



MIMBRE YOUTH REPORT SEPT 2025 – JULY 2026

"Mimbre is the best active class for my children I have found (and I've looked hard!) The combination of fun and physical development is just unparalleled. [...] THANK YOU!"

- Parent 2026

Introduction

Mimbre Youth was founded in 2008 and is rooted in the communities of Mimbre's local borough of Hackney. It uses acrobatics, street dance, circus and public performances to build confidence, friendships and well-being and give participants a strong sense of achievement by learning new and impressive skills.

We actively remove barriers to participation to provide equal access to arts and extracurricular activities for all young people, regardless of background and, in particular for low-income families. We promote inclusion, diversity and representation to build a strong local community where all young people, as well as their families, can feel a sense of belonging, make friendships across postcodes and learn how to trust, lean on and lift each other up (quite literally).

We run weekly classes for three age groups, 6-8 (Mini), 8-10 (Midi) and 11-16 (Maxi), during term time as well as arranging community days, outings and working with others to provide further opportunities.

Classes take place at Milton Garden Community Hall in Hackney in collaboration with Milton Gardens Tenant and Resident Association. Older participants co-create the programme in terms of content, themes and structure, and we use previous feedback from all participants and parents to evolve and direct each term.

The team



In September 2025 we welcomed new Youth Programme Manager **Carys Williams** to the team.

She works alongside Mimbre Artistic Director, **Silvia Fratelli**, and two key freelancers:

Lina Johansson, a Mimbre co-founder and acrobatic teacher.

Natasha Khamjani, a streetdance teacher and choreographer.

This year the team also included one of the older participants as a **peer mentor**.

Our funding



We are currently partly funded through the Healthier Hackney programme.

The Hackney Youth Opportunity Fund also supported a one-off project – our Hip Hop Intensive



Our largest funder is the National Lottery Community Fund.



The Jack Petchey Foundation supports us to recognise the outstanding members of our Maxi group with trips and special activities.



CHAPMAN
CHARITABLE
TRUST



We were also supported throughout the year by funding from the Arnold Clark Community Fund, the Charles S French Charitable Trust, the Buzzacott Stuart Defries Memorial Fund and the Chapman Trust.

Tesco Stronger Starts gave us a grant towards the end of the year and that funding will be carried over to the 2026 autumn term.



We were very grateful to be supported this year by local wellness studio The Rogue Room.

And finally thank you very much to our generous regular supporter Wayne Walters, many other individual donors and the youth programme families, and Arts Council England for our core funding.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Thank you very much!

Participants

Class numbers

	Participants	Total attendances	Number from the global majority	Number from low-income backgrounds
Autumn term 2025	46	370	18	28
Spring term 2026	47	321	25	27
Summer Term 2026	42	327	23	24

Referral pathway

This year we introduced a new more formal pathway for referrals. The aim of our Referral Process is to create a clear and direct pathway for every child to be able to access Mimbre Youth Programme, where they can build confidence and skills in acrobatics and dance within a safe, supportive environment.

We define a young person **'in need'** as any child who may be considered vulnerable or who faces significant barriers to participation in community activities.

A young person suitable for referral may include, but is not limited to, a child who:

- **Faces Financial Barriers:** Comes from a low-income background or a family experiencing financial hardship that would prevent them from affording a place otherwise.
- **Is in Care:** Is currently in the care system.
- **Lacks Opportunity:** Has **limited access to extra-curricular activities** or enrichment programmes due to systemic issues.
- **Is isolated** and would benefit from a supportive environment to help them **make friends**.
- **Is a Young Carer:** Bears significant responsibility at home and would benefit from dedicated time for themselves.

We recognise that the circumstances of a child are often nuanced. The points above offer a framework, but we fully **trust our partners to use personal and professional discretion** when assessing need, and only tell us what we need to know in order to support the young person.

Case study

When A came to join us, she followed her sister who was referred to our older group from one of the local schools. She was quite shy and reserved at the beginning of the term, often needing close support from Carys just to participate in the 'Name Game' where the group repeated each person's name and movement. Initially, she also found acrobatics very difficult, particularly struggling with core movements like forward rolls. When she couldn't master a technique straight away, she would often become overwhelmed, crying out of frustration and leaving the class feeling disgruntled.

However, as the term has gone on, A has shown incredible growth in how she handles these challenges. She has learned to navigate the frustration of not getting a move right the first time, bouncing back from her tears much quicker and showing real pride when she finally masters a skill. She now leaves the class smiling, always keen to show her mum what she has learnt. This newfound confidence really shone through while working on her choreography for the end-of-term performance. She beautifully remembered all her movements, executing them with real flair and character. When this was praised in class, she visibly beamed with pride. Reflecting on this remarkable shift, A's school teacher noted that A has 'found Mimbres transformational and they hope that she can continue to benefit from this!'

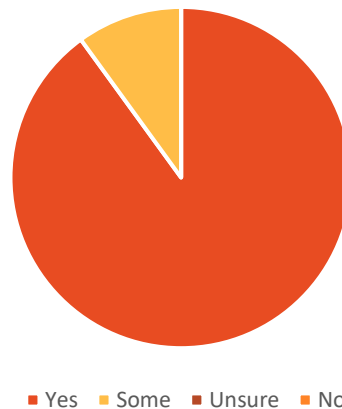


Feedback highlights

Confidence

*I love that if I get stuck on a move I would get a lot of help and practice - thank you!
(A – autumn term 2025)*

Do you think the classes have helped to improve your child's confidence?

