

Government of Japan 2023/2024 Funding Report

The funds enabled hundreds of children across the UK to learn about Japan and were used to implement three new projects: an event for families and teens, school visits by cultural experts, and the introduction of a new loan resource, the mini-activity chest.

Free Community Outreach

The Society welcomed families and young people to The Spring Mini-Fest for a mix of live performances and a range of activities provided by wonderful volunteers and experts.

Visitors could try origami, calligraphy, decorating a kokeshi, or a manga session with Chie Kutsuwada as well as enjoying kamishibai from The Thousand Cranes Theatre Company and music from the London Shamisen Players.

All attendees who completed a feedback survey responded that the event had increased their interest in attending future events related to Japanese culture and the overall average score given was 9.5 out of 10.

Thanks to the generous support, this event was provided at no cost to visitors and fulfilled The Society's aims of providing Japan-related activities which are accessible to all.



School Visits in New Locations

Due to location, funding, and other factors, we are aware that it is difficult for many schools in the UK to provide pupils with an opportunity to experience Japanese culture first-hand through trips or expert-led workshops.

Our School Visits project made it possible for schools to invite a Japanese cultural expert to deliver an authentic and memorable experience for their pupils. Across February and March 2024, we were able to fund six visits to different schools, reaching 230 children.

The topics and content varied according to the expert and included: talks on culture, customs, and school life in Japan compared with the UK; Japanese language; music, origami; kamishibai performances; calligraphy; and Japanese songs.

We were particularly pleased to reach regions where The Society has no volunteers and cannot normally offer school visits.



Visit Testimonials from Teachers

"The experience [the expert] provided went way beyond what I had hoped for in the application. She brought a real taste of Japan into my classroom and engaged all the children from the moment she stepped into the classroom."

"The students totally enjoyed their experiences and took great delight in such an unusual activity. They relished their time with [the expert] and were proud to take home their work to show their parents. Children are far more interested in Japan..."

"The children want to continue learning about Japan and its culture. It has awakened their appetite, and we will try to find out more...I noticed that after the visit, they were talking to children and teachers from other classes, sharing their experience."

Providing Authentic Materials to Teach about Japan

In addition to our full-size Activity Chest, we created new "Mini Chests" which schools, libraries or community groups can borrow. The mini-chests come in three versions for different purposes and at a lower cost, which enables even more children to access our loan resources.

The three versions are suitable for those studying general Japan Topics, holding Japan club activities, or hosting a Japan Day or Multicultural Day event.

Approximately 940 children have benefitted from the mini chest scheme since its launch.

