taking that step into university while you're still 15, learning my independence skills, building myself up as a person. I could always have a parent or a friend there for me but then what if you're there by yourself, what could you do for yourself as a person? Would you sit down and just moan or do you stand up and change something for yourself, so it was that inner confidence, that inner feeling that I could actually do something.'* (Participant, LBTS)

End of project questionnaires revealed that participants across the programme felt more confident about using their home language, and about their use of English. It was also noted by participants and their teachers that the self confidence developed during (M)Other Tongues lasted beyond the project, resulting in greater self assurance in their interactions in class and with their peers:

*'There is one pupil who never speaks out in class, would never read out in class, but I have definitely seen that change in him, he is much more likely to speak out in class, I've seen him carry that confidence back into the classroom.'* (Teaching Assistant, CHCHS)

*'It made me more able to speak up when I've got something to say because I used to not say anything, but now I put my hand up so now I can speak up for myself.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

*'Before I went there I was quite shy because of what people used to tell me, because I came from Africa sometimes people could be quite racist towards me, they asked me if I had a home or if ever had chocolate or something like that. They asked me that and I did not speak but now if they ask me I'll just answer them back and say yes, I know what chocolate is!'* (Participant, CHCHS)

#### 4.2.2.b Attainment and Achievement

Baseline and end of project attainment data was collected for participants from three schools: Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School, The Co-operative Academy of Leeds, and Lilian Baylis Technology College. It was not possible to collect attainment data for all participants in each school due to reasons including pupil movement. In all attainment data was collected for 34 participants.

The data showed raised attainment of one sub level or more in English for 17 pupils (50% of participants) across the programme. This breaks down to approximately 64% of pupils in LBTS, and around 40% of pupils in both CHCHS and CAL. As is the case with any intervention, this cannot be wholly and solely attributed to the impact of (M)other Tongues. However, it was the professional judgment of teachers involved in the project that (M)other Tongues had a significant influence on raising attainment, and that the participants may continue to see the impact on attainment as they develop and mature:

*'The skills that they have learnt have put the direct tools of creative writing in their hands, and this has helped them to improve their writing in so many ways. I have seen the transformation in their literacy skills, and these are improvements that have been achieved in a short time, that we would usually expect to take a much longer time for these pupils.'* (Teacher, CAL)

*'For some of them, maybe we can't say right now yes he's gone from level 5 to level 6 or whatever, but we know it will come, for some pupils that takes time, but the things that they've learnt will stick with them because this is a project that they'll remember forever.'* (Teacher, CHCHS)

Although attainment data was not collected for participants from Cedar Mount Academy, end of residential questionnaires showed that all of the participants felt that the project had improved their use of English and their mother tongue languages. Importantly for this group, given the barriers that exist in being away from family, many participants talked about wishing they could have stayed longer, and hoped they would have an opportunity to return:

*'I like it here, I enjoyed myself, I wish I could stay more than one week.'*

*'It was a pleasure for me to come here, I would like to come again to do different activities.'*

*'I feel different in a good way. I feel comfortable to write'.*

*'Now if I have free time I will try to write some poems.'* (Participants, CMA)

Participants felt that they had learned skills, techniques and approaches to creative writing that they could sustain independently in school:

*'One of the best benefits I got from that week was when I came back to school usually I'm asked to describe like an area or something I always just use my vision only and then at Arvon they always used to tell me use your sound, you have five senses so you have to use them. So now my essay writing is a lot better because I talk about what I see, what I smell, what I hear and how it affects my feelings.'* (Participant, LBTS)

*'It made me realize the power of writing, how every word matters'*  
(Participant, LBTS)

Other measures of attainment were also discussed by teachers. At Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School, the project enabled two pupils to demonstrate their ability to such an extent that they were able to move from a lower to a higher ability class:

*'We've been able to move them out of the lowest grade class into a middle group, so yes the class is more difficult for them but I think they're up for the challenge. They were able to show what they were capable of and what they'd achieved in their writing, which gave teachers the confidence to make the move with them. We're always asking the question how can we raise their attainment level and we've got to find different ways of doing that for different children. I felt Mother Tongues was a really good way of doing that.'*  
(Teaching Assistant, CHCHS)

Also at Cardinal Heenan, a recent arrival whose first language was French achieved an A\* in his French GCSE after his involvement in (M)Other Tongues. The deputy head explained how the project had been significant for this pupil:

