Bedazzle

Building Belonging Through Creativity

CELEBRATING OUR FIRST TEN YEARS



Every child deserves someone who believes in them.
Someone who sees possibility before problems.
Someone who understands that creativity can unlock confidence, relationships can change lives and belonging can transform futures.

For ten years, Bedazzle has tried to be that someone.



FOREWORD

A letter to those who believe in potential

Dear Reader,
Thank you for taking the time to read our story.
As we celebrate Bedazzle's first ten years, it is not really about us.
It is about people.
The child who walks back into school smiling after months of anxiety.
The teenager who discovers confidence on a stage for the very first time.
The adult who arrives believing they are coming to an art group, only to discover friendship, purpose and belonging.
The teacher who finally feels they are no longer facing increasingly complex challenges alone.
These are the moments that remind us why Bedazzle exists.
When we became a registered charity in 2016, we had no grand ambition to become a large organisation.
We simply wanted to create spaces where people felt seen, valued and believed in.
Everything that has followed has grown from that simple idea.
Over the years we have been privileged to work alongside remarkable children, families, schools, artists, volunteers and partners.
They have challenged us.
Inspired us.
Trusted us.
Most importantly, they have shaped the organisation Bedazzle has become.
Despite everything we have achieved together, we believe our greatest opportunity still lies ahead.
Thank you for taking this journey with us.



Ben Cole

Operations Lead



CHAPTER

01

Our Story In Brief

Building brighter futures through Health, Education, Arts and Lifeskills



Communities across the Black Country are changing.
Schools are supporting increasingly complex social, emotional and mental health needs.
Families are navigating fragmented services and rising pressures.
Opportunities for creativity, connection and early intervention have reduced just as demand has increased.
Bedazzle exists to respond to those challenges before they become crises.
Through our HEAL approach—Health, Education, Arts and Lifeskills—we support children, young people, adults and families to build confidence, resilience and a genuine sense of belonging.

Rather than seeing education, wellbeing, creativity and life skills as separate issues, we believe they are deeply connected.
When one strengthens, the others often follow.
Since becoming a registered charity in 2016, Bedazzle has grown from a volunteer-led organisation into a trusted partner working alongside schools, local authorities, artists and community organisations across the Black Country.
Today we:

- Support more than 400 children each year through targeted SEMH and wellbeing interventions.
- Deliver over 1,300 therapeutic intervention sessions annually.
- Provide creative opportunities through youth theatre, Holiday Activities and Food programmes, alternative provision and community arts.
- Deliver adult wellbeing programmes that reduce isolation and reconnect people through creativity.
- Train professionals and support schools to respond confidently to increasing mental health need.
- Provide a creative home through Priory House, bringing education, wellbeing and community together under one roof.

Everything we do is guided by one simple belief…

People flourish when they feel they belong

The difference we make, together.

Over the past decade, your support has helped us reach hundreds of young people and families across our community. Here's a look at our impact so far.

Empowering young people to **bedazzle** and realise their potential.

June 2016 – June 2026



5,000+

YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED

Through creative projects, workshops and one-to-one support.



500+

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS TRAINED

Empowering school staff, youth workers, parents and young people.



50+

SCHOOLS & PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Working together to improve wellbeing and unlock potential.



1300

INTERVENTION SESSIONS ANNUALLY

Consistent support, one conversation at a time.



150+

YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR YOUTH THEATRE

Gaining professional performance experience on stage and behind the scenes.



600+

YOUNG ARTISTS INVOLVED IN OUR EXHIBITIONS

Celebrating their work — building confidence, self-expression and pride along the way.



10

YEARS OF IMPACT

A decade of creativity, connection and community.



60+

DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS & FREELANCERS

Giving their time, talent and passion to make a difference.



1 MISSION

EMPOWERING EVERY YOUNG PERSON

To believe in themselves and realize their potential.

2025/2026 Highlights

JULY 2025

- NDLP "Discover Dudley" Art Exhibtion

AUGUST 2025

- HAF Summer 2025 Workshops
- Same Difference Festival in Wolverhampton

SEPTEMBER 2025

- Youth Theatre "School of Rock" production
- Performances at Dudley Pride and Dudley Town's Day

OCTOBER 2025

- Divali Dreams Half Term Art Workshop
- First Women's Circle at Priory House

DECEMBER 2025

- Performances at Dudley Lights Switch on and at Justice for Ryan memorial.

JANUARY 2026

- Winter HAF Workshops in Music and Art.
- Adult Art and Day of Dance launched.