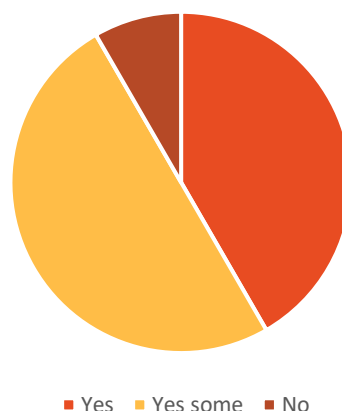


from spring 2026

I can add that thanks to Mimbre my daughter is more confident in herself and her abilities – summer 2026

Friendship

Do you feel like you have made new, or stronger, friendships through Mimbre?



from spring 2026

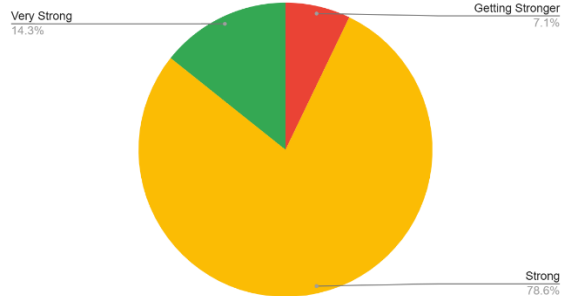
I loved meeting new friends – autumn 2026

Supportive group work rather than competitive group work. Seamless encompassing of different levels and ages. Mimbre fosters a lovely friendly atmosphere and my daughter loves coming! – summer term 2026

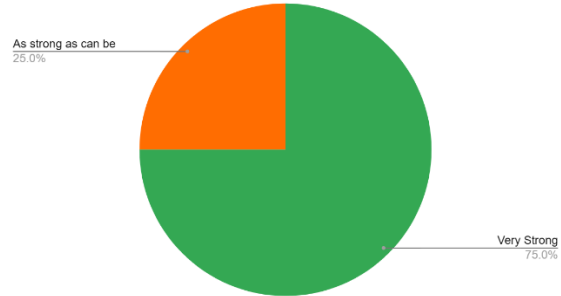
Wellbeing

From summer term 2026

Midi (start): how strong do you feel?



Midi (end): how strong do you feel?



I liked this term because I learnt how to cartwheel – autumn 2026

Mimbre is the best active class for my children I have found (and I've looked hard!)

The combination of fun and physical development is just unparalleled. I also massively appreciate the care that is taken with managing the emotions and the friendship dynamics at the end of the school day. THANK YOU! – spring 2026

[My child] has not taken to many sports so Mimbre offers a great physical alternative. She loves the creativity and relaxed/fun atmosphere. – spring 2026

There seems to be so much fun + joy at the heart of these sessions and that has been brilliant for [my child] so she can have something that is just about being in the moment and expressing herself physically. – spring 2026



Activities through the year

Jack Petchey Achievement Award

We had two winners during this year, they were:

- Roman was voted for by the newer Maxi participants as he made them feel welcome when they came to try it out. This is lovely and something we have talked about a lot together: how to make the group welcoming, inclusive and to feel like a team. For his trip the group asked to go to a roller disco.
- Florence has been attending Mimbire for many years and recently joined our Maxi group where she was a wonderful influence, always arriving with positivity and a real keenness to take part.

Teaching at SWAPA

In autumn 2025 we taught some sessions at the Shakespeare Walk Adventure Playground. We're always blown away by the young people's talent, dedication and enjoyment.



Cirque du Soleil

The young people and their families were thrilled to attend the dress rehearsal of Cirque du Soleil at the Royal Albert Hall.

[Mimbre is] important for a sense of community that is not based on economic advantages as much of Stoke Newington activities are unaffordable. Also love the special treats like Cirque du Soleil which would also be unaffordable without Mimbre.



Teach the adults session

On the “Teach the Adults Day” in March 2026 we had parents, friends and family members come to join in the class and be led by the children. The children were given the chance at being the tutors and many of them stepped up to teach various acro, juggling or dance moves. It was not only a chance to allow the children to be in charge but also for the adults to be learners and play around with new skills. They all really enjoyed it and mastered some skills they could take away and do at home, or over the easter holidays.



Total attendance: 27 regular participants + 27 family members

Easter Hip Hop Dance Intensive

This was a brilliant additional activity for our year.

From one of the organisers:

Each day the participants were led by a different dance tutor, they all taught a different style of hip hop or under the umbrella term for hip hop. I selected the tutors with support from my dance tutor. [...] the end project was really fun because I like dancing and we did a lot of dancing! My favourite was the last day (putting the performance together)



Well done to the Mimbre Youth members who applied for the funding and organised it!



Amazing work to the participants for working so hard all week and putting on a brilliant show at the end!



Thanks very much to the Hackney Youth Opportunity Fund and Hackney Youth Parliament for supporting the project!



And thank you very much to the fantastic tutors Natasha Khamjani, Gemma Hoddy, Wiktoria Grzes and Nevena Stojkov – we learnt so much!



National Youth Circus Day

Some Maxi members attended the National Youth Circus Day at the National Centre for Circus Arts.