*'It's not that he wasn't capable of doing that before, it's more that he wouldn't have seen the point, he wouldn't have done the GCSE. He felt, I*

*...speak French, what's the point of doing the exam? But then in the project he could see with the other kids actually well they've got French backgrounds but there's no way they could do it yet, they're not ready. So he actually made that decision for himself, this is important, I could do well at this.'*  
(Teacher, CHCHS)

At The Co-operative Academy of Leeds, four of the participants were Year 9 students involved in making their GCSE option choices. At the start of the project, none of the students wanted to study Urdu at GCSE. At the end of the project, all four Year 9 students had changed their minds, and opted to include Urdu in their GCSE choices. This corroborates evidence from across the programme that (M)other Tongues impacted on young people's perception of bilingualism as an important skill, and an area of achievement in their own lives.

Baseline data revealed that on the whole participants did not identify their multilingualism as a strength or an advantage, and many did not see it as an important facet of their educational ambition or future career aspirations. Few of the participants used their mother tongue at school, and many saw the greatest asset of multilingualism as the ability to code switch when they didn't want people to understand what they were saying. In particular, recent migrants, were understandably focused on developing their proficiency in English:

*'Tigrinya is my past life, and English is my new life and my future' (Participant, CHCHS)*

As the programme developed, participants embraced opportunities to explore bilingual approaches to creative writing, and this impacted on their sense of pride and achievement in their linguistic skills:

*'It made me proud to be Roma, to use my language.'* (Participant, CMA)

*'It made me feel better about being bilingual.'* (Participant, CAL)

*'I feel more confident about being bilingual.'* (Participant, LBTS)

*'This project makes you think how your culture and speaking your language is important, and it might be important for your future.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

Many pupils also acknowledged that a sense of achievement came through the progress that they had made in creative writing; many participants felt that they had exceeded their own expectations in the work that they had produced, and in the commitment and dedication that they had applied to the creative process.

*'It's kind of like the writing loosened me up as a person. Made me more comfortable with myself, because I could think, that's okay, you know, I did well there.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

*'I found out that I am quite good at poetry.'* (Participant, CMA)

*'I think that we are lucky to have this chance, not many people do this, and it has shown me that we can do really good work. I feel proud of myself and everyone because of what we achieved.'* (Participant, CAL)

Opportunities to share achievements through celebration events, assemblies and performances also contributed to participants' sense of pride. A total audience of over 2,400 parents, peers and teachers attended celebration events that showcased participants' creative achievements.

#### **4.2.3 Impact on social and cultural development**

The (M)other Tongues programme encourages young people to celebrate their community languages, and promotes the development of social interaction. From this perspective, the evaluation examines how learners' joint participation in creative writing enables them to develop strong social bonds, and acquire new strategies and knowledge of themselves, each other, and the world around them. This connects with the project's aims to improve social skills and support community cohesion.

The programme heightened young people's awareness of the importance of celebrating and nurturing their cultural backgrounds, and they identified their community languages as a vital element of this aspiration:

*'The thing I'm going to take away is how important it is to know your language, and to remember when you move to another country, because you're so focused to learn the language you start to forget, but if you forget your language you forget who you are.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

Participants recognised that developing and nurturing their linguistic selves was not just a matter of individual development, but part of their cultural identity. They valued

working in a context in which their languages, values, challenges and aspirations were understood and shared.

*'Because they [the writers] were speaking our language, it was easy to talk to them, I don't mean just the language, they knew what you meant. Like when we were talking about Eid for the play, they knew the same as us. We all knew the same things, you didn't have to explain it all.'* (Participant, CAL)

*'It felt like home, like being in a house with all your cousins, because you know that you're all different but you're all the same, the family and the morals are all the same, because we're all Somali and that's how Somali people are.'* (Participant, LBTS)

The role of writers in sharing and empathising with young people's world views and cultural perspectives was critical in supporting young people's engagement in exploring their cultural heritage in a safe space. The opportunity to use their community languages with their peers and significant adults enabled young people to open up to each other, deepening their social bonds. For recent migrants, this was particularly significant:

*'We didn't know him that well, and we didn't really bother to try and communicate, he was part of our group but not, if you know what I mean, just listening to his music or whatever. But then once we were at that place it was French so he could communicate openly, open up with everyone, and then because he was talking French all the time I think that he became more confident and he could start to communicate in English more as well.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