FEBRUARY 2026

- Delivered school workshops for Children's Mental Health Week around the theme of belonging.
- Female empowerment project with Fine Collective CIC

APRIL 2026

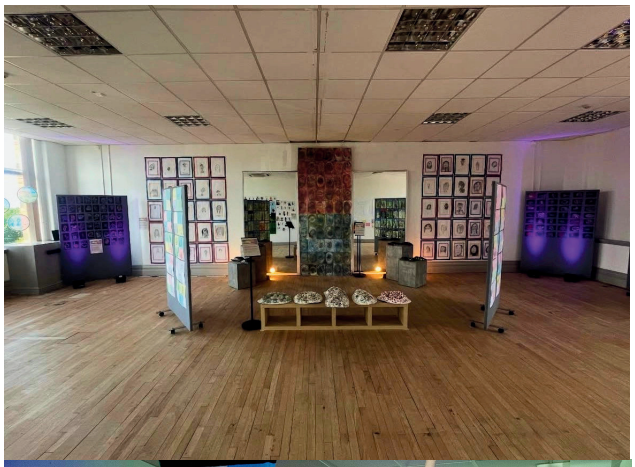
- Easter HAF "Seussical" Bootcamp and Youth Theatre production.
- Neurodiversity in the Workplace Champions training for Wolves CEP.

MAY 2026

- Delivered school workshops for Mental Health Awareness Week
- Trained over 40 staff at Coventry College in MHFA skills

JUNE 2026

- Move to be Moved Dance Celebration
- Our 10th Birthday!







Every moment reflects our purpose. Every milestone moves us forward.

Communities have never needed connection more than they do today

Young people told Dudley they want "safe places to meet, have fun, build friendships and have their voices heard."

Every generation faces its own challenges.
Behind these trends are real people.
A child who no longer wants to attend school.
A young person overwhelmed by anxiety.
A parent trying to navigate services while holding everything together.
A teacher balancing academic expectations with escalating wellbeing needs.
An adult experiencing profound loneliness after years without meaningful connection.
These stories are no longer unusual.
They are becoming increasingly common.

Nationally, around one in five children and young people are now experiencing a probable mental health disorder. Locally, schools across Dudley continue to report increasing levels of social, emotional and mental health need, while community services face sustained demand.

Too often, support begins only when difficulties have reached crisis point.
By then confidence has been lost.
Relationships have broken down.
Attendance has fallen.
Recovery becomes harder.

At Bedazzle, we believe there is another way.

Invest earlier.

Build relationships.

Create opportunities for creativity and connection.

Strengthen communities before crisis takes hold.

Prevention is not simply more effective, it is more compassionate.





CHAPTER

02

Our Inspiration

Every organisation has a beginning.
Ours began with a belief.

Every organisation has a story.
Bedazzle began with a conversation between former colleagues, students and friends who shared a simple question:
How do you carry forward a way of thinking that changed so many lives?
The answer was never to recreate one person's work. It was to continue a belief in people.
That belief became Bedazzle.

A legacy of possibility

The inspiration behind Bedazzle was an extraordinary headteacher named Kevin.
Long before terms such as trauma-informed practice, whole-school wellbeing and person-centred education became commonplace, Kevin was creating schools where relationships came first. He believed every young person deserved to be seen beyond their circumstances, celebrated creativity as much as achievement, and refused to let anyone be defined by the challenges they faced.
When Kevin died in 2014, those whose lives he had shaped were determined that his philosophy would not end with him.
Bedazzle was founded to carry that belief forward.
Today, that legacy lives on through hundreds of conversations, creative opportunities and moments of support taking place every week in schools, communities and at Priory House.
Kevin's legacy is no longer simply remembered—it is lived.

Cherry blossom is now in bloom and surrounds us.
It is a symbol of the fragility of life,
making the most of it,
cherishing every beautiful moment.

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.
Work as hard as you can.
Believe in yourself and your incredible ability.

Kevin McKellar



A Dazzle of Zebras

As friends reflected on Kevin's life, one word kept resurfacing, Bedazzle.

It perfectly described the way he encouraged people to believe they were capable of far more than they imagined.

Then someone made an unexpected discovery.
A group of zebras is known as a dazzle.
For those who knew Kevin, the coincidence felt almost too perfect.
Zebras had always been his favourite animal.
He often spoke about them as a reminder that every individual is unique, yet strongest when part of a community.
No two zebras share the same pattern.
Each carries its own identity.
Together they create something remarkable.

That idea quickly became the symbol of Bedazzle.
Today our zebra represents far more than a logo.
It reminds us that difference should be celebrated.
That individuality strengthens communities.

And that nobody should ever feel they have to change who they are in order to belong.