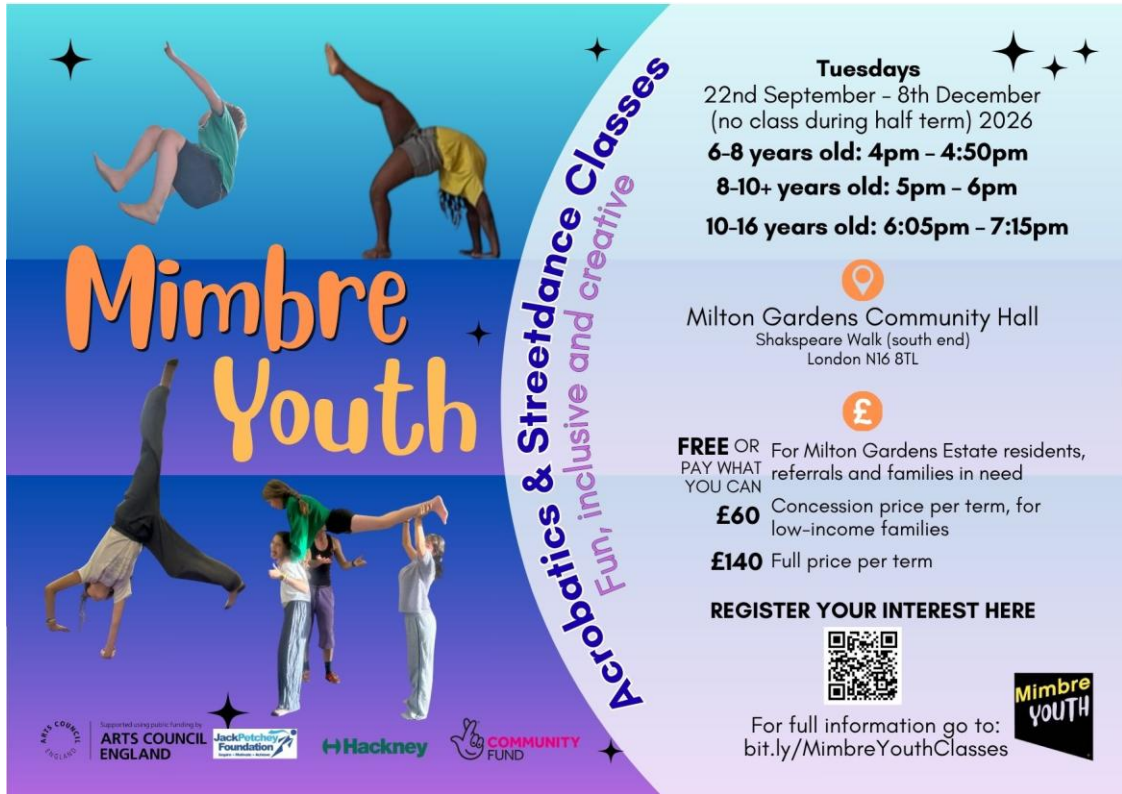
Rogue Solstice at the Rogue Room

We were the beneficiary of a wonderful day at our local yoga and fitness studio, The Rogue Room. Rogue Solstice took place in June 2026 and was a day-long celebration of movement and mindfulness. From kids' dance and capoeira classes to circus performances, open decks, live music, breathwork and movement sessions, the programme showcased some of the most inspiring people in our community, and 100% of the ticket proceeds went directly to Mimbres Youth. We were also thrilled that our Mimbres Youth community was welcomed into the space. For us it wasn't just that the donation to our programme was very welcome – although it was! – it was also about meeting more people in Hackney who support what we do and want to give their energy to making the local community the best it can be.



The future

Despite the difficult funding landscape in the UK, Mimbire has been more successful in fundraising for the programme over the previous year and although not fully funded, the programme is now secured until the end of the current school year.



The poster is divided into two main sections. The left section has a blue and purple background with images of children performing acrobatics. The right section is white with blue and purple accents. The title 'Mimbire Youth' is in large orange letters. A vertical banner on the right side of the poster reads 'Acrobatics & Streetdance Classes' and 'Fun, inclusive and creative'. The right section contains details about the classes, including the schedule, location, and pricing. Logos for Arts Council England, Jack Petchey Foundation, Hackney, and Community Fund are at the bottom left. A QR code and the Mimbire Youth logo are at the bottom right.

Mimbire Youth

Acrobatics & Streetdance Classes
Fun, inclusive and creative

Tuesdays
22nd September - 8th December
(no class during half term) 2026
6-8 years old: 4pm - 4:50pm
8-10+ years old: 5pm - 6pm
10-16 years old: 6:05pm - 7:15pm

Location:
Milton Gardens Community Hall
Shakespeare Walk (south end)
London N16 8TL

£

FREE OR PAY WHAT YOU CAN For Milton Gardens Estate residents, referrals and families in need
£60 Concession price per term, for low-income families
£140 Full price per term

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST HERE



For full information go to:
bit.ly/MimbireYouthClasses

Mimbire YOUTH

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
Jack Petchey Foundation
Hackney
COMMUNITY FUND

If you are able to support Mimbire Youth in any way, please see our website here for how you can help: <https://mimbire.co.uk/support/>

Please feel free to get in touch if you'd like to see our budget, previous funders or for any other information.

Thank you!

Full feedback

Autumn 2025

Mini: Write a new skill that you learnt

1 step into handstand - E

A handstand

Spider Walk

I liked this term because I learnt how to cart wheel

Cartwheel

Handstand into bridge and Kickover - N

Crab

Handstand

Midi: What's your favourite thing about Mimbres?

Snacks and Dancing and Friends

It's the best

I love that if I get stuck on a move I would get a lot of help and practice - thank you! (A)

I loved meeting new friends

Friends and everything

The snacks

Everything

My favourite thing was I learnt to do a cartwheel pyramid

Learning the acrobatics and the teachers

I like doing juggling

Acrobatics, dancing and kind teachers

I learnt how to do a handstand and I also like doing the dance routine

Too many good things

Snacks and Friends

My favourite thing about mimbres is learning new skills but I love everything

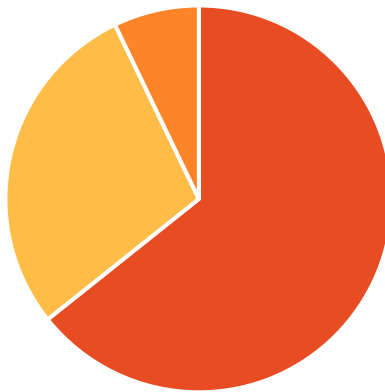
All the shows!

I can get out of the house and do acrobatics!

Spring 2026

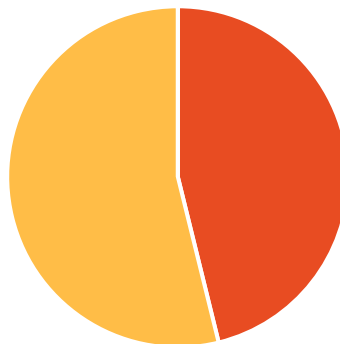
Mini participants

Did you enjoy Mimbre Youth this term?



■ I loved it! ■ Yes! ■ Meh ■ No

Do you feel like you have got better and learnt some new tricks and skills?

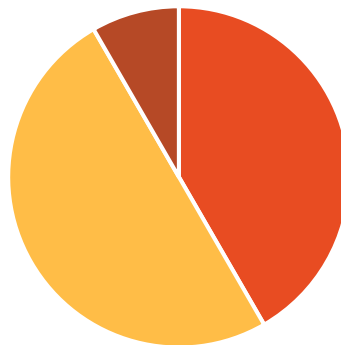


■ Yes lots ■ Yes some ■ No

What's the favourite thing you have been learning or practising this term?

