**Haf Weighton and The Arts Council of Wales – Flying the flag for creativity at The Saatchi Gallery**

The Saatchi Gallery are please to be exhibiting the work of artist, Haf Weighton, along with that of children from Pencoed Primary School in Wales, in the Education room and in the Education gallery in the main gallery between March 22nd and 12th April 2018.

Haf Weighton is an established textile artist based in Penarth, South Wales. In the spring of 2017 she worked with Pencoed Primary School to develop art works as part of the Arts Council of Wales ground breaking Lead Creative Schools scheme

Weighton's work portrays architecture in a form we rarely see, showing sensitivity and connection to place. She uses the traditionally feminine language of thread to interpret, overlap and soften the predominantly male language of architecture.

She has created pieces celebrating the rich history of Cardiff’s city centre arcades and shops, including the iconic department store, David Morgan. Growing on Green Lanes recalls the colourful Turkish shop fronts, grape vines, olive and fig trees of this area of North London where the artists family lived for over a decade.

In January 2017 Pencoed Primary School in Pencoed, near Bridgend selected Haf Weighton to be their Creative Practitioner under The Arts Council of Wales Lead Creative Schools scheme.

The school identified 18 students from Year 4 to work on a project with the artist. The overall aim was to use creativity to raise attainment in numeracy, as well as building confidence and self esteem in the group.

The project was based on the Year 4 topic, The Stuarts. The children learnt about the design of the Union Jack, the flag that was created when James Stuart became King of England and Scotland in 1603 – Wales being part of England at this time. By making their own designs for the iconic union flag, using textile skills such as printing and embroidery, the children explored identity – of nations, welshness and themselves.

School groups who visit the Saatchi Education Rooms will have the opportunity to respond to the work on show by creating their own hand outlines on fabric produced by the artist. These pieces will be exhibited at the gallery in Wales where the exhibition was originally shown (Hearth Gallery at Llandough hospital), in August 2018.

The school noticed a marked improvement in numeracy scores in this co-hort after taking their national tests at the end of this project.

The 18 children met Haf Weighton at The Saatchi Gallery for the opening of the exhibition on March 22nd. In her address to the group Haf commented:

When you first met me at interview, you asked ‘who will win the xfactor’. By having our work showcased at the Saatchi Gallery we have all done better than winning the Xfactor.’

Nine of the children taking part in the project had never crossed the severn bridge before their trip to The Saatchi and were wowed by foreign tourists asking for their autographs when entering the gallery.

The flag designs produced by the Pencoed Primary School children, alongside the work of Haf Weighton, will be on display at The Saatchi Gallery between March 22nd and April 6th 2018.

ENDS.

*Notes to editors*

[*www.hafanhaf.com*](http://www.hafanhaf.com)

*For interviews or comment from Haf Weighton please contact 07807 038574.*

*Lead Creative Schools is an Arts Council of Wales and National Assembly for Wales funded project. Since 2015 over 500 schools have benefitted from this unique project, pairing creative practitioners with schools. Following the Donaldson report, the aim of the project is to use creative habits of learning to raise attainment in areas of the curriculum such as oracy, literacy and numeracy. For more information please contact Dan Allen at the Arts Council of Wales on 07736 485311.*

*For press enquiries from The Saatchi Gallery please contact* *press@saatchigallery.com*