Turner

Press Release

November 2026

Creative futures for Thanet's young people

Turner Contemporary launches three-year programme connecting 800 young people with contemporary art, local artists and opportunities across the creative industries



Photo credit: Jason Pay

Turner Contemporary has been awarded funding to deliver a new three-year programme connecting young people across Thanet with contemporary art, local artists and opportunities across the creative industries.

The new **Clore Schools Connect** programme will work with approximately 800 Year 9 students in its first year, helping young people explore their creativity, build confidence and discover how creative skills can open possibilities for their everyday lives and future careers.

Turner is one of five cultural organisations selected to receive funding through the Clore Schools Connect grant programme, supported by the Clore Duffield Foundation. The other successful organisations are the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Historic Royal Palaces—Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, London Symphony Orchestra and Royal Shakespeare Company. Together, the five organisations form a cohort that will explore and develop new approaches to working with schools facing financial and systemic barriers to cultural engagement.

At Turner Contemporary, the programme will be delivered in partnership with six local secondary schools: Hartsdown Academy, Charles Dickens School, Royal Harbour Academy, King Ethelbert School, Ursuline College and Enterprise Learning Alliance.

Over three years, students will take part in a programme of workshops, gallery visits and creative encounters designed around their interests and experiences. Turner's learning team will visit schools to explore how creativity connects with the subjects students study, the world around them and their future ambitions.

Students will also visit the gallery to discover contemporary art and take part in practical workshops led by artists and creative practitioners from Margate's thriving creative community. Through these experiences, they will encounter different ways of thinking and working creatively, while discovering the breadth of opportunities and career pathways across the creative industries.

The programme will also create opportunities for teachers and Turner Contemporary's learning team to collaborate over time, building lasting relationships between schools and the gallery and supporting a more sustained approach to creative learning.

The initiative comes at a time when access to cultural experiences remains a challenge for some young people. Thanet faces significant social and economic challenges and is the only local authority district in Kent ranked among the 10% most deprived areas nationally. Barriers such as transport costs, school timetables and limited opportunities to engage with cultural organisations can make accessing the arts more difficult for some students.

Clore Schools Connect also responds to research commissioned by the Clore Duffield Foundation, which draws attention to the impact of the pandemic on school trips. By building long-term partnerships with local schools, the programme aims to help overcome barriers to access and make visiting an art gallery a meaningful and sustained part of young people's educational experiences.

The three-year initiative forms part of a wider commitment, supported by the Clore Duffield Foundation, to developing a sustainable model for working with secondary schools in disadvantaged areas. Learning from the programme will be shared to inform future practice and support longer-term engagement between galleries, schools and their communities.

Toby Parkin, Head of Learning & Participation at Turner Contemporary, said: 'We want young people to see that creativity is a vital life skill that can open up a variety of career options. By building sustained relationships with schools and bringing students together with artists working in their local community, we hope to encourage new ways of thinking about creativity, education and future careers.'

Through Clore Schools Connect, Turner Contemporary continues to make contemporary art more accessible to young people, helping them recognise their creative potential and discover new possibilities for their futures. The programme reflects the gallery's belief that creativity is fundamental to how we learn, understand the world and shape the future, building on its wider programme of work with local and marginalised audiences, particularly children and young people.

About Clore Duffield Foundation
The Clore Duffield Foundation was established by Sir Charles Clore in 1964 and is now chaired by his daughter, Dame Vivien Duffield. It supports UK charities working in the arts, education, social welfare and health. The Foundation enhances Jewish cultural life through support for JW3, the Jewish arts and community centre in London. Since 2000, the Clore Duffield Foundation has provided funding to support the development of Clore Learning Spaces in museums, theatre and heritage sites across the UK. they have funded around 80 Clore Learning Spaces with grants of up to £2.5m to create Clore Learning Centres in national museums and performing arts centres, to donations of less than £50,000 to fund small Clore Studios within local museums and libraries.

About Turner Contemporary
Turner Contemporary is one of the UK's most visited contemporary art galleries and part of Margate's vibrant creative community. Opened in 2011 and designed by David Chipperfield, the gallery presents an ambitious programme of exhibitions, events and learning opportunities inspired by JMW Turner's legacy and his enduring connection to the town. In 2026, Turner Contemporary marks its 15th anniversary. Since opening, the gallery has played a pivotal role in the region's cultural and economic regeneration, welcoming over 5.2 million visitors and contributing more than £146 million to the local economy.
TurnerContemporary.org

Notes to Editors
The Clore Schools Connect programme will run over three years, beginning in 2026–27.
In its first year, the programme will work with six Thanet school settings and aims to reach approximately 800 Year 9 students. Activities will include school-based workshops, artist-led gallery visits, collaboration with teachers and programme evaluation. The programme is supported by a grant from the Clore Duffield Foundation.
Programme duration: November 2026–October 2028
Turner Contemporary, Rendezvous, Margate, UK
Open: Wednesday–Sunday, & bank holidays, 11am–5pm

Press contacts
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Supported by the Clore Duffield Foundation

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