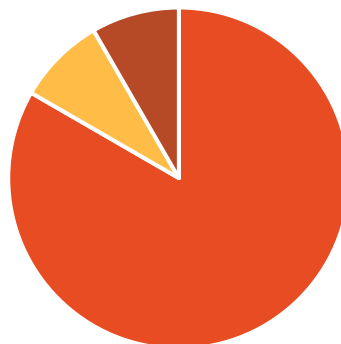
- Dancing, juggling and gymnastics
- Stretching on the mat
- Forward rolls and pyramids
- Pyramids
- I learned how to do a shoulder stand
- I loved the bridges and the piggy back
- Bridges
- I like to learn cartwheels
- 1 handed cartwheels
- 1 handed cartwheels!
- Cartwheels
- The crow balance

Do you feel like you have made new, or stronger, friendships through Mimbre?



■ Yes ■ Yes some ■ No

Are you interested in more performance opportunities?



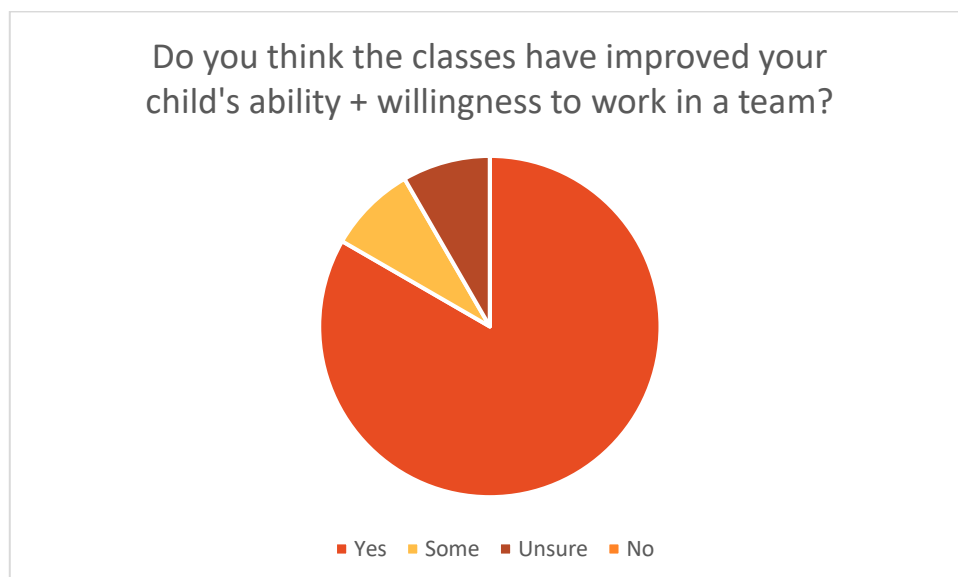
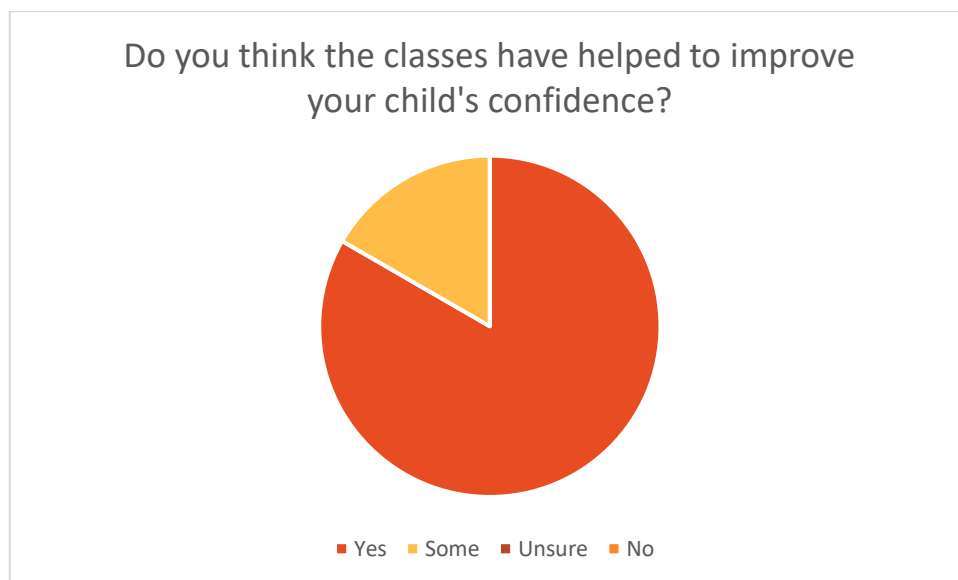
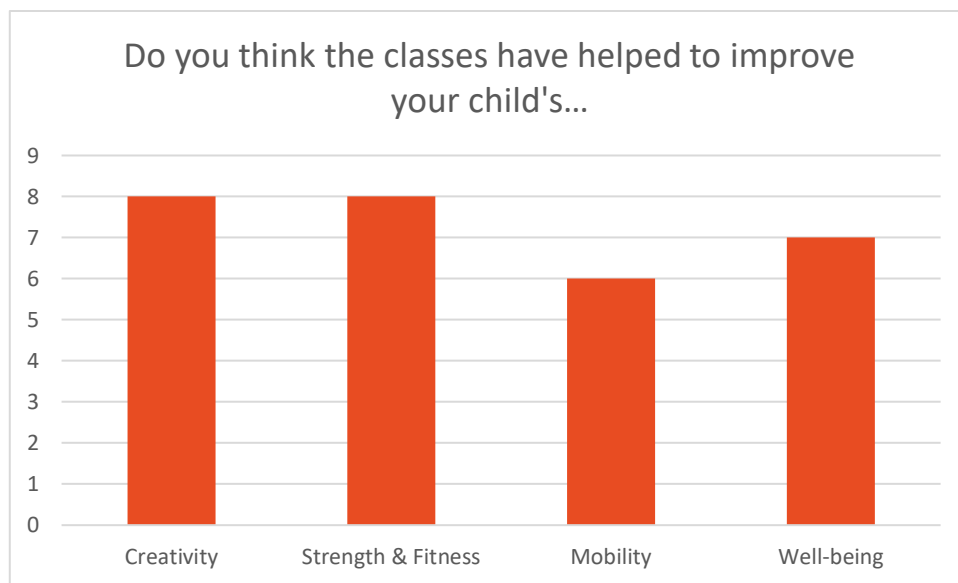
■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure

What would you like to do more of next term?