The exploration of culture and language developed collective communities, and participants felt that this was made possible because the project provided a space for them to be together, focussing on their own strengths and needs, and exploring their creativity, their culture and their languages. Many of the groups did not know each other well before the project, but developed strong bonds:

*'What do I take away? Maybe some memories, souvenirs. I take away the souvenirs that are good times I had with all these people here. The*

*friendships that you had with people have got deeper and the connection that you've made with people has got deeper.'* (Participant, LBTS)

*'It was everything we did together, cooking, cleaning, eating at the table, we all cook together, we stay up together, sleep together. It helps you when you are back in school because we are close to each other.'*

*(Participant, CMA)*

The bonds that developed frequently continued to play a part in participants' lives after the project ended, through continued friendship. The collective cultural identity was evident in their interactions. Older and younger pupils who had experienced (M)Other Tongues together were more likely to continue to connect back at school. Participants felt more confident about using their community languages with each other in the corridors and playgrounds, because *'you should be proud of it, and speak your language'* (Participant, CHCHS).

Participants talked about the way that the project had made them think more deeply about the importance of their languages in relation to their family connections, and the way in which losing linguistic proficiency may isolate them from their elders:

*'Your language is your culture, it gives you something in common with family. Say you go back to your home country and you don't speak the language that everyone else is speaking, the old generation will be talking and they'll literally be talking about you and you won't have any clue. You have to be able to understand what they're saying, to feel included and you'll still be learning things all the time.'* (Participant, CHCHS)

Teachers saw social bonds develop as the projects developed, and talked about a sense of cultural community growing as participants' friendships deepened:

*'I was impressed that they looked after each other, there was no arguing, they did everything together and for each other. At this age with some of the pupils there can be some resistance between boys and girls, but the writers were very sensitive, gave them spaces to work apart and come together. They have been like a family this week.'* (Teacher, CAL)

*'When they went away they were a bunch of disparate individuals. When they came back they were like a family.'* (Teacher, LBTS)

Some participants identified that the strength of the bonds that they developed grew from the shared opportunity to explore and express their cultural heritage. For many pupils cultural stories had not been explored before; the project enabled them to question and share important aspects of their collective identity:

*'Our parents fled from the country when they were really young and then we as Somalis, like young students, we do not exactly know the culture and stuff of our country. So coming together as a Somali group actually strengthened that inner feeling like I'm a Somali...I'm someone who can do something, I can say something, I stand for my country, I have an identity. I think that was the key aspect of bringing the group together as Somalis because our country might be torn as a nation but at the end of the day if the people are still together then it's up to us in the future to repair it.'* (Participant, LBTS)

Some participants were able to explore where their own culture sits in relation to connected cultures. For the Roma participants from Cedar Mount Academy, the project offered them opportunities to meet and work with Roma adults whose backgrounds were different, and who use different dialects and languages.

*'They were kind of amazed by that, you could see them putting it together, getting a bigger sense of who they were and who they were connected with.'* (Arvon Team Member)

As in all aspects of the programme, the residential setting played a role in achieving impact. In particular, the permission and support to live their lives with cultural authenticity during the residential weeks was seen as vitally important to nurturing community cohesion:

*'All the staff at Lumb Bank need to be credited. The Lumb Bank workers were so supportive and sensitive. They did research on the needs of the Roma culture, and at all times had absolute respect. Cultural transgressions can lead to Roma walking off projects. The food was a huge part of the week and the girls all said they appreciated the effort put in; they did a small speech at the last supper to acknowledge this.'* (Writer, CMA)

#### 4.2.4 Impact on perceptions of multilingual learners

This theme is related to the issues of social and cultural development, which explored how the community of young learners sees itself, and how (M)other Tongues impacted on these perceptions. However, the analysis extends here to explore how the project has influenced ways in which the language community is perceived by others, specifically within schools.

