

Calderdale Theatre School Association

Report of the trustees for the year ending 31st July 2025

Purposes and activities

The purpose of the charity is to advance the education and skills of young people in Calderdale by developing their understanding, knowledge and appreciation of the arts and culture through theatre, drama and other activities.

The principal activities of Calderdale Theatre School (CTS) were Saturday morning drama workshops and live performances. The workshops were delivered by a team of freelance professional drama practitioners who also rehearsed and directed the productions. The Saturday morning workshops were held during school terms at the Orange Box Young Peoples' Centre in Halifax. Performances took place at Fire & Water in Sowerby Bridge and at the Orange Box in Halifax.

These activities benefited young people by building confidence, developing creativity, improving verbal and non-verbal communication skills, developing empathy and concentration, and encouraging teamwork and collaboration.

In planning activities for the year, trustees kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and fee charging. CTS welcomes all young people, aged between 10 and 19, regardless of personal background, ability, faith, gender or personal circumstances. Of the 43 students registered during the year, 29 were girls and 14 boys with 8 students reporting additional needs.

CTS relies on the income from fees to cover its operating costs. In setting the level of fees, charges and concessions, the trustees gave careful consideration to the accessibility of the charity for those on low incomes. During the year 1 student received a free place, 10 students received a means-tested reduction, and 2 students received a reduction for families with more than 1 student.

Volunteers

The running of CTS is reliant upon the work of volunteer trustees and parents. They do a lot of the administration work of the charity and help behind the scenes making and maintaining costumes and creating sets and props. This year we were particularly grateful to Ellis Price and Lucy Fee from Fire & Water, Alison Roberts, Tony Clark, Lisa Gort and Christine Wood for their help with productions.

Achievements and performance

A Play-in-a-Day

We had great fun in December when all our members took part in a *Play-in-a-Day* event. The students worked in groups and were given a box of stimulus to create a piece of theatre. We also welcomed visiting artist, Lucy Fee, who made props and costumes from junk and recycled items. The drama made was extremely diverse and entertaining. It was rewarding for staff to see the skills and techniques taught and practised in sessions, used in their devised work. We had an enthusiastic audience that supported this elaborate box of tricks.

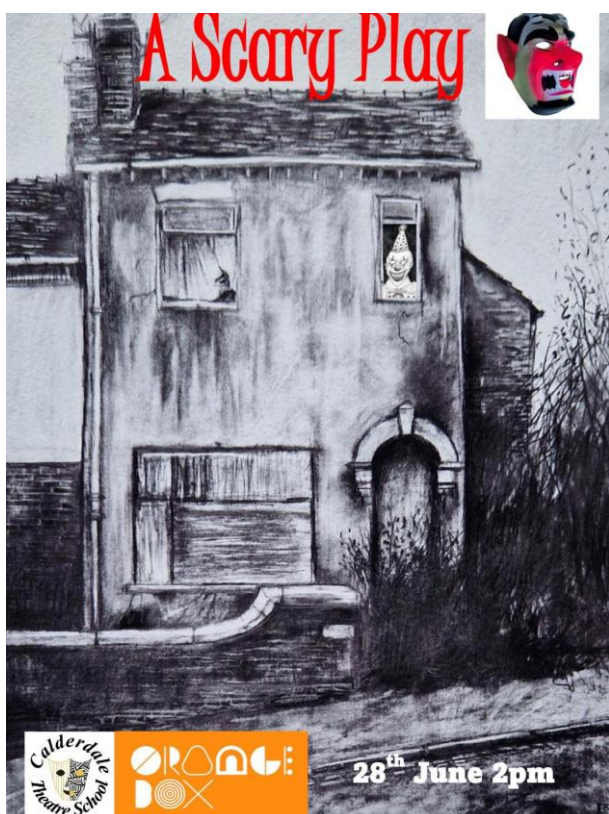
Frankenstein

In the Spring Term, rehearsals for *Frankenstein* began. This piece involved students from years 9 to 13. We were delighted to invite Katie Alcott onto our staff as Movement Director, which greatly enhanced the concept of the piece. The play was adapted by Rob Garrett, one of our established leaders and was performed at *Fire & Water* in Sowerby Bridge. The atmosphere and setting of this theatre space greatly suited the world of the play and the students created a very affecting piece of theatre. The cast had the opportunity to perform the show three times, which allowed them to refine their work and practise maintaining focus and consistency in performance. Ben and Rob directed the piece and supported cast members who sang. The effect was eerie, atmospheric and thought provoking. A journey into a timeless classic that still mirrored concerns of our current times. Costumes by Alison Roberts. Stage Art by Lisa Gort.



A Scary Play

In the summer term, rehearsals for *A Scary Play* began. Our younger students in years 6 to 9 entered a world of mystery and intrigue in a piece inspired by Judith Johnson and Walter De La Mare and adapted by Alison Field. The choreographed movement was created by the students and supported by their directors Jenny and Alison. They also learned how to perform in a new stage configuration, 'Promenade', where the audience follow the actors around the space. Different realities and scenes were staged in different locations, which created a sense of movement and pace. The result was immersive and challenged students to work with complex direction ideas. Projection and physical theatre were at the heart of this sometimes, abstract piece. The staff were very proud of the powerful ensemble created by these extremely mature and talented students. Costumes by Alison Roberts, Set Building by Tony Clark.



Financial Review

Once again, the financial pressure on families meant that trustees decided not to increase fees this year. We have continued to hold workshops at the Orange Box and are grateful to Calderdale Council for their support. Cash at the bank at 31/07/2025 was £20,555 in unrestricted funds. The main financial risk to the charity is a sustained reduction in student numbers and the increasing cost of premises to hire for workshops and performances. We aim to keep £5000 in reserve funds to cover 6 months running costs and to meet any unforeseen expenditure that may occur.

Structure, Governance and Management

Calderdale Theatre School Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed by its constitution dated 26th January 2013.

The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity. The board meets every 2 months. The board engages the services of freelance drama practitioners to deliver the drama workshops and other activities. In accordance with the constitution one third of trustees retire each year but they are eligible for re-election. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefit.

The charity has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and an Equality and Diversity Policy. All freelance staff who work directly with the students are required to have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The Financial Controls policy was updated this year. The charity also has policies on anti-bullying, charity risks, complaints procedures, equality and diversity, serious incident reporting, taking, using and storing images, trustee conflict of interests, trustee expenses and privacy.

Reference and Administrative Details

Calderdale Theatre School Association (CTSA), charity No. 1151269, is registered at 23 Chiserley Gardens, Wadsworth, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, HX7 8RU.

Trustees

All trustees served for the full year

Rachel Smith – Chair

Tony Clark – Vice Chair

Gerry Powell – Treasurer

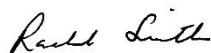
Michaela O’Sullivan – Secretary

Adelle Beswick

Louise Clark

Alison Roberts

Signed on behalf of trustees:



RACHEL SMITH Chair of Trustees 29/10/2025