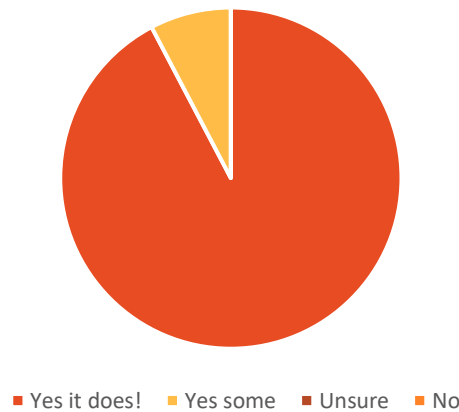
- Gymnastics
- Doing harder tricks
- Cartwheels and handstands
- More poses
- A handstand
- I like everything. Thank you.
- ?
- Bridges
- Handstands
- Bridges!!
- Pyramids
- More stretching. More pyramids.



Mini parents



Do you feel like Mimbre Youth contributes to a sense of community for you and your child?



Any thoughts on why these classes have been good for your child, why the classes are important to you, your family or the community, or what makes these classes unique from other provision?

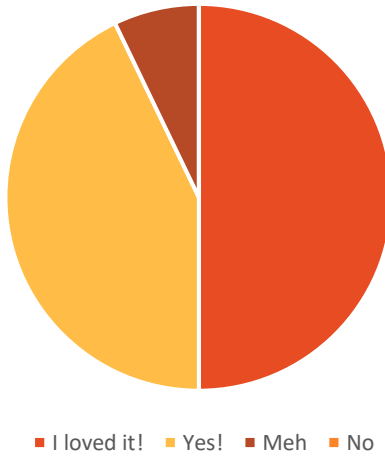
- I like the class so much. My daughter she like so much and she is happy
- Very inclusive and makes my child feel welcome + happy
- They encourage the kids. Equality. My kids have become more flexible.
- The children are happy and helped for strength
- It's great for her to move and be encouraged to move
- Mimbre is the best active class for my children I have found (and I've looked hard!) The combination of fun and physical development is just unparalleled. I also massively appreciate the care that is taken with managing the emotions and the friendship dynamics at the end of the school day. THANK YOU!
- Better quality than the after school clubs at school.
- [My child] has not taken to many sports so Mimbre offers a great physical alternative. She loves the creativity and relaxed/fun atmosphere.
- There seems to be so much fun + joy at the heart of these sessions and that has been brilliant for [my child] so she can have something that is just about being in the moment and expressing herself physically.
- Helped [my child] with her splits and she's enjoyed it
- Continue
- She has so much fun

Any thoughts on what we could do better or differently?

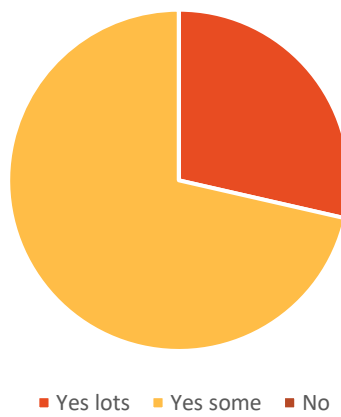
- I would like to register my daughter
- No
- Don't change a thing! You're all fantastic.
- No it's great!
- Everything is good
- 2 times per week
- More flexibility

Midi participants

Did you enjoy Mimbre Youth this term?



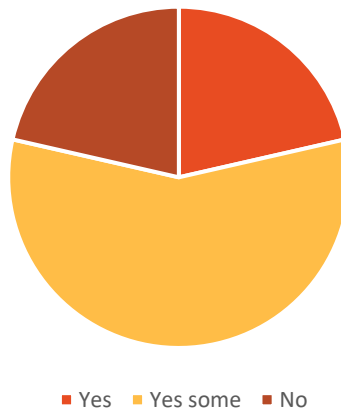
Do you feel like you have gotten better and learnt some new tricks and skills?

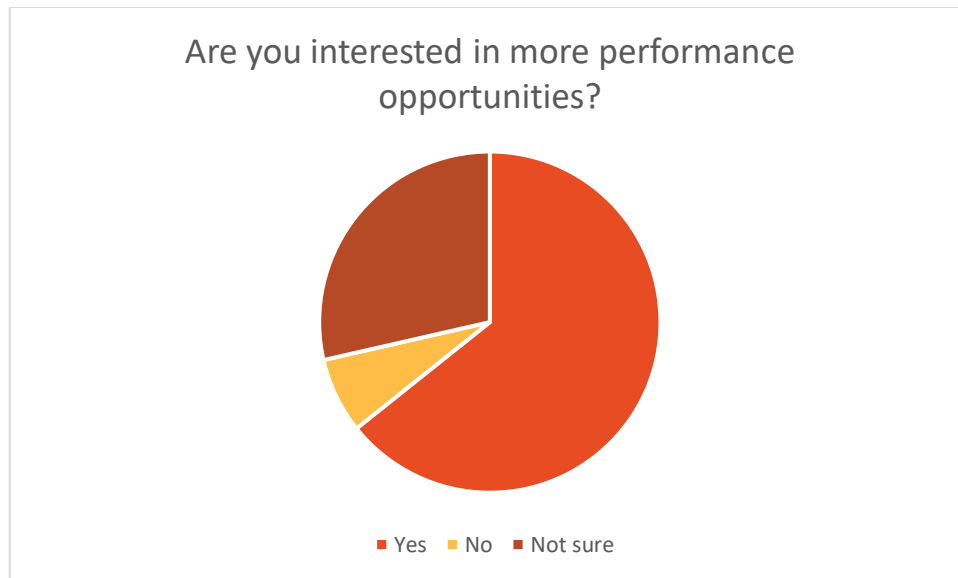


What's the favourite thing you have been learning or practising this term?

- Cartwheels
- Cartwheels and roundoffs
- Circus things
- Pyramids, cartwheel and roundoffs
- Roundoffs
- The yoga and the skipping
- Spider walk
- Bridge
- Cartwheel
- Pyramid
- Acrobats
- Spider walk
- Cartwheels because now I can do one
- Acro and gymnastics

Do you feel like you have made new, or stronger, friendships through Mimbre?