*'I don't think usually people think girls like us are any good at plays and things, but maybe we can change their minds.'* (Participant, CAL)

All of the participant groups had opportunities to share their work not only with each other on the residential course, but with their families and peers at celebration events, assemblies and performances. These events had a significant impact on audiences:

*'On this last trip to Manchester, the school was a transformed place. They can see the outcomes of Mother Tongues, they are incredibly supportive. On the 8th May, we spent the day workshopping then preparing for the assembly. On the morning of the 9th, around 250 students watched a special assembly where we did a presentation of the week, including photographs and readings of the poems. The girls all took part and the reception was excellent. The other students listened beautifully throughout and it was a truly proud occasion. Many staff members were present and gave excellent feedback.'* (Writer, CMA)

The impact of the performances and assemblies on those present was evident across all four projects. Teachers were able to see participants in a new light, and were often impressed not only by the quality of work produced but by the confidence and grace with which young people presented their work:

*'She stood up in front of our end of year assemblies, about 800 children, and teachers were saying to me after, who's that, is that the same quiet shy little girl? Whoa! She was commanding. Just incredible confidence booster for her, and so important for the other pupils and the teachers to experience that.'* (Teacher, CHCHS)

*'The performance is important because it shows the community that we value these young people, we value their language and their talent. Everyone can see how much they have achieved, and this is part of our school, their achievement is important to us all and we are proud of them.'* (Teacher, CAL)

Teachers also felt that the opportunity to share work publicly made explicit the ability of multilingual learners to cope with significant levels of challenge, presenting them not as pupils who need additional help, but as pupils who have additional strengths:

*'Sometimes people don't realize, some of these pupils have come to the school with no English, very little English, they have a mountain to climb, and it's not always easy for people to see yes, they have talents, they have abilities, goals and ambitions. I think when people have seen what they've done, they get past their preconceptions and start to see what's truly there.'*  
(Teaching Assistant, CHCHS).

Parents who attended celebration events were often moved and impressed by their children's' achievements:

*'I am really proud of them. When my daughter read my poem about me it was very emotional and made me cry.'* (parent, LBTS)

*'I think it's wonderful. I can see that he is not so shy now, about our language, he is talking to me much more. I was surprised that he did the play, I thought he was maybe too shy.'* (Parent, CAL)

Pupils at all of the schools had additional opportunities to present their work at performances and conferences outside of school, in cultural and educational settings. At Cardinal Heenan, some participants were encouraged to take part in poetry events outside of school because they were aware of the positive responses they had received from peers:

*'It really did make a difference to how they felt because pupils would come up to them and go "that was really good, did you really write that" or they'd come to me saying "Miss, did she write that really by herself". It helped them to see themselves as writers because there were all these other people seeing them as talented, telling them they were good.'* (Teaching Assistant, CHCHS).

As perceptions change, the potential for continued support for multi-lingual learners grows, but is dependent on the ability of those in close and sustained contact with the participants to implement action. All of the projects have been variously supported by senior managers, teachers, teaching assistants and local authorities who continue to work with the young people and their peers in the four schools. It is recognised that implementing strategic change takes time, and that some developments may yet be initiated. A number of steps have been identified by

partners which express their commitment to building on the impact of (M)other Tongues. These include:

- Displays of participants work
- Profiling work in school publications/websites
- Making anthologies available across the school
- Continued partnerships with (M)Other Tongues writers
- Curriculum planning to include writing produced by (M)other Tongues participants

All of the partner schools involved in (M)Other Tongues said that they wanted more opportunities for their multi-lingual pupils to be involved in Arvon's work. The driver behind this desire is the impact that the project has had on participants, which has positioned (M)Other Tongues as a programme that has the potential to be at the centre of young people's personal, social, cultural and academic development:

*'I think (M)Other Tongues is very central to what we are trying to do for young people. If we want to raise their attainment, to help them to reach their potential, we have to make sure that young people's voices are being heard and give them the space and the platform to be able to do that. You know that saying young people should be seen and not heard? I sometimes feel that we live in that kind of society where we don't want to hear anything from them and we, the adults, will speak for them. We think we understand and we forget that their experiences are different. We can't hear their voices if they've been cut off from their culture and their language, and that was the powerful aspect of (M)other Tongues, connecting them with their creativity, and with their language.'* (Teaching Assistant, CHCHS).

## 5 Recommendations

(M)Other Tongues is a unique, innovative and ambitious programme whose relevance to young people's lives and educational ambitions has continued to grow and develop since its inception four years ago. The programme has achieved significant outcomes for young people, as evidenced in this report. Trust in Arvon to deliver the programme with sensitivity and professionalism is high; all of the schools and local authority teams who were involved in (M)Other Tongues 2012-2013 expressed their desire to work with Arvon again, and to continue to be involved in (M)Other Tongues.