One of Kevin's many hand written revision packs for Year 11 students



CHAPTER

03

Lives Changed

Statistics tell us how many people we reach. Stories remind us why we exist.

It is easy to measure intervention sessions, school partnerships, workshop attendance and performance audiences.
These figures matter. They show our reach and help us remain accountable to the people and communities we serve.
But numbers cannot measure confidence.
Or hope.
Or belonging.
For that, we need stories.
The following case studies represent just a handful of the lives that have shaped—and been shaped by—Bedazzle over the past ten years. Each journey is unique, yet together they reveal a simple truth:

Meaningful change begins with a relationship.

Finding a Voice - L's Story:

When L first came to Bedazzle, she loved drawing.
She filled sketchbooks with ideas.
Created characters.
Experimented with colour.
Yet, like many talented young people, she struggled to believe that her creativity had value beyond the pages she kept to herself.
Bedazzle did not try to change her.
Instead, we created opportunities for her to keep creating.
To experiment.
To make mistakes.
To share ideas.
To discover confidence through encouragement rather than judgement.
Over time something remarkable happened.
The conversations shifted.
From artwork...
...to ambition.
The young person who once questioned whether she was good enough gradually became someone encouraging others to believe in themselves.

This year, L achieved something extraordinary.
Her illustrations became part of a professionally published children's book.
Artwork that once lived quietly inside sketchbooks now inspires children discovering creativity for the very first time.
Today, she continues her education while volunteering with Bedazzle, supporting young people beginning journeys similar to her own.
Her story reminds us that creativity is rarely the final destination.
It is often the beginning of believing in yourself.



A Place Around the Table: Adult Art Group

> *"I came to paint, I stayed because I found my people"*
>
> Adult Art Participant

Not every Bedazzle story begins in childhood.
Some begin much later.
After bereavement.
Ill health.
Retirement.
Loneliness.
Or simply years of believing there is nowhere left to belong.
Our adult creative wellbeing programme brings together people whose paths may never otherwise have crossed.
At first glance, it is an art group.
Look a little closer and something else becomes visible.
People checking on one another between sessions.
Friendships continuing outside the group.
Newfound confidence leading to volunteering.
Laughter replacing isolation.
One participant described Bedazzle as: "The reason I get out of bed in the morning."
Another simply said, "I came to paint. I stayed because I found my people."
Those words remind us that creativity is often only the beginning.
The real outcome is connection.



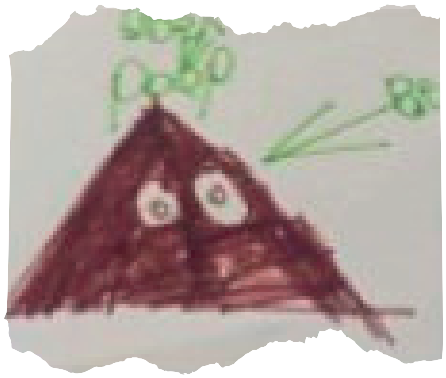


Building Trust - J's Story:

Progress is not always dramatic.
Sometimes it begins with eye contact.
Sometimes with the confidence to walk through the classroom door.
When J first met Bedazzle, he had recently arrived in the UK and was trying to adapt to a new education system, a new culture and unfamiliar relationships. School had become a place of anxiety rather than opportunity.
As his behaviour increasingly became the focus of adult attention, his confidence and self-esteem continued to diminish. We chose to begin somewhere different. Not with behaviour. With curiosity. Instead of asking, "What is wrong?" we asked, "What has happened?" And perhaps more importantly, "What strengths have not yet been discovered?"
As trust grew, creative activities became conversations and conversations became relationships. Through this work, we recognised that J's behaviour was masking additional needs that had previously gone unnoticed, allowing the right support to be put in place.
There was no dramatic breakthrough—just patient, consistent support, one conversation at a time.
Gradually, J learnt to recognise and regulate his emotions, rebuilt his confidence and began to engage positively with learning again.
Today, J has successfully transitioned to a new school where he is thriving.
His story reminds us that meaningful change rarely begins with a programme. It begins with someone taking the time to understand the person behind the behaviour.

The Drawing:

Some moments stay with you forever.
When K first met Bedazzle, she had recently entered care. Frightened, angry and overwhelmed, she believed we were part of the reason her life had changed.
Building trust was never going to happen quickly.
One morning, a member of school staff quietly handed us a drawing K had completed.
It wasn't a thank you or a picture of happiness.
It was a drawing of her Bedazzle practitioner…



At first glance, it was easy to laugh.
But it represented something much deeper.
Children who have experienced trauma often communicate their feelings in the only ways they know how. Whether K was expressing her anger, trying to provoke a reaction or simply testing whether we would still be there afterwards, the message wasn't really about the drawing.
It was about trust.
So we didn't walk away.
We continued turning up. We listened when she wanted to talk, sat quietly when she didn't, and reminded her—through our actions rather than our words—that relationships can survive difficult emotions.
Months later, K arrived carrying homemade cupcakes to share.
The drawing hadn't disappeared from the story.
It had become part of it.
Because the greatest sign of progress wasn't that K stopped feeling angry. It was that she learnt she could express those feelings without losing the people who cared about her.