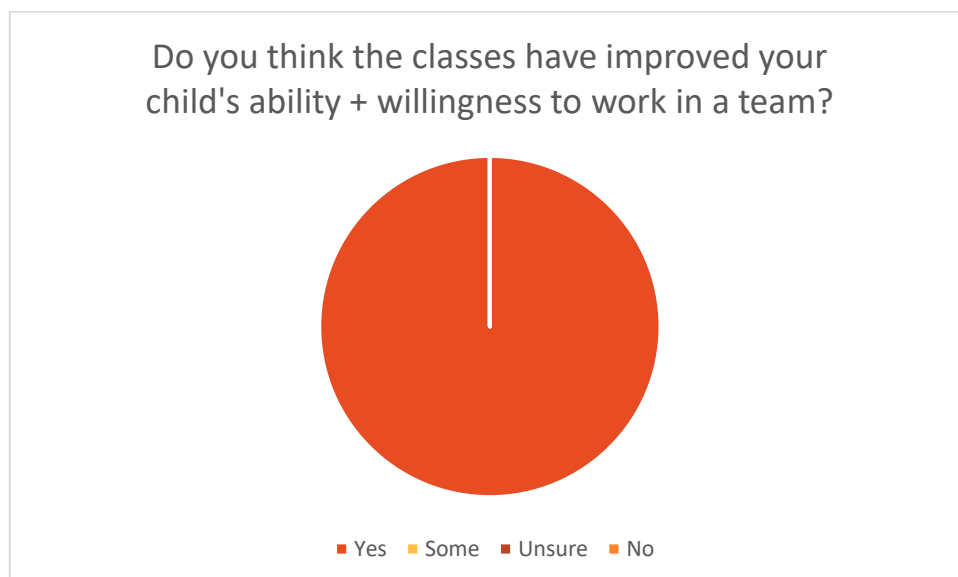
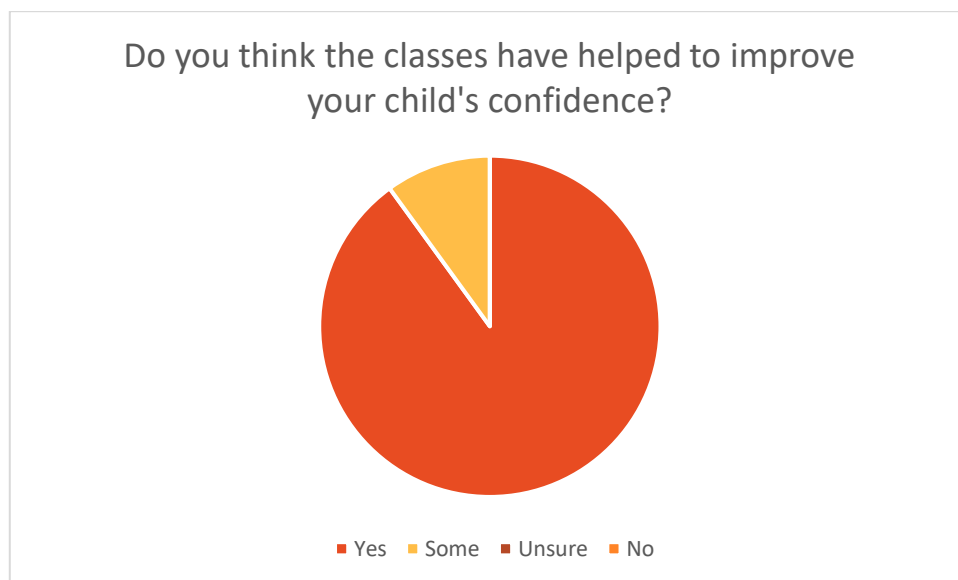
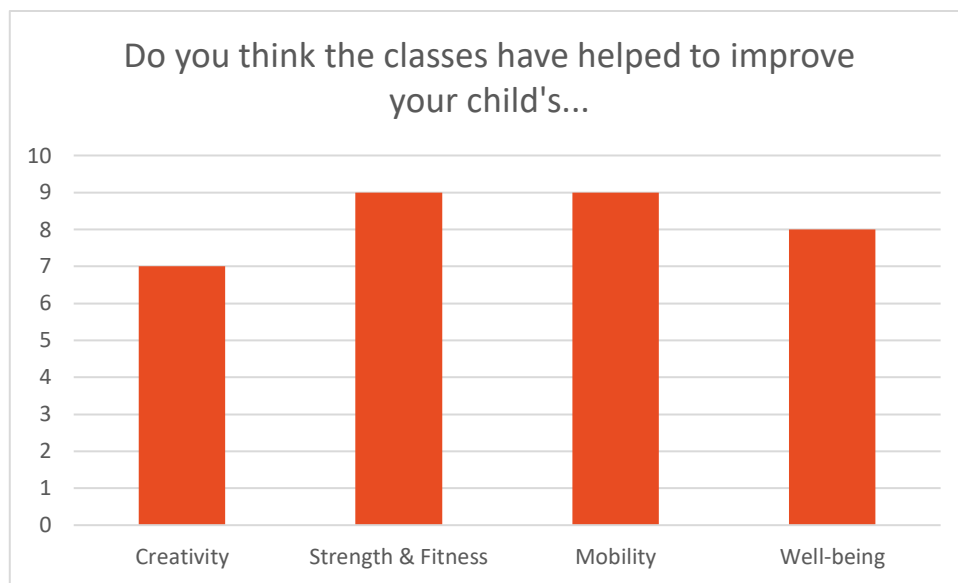




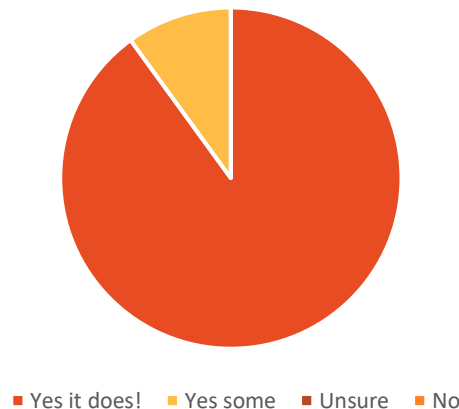
What would you like to do more of next term?

- Backflips
- Roundoffs
- Circus
- YES
- More skipping and yoga
- No
- Yes
- Yeah
- Yes
- Definitely
- IDK
- Handstands and bunny hops
- Definitely

Midi parents



Do you feel like Mimbre Youth contributes to a sense of community for you and your child?



