

## CASE STUDY 3

# PENLEE HOUSE GALLERY & MUSEUM

## PENZANCE

### Why take part?

As several galleries were due to be rehung, the gallery saw this as an opportunity to work in a different way with young visitors, to build links with a local school and to raise awareness internally of what the museum can offer children and young people.

### Who took part?

Ten pupils from Years 5 & 6. The Education & Outreach Officer emailed a primary school that had visited earlier in the year and they responded by selecting pupils from the Gifted & Talented programme with a particular interest in Art.

### What did they do?

The pupils were responsible for curating a gallery, selecting the artworks for display and planning the layout of the room. They also produced labels and a short interpretative film.

### How did they spend their time on the day?

Prior to Takeover Day the museum had sent the pupils a list of 50 possible works to be included. The classes made them into a booklet and discussed them in school as well as at home. They selected 20 to be displayed and made labels for them. Having visited the gallery to do a recce and measure up they produced a mock-up of the room and paintings to scale on paper:

On the day, they:

- Met key staff and learned about issues of size, shape, colour and conservation when hanging a gallery.
- Refined their plans for the room, further measuring and decided on a final layout.

Back at school the pupils made a short film to help visitors understand why they had chosen the particular paintings and also provided the gallery with a visitors' book to record comments.

### What happened next?

Over the weekend the gallery staff hung the exhibition according to the pupils' plan and the following week the pupils were invited back with their parents as guests of honour at the opening ceremony, where their certificates were presented by the Mayor. The school and the children were delighted to be involved, bringing the whole of Year 6 to Penlee House to see the exhibition a month later.

Staff at Penlee House felt it was a tremendous way to get the community involved in the running of the gallery and have widely publicised the children's takeover efforts on their website and Facebook page. The exhibition has a real buzz about it as visitors appreciate the children's perspective on the pieces and the quality of the children's interpretation.

*'The pupils and teachers from Penpol School who have been involved in this takeover must be congratulated – what they've produced is very very impressive.... I'm quite humbled to read their intelligent, empathetic, personal interpretations of the Newlyn School paintings. BRILLIANT..hope this new innovation continues!'*

Comment from Facebook user

*'I love the way the children have brought the paintings to life!! Incredible achievement. Made my heart sing.'*

Penlee House Gallery and Museum visitor