The Ripple Effect:

Every story in this report begins with one person.
But meaningful change never stops with the individual.
It reaches families.
Strengthens schools.
Builds communities.
This is the ripple effect.
One conversation.
One relationship.
One community at a time.

> *"You can always rely on their positive energy to promote good mental health, across the school and beyond"*
>
> Headteacher, Partner School



CHAPTER

04

Our Approach

We Design Support Around People

Every day, professionals are asked to make sense of increasingly complex lives.
Children are described as anxious.
Disengaged.
Challenging.
At risk of exclusion.
Adults become isolated.
Parents become overwhelmed.
These descriptions may explain part of a person's experience.
They should never become their identity.
At Bedazzle, we have always believed that people are far more than the difficulties they face.
Every child brings talents waiting to be discovered.
Every family possesses strengths that can be nurtured.
Every community already holds the resources needed to create change.
Our role is not to fix people.
It is to create the conditions in which they can flourish.
That simple shift changes everything.
Instead of asking, "What programme does this person need?"
we ask, "What does this person need in order to thrive?"
Sometimes the answer is creative expression.
Sometimes it is trusted relationships.
Sometimes it is practical support.
Sometimes it is simply somebody who listens without judgement.
There is no single pathway.
Because no two people are the same.

The HEAL Approach

As Bedazzle grew, we began reflecting on what connected every part of our work.
Whether supporting a child in school, delivering an arts project, facilitating an adult wellbeing group or working alongside families, the same four themes appeared again and again.



Together these four themes became known as **HEAL.**
Not as a programme.
Not as a curriculum.
But as a way of understanding people.
The HEAL approach reminds us that lasting change rarely comes from addressing one aspect of someone's life in isolation.
People flourish when health, education, creativity and life skills strengthen one another.

Creating the Conditions to Flourish

Over the years we have noticed something remarkable.
People rarely remember a timetable, a worksheet or a programme.
They remember how they felt.
"I felt listened to."
"I felt accepted."
"I knew somebody believed in me."
Those moments rarely happen by accident.
They are created through relationships.
Trust cannot be rushed.
Confidence cannot be demanded.
Meaningful change grows through consistency, kindness and showing up, especially on the days when someone finds it hardest to engage.
Creativity plays an important role in this process. Not because everyone should become an artist, performer or musician, but because creativity creates opportunities. It helps children communicate emotions they cannot yet explain, enables young people to experience success where they may have known only failure, and encourages adults to reconnect with parts of themselves they thought had been lost.
When people experience trusting relationships, opportunities to be creative and the confidence to contribute, something else begins to emerge.
Belonging.
We have come to believe that belonging is not simply one outcome among many.
It is the environment in which every other outcome becomes possible.
When people know they belong, confidence grows.
Learning becomes easier.
Relationships deepen.
Hope feels possible again.
This belief influences everything we do—from welcoming visitors into Priory House to working alongside schools, designing programmes, supporting volunteers and evaluating our impact.
Programmes will continue to evolve. Communities will continue to change. The challenges facing children and families will grow.
Our philosophy will remain the same.

- **See the person.**
- **Build the relationship.**
- **Create the opportunity.**
- **Help them discover that they belong.**



CHAPTER

05

Growing with Purpose

Growth has never been our ambition. Increasing our impact has.



When Bedazzle became a registered charity in 2016, we did not set out to build a large organisation.
We set out to build one that could make a lasting difference.
Over the past decade, our work has expanded steadily in response to the needs of children, families, schools and communities. Every new service, partnership and opportunity has been shaped by one simple question:
Will this improve outcomes for the people we serve?
That question continues to guide every decision we make.

Growing Responsibly

From a volunteer-led charity, Bedazzle has developed into a respected organisation working across health, education, arts and lifeskills.
Alongside this growth, we have strengthened our governance, financial management and organisational systems to ensure we remain resilient, accountable and sustainable.
We have chosen to grow carefully, matching our ambition with our capacity to deliver high-quality support.
For us, success is not measured by organisational size, but by the quality of our work and the difference it makes.