Any thoughts on why these classes have been good for your child, why the classes are important to you, your family or the community, or what makes these classes unique from other provision?

- My child has really enjoyed attending these classes and has improved confidence and flexibility as well as having a great community in class
- I love that Mimbre's classes always provide space for expression, connection between children and physical improvement
- The classes have helped her a lot in terms of team participation and flexibility
- Not too regimented therefore as a neurodivergent child he willingly participates
- Important for a sense of community that is not based on economic advantages as much of Stoke Newington activities are unaffordable. Also love the special treats like Cirque du Soleil which would also be unaffordable without Mimbre.
- Great for building confidence and resilience. My daughter looks forward to coming every week and it has improved her mental wellbeing.
- Very inclusive and it allows the children and family to be energetic and express themselves
- Fun physical exercise, confident in movement and teamwork. A chance to mix with children from different schools and create a wider sense of community - all round positive experience!
- Good mix of acrobatics and dancing

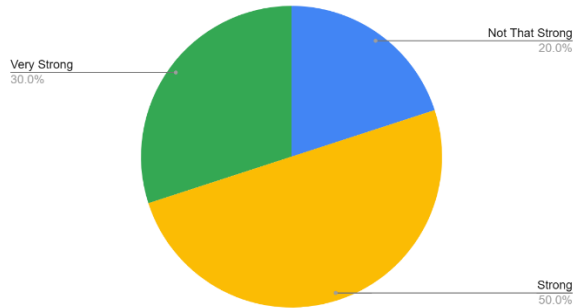
Any thoughts on what we could do better or differently?

- N/A Class is amazing and teachers are saints :)
- More choreographic combinations and strength is flexibility which then they can use in performances
- Incorporate more activities and increase frequency
- None at the moment

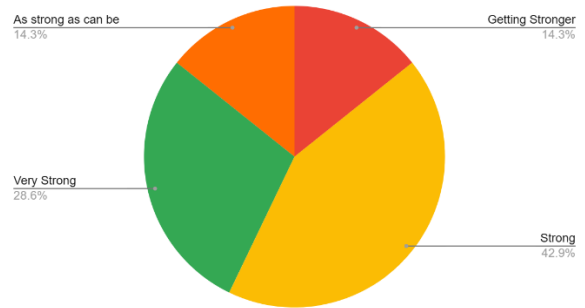
Summer 2026

Mini participants

Mini (start): how strong do you feel?



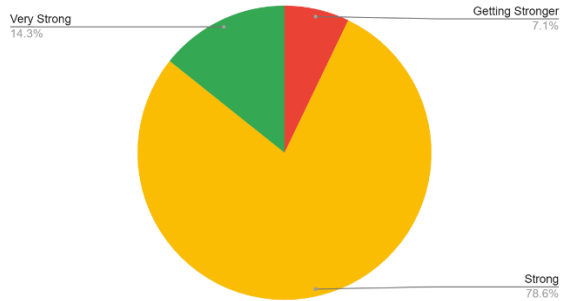
Mini (end): how strong do you feel?



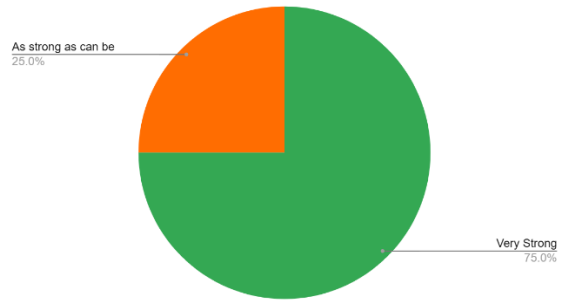
- All participants said they felt as strong or stronger than before.

Midi participants

Midi (start): how strong do you feel?

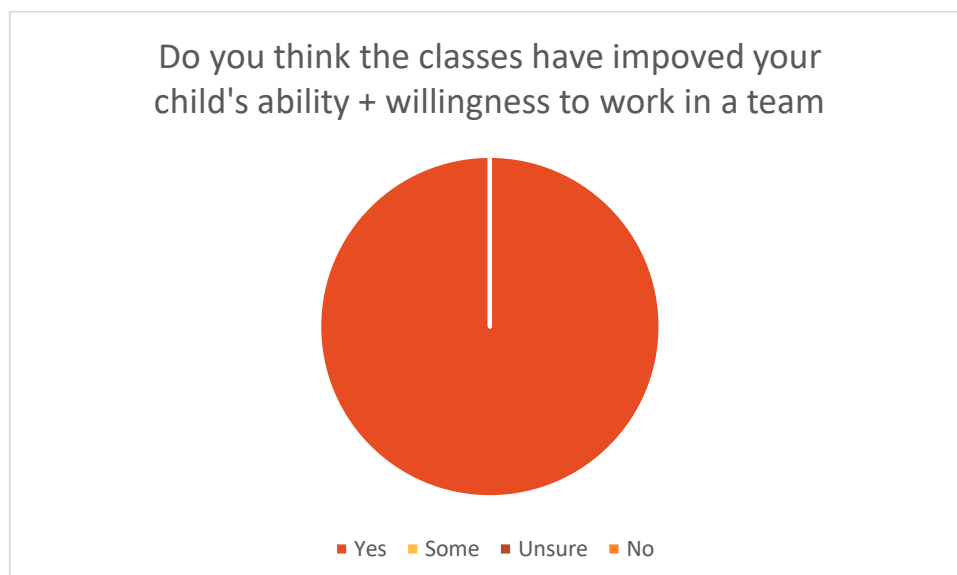
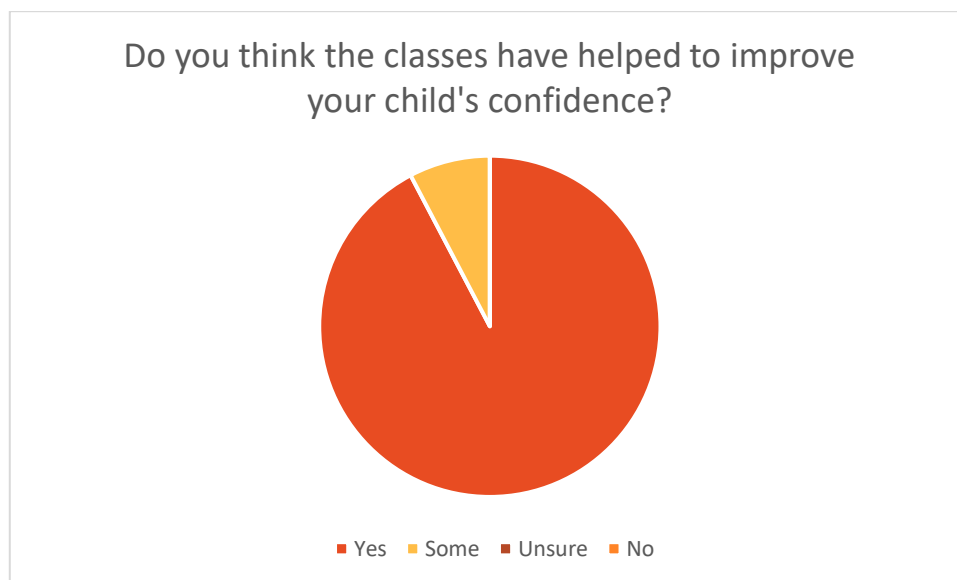
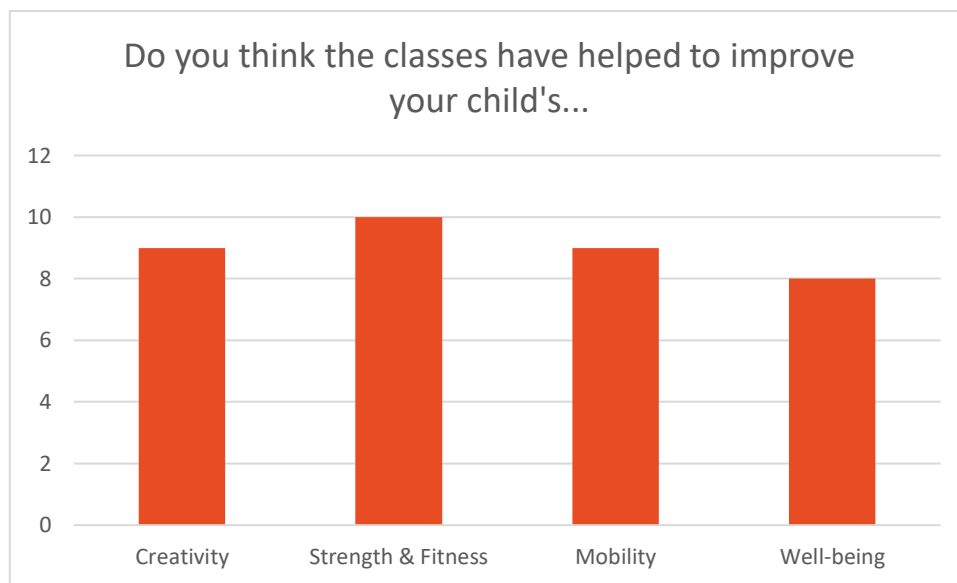


Midi (end): how strong do you feel?



- All participants said they felt as strong or stronger than before.

Parents



Do you feel like Mimbres Youth contributes to a sense of community for you and your child?



■ Yes it does! ■ Yes some ■ Unsure ■ No

Do you think that Mimbres Youth encourages your child to move more or be more active outside of classes? Feel free to give an example below.

- Yes
- Yes, A's experience and practice at Mimbres compliments wonderfully her dance practice as well as general wellbeing and posture as well as strength.
- Yes loves to find new ways to climb and dance
- Started to practice handstands in the park and at home doing roly pollies
- Yes it does
- Yes it does
- Yes it does
- Yes it does
- Yes it does - practice at home, trying new moves
- Yes it does
- Yes it does
- Yes it does

Why are the classes important to you, your family or the community and what makes these classes unique from other provisions? What can we do better or differently?

- I agree with everything above. I can add that thanks to Mimbre my daughter is more confident in herself and her abilities.
- Would like to see more workshops and collaborators. I love the opportunities and expansion towards creativity and improvisation and freedom for children to bring and come up with their own ideas/movements. Mimbre is encouraging and developing that beautifully.
- An affordable, beneficial class. I have not seen anything else similar. A true gem!
- The classes are important to improve my child's teamwork skills and communication. It has also helped me to understand my child better socially when she has to work with others.
- You could create a SEND specific Mimbre group! We'd love that. SEND kids have real difficulty accessing clubs.
- It's important to me because its useful for my daughter, she got confidence, she got physically and mentally strength, and she has creativity.
- It's helped my daughter to be more flexible and build more confidence so far the teachers are amazing
- Positive physical activity to unwind after school and taught in a fun supportive inclusive way
- Very good thank you so much I am happy as a mum
- Mimbre is the best I don't know how you do it, but it gets better and better as the kids grow up. They're both enjoying going up to a higher group - it's a real highlight of their week!
- Supportive group work rather than competitive group work. Seamless encompassing of different levels and ages. Mimbre fosters a lovely friendly atmosphere and my daughter loves coming!

"[My child] really enjoyed it! I could especially tell by the way he was moving his body around when we walked home and at home - like a physical need had been fulfilled! [...] Thanks so much for your understanding re the neurodivergence - it's so refreshing when people get it." – Parent

"Our children absolutely LOVE mimbre and we are so lucky that some of our most vulnerable families are able to engage in your programme. The parents come and tell me regularly about how it has transformed their children's wellbeing and confidence so thank you." – local teacher

Additional

“There are no words to fully express our gratitude to you and your beautiful company. Mimbres has been such a rare and precious space of true inclusion for M in a world where those spaces are far too few for children who need them most.

“Being part of Mimbres has been a source of learning and inspiration not only for M, but for our whole family. You do such an incredible job of bringing families and communities together, creating a space of kindness, creativity and unity. Mimbres is a rare jewel in today’s world—where people like you give your very best for children with such generosity of spirit.

“We deeply admire your work and are profoundly grateful for the immense support you have given M, and us, over the years. I know the seed is planted, and I truly hope that one day he will use all that he learned with you in his own creative journey.” – Parent



Images by the Rogue Room and the Mimbres team