The recommendations in this report are built from a perspective that Arvon has invested considerable energy and resource to date on a research and innovation phase of (M)Other Tongues. It is therefore recommended that Arvon and other (M)Other Tongues stakeholders consider the next phase of (M)Other Tongues as embedding and deepening learning, enabling partnerships to mature and flourish, and maximising outcomes for participants.

### 5.1 Develop longer term partnerships with (M)Other Tongues schools.

It is not sustainable for the small team who manage (M)Other Tongues to continue to invest time and resource in continually seeking to establish new partnerships with schools. It is therefore recommended that Arvon should work with partner schools over a longer period (3-5 years) to embed the programme and maximise impacts. Such an approach will facilitate the recruitment of participants, as communities who have been involved in the programme in 2009-2013 will be able to reassure potential participants and their families. Longer term partnerships will support a cascade learning model, as past participants from the programme engage with new participants through their creative work. Longer term partnerships will facilitate improved opportunities for staff to connect with and embed the (M)Other Tongues approach to learning in their classrooms, and provide Arvon with opportunities to track impacts (including attainment and community cohesion) over a longer time frame.

## **5.2 Establish progression routes for (M)Other Tongues participants who demonstrate particular talent, commitment or interest in creative writing.**

In order to sustain young people's engagement in creative writing, Arvon should put in place strategies and structures that will enable young people to access the support they need when their involvement in (M)Other Tongues is complete. Longer term partnerships will go some way to supporting this recommendation, since Arvon will have continued relationships with schools. Other forms of support might include: supporting schools to work in collaboration with writing organisations to develop young writer's networks; peer to peer mentoring; and collaboration with local writers and literature organisations who can provide local support and expertise. Arvon should consider ways in which the organisation can directly support talented and interested students by directing them to local and regional writing groups, and suggesting grants for public courses as appropriate.

## **5.3 Develop and deepen expertise in the community languages that have been explored through (M)Other Tongues 2009-2013.**

Arvon has invested in developing expertise in six community languages: Portuguese, Yoruba, French (and Creole), Urdu (and Mirpuri), Romanian Roma and Somali. Writers who have worked with Arvon on (M)Other Tongues have developed their skills and knowledge, and their creative engagement has helped to shape the programme. The knowledge that has been gained through working with these community languages has the potential to contribute to (M)Other Tongues programmes within the existing network of schools (for example, there are Roma communities within all of the (M)Other Tongues schools). The writers will benefit from the challenge of working with communities in different areas, and participants will benefit from writers' enhanced knowledge and experience. Arvon's expertise will be strengthened as it develops a rich knowledge and evidence base, rather than stretching the programme thinly over an increasing range of languages. As new groups come on board with the (M)Other Tongues programme, efforts should be made to find opportunities to continue to explore and develop expertise in the same community languages.

#### **5.4 Ensure that the (M)Other Tongues programme focuses attention on young people aged 14-18.**

Many of the personal and social impacts of (M)Other Tongues relate to young people's emerging sense of identity, which relates strongly to young people from Year 9 and above. This is not to minimise the impacts that were achieved for younger participants, or to suggest that they are excluded from the programme. However, greater impacts are likely to be felt with young people from Year 9 and above, and this should be kept in mind when working with schools on the recruitment of participants.

#### **5.5 Further disseminate the findings of (M)Other Tongues in order to maintain and build interest and momentum.**

Arvon should seek to share findings with teachers, writers, the wider cultural sector and education leaders in order to support the development of both the (M)Other Tongues model and the (M)Other Tongues approach to creative writing with bilingual students. The Seminar planned for early in 2014 should seek to connect writers and teachers, enabling them to share experiences and develop their understanding.

#### **5.6 Develop and implement further professional development opportunities for teachers and writers.**

Arvon should maximize the potential of the (M)Other Tongues learning resource to influence practice. This can be done by establishing a professional development programme that enables teachers to engage with the writer's processes promoted in the resource. Arvon should explore the possibility of working with other arts and literature organisations who share an interest in working with bilingual and multilingual young people to support this work. This approach may also help Arvon to find effective ways to collaborate with schools who are unable to engage students in a residential process.