Investing in People

Behind every programme is a dedicated team of staff, volunteers and trustees committed to learning, collaboration and continuous improvement.
Together they bring expertise across education, safeguarding, mental health, the creative industries and community development, enabling Bedazzle to respond confidently to increasingly complex needs.
We are equally proud of the culture they have built—one where professionalism and kindness sit alongside creativity, reflection and shared purpose.
As our organisation has grown, so too has our investment in developing the people who make our work possible.

Ten years on, Bedazzle is a stronger organisation than when it began—not because we have grown for growth's sake, but because we have invested in the people, partnerships and systems that enable us to create lasting impact. As we look to the future, those foundations give us confidence that the next decade can achieve even more.

Looking Beyond Today

Every organisation reaches moments where it must decide whether to protect what already exists or prepare for what comes next.
For Bedazzle, that moment is now.

The opening of Priory House has given us something we have never had before.
A home.
Not simply for our organisation.
For our community.
It provides the foundation from which we can continue developing specialist support for children and families while creating new opportunities for creativity, education and wellbeing.

The next stage of our journey will not be defined by larger programmes alone.
It will be defined by stronger pathways.
Helping children move confidently through education.
Supporting young people into adulthood.
Providing opportunities for adults to reconnect with purpose and community.
Creating a place where learning, creativity and wellbeing continue throughout life.









CHAPTER

06

The Next Ten Years

The future should belong to every young person, not only those who find life easiest.

Our vision for the next decade is ambitious.
Not because we wish to become a larger charity.
Because the need around us continues to grow.

Over the coming years we will strengthen the work we already know changes lives.
We will deepen our partnerships with schools, helping more children access early intervention before challenges become crises.

We will establish specialist alternative provision that combines education, wellbeing and creativity, providing personalised pathways for young people whose needs are not always met through traditional models.

We will work towards delivering accredited post-16 learning, creating opportunities for young people to progress into creative careers, wellbeing professions and community leadership.

We will continue expanding opportunities for volunteering, mentoring and intergenerational learning, recognising that communities become stronger when people support one another across every stage of life.

At the centre of this vision sits Priory House.
More than a building, it has become the physical expression of everything Bedazzle believes.
A place where creativity, education and wellbeing exist together.
A place where people of different generations learn alongside one another.
A place where communities gather.
A place where belonging can be experienced rather than simply discussed.



Measuring Success

Ten years from now, we hope Bedazzle will have grown.
But not simply in size.
We hope more children will feel confident returning to school.
More young people will discover talents they never believed they possessed.
More adults will find friendship through creativity.
More families will know they are not facing life's challenges alone.
More schools will feel supported.
More communities will recognise the power of creativity to bring people together.
These are the outcomes that matter most.
Because success is not measured by the number of programmes we deliver.
It is measured by the number of lives that continue to flourish long after those programmes have ended.

What 10 Years Has Taught Us...

Over the past decade...
We have learned that people remember how you made them feel long after they forget what you said.
We have learned that creativity reaches places words sometimes cannot.
We have learned that confidence often begins with one trusted relationship.
We have learned that schools cannot meet today's challenges alone.
We have learned that communities already possess extraordinary strengths when people are given opportunities to connect.
We have learned that volunteers change organisations just as organisations change volunteers.
We have learned that buildings matter far less than the people who fill them with life.
We have learned that kindness and professionalism are not opposites.
We have learned that hope grows when it is shared.
Most importantly...
We have learned that every person has potential.





Continuing the story...



Every achievement celebrated represents a shared effort.
Schools that opened their doors.
Families who placed their trust in us.
Artists, volunteers and practitioners who shared their skills.
Trustees who provided guidance.
Funders and partners who believed in our vision.
Together, they created opportunities that have helped thousands of children, young people and adults discover confidence, creativity and belonging.
Behind every successful project is something less visible but equally important.
Strong governance.
Skilled people.
Safe environments.
Thoughtful leadership.
Careful planning.
These foundations make meaningful work possible and ensure that support continues long after individual projects have ended.
As we look towards the next decade, our commitment remains unchanged: to listen, to learn and to respond to the changing needs of our communities.
We know that no organisation achieves this alone.
Meaningful change is always created through partnership.
Whether you are a school, a family, a funder, a volunteer, an artist or an advocate, you are part of the wider community that makes Bedazzle possible.
The next chapter of our story has yet to be written.
We hope you will help us write it.

Bedazzle

CELEBRATING OUR FIRST TEN YEARS

Spaces *inspire.*
People *transform.*

At Priory House, creativity, connection and community come together.



Priory House, Dudley, DY1 1HH

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www.bedazzle.org.uk

Charity number: 1166683

Building belonging through creativity