

# Kids foster love of circus

By James Scott

Kids at Gayhurst Community School have been getting creative to mark 250 years since the founding of the circus in the UK.

The Hackney school's art gallery, #TAG, which is dedicated to exhibiting artwork created by children at the school, held the opening of its latest exhibition in June.

The theme of the exhibition, titled Hooplah!, is the circus, which links to the children's geography topic. The children



Gayhurst Community School art exhibition.



explored circus characters and their roles, performance skills, playful antics, audience responses plus the visual language of the circus universe through costume, props and graphic design.

As part of their learning, children studied circus from around the world and enjoyed discovering the cultural identities of different performance companies. They explored where circus troupes toured from, studying the world map and gaining a greater understanding of continents, countries and seas.

Animal welfare and changing cultural attitudes toward the care and safety of animals was an important area of discussion. During workshops with art educator Art Hoppers, reception children painted each others' faces for a series of photo portraits. They printed fabric designs for bunting and even created a video of themselves throwing cream pies on each others' faces.

Years 1 and 2 made circus posters, created their own egg register of clown portraits and created a world map with the continents defined by circus style patterns. They also made a flip book of characters based on



Photos: Gayhurst

their drawings and collage works and created wire characters in miniature to bring the model circus in the gallery to life.

At the exhibition's launch there were various circus activities out in the playground and lots of delicious circus themed food.

#TAG is a project commissioned by Gayhurst School, delivered and managed by Art Hoppers.

The exhibition runs until July 20. Gayhurst parents and carers can visit the gallery daily from 3.30pm. External visitors can visit by appointment - please call 020 7254 6138 or e-mail [admin@gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk](mailto:admin@gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk).