

**National Foundation
for Educational Research**



**National Evaluation of Creative
Partnerships**

Case Study Report – Revised Final Version

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March 2005

Acknowledgements

The NFER evaluation team wish to thank all the staff, young people and creative providers in the case study schools, who gave so generously of their time. Thanks are also due to the Creative Directors in each of the Partnership areas, for their guidance and support. In addition we would like to thank Vanessa Burns, our project administrator at NFER, for all her efforts on our behalf.

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Case Studies of Creative Partnerships

1. Introduction

This report provides an account of partnerships and projects between creative providers and staff in eleven English schools, each located in a different Creative Partnerships area. The schools ranged in size from an infant school with 161 children, to a secondary school with 1514 young people. The sample comprised five infant/primary schools, five secondary schools and a special school for young people with moderate and severe learning difficulties.

The main purpose of the case studies was to identify creative approaches which are sustainable, replicable and capable of being disseminated to inform the future development of Creative Partnerships. In addition, the team at the Creative Partnerships National Office requested that we focus on schools that had attempted a 'whole school' approach (as opposed to those where only a small number of staff and young people were involved), because these would best represent the model of involvement promoted by Creative Partnerships.

In the summer of 2003, Creative Directors were asked to nominate up to three schools which they felt had taken a whole school approach to developing a creative teaching and learning environment through Creative Partnerships. Because of the interest in identifying approaches that could be replicated in future, we asked Creative Directors to include schools and creative providers (known in Creative Partnerships as 'creatives' or 'creative providers') that had had little involvement in partnership working prior to Creative Partnerships.

The selection of 11 case studies was carried out by the NFER evaluation team, who sought to represent a range of different types of school, project and art forms. However, despite our request to include 'less experienced' partners, most of the nominated schools had had prior experience of working with Creatives and most of the Creatives had had prior experience of working with schools.

The visits began in December 2003 and continued until July 2004, although most were completed in January and February of 2004. Members of the evaluation team visited each school for a period of about two days. While at the school, the team arranged to speak to the school's Creative Partnerships coordinator, the headteacher and/or other members of the senior management team (SMT), teachers and other staff, creative providers and school governors (especially those with responsibility for creativity/arts). The evaluation team also interviewed young people who had been involved in Creative

Partnerships projects. In most cases, the interviews with young people took place in small groups. A total of 57 school staff, 23 creative providers, 13 school governors and 130 young people took part in the interviews. The team also collected relevant documentation (such as project plans, publicity material and visual imagery).

The 11 case study schools had hosted multiple projects which were funded (or part-funded) by Creative Partnerships, totalling about 100 projects by the time our visits took place¹. However, the interviews and resulting case studies tended to focus on projects that were considered to have had the largest impact on creative teaching and learning, and the greatest potential for replication. This amounted to about 30 projects taking place in the 11 schools (some of which involved several different elements contributing to a common theme).

This report provides an account of the schools' involvement in Creative Partnerships and the impact of their projects on the children and young people, school staff, Creatives and the school as a whole. We asked our interviewees to identify the aims for their projects, what the projects had helped them to achieve and which factors contributed to (or inhibited) their impact. We also asked school staff to identify the legacy of Creative Partnerships in the school and to comment on whether, in their view, the projects (or the approaches involved) had the potential to be replicated in other schools. The case study accounts were returned to the schools for comment at draft stage and any factual inaccuracies were amended. We requested permission to name the schools and their partner organisations, but it was agreed that we would not name the individuals involved.

Each of the case studies is presented in turn, using a common set of headings. The case studies have been grouped according to the type of school (primary, secondary and special). The report ends with a section presenting an overview of the messages from the case studies and suggestions for the future development of Creative Partnerships.

¹ We should note that the definition of 'a project' is not straightforward. Some schools were involved in one or two major projects with multiple partners, whereas others had numerous 'mini projects', some of which were closely related to one another (one school had approximately 40 such projects). We have adopted the schools' definition in order to report on the number of projects involved.

2. Case Studies

Case Study 1: Moor Green Infant School, Birmingham

Introduction

Moor Green Infant School has had long experience of partnership working with other schools. As part of a cluster of schools in Birmingham, Moor Green became a Creative Partnerships school in 2002. At the time of the case study visit in January 2004 the school was engaged in a number of different projects across all age ranges. A total of 21 interviews were conducted for the case study: with the headteacher (who was also joint Creative Partnerships coordinator), the acting Creative Partnerships coordinator (whilst the school's Creative Partnerships coordinator was on maternity leave), three creative providers, a parent governor, an LEA governor, a parent, a class teacher, a learning mentor and ten children from Years 1 and 2. A class teacher from a local secondary school in the Moor Green cluster area was also interviewed.

The school

Moor Green is a culturally diverse school for children aged from four to seven. The school is small with a decreasing population: at the time of the last inspection (2002) the school had 161 children on roll. There is an above average amount of mobility in and out of school and a sizeable minority of young people start at the school late in Years 1 or 2 or leave before they transfer to junior school. The proportion of young people with special educational needs (SEN) is well above the average for primary schools nationally, at just over 40 per cent. The proportion of young people eligible for free school meals is also above average, at 36 per cent. Just over 40 per cent of young people are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Pakistani and Bengali. Just over 20 per cent of young people speak English as an additional language (OFSTED 2002).

Moor Green Infant School is located next to a junior school of the same name (which is not taking part in the Creative Partnerships initiative) with which it has recently amalgamated governing bodies. The school is involved in a number of national and local projects, such as Education Business Partnerships and the Healthy School Standard Key Stage 1 Citizenship project. At the time of the NFER visit Moor Green was awaiting the results of an application for Artsmark Gold status (confirmed in the Summer of 2004).

What did the school set out to achieve?

The headteacher explained that the education of the whole child is very important to the school, and viewed Creative Partnerships as ‘central to our aims’. School staff had experience of working in partnership with other local schools and felt that Creative Partnerships was one way in which to continue developing these links. Moor Green made Creative Partnerships a whole school priority in their 2003/04 school development plan.

What did the school do?

Moor Green Infant School has been involved in a number of Creative Partnerships projects since 2002, some partly funded by the programme and others wholly funded by Creative Partnerships. These included a book week to launch Creative Partnerships in the school, puppetry workshops for Year 1, theatre and ballet trips for young people and their families, dance classes run by Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB) for school staff, an animation project in collaboration with a secondary and a special school called ‘Elephant in the Playground’, and a project inspired by the approach to early childhood education adopted in the Italian town of Reggio Emilia that was just beginning at the time of the case study visit. However, the largest and most complete project at the time of the case study visit was ‘Safahr – Telling Tales of a Journey’.

The Safahr project was wholly funded by Creative Partnerships. It was a story telling and performing arts project culminating in a performance at the Birmingham Hippodrome. As Safahr formed the majority of discussion with the interviewees during the case study visit, it will be the focus of this report.

From start to finish, Safahr lasted 14 months. It was led by BRB and involved five other schools from the Birmingham area (two special, one primary, one secondary and one nursery). The project also involved over 50 creative providers including African drummers; bangra dancers; choreographers; composers; designers; lighting designers; painters; musicians; sound engineers; visual artists and a video company. The project had three main aims. Firstly to make sure that young people’s experiences provided them with an authentic and exciting process. Secondly to ensure that teachers had ownership of the project, and thirdly ensuring that the project gave creative providers sufficient flexibility and openness.

There were six phases to the project:

1. collection – two creative providers visited all six schools, working with young people and some parents to collect stories. Then the creative providers and students from a secondary school identified stories that fitted together and would work in a theatrical context.

2. exploration and experimentation – the material from the first phase was used as a starting point to explore and examine the theme of journeys aided by bangra dancers, African drummers and mendi painters.
3. selection – a number of artists (dancers, musicians, visual artists, designers) helped the young people, creative providers, teachers and members of the community to re-examine the theme. The creative providers and students from the secondary school then came up with one story line that involved a whole range of ideas ‘made up of everyone’s and no-one’s story’.
4. creation – composers, choreographers and designers helped create an individual dance for each school.
5. rehearsal – a choreographer worked with each school
6. production – Safahr was staged in two days at the Birmingham Hippodrome.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

The school staff identified a number of areas in which Creative Partnerships had impacted on the young people, including broadening their horizons and raising their confidence. All the young people at Moor Green Infants had been involved with Creative Partnerships, and clearly enjoyed the activities. Unfortunately however, some of the children that we interviewed were too young to fully comprehend the questions we were asking about the project. One boy commented: ‘there weren’t any artists, only people who do good drawing’.

Staff and parents thought that having a range of different people coming into the school benefited young people by raising their aspirations, confidence and contributing to their enjoyment. A learning mentor at the school explained:

They’ve enjoyed having different people coming in and working with them. It broadens their horizons; it gives them a chance to think about things a little bit more and see things from a different point of view.

Several of the interviewees suggested that having male dancers visiting the school provided a positive role model for the children, particularly the boys. One parent commented that her son would not have pursued his interest in dance without this involvement:

I don’t think he would [have done dance without Creative Partnerships], particularly as a boy. The school has accepted it as being the norm. He went to an out of school hours learning club that did dance but he didn’t stay at it because it was all girls, whereas in school it’s everyone. I think as well it’s because the school has male

dancers coming in, which is a really great role model for the boys, that's a key factor: it makes them feel that they are a valued part of school.

Another parent explained that her son had found school particularly difficult due to his dyslexia, but that

opportunities like this have increased his confidence an enormous amount... He didn't used to want to go to school, but Creative Partnerships has helped him grow up a little bit and cope with things that are more difficult in life.

Staff noticed an increased confidence in the young people across the school. One teacher gave the example of children who were afraid of making the transition to the junior school, but after working collaboratively with a secondary school, they were now looking forward to the transition. The headteacher was slightly more reserved in her comments, saying: 'although it's difficult to measure things like confidence... we can see that they are much happier'.

Impact on teachers

As with the young people, interviewees felt that Creative Partnerships and the presence of creative providers in the school had impacted on the confidence of school staff. A Year 1 class teacher explained: 'It has given me confidence... The experience of working with people from different professions has been great for personal and professional development'. Similarly, staff valued working with colleagues from other schools, particularly colleagues from special schools. One teacher said: 'I now feel like I have colleagues across all phases'.

An impact on teaching and learning was also identified. A parent governor felt that there had been a definite impact on teachers, who were now putting forward: 'creative thoughts about how subjects and the curriculum can be approached'. One of the Creative Partnerships coordinators agreed, saying that Creative Partnerships had: 'Made us look at our teaching more than we normally would perhaps. There was already a lot of creativity in the school, but as Creative Partnerships has gone on we've started to think about it more'.

Impact on creative providers

The creative providers also felt that they had benefited from the experience of working in partnership with schools and other creative providers. They had been able to spend more time with the staff and young people of Moor Green Infants than during their previous artists-in-education work, and this had given them a greater knowledge of schools and of the curriculum.

Whole school impact

As one creative provider put it, ‘being a small school there has been a large impact’. Creative Partnerships had permeated the whole school: all the staff, the young people and some of the parents at Moor Green Infants had been involved in Creative Partnerships activity at the time of the case study visit. The raised confidence of both staff and young people infiltrated the atmosphere of the school and Creative Partnerships had also impacted on the way the school day was organised, including changes to the timetable and an increase in teachers working together on joint projects. The Creative Partnerships coordinator commented that this had become so embedded in the school’s approach that: ‘our parents think it’s normal, that it’s what happens in every infant school’.

Looking back, looking forwards

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

A learning mentor at the school attributed the success of Creative Partnerships at Moor Green to the attitude of the headteacher. The teachers echoed this sentiment saying that to make the programme work you need someone with ‘status, vision and passion within the school’. In turn, the headteacher said that the whole school has to be ‘on board’ to make an initiative like Creative Partnerships work.

The headteacher also felt that the resources provided by Creative Partnerships, both in terms of time and money, were a key success factor. She highlighted the fact that Creative Partnerships had recognised the need for comprehensive planning before the start of a project, enabling creative providers to meet the children and understand how the school day works. This was also appreciated by the creative providers themselves, as one explained: ‘it gives us a real opportunity to understand what goes on in school to a depth that you would never reach in the short projects that we normally do’.

What were the main challenges?

Although the school and the creative providers felt that they had developed an understanding of one another there was some initial concern about the relationship between the school and the Birmingham Creative Partnerships team. There were some communication issues that arose that the school felt had negatively impacted on forwarding planning and funding of Creative Partnerships activities, though the project had still been seen as a great success.

There was also concern, expressed by both creative providers and school staff, that there was a great deal of time-consuming paper work and bureaucracy related to Creative Partnerships activities, arising from both BRB and Creative Partnerships. As one creative provider commented: ‘administratively, it’s been hard working in two layers of bureaucracy: schools don’t know who to turn to’.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

Everyone interviewed was confident that creativity would continue to play an important role at Moor Green in the future. The parent governor we spoke to explained that ‘the ideas and systems are really well embedded’. The school staff had been enthused and were already bringing new ideas to the classroom. The headteacher was optimistic about the future: ‘There’s got to be a correlation between school improvement and Creative Partnerships work; its enhanced so much of what we are doing’. However, she also warned that ‘this could be an initiative that is just personality led. If I left, I don’t know if Creative Partnerships would continue and I’m sure that’s the same in other schools’.

Conclusions

Creative Partnerships has built on and contributed to the ethos of Moor Green Infant School. The presence of creative providers in the school has raised the confidence of both staff and young people and as a result new ideas and systems are now embedded in Moor Green.

Case Study 2: Springvale Primary School, Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham

Introduction

The research team visited Springvale Primary School in December 2003, at which point the school had been engaged in Creative Partnerships activities for just over a year. Interviews were conducted with the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator, two teachers, two creative providers, the chair of governors and 15 children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The school

The school has approximately 200 children aged from three to eleven. Most of the children live in the eastern side of the Yorkshire town of Penistone, which is situated almost equidistant between Sheffield and Barnsley. Children also attend the school from outlying villages, and the catchment area is gradually changing as land once given to heavy industry becomes available for private housing development. At the time of the last OFSTED report in 1999, there were no children of minority ethnic background in the school, reflecting a lack of ethnic diversity in the surrounding area. There were 37 young people who were on the register of special educational needs. Tests conducted on children at the time of their entry into reception class showed that children's attainment levels were often dramatically different from one intake to the next.

What did the school set out to achieve?

Prior to Creative Partnerships, Springvale Primary School had had some experience of working alongside artists and arts organisations, including involvement with the local Performing Arts Development Service, Theatre in Education and a ceramicist in residence. However, the headteacher explained that working with artists had been 'limited' in the past, as it had generally involved the delivery of one-off workshops. She wanted Creative Partnerships activities to bring opportunities to deliver the curriculum in new and creative ways that would accommodate a wider range of learning styles. The headteacher added that she felt that the delivery of the National Curriculum had been too prescriptive and had restricted teachers in their teaching styles.

Staff and governors decided that they wanted to focus Creative Partnerships activities on the life and work of a seventeenth century academic called Nicholas Saunderson, who was born within a few miles of the school. Despite the fact that he was blind, Saunderson went on to become an eminent

professor of mathematics at Cambridge University. The school is located in an economically disadvantaged area and staff felt that people's aspirations in the area were often low. They hoped that as a local person who had achieved a great deal in his life, Saunderson would help to raise children's aspirations by providing them with a valuable role model.

What did the school do?

With the support of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and a second teacher submitted a successful bid to their regional Creative Partnerships team. The deputy headteacher then became the Creative Partnerships coordinator and, supported by the governors, the headteacher took him 'off timetable' for five afternoons a week (this funded partly by Creative Partnerships and partly by funds from other sources to enable him to engage with Creative Partnerships and other management responsibilities). He did focus on Creative Partnerships activities, the main tasks being developing plans, arranging projects and identifying and meeting with creative providers, as well as taking responsibility for monitoring and evaluating activities. Early on in the programme, the coordinator ran an INSET session in the school in which he provided teachers with suggestions for possible Creative Partnerships activities, and asked them to contribute their own ideas. These ideas were then put into a detailed 'master plan'. The teachers signed up for the activities that they wanted their classes to take part in and indicated those that they thought were most appropriate for the whole school.

Children worked with a wide range of creative providers as part of Creative Partnerships. Some providers worked alongside the school for the entire academic year while others were involved for less time. Those creative providers involved during the academic year included a male voice choir; wind and samba bands; a gospel singer; puppeteers; theatre educators; sculptors; designers; animators and film-makers.

All of the Creative Partnerships activities used Nicholas Saunderson and his life as a stimulus, although in some instances, the link with Saunderson was limited to encouraging children to achieve things that they might not have previously thought possible. In other activities, there was a more direct and obvious link with Saunderson. For instance, the children made a variety of games that could be enjoyed by visually impaired children, and welcomed visually impaired people to the school to try out the games with them. Children also produced a video documentary film based on the mathematician's life and worked with a storyteller to write and perform the story of Saunderson which they toured around local schools, and created an animated film based on a comic version of Nicholas Saunderson demonstrating how to solve various maths problems. This film was shown at the local cinema.

All children in Year 5 visited Cambridge University, where Saunderson worked, saw some of Darwin's papers and were given a 'flavour' of Cambridge life – they had tea and biscuits with a college master and then went punting on the river. The school used funding from their own sources to invite local 'celebrities,' such as cricket umpire Dickie Bird and table tennis champion Sue Gillroy, to speak to the children. Staff hoped that, like Saunderson, the local celebrities would demonstrate to the children what could be achieved through hard work, dedication and commitment.

Finally, children worked with professional designers to produce a logo and slogan for Creative Partnerships activities in the school: 'You don't need eyes to see, you need vision'.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

The two main aims of Creative Partnerships activities at Springvale were to raise children's aspirations and to develop opportunities for them to learn more creatively. While some parents whose children had visited Cambridge University commented that they felt the visit had widened their child's horizons to the possibility of going to university, perhaps even to Cambridge, it is probably too early to assess the extent to which children's aspirations have actually been raised by their involvement in Creative Partnerships.

Teachers and the children themselves commented that their confidence and self-esteem had developed and it was hoped that this would help to raise their aspirations in the future. Children said that, through the course of the activities, they had discovered that they were able to learn new skills, and by doing so felt more able to try other new things. For example, one child in Year 5 said that taking part in creative activities had helped her to be persistent in her 'everyday life', by teaching her to 'stick to things and never give up.' Some said that Creative Partnerships had helped give them the confidence to ask questions in class. Children also said that they had learnt to work cooperatively through Creative Partnerships. For example, one Year 4 girl commented: 'I used to take over... but now I've thought "I'd better change my ideas"' and I've gone along as a team.'

Teachers felt that in the school, Creative Partnerships had been successful in its aim of providing opportunities for children to learn in new ways. For example, one teacher noticed that her class had difficulties structuring a story. She had asked the dancer to work with them on this. The dancer had shown the children how to build up a series of movements that related to each other.

The teacher hoped that the children would be able to apply this to writing a story.

Comments made by both teachers and children indicated that children had benefited from working with creative providers. The children noticed that the creative providers had a style of delivery that differed from working with their teachers. One Year 5 boy explained his perception of this different learning experience: 'It was learning in an exciting way...it's boring just sat down at the desk while your teacher is at the whiteboard, walks around writing stuff... You're learning when you're actually there doing it, you've actually got a professional person teaching you' By working with creative providers and following 'professional' processes, children also developed their knowledge of the creative industries, such as realising the different types of expertise involved in making a documentary film.

Children commented that they enjoyed school more because they looked forward to taking part in Creative Partnerships activities. Teachers said that boys had responded well to working with a male dancer, and when interviewed, several boys commented that they enjoyed dance and no longer found it 'embarrassing.' Some children said that the Creative Partnerships programme had impacted on their life at home, as they were applying some of the new skills that they had learnt at school. As one girl said: 'Instead of just sitting around watching TV all of the time you can practise your dance and show your parents.' Parents said that they were delighted to have the opportunity to see their child perform in school, and were pleased that their children were enjoying new opportunities.

Children said that they felt proud of what they had achieved in Creative Partnerships activities. All the children involved had taken home video copies of the films that they had made. Several mentioned that they had watched these videos many times, often with members of their family or friends.

Impact on teachers

Teachers had taken part in the sessions alongside the children, and also had separate sessions with the creative providers. They said that they felt that they had absorbed new creative approaches and ideas into their own teaching practice. This would enable them to cater for a wider range of learning styles than before Creative Partnerships and they hoped that it would help to raise standards in the classroom.

Teachers said that they felt that Creative Partnerships had given them the opportunity to work with children more flexibly, as they had done in the past: '[to be] spontaneous at times. Things happened and moved on as they

evolved... you couldn't plan it in the minute detail that you tend to have to do to get through the National Curriculum.'

The teachers said that they had enjoyed the rare opportunity to see someone else work with the children, and had watched the children's responses carefully. Teachers had picked up on some of the techniques used by the creative providers. For example, one teacher had worked with her class together with a professional puppeteer to create scenes of life in by-gone Penistone. She had realised that puppetry was a particularly effective way of encouraging some of the quieter children in her class to become more vocal. In general, teachers had been surprised by strengths demonstrated by some children and the way in which they 'came out of their shells'. At times they had been delighted by the pure enjoyment the children showed during Creative Partnerships activities. The headteacher said that she thought that staff morale had been raised through Creative Partnerships and that teachers had been stimulated by their participation.

Impact on creative providers

The creative providers involved were pleased to have been able to build longer-term relationships with both children and staff in the school. One provider said that this had required her organisation to plan meticulously, and this had been both more challenging and more rewarding than other projects she had done in schools. The creative providers had enjoyed working in the school, and one said that she felt the staff had been 'open and honest' in their approach. She also felt she had benefited from the opportunity to work alongside teachers. In addition, the creative providers described how working with the teachers had enabled them to develop their skills, such as behaviour management techniques.

Whole school impact

Teachers commented that they felt that Creative Partnerships had enabled them to develop more confidence in using creative approaches in their teaching and had helped them to embed the creative arts into other curricular areas. For example, the headteacher commented that

now I can happily say[...] we're going to spend a certain amount of time on dance and it's going to be integrated into[...] topics[...] whereas in the past teachers have felt "I've got to cover this, this and this and the easiest way to do it is through books."

Creative Partnerships had raised the profile of the school in the local community. As mentioned, children from the school toured other local schools with a performance based on the life of Nicholas Sanderson and parents and

children attended a showing of the animated film made by the children at a local cinema.

Looking back, looking forward

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

Teachers and governors in the school felt that the project would not have been as successful had it not been for the time allocated to the Creative Partnerships coordinator. The creative providers commented that they found the coordinator's clarity in planning a useful starting point from which to develop ideas with the school.

Many of the other members of staff also saw this as an opportunity to develop their own creativity in their teaching practice and welcomed the programme with enthusiasm. Close collaboration with teachers enabled creative providers to treat curriculum targets as 'part of the process used to help shape the project, not hinder it.' Progress and plans were reviewed regularly by both teachers and creative providers and it was felt that this had supported the success of the activities.

What were the main challenges?

The headteacher said that writing a proposal for Creative Partnerships that met the organisation's brief had presented the first challenge. She felt there was a lack of clarity about what was available: the regional team had told the school to 'think big' but, in terms of budget, the school's ideas had actually exceeded the available funding. The school subsequently revised their plans with guidance from the regional Creative Partnerships team.

Despite the allocation of time to coordinate Creative Partnerships, the coordinator felt pulled in many different directions, in fulfilling his responsibilities as coordinator, class teacher and deputy headteacher. Managing the scale of the programme proved hard at times, and the coordinator found that the Creative Partnerships team were not always in a position to help him to identify creative providers. This had, at times, required a great deal of his time.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

The headteacher hoped that the legacy of Creative Partnerships would be 'a thriving school using the performing and visual arts as a core to the curriculum.' The headteacher concluded by suggesting that any school considering Creative Partnerships should 'think big, think wide, keep focussed

and enjoy it'. The coordinator highlighted the way in which Creative Partnerships had changed teaching and learning within the school: 'it's not just a case of getting people in, it's about how can we do things in different ways that's going to enable more children to participate and enjoy their learning?'

Children, teachers and creative providers commented on a change in attitude to some creative arts amongst the children. One creative provider observed, for example, that 'dance became something everyday and not something elitist.'

As noted the children had produced a film and the teachers thought it might be possible to show this again before the screening of commercial films at the local cinema. A more public legacy is the building of a public memorial seat celebrating the life and work of Nicholas Saunderson incorporating tiles made by the children. One girl in Year 5 said: 'In ten years time I'll be able to look back and say "I made a tile on that bench".'

Conclusions

Involvement in Creative Partnerships has enabled Springvale Primary School to extend opportunities for creative learning within the school across a range of curriculum areas. This has been of benefit to both teachers and children alike. Whilst it is too early to say whether or not the aim of raising the children's aspirations has been attained, Creative Partnerships activities at the school are increasing children's self-confidence and broadening their horizons. It is hoped that this will have a positive impact on their aspirations in the future.

Case Study 3: Jubilee Primary School, London East

Introduction

Jubilee Primary School has a strong history and tradition of creative practice and works regularly in partnership with a variety of creative providers. It became a Creative Partnerships school in 2002, and, at the time of the case study visit in February 2004, it was engaged in a whole school initiative involving young people, staff and parents, which would culminate in the performance of an opera in June 2004. A total of nine sets of interviews were conducted for the case study: with the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator, the chair of governors, two classroom teachers, two creative providers, and two groups of young people (11 in all), from Year 5 and Year 6.

The school

Jubilee Primary is a large mixed community school in the London Borough of Hackney. It is in an area of rich cultural diversity and substantial material hardship. Many cultures and nationalities are represented in the school and a high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). Over 35 per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs. The level of unauthorised absence is above the national average and there is high mobility among the young people. There are approximately 440 pupils on roll, aged three to 11.

In addition to Creative Partnerships, the school is part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ), and is in receipt of an Artsmark Silver Award and a Space for Sport and the Arts Award. Prior to Creative Partnerships, the school worked with high profile creative providers such as the English National Opera, the London Symphony Orchestra, and The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and with individual creative providers, including a sculptor who produced miniature ceramic buildings for display in the school grounds.

What did the school set out to achieve?

The headteacher explained that creative and cultural education had always been part of the strategic vision for the school. The school's policy on the arts had evolved over time but involvement in Creative Partnerships had 'firmed it up'. The school had had plenty of ideas and links with the creative community before Creative Partnerships but they had always had to set aside money from the school budget to work with creative providers, although that had become

increasingly difficult in recent years. Creative Partnerships had given the school the financial means to make the ideas happen. According to the Headteacher, Creative Partnerships was ‘an answer to a prayer’ and she wanted the opera project to reflect her ‘core belief in the value of the arts’, and to show that ‘the arts are as important as everything else in children’s lives’. She also described how involvement in Creative Partnerships linked in with another longer term school strategy in the arts focussing on embedding Howard Gardner’s work on multiple intelligences, and utilising children’s different learning styles to motivate them and get better work out of them. She felt that ‘creativity and multiple intelligences go hand in hand’. The Creative Partnerships coordinator shared the headteacher’s view on the value of Creative Partnerships and was pleased to be involved, seeing it as a natural progression from work they had been doing before.

What did the school do?

The school submitted a bid for Creative Partnerships funding in 2002 via the Learning Trust, the education authority in place in Hackney. The success of the bid was timely because the school had already bid for a new hall to be built (funded by Sport England and Arts Council England) and wanted to celebrate the opening of the hall in June 2004 with a large event, which Creative Partnerships funding would make possible.

Both the headteacher and the Creative Partnerships coordinator (who is a senior teacher and Creative Arts coordinator in the school) had been actively involved in the setting up and development of the Creative Partnerships programme. They had attended a number of meetings at the beginning, which they described as ‘confusing’, because there had been no Creative Director in place in the partnership for three months. Once the Creative Director was appointed, however, it had become easier to understand the practicalities of the programme.

Both the headteacher and the coordinator communicated regularly with the Creative Partnerships team, though this was mainly by telephone. The coordinator was also a class teacher three days a week, and did not like to leave his class to attend meetings, if they fell on those days. The Creative Partnerships team organised drop-in workshops, which he had not been able to attend owing to teaching commitments, and as part of Creative Partnerships he also had a mentor, but he was not entirely sure what her role was and she had not come into school at the time of the NFER visit. In later discussion with the school regarding Creative Partnerships activity the coordinator noted that the mentor had come into the school and run INSET activity and she ‘has proved to be invaluable as support and as a friend’. Though her role was still perceived to be uncertain the coordinator felt that this was becoming clearer the more opportunities that the school and mentor had to work together.

There had been two projects organised under the auspices of Creative Partnerships: a dance project and a whole school opera project.

The dance project had come about when the school first became involved in Creative Partnerships. The coordinator brought in a dancer for a one-off payment to work on a project to raise the profile of dance in the school. This had been immensely successful: it had encouraged children to come to school early and to attend dance festivals outside school. In fact, there were now two early morning dance classes for infants and juniors as a result, and the dancer had become a member of the school staff.

The second Creative Partnerships initiative was the opera project, which was in progress at the time of the case study visit. This was being organised in association with the Hackney Music Development Trust, an educational charity developing work with schools and communities across Hackney. It had grown out of previous work with the Trust in Year 6 on 'The Hackney Chronicles', a travelling show written by young people at another local primary. The coordinator explained that he had wanted the opera to be a whole school project, and all year groups, except nursery and reception, were taking part, as were staff and parents. The event would be staged in June 2004.

The material used for the opera was the life stories of members of the community, many of whom were refugees and asylum seekers. Parents had been invited into school on a number of occasions to tell their stories, which were written down and transcribed. One child had been born on the plane to England and this had been incorporated into the story. The focus of the opera was journeys: it was about people locking the door for the last time, leaving their homeland and opening a new door in a new land. A variety of creative providers were involved: a librettist, composer, musical director, director, designer and project manager. A creative provider had been employed to write a libretto based on the stories. A musician, working with Year 6 young people in weekly workshops, had incorporated their ideas into the music, which was put onto compact disc (CD). Year 2 and Year 6 young people identified as gifted and talented in art formed a 'Design Team' and worked on the costumes and stage sets with a designer. From February 2004 onwards jobs were allocated to each year group e.g. ticket sales, making masks, front of house, and costumes. They were to have three afternoons a week dedicated to art, in which they would prepare for the opera. Young people in Year 6 would have two afternoons a week (because they were due to take their National Curriculum Assessments that year). The staff also had INSET days on arts skills, drawing to scale, scene design and painting, which had been very successful.

There would be a local evaluation of the project and the school was preparing to write a book about it, which in time would be made available to other schools. This would give information on how to work with an arts partner and how to use cross-curricular work.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Senior staff, teachers and young people generally felt that involvement in Creative Partnerships activities had had or would have a positive impact on school life, though some said that it was too early to judge the full impact of the opera project because this would not come to fruition until the summer term, 2004.

Impact on young people

One of the main benefits to the young people was thought to be an increase in confidence. A Year 6 teacher explained that the preparatory workshops for the opera had pulled her (normally) difficult class together. Their behaviour and listening skills had improved because the activities had been enjoyable and made them work together. They had been learning without realising. This was corroborated by her students, who said they could communicate better, and were more relaxed with each other: 'People are talking to other people they don't usually talk to and getting along'. The art teacher, who had worked with the 'Design Team', felt that 'they have developed a way of thinking rather than skills'. Her students reported that they felt more confident to experiment with ideas and had been inspired by working with other young people of different ages. The creative providers felt that the activities had made the young people feel more positive about themselves because they all had a stake in the project and there would be 'a tremendous feeling of satisfaction and achievement for the school'.

Impact on teachers

Similarly, the main impact on teachers was thought to be an improvement in confidence, better communication and a different approach to teaching. The coordinator explained that involvement in the opera would change the way teachers taught, encouraging them to work in a more fluid way and to teach across the curriculum:

We are hoping through the opera to look at things more cross-curricularly. The opera is the beginning of their freeing up of the curriculum. It's hard for people to realise that actually it's not what they're learning but how they're learning.

He also felt Creative Partnerships would bring KS1 and KS2 teachers together in a common aim. The headteacher too felt that involvement in Creative Partnerships would change approaches to teaching in the school and encourage the staff to teach across subject areas. At the moment staff were 'scared of being artistic'. The Year 6 teacher welcomed the opportunity to approach her teaching in a different way. The INSET organised as part of the Creative Partnerships programme, in which teachers had been given a design challenge, had made her realise that, as a teacher, she gave her students too much information on how to do things. This prevented them from thinking freely and restricted their creativity. As a result she was now trying to incorporate more games into her lessons and to encourage her students to work together. This had not only improved their behaviour but also encouraged her to focus on behavioural management in her Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity.

Impact on creative providers

The two creative providers interviewed held mixed views on their involvement in Creative Partnerships. One felt that her Creative Partnerships work was 'no different from any other job I do' and that the levels of support provided by Creative Partnerships were similar to support received from other contractors. She noted, however, that payment had been slow, which she identified as a difficulty nationwide rather than an issue with the local Creative Partnerships team. She also commented that that 'there's a lot of admin in this particular job and that doesn't please me much because it's not my interest'. The other creative provider was more positive about her involvement: the Creative Partnerships team had been very supportive and her work with young people and teachers had been very rewarding. She was keen to work on Creative Partnerships projects in the future.

Whole school impact

As has been seen, involvement in Creative Partnerships activities was considered to have been beneficial to the school as a whole. The headteacher felt that Creative Partnerships had enabled the school to change its approach to teaching 'It's given us a kick start to making coherent work for multiple intelligences and topic planning'. The school had tried to bring together cross curricular areas before, but with less success. She also felt that Creative Partnerships had had an impact on the image of the school and its profile in the wider community, in that it had enabled the school to stage an opera, which was the kind of event that a primary school would not normally undertake. It had also strengthened links between the school and parents, and between the parents themselves, because it was about their journeys and it highlighted the common thread between people and cultures who had been uprooted and made a new home: 'It's important that we show in a practical way that we value them and their stories and cultures'. The chair of governors

felt that well established, longer-term Creative Partnerships would give stability to the school and build relationships with the different communities from where its students came.

There had been an added value in involving creative and cultural providers in that it had introduced a different dimension and enabled children to work on a different level to the one they would experience in an art lesson. Bringing artists into schools gave young people an idea of what was going on in the outside world and artists were able to build different relationships with the young people and focus on their specialism without having to control them. One of the creative providers explained that the school had gained

a confidence in its creativity and how it can develop using the arts. I hope it's got an insight into the different world of working in the arts. Everybody gains huge amounts from good partnerships and interactions with different people.

Looking back, looking forward

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

The headteacher felt that Creative Partnerships could only work if there was someone on the staff with enthusiasm and commitment to the creative arts. It was not just a question of money but of 'dream and vision.' Staff had to be prepared to see projects through in the face of other pressures, such as raising National Curriculum Assessment results, and this was not always easy. Another member of staff felt that successful partnership working was dependent on a good management team, organisation and resources. The Year 6 teacher who had worked with the providers in the music workshops, felt that it was the creative providers' understanding of the behavioural problems in her class that had been crucial to the project's success with her students. Their workshops had included 'little things that made (the young people) gel and work as a team and not feel embarrassed about doing things'.

What were the main challenges?

Staff mentioned three main challenges in taking part in Creative Partnerships. These were:

- Learning to teach across the curriculum, which teachers were not trained to do and found difficult
- Adapting to different working styles: one teacher explained that it had taken some time to adapt to working with creative providers. They had different approaches and expectations to teachers and it had been 'a learning process on both sides'

- Relationships between the teachers and the creative providers.

It was the last of these that provoked most comment. Teachers described the artists as ‘demanding’, and ‘a law unto themselves’. It was like ‘treading on broken glass in terms of their and your expectations’ because they were not ‘institutionalised like us’. There was also some difficulty regarding the timing of rehearsals. Creative providers did, at times, have to rearrange rehearsals to fit in with the school timetables and the school also did the same. The coordinator described how some art classes were rearranged to suit Creative Partnerships activity, but that these changes were not always convenient.

One of the creative providers also mentioned challenges in working with the teachers. She felt unrealistic pressures had been put on her. Teachers had not taken the time to read materials that she had produced. She felt that teachers should take more responsibility for the outcome of the project ‘I am not a teacher. I am an artist and a designer and a facilitator and that is it’. She also felt that the teachers had been somewhat resistant to learning and to the INSET activities. Another creative provider interviewed emphasised the need to develop relationships with school with care: it was important to understand the pressure teachers were under and the nature of schools in general, because schools were very different from arts organisations.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

The headteacher hoped that the profile of the arts would be raised and that the creative arts would be seen as important in terms of cooperation and problem solving, as well as being vehicles for study in their own right. She hoped that the arts would help there to be further development of activity relating to multiple intelligences and topic planning and that this would become embedded in the school, though this might take a few years. She felt that the arts evoked an emotional response which would promote learning at a deeper level. This was reiterated by the coordinator who felt that cross-curricular work in the creative arts boosted children’s confidence. The Year 6 teacher felt that the lessons she had learnt in INSET sessions were already embedded into her planning. Approaches she would take forward were: ‘not capping learning, letting them be free and creative. Not telling kids what the end results will be’.

With regard to advice for other schools considering involvement in Creative Partnerships type activities the headteacher advised schools to be clear about the projects they took on and to choose ones which would affect the school at a deeper level, rather than one-off projects. Schools should, she felt, plan to affect all areas of the school through cross-curricular planning.

Conclusions

Despite the challenges of partnership working for both teachers and creative providers, those interviewed during the case study visit were wholly positive about the impact of Creative Partnerships on all those involved in terms of confidence, communication and learning skills. While Jubilee Primary had always been committed to creative education, it was felt that Creative Partnerships had given the school the chance to make its ideas a reality.

Case Study 4: Glade Hill School, Nottingham

Introduction

Glade Hill Primary School became a Creative Partnerships school in 2002. The research team visited the school during February 2004 and conducted interviews with the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator, a class teacher, who was also the school's Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO), two governors, one creative provider and 11 children from Years 1 to 6. A second creative provider was interviewed by telephone at a later date.

The school

Glade Hill Primary School is located in the outskirts of the city of Nottingham. It is a Community Nursery and Primary School, taking girls and boys aged three to 11. The most recent Ofsted Report (2001) noted that with 266 pupils, the school is larger than most primary schools, and that children entering the school were generally attaining at a level that was below the national average. At 29 per cent, the number of children who were identified as having special educational needs was relatively high. Nine percent of the children were from minority ethnic groups, most of whom were of African-Caribbean origin.

What did the school set out to achieve?

Prior to Creative Partnerships, the school had often worked with artists, but their involvement had been limited to 'off the peg' projects which connected with specific aspects of the school's curriculum. Through Creative Partnerships, the headteacher wanted all members of the school community to be involved in the process of creating a permanent outdoor space that would provide a stimulating environment for play. The headteacher felt that play was very important in the development of children's communication, social, speaking and listening skills, imagination and creativity. Staff had noted that children often had poor social and play skills when they started school. Staff had welcomed developments in the Foundation Stage curriculum (for children in Nursery, reception and Year 1) that emphasised the importance of play. They had also identified practical play as a strategy for helping to engage older children.

The school had already secured funding from the DfES 'Sporting Playgrounds' initiative to fund the costs of materials and building of an outdoor play area. They therefore decided to focus Creative Partnerships activities on the involvement of the whole school in the development of ideas

for the playground. The school set out to achieve this by giving children the opportunity to work with various creative providers to develop the children's ideas about the use of space. They also wanted to raise children's awareness of their own bodies and senses through exploring and utilising different spaces.

The headteacher reported that he felt that the curriculum had been 'squeezed' over recent years, and that this had 'pushed the creative arts off the edge.' He wanted Creative Partnershipss activities to enable creativity to 'permeate the curriculum'. In so doing, he wanted to achieve the following five targets:

- to develop children's self-esteem through the creative arts
- to 'bring the spark back into children's learning'
- to re-skill teachers in using creativity in their teaching
- to enable teachers to work with artists
- to broaden and enrich the curriculum.

What did the school do?

Initially, teachers decided to engage the children in a project in which they would create an installation or 'environment'. They hoped that this experience would inspire the children to develop ideas that would later contribute to the design of a playground in the school grounds. They hired a large sculpture of a chrysalis made by a well-known sculptor, and set it up in the central hall for two weeks. The chrysalis was large enough for several children to be able to sit inside it. All of the children in the school worked with a multi-media artist to create an installation that transformed the school hall into a 'rainforest' environment, using the chrysalis as a central focus. A sound artist helped the children to create a soundtrack of simulated rainforest noises, using their own bodies and every-day materials such as crunched-up paper, to create the sounds.

The chrysalis project stimulated ideas about the creative use of space, which the children then developed with two designers who were commissioned to design the playground. Children explored how their bodies moved and related to structures, such as tunnels and ladders, that could be included in the playground. Creative providers encouraged the children to think beyond traditional playground design, to imagine something that was 'really magical.' Working with the designers, the children interviewed each other to identify the variety of games that they enjoyed playing outdoors, such as card games and role play involving crossing ravines, being on the moon, at sea or in a jungle. The designers realised that they needed to design a playground that incorporated 'fantasy' space for younger children but was also exciting and physically challenging for older children. They drew out the elements of

imaginative and physical play that children seemed to value the most. For example, one member of staff was a keen climber and this enthusiasm had transferred to the children. The designers ensured, therefore, that the playground gave children plenty of opportunities to climb structures. Many of the children said that they wanted the playground to incorporate elements like a 'house' or a 'castle' that they could go inside, as they had been able to do with the chrysalis. The designers therefore incorporated an existing water tower into the design, which provided children with an enclosed and covered space.

The designers involved children in all stages of their planning. As one noted: 'We tried to show them the whole process of how we work and think about things, like measuring up, materials, weather, shelter.' The children made diagrams of their ideas and then produced three-dimensional models of their designs, using a wide range of materials including sewing thread, string, wire, cardboard and balsa wood. Acknowledging the preciousness of teachers' 'free' time, the designers provided home-baked cakes one lunchtime to encourage staff to attend so they could contribute their own ideas to the design of the playground and how its development could best meet curriculum needs.

The designers had worked predominantly with children in Years 3 to 6, taking each class for a weekly session throughout the summer term. However, the whole school, including the youngest children were consulted about which elements of the design to build.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

Discussions revealed that Creative Partnerships involvement had positive impacts on children at both individual and whole school level. Both teachers and children reported that Creative Partnerships had positively impacted on children in a variety of ways, all of which reflected the targets as previously described.

Firstly, the activities had impacted on individual children's self-esteem and emotional well-being. It had raised children's expectations of themselves. The Creative Partnerships coordinator commented that: 'meeting people who are enthusiastic and talented, opens children's minds to what's possible and what they can achieve.' Children's social skills had developed through collaborative working. They were encouraged to share ideas with creative providers, teachers and with other children, and worked towards a common goal. This helped them to gain confidence in asking questions and learning to value each other's opinions. In so doing, they developed their ability to work as a team. Children had a rota for using the playground, and teachers noticed that the

children's participation in the programme appeared to have helped children to respect one another more and to 'treat each other kindly.'

The completed playground provided the children with tangible evidence of their collaborative work, and 'something to be proud of.' The creative provider commented on the importance of the ownership of the project that she felt the children had achieved through their involvement. She compared 'off the peg' playground designs to the Glade Hill Primary playground describing Glade Hill as 'a space which has proper textures... and genuine things.'

Teachers and the children themselves observed that children's involvement in creative activities had increased their enjoyment of school. According to one staff member, Creative Partnerships had 'brought the spark back into children's learning' as they were encouraged to work 'less inhibitedly and be less worried about what is expected... [and be able to] explore their ideas more freely.' Children across the school took it in turns to use the playground during lesson time as well as playtime. One teacher commented that children 'look forward to using it next time and think about how they will use it.'

Another impact of the project related to improvements in children's speaking and listening skills. Teachers noted that the activities had encouraged children to express their own opinions, and to share these with their peers.

The project had also helped to develop children's creative skills. One of the creative providers who worked with the children on the design of the playground noted that she felt that the chrysalis project had 'primed [the children] to be thinking creatively... they were confident and had lots to say... they talked about artwork and sculpture in a mature way.' As a result, she felt that their approach to designing was 'more abstract and more risky' than most children's would have been.

It was felt that Creative Partnerships had helped children to gain an insight into the creative process and of the work of artists and designers. They had witnessed and been part of the whole process of the development of the playground from initial idea to end product. As the Creative Partnerships coordinator said, this had given children 'a huge understanding of what art is and how artists create.'

Other staff mentioned unexpected outcomes, such as the observation that traversing the monkey bars had made some children 'braver' as they had done something they would otherwise not have done. The SENCO commented that Creative Partnerships had helped children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, including some children who were in care. She suggested that the

creation of intimate and ‘safe’ spaces inside the chrysalis and in the playground had been of particular benefit to these children. These children had been given the opportunity to open up and ‘voice their feelings’ and talk more freely than was usual in the classroom environment.

Impact on teachers

Teachers had worked alongside the creative provider sessions with the children, and this had given them new ideas for approaches and techniques for creative learning. As one teacher said: ‘the artists have shown me how to get the best out of children, especially through artwork, and that has helped me a lot.’ They said they had greatly enjoyed ‘learning from the experts’ who also understood teacher needs to develop their own creative skills. The headteacher observed that the learning exchange had been ‘a two-way process,’ as teachers had also helped creative providers work effectively with children with challenging behaviour and particular needs.

Impact on creative providers

The creative providers who worked on this project had considerable experience of making public art, often as part of small-scale urban regeneration programmes. They specialise in the incorporation of innovative design, sculpture and landscaping through participatory workshops for adults and children. However, this project offered a more sustained experience of working with a whole school over a period of time.

The creative providers enjoyed the project at Glade Hill for a number of reasons. Firstly, they found the high level of contact they had with the children involved in the project to be rewarding, as one of them said: ‘We got to know the children well and felt [the playground] grew out of them, and our relationship with them.’ Secondly, they took pleasure in the children’s enjoyment which resulted from their participation in the project. Thirdly, the project enabled the creative providers to develop their interest in working with sustainable materials and ecologically friendly processes. The creative providers were hoping to build on their experiences at Glade Hill to develop partnerships with other schools in future.

Whole school impact

Creative Partnerships activities appear to have had two main areas of impact on the whole school. Firstly, the headteacher reported that Creative Partnerships had ‘raised the profile of the school in the city and in the community.’ The launch of Nottingham Creative Partnerships had been held at Glade Hill and this had generated positive interest at both a local and national level. The headteacher was delighted that the school had been seen to ‘grasp the opportunity [of Creative Partnerships] with more than two hands.’

Secondly, teachers said that creative activities had helped to develop a sense of community within the school. For example, the Creative Partnerships coordinator described the ‘buzz’ in the school during the installation of the chrysalis. She said that children had worked together across all key stages and that this had ‘fired people’s enthusiasm... because everyone came together.’ The school held two whole-school assemblies each half term dedicated to children’s achievements in creative activities, and parents were invited to attend.

Looking back, looking forward

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

There were several factors that contributed towards the success of Creative Partnerships at Glade Hill Primary School. Firstly, the commitment of the school staff to the project was crucial. The Creative Partnerships coordinator was appointed to the staff specifically to lead Creative Partnerships. The venture was new and challenging to her, but she had enthusiasm and relevant experience to take on the role. In order to gain the support of the whole staff, she canvassed all staff to invite their ideas for Creative Partnerships.

Links with the local Creative Partnerships team were very positive. Both the headteacher and the Creative Partnerships coordinator felt that the Creative Partnerships development worker (a member of the local Creative Partnerships team) had contributed both ideas and ‘drive’ to the programme. The coordinator described the approach to the programme from the Creative Partnerships team as ‘tightly structured’ to ensure that the relevant project plans, aims and objectives were in place.

The relationships that the creative providers developed within the school community also contributed to the activities’ success. The artists were looked on as ‘very much part of the school.’ Their willingness to listen to the children and to take on board their ideas aided the sense of the ‘ownership’ that the children felt of the work. One teacher summarised the artists’ approach as: “let’s get going on this – give us your ideas” rather than giving them all the ideas to start with.’ The teachers also attributed part of the success of the project ‘to the fact that the creative providers had understood the importance of communicating with teachers and explaining to them the objectives of the sessions with children and debriefing them afterwards.

The headteacher also recognised the commitment of the children, commenting that they had embraced Creative Partnerships wholeheartedly. He felt that ‘the

[good] behaviour and commitment of the children who had been involved in Creative Partnerships activities' had contributed to its success.

What were the main challenges?

The main challenges identified by the school concerned the resources needed to support Creative Partnerships activities, especially the time required for the coordinator and other staff to liaise with creative providers and the Creative Partnerships development worker. The coordinator summarised the challenge as being 'to create a work-friendly level of commitment that doesn't need you to chase more people as well as teach your own class.'

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

The headteacher commented that the playground would 'last for generations', thereby giving children opportunities to develop better social and interpersonal skills, self-confidence and speaking and listening skills. Staff felt that such developments would, in time, spill over into children's academic achievement.

The headteacher felt that as a result of Creative Partnerships, staff had recognised the value that creativity had brought to teaching and learning within the school. Consequently, he hoped that creativity would become 'embedded in the curriculum' through the teachers' increased understanding of how to enrich the curriculum, and a knowledge of how to tap into the skills of creative providers. Teachers felt that they had already begun teaching through a more 'integrated' and 'holistic' approach, for example by incorporating art, PE and ICT into other curriculum areas.

Since the playground has been completed, the school has appointed a resident artist/broker. Her role has been to work closely with school staff to identify particular curriculum areas that staff feel would benefit from a creative input, including topics that they found 'dry' to teach. Her role also involves identifying and liaising with creative providers, as well as coordinating and facilitating activities herself.

Conclusions

Creative Partnerships activities at Glade Hill Primary School have developed children's self-esteem and emotional well-being and have enhanced their ability to work collaboratively as a team. A creative approach to learning has been nurtured in the school. Children's expectations of themselves have been raised and their enjoyment of school increased. Teachers have developed their own creative skills and their ideas for teaching. In addition to this, a sense of community within the school has been heightened and the profile of the school in its community has been raised. The physical presence of the playground has

provided a lasting legacy of Creative Partnerships, and it will enable the school to continue to develop children's learning through play.

Case Study 5: The Priory School, Slough

Introduction

This case study is based on 19 interviews. These were conducted with the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator, ten teachers (eight of whom were year group coordinators, one was a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Early Years team leader and one was the head of music). In addition to these school based staff, interviews were also conducted with one parent governor and two creative providers. Group interviews were conducted with four groups of young people from Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 (a total of 11 children). The case study visit took place in February 2004 over a period of two days.

The school

The Priory school is a nursery and primary school catering for 744 boys and girls aged three to 11. The school employs 45 full-time and three part-time teachers. Approximately nine per cent of the children on roll are eligible for free school meals, which is lower than the national average. The percentage of students who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) is 19 per cent. This is high when compared to the national average but low compared to the local average of approximately 40 per cent. Young people with special educational needs (SEN) make up around 15 per cent of the student body and the school has a specialist unit for young people with physical disability.

In October 2002 OFSTED described The Priory as a 'perfect school'. The school has gained Beacon status in nine specialist areas, including 'Whole school good practice' and 'Raising standards through strategic planning, leadership and management training'. The school was awarded Artsmark Silver (it has since been awarded Artsmark Gold) and, prior to the introduction of Creative Partnerships, the school ran an arts week each year focusing on visual arts. The Priory School introduced free, timetabled instrumental lessons for all young people in Years 3 to 6. In addition, a theatre group has worked with the school on an occasional basis.

What did the school set out to achieve?

Despite the excellent reputation and successes the school had achieved, they were continually striving to develop their provision for children. The SMT wanted to make what was already an excellent school a more creative institution that was not solely focused on attainment.

The SMT felt the school offered little space for creativity and the existing way of working was felt to provide little recognition of the natural tendency for children to learn in a cross-curricular way. The SMT decided to radically overhaul the timetable and delivery of the curriculum. They decided to continue to teach core subjects (mathematics, English and science) in the morning, when children would be set by ability. In contrast, the afternoon activity would cover the remaining subject areas, using themes stimulated by a work of art. The impact of this approach was that all the elements of the National Curriculum would be covered but that 50 per cent of the timetable would be given over to encouraging creative approaches to teaching and learning.

These ideas originated in the school, but Creative Partnerships provided the context and catalyst for many of the activities that took place.

What did the school do?

Before Creative Partnerships came into being, the school had already decided to use works of art as a stimulus for teaching the foundation subjects (namely geography, history, religious education, design and technology, art, music, physical education and citizenship). One member of staff commented that when these changes were first discussed they sounded ‘brilliant but awesome’.

The school was invited to bid for Creative Partnerships involvement by the local partnership. After attending initial briefing meetings, the headteacher felt that Creative Partnerships would be a good opportunity for the school. She felt that the funding would allow the school to work with creative providers, using them ‘more profoundly’ than in the past. This, it was hoped, would enable longer term involvement that could lead to a ‘radical impact on teaching and learning as a whole’. The focus on long-term, whole-school impact was a key feature of this school’s approach to the initiative. Creative Partnerships projects were integral to the new way of teaching the foundation subjects and all teachers and children have been involved in Creative Partnerships activities.

The school began planning in the autumn term of 2002. During the first term, the funding available from Creative Partnerships was used to enable staff to attend INSET opportunities and to plan the year ahead. During the planning phase, all the teaching staff were given the same brief:

- to choose six works of art from which they could teach the foundation subjects (of these, one was studied by the whole school linked to the National Gallery project ‘Take One Picture’)
- to plan half-termly modules around each work of art, and

- to build in evaluation procedures (these would feed back into the development and evolution of each project/picture and also act as a measure of student performance).

The staff either planned together as a year group or divided the tasks between them, meeting regularly to discuss progress.

The curriculum coordinators took responsibility for ensuring the planning addressed the National Curriculum requirements for each subject. The Creative Partnerships coordinator ensured that the projects included Years 1 to 6, that there was an emphasis on creativity and that work with creative providers was included as appropriate.

The new approach was introduced in January 2003. Once the major planning was completed, Creative Partnerships funds were devoted to bringing creative providers and other specialists into the school. These have included an African dancer, a group of actors and a local visual artist. These individuals and groups have worked with the school in many different ways. For example, the visual artist provided INSET for staff and ran activities for the children.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

Many of the teachers commented on the increase in self-esteem, confidence and self-belief they witnessed in young people. One teacher noted that the impact has been 'profound' as she described how children were showing considerable enthusiasm, having been 'inspired by their learning and what they are doing'. Another member of staff felt that the children had 'come alive'. This teacher referred to the way children now approached their work with greater attention to detail and a more sustained interest.

The work had affected individuals in different ways. For example, one girl explained how she used to think that her peers were more able than her because they were working at a faster pace. However, since her involvement in one of the Creative Partnerships projects, she found it easier to keep up and feels that other young people consider her to be equally able.

Many members of staff and several young people made comments about the impact that involvement in Creative Partnerships activities had had on independent learning. For example, one teacher described a Year 6 activity in which the students had presented their own project on Spain. They had been given complete control over the creation of this project and had enthusiastically and successfully engaged with independent work. They were also given the freedom to record their learning in different ways. For example, students were encouraged to use conceptual techniques like 'mind maps' take

photographs, and generally record their progress using more imaginative methods.

The staff and young people also spoke of improvements in self-expression amongst the children. One teacher said:

They have the freedom to express their opinions in a completely different way it is total freedom now... through arts, drama and performance we are getting their opinions... we didn't have this as much before.

Children felt that the new work had helped with particular aspects of their learning. When we asked a group of children in Years 3 and 4 how the new things they had learnt during Creative Partnerships had helped them in their school work, they responded that it helped them remember more and answer questions more quickly.

Teachers felt their aim of providing a more coherent learning experience had also been achieved, as one teacher said:

Things seem to make more sense, because [they] are linked to the picture and it all seems to have more of a point.' [Discussions] are more deep and meaningful than before.' [The children] make more links between topics now.

Teachers also commented that the scope of learning had widened for children, as they now had the opportunity to learn more about the world. Generally, it was felt that young people were 'more rounded', more enthusiastic and had greater ownership of their work as a result of their involvement in Creative Partnerships.

Impact on teachers

Teachers felt that Creative Partnerships had helped them to be more motivated and excited by their work. They were no longer prescribing to children what to do, and that this had provided a greater space for self-expression. One teacher said: 'It is amazing how much you can get out of teaching this way it is inspiring.'

Some teachers thought their approaches to teaching and learning had developed as a result of working with creative providers. This had given them confidence to replicate an activity initiated by the creative provider or to adapt

the idea for use in another context. As one teacher said ‘New people bring in new ideas. It makes you feel like you can do things better.’

Impact on creative providers

The creative providers spoke of both a personal and professional impact arising from their involvement in Creative Partnerships. They felt that Creative Partnerships involvement had contributed to a sense of personal achievement. They took pride in the fact that they had helped teachers to grow in confidence and had enabled them to use new materials and activities with their classes. One creative provider commented that the involvement in Creative Partnerships had allowed her to develop her role as a professional who could ‘enable’ teachers to realise their goals for a particular project. They also talked about achieving professional satisfaction that resulted from being given the opportunity to offer something of value to schools, teachers and especially the children. Another creative provider talked positively about the experience of offering her skills, expertise and teaching experience to bring out the best in both teachers and children.

Whole school impact

Creative Partnerships has enabled the school to provide greater flexibility within the curriculum. The school has achieved its aim of restructuring the timetable and teaching the foundation subjects in a cross-curricular way. This has involved all the staff and young people in the school.

In addition, the image and reputation of the school, though already very good, has been enhanced both by a greater number of people coming in to the school (including creative providers) and by staff visiting other schools to talk to teachers and others about what they have done. Both the headteacher and the Creative Partnerships coordinator have been involved in disseminating their experience. Though this dissemination activity was connected to the school’s beacon status, Creative Partnerships activity provided a focus for discussion.

Looking back, looking forward

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

There were a number of key factors identified that helped Creative Partnerships to be successful in The Priory School. These relate to the staff and their approach, the leadership both within and outside the school and the type of support provided during the planning of activities.

The staff felt that teamwork had been very important and that all teachers were seen to be supportive of the development associated with Creative Partnerships. Their key involvement in planning had resulted in a strong feeling of ownership. Staff valued the autonomy they had been given over who they worked with and how they worked, for example teachers were able to select their creative providers. As one teacher noted: 'People choose [Creative] partners... [there was] no imposition'. They were also able to work in a collaborative way with creative providers, enabling activity to be developed through dialogue between both parties. As a result, the activities met the specific requirements of the teachers and the needs of the children. The impact of this was felt to be positive as it gave the teachers a real sense of ownership over the activity and partnership with the creative providers concerned.

Strong leadership at both the school level and Creative Partnerships level was highlighted as a key factor for success. The need for a good Creative Partnerships coordinator within the school was said to be crucial, and the Creative Partnerships Partnership level leadership support was equally important, as one teacher said: 'Slough [Creative Partnerships] has been brilliant... they are so keen and enthusiastic and they are always [available] on the end of a phone.'

Teachers also highlighted the importance of the Creative Partnerships funded INSET. This had acted as a catalyst to stimulate creativity and formed the foundations upon which the activity was planned. It had also allowed them to understand more fully what the headteacher and SMT were striving to achieve and enabled them to see how they might realise these goals.

What were the main challenges?

Although all the accounts from staff were extremely positive, they also mentioned some of the more challenging aspects they had encountered. They commented on the intense workloads that had accompanied Creative Partnerships activity. This workload was experienced both during the initial planning stages and also in the cycle of reflection and review built into the projects. There were mixed views about this: teachers found the planning and reflection stimulating, but they were frustrated by the fact that there was not enough time to do everything they wanted.

A small number of teachers thought that the planning requirements had been overly burdensome at the start of the projects. Some felt this was not a good use of time as they often revisited plans and changed them once the projects had begun and they had gained a better understanding of the new approach in question. This said, teachers noted the importance of the need for planning.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

All those we spoke to (including teachers, young people and creative providers) were very positive about the legacy of Creative Partnerships. They all remained committed to the developments that had been made. In addition it is evident that development was ongoing. Even though the activities were already highly successful, there was a desire to continue to evaluate and refine projects. However, staff were concerned about the sustainability of Creative Partnerships without the guarantee of continued funding at the level that it currently enjoyed. Some members of staff held the opinion that the school would find new funding to allow them to continue in much the same way. Others felt they would manage with fewer visiting creative providers (or none at all) as teachers would use the experience they had gained to provide a range of creative activities themselves. One teacher commented that this approach would be acceptable as ‘You could still do things, but a visitor has a much bigger impact.’ This suggests that Creative Partnerships would have a legacy but that this would be diminished if funding did not become available to sustain activity at current levels.

Conclusions

This school presents a positive example of the impact of Creative Partnerships. The initiative has provided structure, support and guidance, all of which have helped this high performing school to achieve its goals. By adopting a whole-school approach, the school has radically changed the teaching of foundation subjects. This has increased the school’s creative capacity and made the teaching and learning more cross-curricular to the benefit of children and staff.

Case Study 6: Bishopsgarth School, Tees Valley

Introduction

This case study is based on interviews carried out at Bishopsgarth School in December 2003. The interviews were conducted with: the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator (head of music), the head of art, the head of Year 8, a staff governor, five Year 7 students, five Year 8 students and two creative providers. The school was selected as a Creative Partnerships school in mid-2002 and activities began in January 2003. Prior to the initiative, the school had some experience of working with creative providers, but this was described as 'a bit piecemeal' by the headteacher. At the time of the visit, the school had applied to be a specialist school for the arts, but had been unsuccessful due to the small size of its arts departments.

The school

Bishopsgarth School is a small secondary school located in Stockton-on-Tees, with 590 students on roll. Most students live on two nearby housing estates where there is a high level of unemployment, and over a third of students are entitled to free school meals. The school has an onsite facility for 80 students with complex special educational needs (SEN) who have access to the full curriculum. These students travel to the school from a wider area than those who do not utilise the unit. The majority of students attending the school are of white ethnic origin, and all but a few speak English as their first language (OFSTED 2003). The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities (EIC) initiative and is a Stockton-on-Tees Education Action Zone (EAZ) member. Bishopsgarth attained standard Artsmark status in 2000.

What did the school set out to achieve?

The headteacher at Bishopsgarth explained that the school serves a catchment area deprived of creative and cultural possibilities. He felt the young people attending his school failed to see they were deserving of opportunities, and he regretted that so few possibilities existed for them. As a way of introducing young people to new experiences, the headteacher aimed to increase creative activities within the school. He believed involvement in these activities would also increase young people's self-confidence and broaden their horizons. To begin with, the school set out to deliver Creative Partnerships activities through its arts department. As these faculties were rather small, the headteacher aimed to use Creative Partnerships as a training tool for teachers. He hoped that, by developing the skills of staff, the school would be able to operate a more complete arts curriculum. In addition, as family involvement in

learning is a particular priority for Creative Partnerships in Tees Valley, the school was also keen to provide parents with new ways of looking at the role of creativity in education.

What did the school do?

Since the beginning of 2003, around 15 arts projects have been made possible at Bishopsgarth School through Creative Partnerships. These have included workshops and residencies based around a wide range of arts activities including animation, music, painting, creative writing and storytelling. Students have also participated in concerts, theatre performances and museum visits. The longer-term projects at the school have, however, centred upon dance and opera. These two projects, in particular, have enabled the school to focus on and demystify these two art forms which students at Bishopsgarth School would not normally experience.

Promoting and developing dance is a key interest for Bishopsgarth School. Central to its advancement within the school is a desire to remove the boundaries surrounding dance, particularly in relation to the participation of boys. The school worked with a professional dance organisation, Tees Dance Initiative, on a project entitled 'First Steps'. As the project involved linking with feeder primary schools, it was felt most relevant to include Year 7 students in the dance production. For one term, a small group of dancers worked with boys and girls on a weekly basis in their PE lessons. The project culminated in a performance at Stockton Riverside College.

Through Creative Partnerships, a series of opera projects was run at Bishopsgarth. The Creative Partnerships team in Tees Valley initiated a year-long project involving Northern Stage, the largest producing theatre company in the North East. Along with students from 19 other Creative Partnerships schools in the region, six students, with a particular ability for singing, participated in an opera summer school. The summer school events were followed by trips to see opera performances, after-school workshops, a Christmas concert and the creation of a new opera, 'Turning Point' which was performed at Borough Hall in Hartlepool. For the second part of the project, students at Bishopsgarth contributed to another major new opera, 'Blaze!', which was performed at Darlington Railway Museum. The students created the songs, music and drama for the production, and also worked on the technical side of the production and assisted with its promotion and marketing.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

The students at Bishopsgarth School appeared to be well informed about the activities on offer at the school and were keen to get involved. The Creative

Partnerships coordinator was confident that, through Creative Partnerships, the school was succeeding in providing students with good quality experiences that would not normally be included in the school curriculum. A number of staff believed students were being motivated and excited by their involvement in Creative Partnerships activities. New opportunities were being delivered, and young people were beginning to see their own potential and take pride in their achievements.

The dance project provided a context for creativity to develop in the school, which was particularly noted by staff. The head of Year 8 explained that the project got students to think about their progress and what they would like to be involved in the future at the school. Most of the students who took part in the final performance continued their involvement in dance by being involved in the school's annual musical production. She described this as 'spirit-raising'. For her, the participation of students in the show was important, but it was even more important that they were making a commitment to creative work and were providing their own ideas and suggestions.

Students were extremely positive about their involvement in the project. One young person summed-up its impact by saying: 'We all thought school was boring, but when you think about it, it is good because not all other schools have dance'. While all students enjoyed the project, there was an overwhelming feeling that the boys had responded particularly well. One teacher commented: 'I would have never believed that someone could get a boy in this school to dance'. The biggest impact was seen to be on their self-confidence. One young person revealed being teased by his older brother for being involved in the project because it was not masculine. In his defence, he remarked, 'you haven't done anything this brave'. Performing at a prestigious venue particularly helped to boost confidence levels. Also, as transport has been provided for families in need, students were able to perform in front of their parents and siblings – this encouraged a sense of pride among students and those watching.

According to the Creative Partnerships coordinator, the opera project was a massive creative boost for the students involved. Although the group was small in number, those participating maintained their interest throughout. The Creative Partnerships coordinator felt the project had succeeded in developing the students' cultural understanding and had removed the boundaries surrounding opera. She believed that, without the project, opera would not have featured in the students' thinking. However, because of the project, she felt students now had an unprejudiced view of opera as an art form. A creative provider supported this by saying that the students were able to participate in the process of making an opera with open minds. The students worked with a diverse range of providers and were able to see their ideas turned into opera pieces, which they found extremely rewarding. A creative provider remarked

that the opera ‘came from the kids, not just a bunch of professionals’. As well as this, one of the creative providers involved highlighted the social aspect of the project as she described how students from Bishopsgarth had made connections with students from other schools with the result that ‘some really good friendships’ that would not have otherwise existed, were made.

Impact on teachers

Bishopsgarth School aimed to use Creative Partnerships, in part, as a training tool for teachers. It was hoped that, by working in partnership with creative providers, teachers would develop their skills and be able to offer new activities within the school. The dance project was a great learning experience for the teachers involved. In particular, they became more confident and were less afraid to experiment. One PE teacher delivered a dance lesson during an OFSTED inspection, inspired by her involvement with the professional dancers. The projects have also impacted on the staff’s perception of students. One teacher commented: ‘[The dance project] has changed the way I perceive some of the students, particularly some of the boys who have really blossomed. I have seen them in a different light’. The Creative Partnerships coordinator commented that, as she knew which students had been involved in the opera project, she was able to talk to them about this type of music in a way that they would understand.

Impact on creative providers

From the perspective of a creative provider working on the opera project, the experience of working with Bishopsgarth had been exciting and very rewarding. She was particularly pleased that the students had seen their ideas turned into real pieces of theatre. In addition, she was very appreciative of the support she received from teachers, which was described as ‘unerring’.

Whole school impact

Bishopsgarth School has embraced Creative Partnerships with real enthusiasm, and the activities provided were seen to be of enormous benefit to the school, its staff and students. Whereas, in the past, creative providers had worked in the school on one-day projects, staff felt that longer-term residencies provided by Creative Partnerships were helping to make creativity a fundamental part of school life. The opportunity to develop the arts and broaden the school curriculum was seen to be particularly positive. For example, dance is now taught as part of the PE curriculum rather than being on the perimeter of the school’s programme. In addition, stronger cross-phase and cross-curriculum relationships have been developed, as teachers from different schools and departments have begun to work more closely together, for example combining English, art and music.

Looking Back, Looking Forward?

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

Good quality leadership from the Creative Partnerships coordinator was seen as a key factor in making Creative Partnerships work at Bishopsgarth School. The teaching staff involved spoke very highly of the role played by the coordinator. The headteacher felt the whole venture could have been ‘a big failure’ if the coordinator had not been as committed. Other staff spoke of the coordinator’s dedication and organisation; they had felt involved and informed every step of the way. The Creative Partnerships coordinator received one extra management responsibility point for coordinating and evaluating Creative Partnerships activities and she also had almost one day a week to dedicate to the initiative.

A key element of the coordinator’s role was to ensure that activities did not greatly disrupt the school timetable, which was regularly achieved and thoroughly appreciated by staff. Integrating activities into lesson-time had an added benefit as it guaranteed the participation of students. Although the school ran several extra-curricular clubs, the take-up was somewhat disappointing. Therefore, because Creative Partnerships was incorporated into lessons, students participated in activities which they would not normally elect to do in their spare time. While staff were concerned about possible disruption to lessons, they were in no way resistant to the activities. As commented by the head of Year 8, the success of the projects was, in part, due to the ‘responsiveness and open-mindedness of staff’.

According to the head of art, the projects would, perhaps, not have worked so well if the creative providers involved had been less professional and organised. In most cases, the quality of work provided was perceived to be very good by teachers and project briefs were fulfilled, if not surpassed. Again, in most cases, creative providers set out clear aims and objectives for their projects. One creative provider explained that he undertook a pilot project within the school to ascertain the young people’s capabilities. This type of planning and consultation was considered to be critical to the success of a project as was the support that the creative providers received from teachers. A staff governor supported this by noting that the experiences provided were challenging and fresh, and not overly academic.

What were the main challenges?

Initially, the school felt it did not have enough time to commit to Creative Partnerships. However, things started to change when the school was contacted directly by creative providers and project ideas were offered. The

school was interested in these proposals because they required less planning time. From the perspective of the Creative Partnerships coordinator, project planning took a lot of time and, as a result, was the most challenging part of her involvement in the initiative. She also saw project evaluation as a big task that required a lot of time. In her view, this aspect of the initiative had not been thought-out properly by Creative Partnerships. However, she was pleased that the paperwork associated with Creative Partnerships had become more streamlined over time.

Generally, the selection of creative providers ran smoothly and the school was happy with the activities provided. However, there were cases in which teachers questioned the 'lottery-system' of selection for creative providers. The Creative Partnerships coordinator described some of the creative providers that go into schools as 'unknowns'. In some cases, the school had based its decision to work with a particular creative partner solely on the basis of that person's judgements of themselves. However, while a project may look good on paper, it reveals little about the process by which it was achieved. As far as the coordinator was aware, while Creative Partnerships provided police checks on artists, they did not look at their professional credentials. She and her colleagues felt a directory of creative providers, based on the reviews of schools, would help them to put projects together in the future.

Working with creative providers presented other challenges for school staff. In one case, a project based on creative writing did not turn out as planned. The teachers involved felt the original idea was changed by the lead artist, and they were not convinced that students were getting as much out of the project as they should have. This was disappointing for the school and left staff feeling that more could have been achieved if the project had been run in-house. The head of Year 8 thought the project should have involved the whole year group, not just a small number. She also felt some of the students' work went unused and that they were used as 'props' rather than participants. There was also felt to be a lack of understanding of how schools work, for example creative providers were often unaware of timetable arrangements within the school. This was evidenced by the fact that one of the creative providers involved in the Opera Project experienced difficulty in getting the young people involved together, because of the timetable issues. She held her workshop at the same time as a compulsory revision class, which reduced the number of participants. She also felt the recruitment and retention of students was difficult because of other activities (particularly arts-based activities which drew away some of her attendees). From her perspective, the main challenge faced by the school was to include students who were uninterested in drama and music, because her project had only involved those who were already keen. Project review meetings, however, helped to relieve these tensions.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

A new pedagogic approach and a network of creative providers is the legacy that Creative Partnerships will leave at Bishopsgarth School. The opportunities provided through Creative Partnerships have been beneficial for the students and teachers involved, and the experiences that have been gained are now central to the school. But, as one of the creative providers pointed out, integrating creativity into the fabric of a school is a slow process. While creativity is not yet permeating every aspect of the curriculum, the school aims to build on the work and expects to firmly embed creativity within the entire school in the future.

Conclusion

Creative Partnerships has complemented the approach of Bishopsgarth School. The school wants to give as much as it can to its students, and Creative Partnerships has enabled it to realise some of its aspirations. The school aims to provide students with a well-balanced education through the arts, which is being achieved through the commitment and motivation of its staff. The students at Bishopsgarth School have been excited and enthused by the projects on offer, and many are continuing their involvement in creative activities. It is felt that, through Creative Partnerships, the school is now a more creative place with a more varied curriculum.

Case Study 7: Halewood Community Comprehensive School, Merseyside

Introduction

This case study is based on interviews carried out at Halewood Community Comprehensive School in January 2004. The following people contributed to the account: the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator (drama specialist and head of the school's art college), the head of music, the head of geography/PSHE, the head of drama, a school governor, ten Year 9 students and two creative providers. The school began involvement in Creative Partnerships in mid-2002, and prior to this had considerable experience in the arts. A substantial building programme has recently been completed at the school, providing a purpose built dance studio, high-tech recording studios, seven practice rooms, performing arts ICT suite, theatre and studio space.

The School

Halewood is a large community comprehensive school in Knowsley. The 1514 young people on roll are aged between 11 and 18 years, and most of them are of white ethnic origin. The school is located in a particularly deprived area of the country; and many young people are from backgrounds of high social and economic disadvantage. Halewood was awarded Beacon School status in 1999 and became an Excellence in Cities (EiC) school in the same year. In September 2001, the school became the first specialist school for the performing arts on Merseyside, with Artsmark Gold being achieved in 2004.

What did the school set out to achieve?

Halewood aimed to use Creative Partnerships as a way to increase cross-curricular working within the school. In particular, it set out to integrate dance, drama and music, based within its Arts College, with other disciplines taught at the school. The Creative Partnerships coordinator explained that the school wanted to create an environment in which young people could make connections between subjects and transfer knowledge from one lesson to another. He remarked: 'Kids move from one lesson to the next, they learn some really good stuff in one lesson and are required to use it in the next, but they don't know how'. By embedding arts-based subjects within the school curriculum, Halewood aimed to build upon its subject specialist status, to become a school that used its specialism to raise attainment and opportunities across the school.

By adopting a cross-curricular approach, the school was determined to increase the achievement levels and skills of its young people. The Creative Partnerships coordinator commented

...the curriculum is not teaching kids to become geographers or historians because they are not being given the skills. It is only when they get to sixth form that they are expected to change their approach and start thinking for themselves.

Through overlapping subjects, the Creative Partnerships coordinator wanted teachers to find new ways of delivering their schemes of work, which would enable young people to amalgamate their skills. By working with creative providers and through training programmes, it was hoped teachers would experiment with more imaginative approaches that would enhance the school's existing curriculum and excite its young people.

What did the school do?

Halewood aimed to build an awareness of the importance of using arts-based subjects as a method for whole school improvement. To begin this work, Year 8 young people were chosen to trial a new way of working. The Creative Partnerships coordinator explained that these young people were particularly challenging in terms of their behaviour and attitude to learning. He remarked that the school's curriculum, as it stood, would 'do them no good whatsoever'. So, along with colleagues, the Creative Partnerships coordinator looked at ways to make it more suitable. To begin with, Year 8 young people and their teachers embarked on several pilot projects with creative providers, with the aim of introducing new approaches into non-arts based subjects.

For one group of geography students, Creative Partnerships gave them the opportunity to work with a photographer for several weeks. Their teacher was keen to refresh a unit of work based on land use in urban areas, which was seen to be 'very stale' by teachers and young people. It was felt that current resources did not relate to young people's experiences, so the teacher and creative provider decided to base the unit of work on Liverpool's city centre. Each young person was provided with a disposable camera and was invited to take photographs around the city. The teacher and photographer encouraged young people to explore different geographical zones and look at the city in a new way. Young people were then given the opportunity to process their films and experiment with ways to display their work.

A maths project also took place, which involved young people studying fractions with two Columbian musicians. The idea was to explore Latin rhythms, create simple patterns and compare them both musically and mathematically as fractions. The musicians worked with the young people in a workshop format. Each young person analysed a specific part of a rhythm,

then looked at it as a fraction, then as a whole and finally performed it with their classmates. Within the workshops, young people looked at rhythms graphically, in order for them to consider how time can be broken up into fractions of music. They also looked at ways of making music on computers, which could also be applied as fractions and given mathematical values.

Following the pilot projects, the Creative Partnerships coordinator and his colleagues looked for ways to expand on the work. It was decided that working off-site would be a good opportunity to experiment and develop ideas. Therefore, the whole of Year 8, along with 30 members of staff, spent a week at a residential centre in Anglesey. Creative Partnerships contributed to the event by providing creative providers to facilitate the work of teachers. The ultimate aim of the retreat was to create a 'curriculum map' for the young people when they reached Year 9. In order to achieve this, teachers were paired with others according to what were thought to be interesting subject combinations. Teachers then discussed topic areas which they found difficult to teach and/or were those topics that young people were disengaged from. Working with colleagues based within the school's arts college, teachers considered ways in which arts-based subjects could enhance, complement and extend their work. The groups of teachers then planned work together and devised workshops to be undertaken with young people.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

The main aim of Halewood's involvement in Creative Partnerships was to enable young people to make connections between subjects, and several teachers commented that this had been achieved. The head of drama said she was beginning to see young people drawing upon different areas of learning, rather than learning only for discrete lessons. She felt this had had 'a massive input on their learning'. The ability to cross-reference subjects and skills was also commented on by a young person, who said 'I think you learn more quickly because you are using two different things and it is more enjoyable'. Related to this was an increase in young people's ability to think independently. The Creative Partnerships coordinator felt young people were now starting to make their own decisions, carry out critical analysis and formulate their own opinions.

As a result of their involvement in Creative Partnerships, the motivation levels of young people were also seen to have increased, as had their attitude to learning. A number of teachers commented that young people had begun to work independently of teachers and lessons. They were taking their work seriously and were staying behind after school to finish pieces of work. One teacher referred to her opinion of the young people when she first arrived at the school: 'I had written off the whole year group because I thought I

couldn't do anything with them'. This teacher was amazed by what the young people had achieved. She remarked: 'I would never have thought that I would have got this work out of them'

A teacher involved in a pilot project described how the teamwork element within the project, along with the allocation of responsibility areas to young people, had increased confidence levels and had enabled the class to 'gel together'. A number of young people also commented on the impact of Creative Partnerships projects. One aspect they spoke about was an improved ability to work with others. One young person remarked: 'I'm quite a dominant person but I listen more now'. Likewise, another observed that she was more able to cooperate because 'everyone has got to put in their ideas as well'. A third said: 'When you are working in a group and someone comes up with an idea you work on it and just gets better and better'. Young people also mentioned how their involvement in Creative Partnerships-related projects had affected peer relationships. One young person commented that, due to the working in groups during the Anglesey residential trip, she had 'made friends with people that I didn't think I would get on with'.

Impact on teachers

An awareness of the potential and importance of creativity in teaching and learning was seen to be the main impact of Creative Partnerships on Halewood's teachers. By working with creative providers and through in-school training on theories such as mind-based learning, accelerated learning and teaching for creativity, the headteacher considered his staff to be more open to change and more willing to experiment with the curriculum. The Creative Partnerships coordinator commented that Creative Partnerships had assisted in 'unlocking the potential' of teachers. From this, teachers were being inspired to become creative providers in their own right.

Collaborative working between departments was seen to have opened new challenges and possibilities for teachers. One teacher commented: 'Everything used to be behind closed doors and you might only make a link if it was with someone you were particularly friendly with'. This teacher now saw a flow of information and ideas within and across departments. The opportunity to plan with colleagues from different subject areas, and reflect and evaluate on what had been achieved had helped this teacher to develop her own practice and create the most impact in her lessons. This teacher viewed this to be the most important and valuable part of Creative Partnerships.

A number of teachers mentioned that, by working with creative providers, their lessons had become more fun. One teacher said he was delighted to see young people learning new material and enjoying the process. A creative provider observed that it was much easier for teachers to impart information,

and much easier for young people to accept information, when they were in an environment that was 'less sterile'. Several teachers felt working with creative providers had impacted on their own creativity, enthusiasm and learning. They had picked up new ideas which they intended to continue using. The head of music remarked: 'It [Creative Partnerships] has made me ask more questions about my teaching, and question how and why I am teaching that way'.

Impact on creative providers

In the view of two creative providers, their experience of working on Creative Partnerships projects at Halewood was very positive. They thought everyone involved had responded well, and enough time had been given to explore different project directions. Working alongside teachers, rather than imposing on them, was seen to be a particular feature of Creative Partnerships work. One creative provider commented that teachers often resisted working in creative ways because they anticipated an increased workload. He was pleased to have provided them with a bridge to working in more imaginative ways. A second creative provider was happy to see the school working on cross-curricular activities. This was a particular advantage to him, as a maths specialist, because it allowed young people to have an enjoyable maths experience, rather than a typically 'boring' encounter.

This said, the creative providers had faced some challenges in delivering activities. For example, one project involved young people playing instruments in front of a large group. This component did not work well because young people were reluctant to participate. The creative provider involved felt that, rather than being shy, the young people were in fact apathetic towards the activity. To resolve this, it was decided that the young people should work in smaller groups. The creative provider also explained that he had encountered some problems with the technical equipment at Halewood. As both of these issues were unexpected, he advised other creative providers to be well prepared when working in schools, because there would always be unanticipated difficulties.

Whole school impact

Since the introduction of Creative Partnerships at Halewood, the Creative Partnerships coordinator had noticed changes in the way the school worked. He sensed a realisation on the part of teachers that they were working towards one focus, rather than separate aims. The Creative Partnerships coordinator was confident that, more or less without exception, every department was applying creative approaches to teaching. He remarked that it was now 'a hell of a lot easier' for the school to achieve its vision. However, the head of drama explained that this impact was perhaps not anticipated. The school had originally planned to carry out a lot of creative activities. But, teachers started to think about what that actually meant. They had to examine how they were

going to explore creativity, how they would experiment with it, how they would integrate as many opportunities as they could, and ultimately, how it would affect their teaching.

Looking Back, Looking Forward

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

The willingness and determination of staff was seen to be the key factor in making Creative Partnerships work at Halewood. The Creative Partnerships coordinator commented: ‘so many things in education start off as great ideas and everybody is dead keen, and then they just fall by the wayside because so many other things get put on top of it’. To maintain enthusiasm for the initiative, it was essential to have support from the headteacher. The Creative Partnerships coordinator commented that Halewood’s headteacher had made Creative Partnerships a focal point for the development of school. One way to start this process was to oblige each teacher to plan and deliver three lessons using different styles/strategies, as part of their performance management targets. The headteacher remarked: ‘My job as a head is to create the conditions for other people to flourish and feel confident’.

The importance of a committed person to lead the initiative was highlighted by the headteacher as a way to ensure that Creative Partnerships worked within a school. He explained that Creative Partnerships needed an in-school coordinator who could strategically manage the venture, could devote their time to it long-term, and had a level of seniority to make change happen. It was also important for the school to have a vision on which to work towards. The Creative Partnerships coordinator explained that, in order to establish this focus, a dialogue between departments, at the beginning of the process, was really important. By having a clear vision, it was possible for Creative Partnerships to become central to Halewood’s thinking. The headteacher commented: ‘It’s no good being a passive partner; you need to be proactive and embrace it [Creative Partnerships]’.

What were the main challenges?

According to Halewood’s headteacher, embedding the Creative Partnerships concept in the minds of his 170-person workforce was a huge challenge. Likewise, the Creative Partnerships coordinator said, developing a whole school understanding about what creativity is and how it can be used within a classroom was challenging. In part, this was due to staff resistance, particularly from those outside of the arts. To gain the involvement of staff, it was important for those leading Creative Partnerships to construct a situation in which the personal benefits for them could be observed. As the headteacher

explained, while all staff might not be fully committed at this stage, they would be more willing to take part. Gradually, by being involved, they would gain a new understanding, and hopefully become more committed to working creatively. The challenge after this, as the Creative Partnerships coordinator highlighted, was keeping Creative Partnerships at the forefront of people's minds and making sure that the school was moving forward and not standing still.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

Halewood had begun to use Creative Partnerships as a catalyst to develop a strong model for creative teaching and learning. The headteacher described how the school had reached a point where there was such an overlap between its vision and that of Creative Partnerships that 'you would be hard pressed to separate the two'. In the view of its coordinator, Creative Partnerships at Halewood had evolved into a 'massive staff development' project. By working in partnership with creative providers, he was confident that those involved had been inspired to teach in more imaginative ways. He now hoped that teachers would continue to deliver their lessons through the arts and not just 'chalk and talk'. From the headteacher's perspective, he was looking forward to the school becoming a centre of excellence with creativity at the centre of its vision. He remarked: 'I don't see there ever being a conclusion to it [Creative Partnerships] because you are always going to adapt, change and develop'.

Conclusions

Creative Partnerships was influencing the way Halewood worked, and was forming a focal point for its progression. The school was strategically working towards integrating creativity across its curriculum. An ambitious vision had been introduced by those leading the initiative, but one that was adaptable and one that could evolve. Within the school, teachers from different backgrounds and approaches were beginning to work together on one focus, and a whole school understanding of creativity was being developed. Teachers were working with creative providers and in-school colleagues to produce imaginative approaches to the school's curriculum, and a strong sense of what a Creative Partnerships model can achieve was emerging. The next step is for the new methods of teaching to be used in a consistent way, in order to increase the achievements and skills of both young people and staff.

Case Study 8: Deansfield High School, Black Country

Introduction

Deansfield High School is located in an economically deprived area of the Black Country. The school joined Creative Partnerships in 2002, and since then has been cited as a best practice example of creative and partnership working by the Times Educational Supplement (TES). At the time of the case study visit in January 2004 the school was engaged in a number of different projects across all age ranges. In total, 11 sets of interviews were conducted for the case study: with an assistant headteacher, who shared the responsibility of Creative Partnerships coordination with another teacher, three subject teachers, the vice-chair of governors, one creative provider (who acted as a facilitator for the school) and three groups of young people from Years 7 to 13 (16 young people in all).

The school

Deansfield is a small school and, at the time of the last inspection (2001) there were 554 young people aged between 11 and 16 on roll. It is located in an area of extreme economic disadvantage and deprivation, which is reflected in a high proportion (40 per cent) of young people who are eligible for free school meals. Deansfield was placed in special measures in 1997 but an inspection conducted in 1999 judged that sufficient improvement had been made and the school came out of special measures at that time. Since then, Deansfield has improved the standards of attainment 'quite significantly', especially at GCSE where the rate of improvement has been 'much faster than in schools nationally' and the gap between Deansfield and other schools has 'narrowed substantially' (OFSTED 2001).

What did the school set out to achieve?

The assistant headteacher explained that the school set out to develop and enhance their existing priorities. These priorities were twofold, firstly to enhance teachers' professional development, especially in relation to adopting a wider range of teaching and learning styles and secondly, raising young people's self esteem, confidence and broadening their experiences of culture.

The school's arts policy, which was written as a result of Deansfield's participation in Creative Partnerships, states that arts activities will be enhanced which will aid 'innovative and imaginative contexts for teaching and learning in all curriculum areas... [and] increase the energy and enthusiasm of

young people and of teachers'. This aim of enthusing young people was identified by one of the school governors who viewed Creative Partnerships as a key way to reach the school's more 'challenging' young people, in particular 'those who are more difficult to involve in education'.

What did the school do?

At the time of the case study visit, Deansfield had completed two Creative Partnerships projects: a film project in collaboration with Wolverhampton University students, and another titled The Atlantis Project. A third project was just beginning on regeneration and town planning. As The Atlantis Project was the largest completed project at the school at the time of the case study visit, it formed the focus for discussion with the interviewees and will be the main subject of this report.

The Atlantis Project was named after the Atlantis Nightclub in Wolverhampton. The idea for the project and much of its development was guided by the young people who were also represented on the project's steering group. Young people were asked what they thought creative industries were. This led to the theme of a nightclub, including a fashion show and opportunities for young people to showcase their creative talents. Following the young people's initial idea, the school staff had a half day INSET event at the nightclub to 'brainstorm', plan fieldtrips and identify curricular opportunities.

The aims of the Atlantis Project were to develop young people's abilities and talents within a creative context relevant to their lives and to widen young people's experiences of opportunities for employment within the creative sector. The project provided opportunities to: engage in a cross curricular projects; develop creativity; give young people the chance to apply their imagination; pursue a purpose and evaluate their ideas within the context of night club culture. The project set out to involve all young people in the school and in so doing, to develop a sense of community, working collaboratively with creative providers and groups.

The project ran across the whole curriculum, linking performing arts, citizenship, geography, design and technology, science, literacy, numeracy, French and business studies with creative industries and the wider community.

Nine hundred young people and staff from Deansfield took over the nightclub for one night in May 2003 following six months of preparation that included creative writing, learning about the properties of light and how to programme lighting on computers, and making statistical records of drink sales. A plethora of creative providers was involved including a milliner, a potter, a story teller, a French theatre company, First Leisure Nightclubs, Dance Exchange, Punch

Records, Arena Theatre and Loudmouth Theatre Company. Additional sponsors and partners included Wolverhampton Community Safety Partnership and J. Sainsbury.

On the night, young people from all year groups put on dance, music and fashion shows, operated the sound and lighting systems, ran a French café (where only French was spoken), practised orienteering skills around the club and managed the crowd. A group of Year 11 young people also worked with the local Community Safety Partnership to produce a pocket size Safe Night Out Guide (SNOG), giving advice on health and safety, drugs awareness and the role of the police.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

All those spoken to identified definite and wide ranging impacts on the young people. Impacts were felt across the school, including increased academic ability and personal skills, broadened horizons, improved relationships between school staff and young people and improved attendance and behaviour.

All the young people spoken to clearly enjoyed the Atlantis Project and also felt that they had learnt a lot from it. Areas which young people felt had been developed ranged from new creative skills such as writing lyrics and music production using ICT, to new personal skills such as organisation, communication, collaboration and confidence in front of large crowds. They also identified an impact on their academic achievement, particularly in French and said that they had a better understanding of different types of learning. As the project was integrated into the curriculum, some young people also felt aided in their GCSE and A level studies. One young person suggested that she had got a good grade in her textile exam due to the project, while another commented that it 'egged me on to do better in my GCSEs'. These new skills were also recognised by the school staff. One teacher gave the example:

I've been working with 6th formers doing their UCAS forms and many of them mention Creative Partnerships in their personal statements. That in itself says it all about the skills that the children have learnt and what it means to them.

The young people felt that the project had broadened their horizons; they now had a greater understanding of the opportunities offered by the creative industries: 'it opened their eyes to the reality that the creative arts are not simply enjoyable for themselves, you can be employed to do it' (Vice-chair of

governors). The teachers felt that this was aided by the role models provided by the creative provider, in particular for the boys.

The project also made the young people feel differently about attending school and their relationship with the teachers. The young people valued working with their teachers outside of the formal school setting, as a 6th form student explained: ‘they [the teachers] were different outside school which I think helped the young people [and] teacher relationship and people could see that teachers are actually human’. Staff, young people and governors all identified an impact on attendance. One of the young people said that ‘it makes you want to come to school’ whilst a teacher gave the example of one young person whose attendance was ‘incredibly erratic’ before Creative Partnerships, but following Creative Partnerships ‘now comes back on a Wednesday night for extra work’. As a result, the teacher said that this young person’s grades were improving, and he had decided to go on to study design at A level. Creative Partnerships, said the teacher, ‘was the turning point for him’.

The school staff identified an impact on the young people’s behaviour. One teacher said ‘I haven’t seen more motivated classes – it gives them a boost to do something that no one else is doing; they’re in charge. Because they are more motivated they are more inclined not to misbehave’. This was also noted by guests who attended The Atlantis. The vice-chair of governors, and headteacher at a local (non-Creative Partnerships) school said that not only was behaviour good on the night of the nightclub event, but also in the subsequent term. He admitted that ‘you can’t make a direct link, but clearly it helped the school move forward in changing social relationships’.

Impact on teachers

All the school staff interviewed said that Creative Partnerships had had a significant impact on them. The teachers said that they now had a better understanding of other curriculum subjects, and therefore a better relationship with colleagues from other departments. They also said that they felt more motivated, valued and rewarded. The assistant headteacher felt that this had a positive effect on staff recruitment and retention, attributing much of the school’s improved reputation to the ‘enrichment’ provided by Creative Partnerships.

Impact on creative providers

All the creative providers were impressed with what Deansfield achieved from The Atlantis Project, and praised the positive relationships the school had forged with the local creative sector. For some of the creative providers, this was their first time working with a school and they felt that they learnt a lot from the new experience. One teacher explained: ‘The [creative provider]

worked in adult education and she looked terrified to start with, but in the end she said that she had learnt from a different angle’.

Both teachers and creative providers felt like they had an equal working relationship, as one teacher put it ‘we all worked together, the young people, myself and the creative provider... I think they [the creative provider] enjoyed it as much as we did’.

Whole school impact

The impact on the whole school is where the success of the Atlantis Project was demonstrated. Everyone interviewed, from the youngest student to the longest-serving member of staff, told us about how the atmosphere of the school had changed and how this had made a positive impact both within the school and beyond.

The improved relationship between young people and teachers, and between teachers working in different departments created what the assistant headteacher termed ‘a buzz about the school...an incredible feeling of community’. The young people felt this too, commenting that ‘it showed that the teachers really want to help the school’.

This enthusiasm reached into the local community. The school was previously struggling to throw off the stigma commonly attached to a school that has been in special measures, but now the activities taking place in school are being widely cited as an example of best practice and reported in the *TES* (Times Educational Supplement).

This enthusiasm has also led to a sustained feeling of pride in the school from young people, staff and the local community. One sixth form student said ‘people think it’s a better school now. It’s got to be one of the best schools around here now, it’s drastically changed. Creative Partnerships has given the school a new life’. Whilst the vice-chair of governors said:

It gave a sense of identity and pride to the whole school in a way that I’ve never seen another project do in any school... Self esteem is probably one of the most significant things, it developed in a whole range of people; not just the individual child but the whole school. You could sense it in the staff, a sense of pride in the school.

Looking back, Looking forwards

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

The planning of The Atlantis Project was crucial to its success. The involvement and enthusiasm of all key groups; young people, staff, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and creative providers right from the start meant that all involved felt they had ownership of the project. This has also meant that there was what the creative provider termed 'a genuine partnership':

It's transparent, it's joined up... it's a partnership. It is not going in and providing cover. It is not doing the job for the school or for the kids or for the teachers. Its got to be negotiated right from the start that the school is putting in as much as you are, preferably a lot more.

The support of the SLT throughout the project and the willingness and flexibility of a significant number of school staff were identified by the assistant headteacher as being main factors in making Creative Partnerships work in the school. She explained that the staff have to 'put in extra time, extra effort and be willing to work in different ways'. This was echoed by the staff themselves.

The support and flexibility of school staff and managers was also identified by the school's Creative Friend, a film maker who acted as a broker on behalf of the school. He told us that 'schools that have got the most out of... [Creative Partnerships] have demonstrated that flexibility'.

What were the main challenges?

There were some initial concerns raised by the Creative Partnerships coordinators and the Creative Friend over the bureaucracy surrounding the financing of the project, however this was felt by all parties to have been resolved. Some of the teachers also felt that time and staffing constraints caused difficulties. When asked how these constraints could be overcome, the staff suggested working during school holidays or weekends.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

Many of the interviewees spoke of the positive legacy that Creative Partnerships will have in the school, from the raised self-esteem of the school community to the increased respect from the local community.

The partnerships formed with creative providers, and with the local community, will continue to be important for the school. As the vice-chair of governors explained ‘the notion of partnership is key now in the school’. The school is looking to forge more partnerships with businesses, other schools, colleges and universities, and the wider community. The sustainability of this change was identified by the vice-chair of governors: ‘because it’s about practice and ethos, it’s not so affected by budget’.

Conclusions

Creative Partnerships has helped to make Deansfield High School an exciting place to work for both staff and young people. The personal and educational impact of the project on all key groups has raised self esteem and morale both within the school and beyond.

Case Study 9: Charles Edward Brooke Girls' School, London South

Introduction

Charles Edward Brooke School has a long experience of creative practice and had worked regularly in partnership with a variety of creative providers. It became a Creative Partnerships school in summer 2002, and, at the time of the case study visit in January 2004, was engaged in a number of different projects across all age ranges. A total of 14 interviews were conducted for the case study: with the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator, the chair of governors, five teachers (all of whom were heads of curriculum areas), three creative providers and three groups of Year 10 and Year 11 students (twelve young people in all).

The school

The school is a voluntary aided Church of England comprehensive for girls, with approximately 870 students on roll, aged 11 to 19. It is situated in a highly deprived area of the London Borough of Lambeth but draws its students from a wide area. A high proportion of the students are of minority ethnic origin, with the largest representation from Black African and African-Caribbean communities. There are also substantial numbers of girls from families with Balkan or Hispano/Portuguese origin. A total of 37 different languages are spoken at home and 32 per cent of students on roll speak English as an additional language. Approximately a third of students are on the register of special educational needs, though few have statements, and a large number (43 per cent) are entitled to free school meals. There is some pupil mobility in the school population and the level of attendance is high at one per cent above the national average.

As noted, the school was already a creative school before it became involved in Creative Partnerships, working on dance and music projects as well as with the National Theatre and the London Contemporary Dance Theatre. It has specialist status as an Arts Media College and was awarded an Artsmark Gold Award, in 2001 and again in 2004

What did the school set out to achieve?

The headteacher explained that involvement in Creative Partnerships had been a logical step to take, as the arts had always been strong in the school and it was hoped that Creative Partnerships would enable them to build on their

existing strengths. She said that involvement in Creative Partnerships would raise standards and encourage success for all. It was her belief that the creative arts could be a key vehicle in encouraging student engagement and motivation, in realising holistic personal development and in improved linkage between students from the 60 feeder schools. The Creative Partnerships coordinator, who was also deputy head, explained that Creative Partnerships gave the school the opportunity to devise its own projects across a broader range of areas. Prior to Creative Partnerships their arts projects had usually been linked to what was being produced at the National Theatre or the London Contemporary Dance theatre, and they had had no control over thematic matter and methodology. The head of drama explained that she had been keen to be involved in Creative Partnerships because of its openness to ideas. On a practical note, both she and the other teachers interviewed explained that Creative Partnerships funding had been an incentive to their involvement because it reduced the need to use their departmental budgets for this type of activity.

What did the school do?

The school organised a wide variety of projects, ranging from short projects for small groups of students to longer projects for whole year groups. The ideas for these were generated by the heads of curriculum areas and the projects included:

- a community radio project
- a project celebrating black hair design and fashion for Key Stage 3 students
- a street dance project
- a dance and photography project for Year 9
- a Year 7 performance project on the media
- the Young Arts Leadership Award (YALA)
- the Year 11 poetry slam
- the 'Architecture of Emotions' project for Years 8 and 9
- the 'Marriage à la Mode' project (in association with the National Gallery)
- film music composition
- approximately 20 days of continuing professional development (CPD), including a Choral Conducting course for the head of music.

Three of these projects (the black hair design and fashion project, the 'Marriage à la Mode' project, and the community radio project) were discussed in more detail during the case study visit.

The black hair design project, which lasted for one month in May 2003, had involved key stage 3 students who had worked with approximately 30 students from the London College of Fashion to design their hair and make-up. The project culminated in a one-day fashion show, including projected images of archived material relating to black hair. This was performed to different year groups and teachers in the school.

The Marriage à la Mode project involving the whole of Year 9 was run in association with the National Gallery. The activities, which took place after school, were based around Hogarth's sequence of pictures exhibited at the National Gallery. The project included dance, drama, and IT activities in which students constructed a collage using digital photography (with the computer package, PhotoShop). The work culminated in an evening performance for families and students at the London 'Bridge' nightclub in the summer term, 2003. A number of adults were involved in the project. These included teachers, representatives from the National Gallery, and three creative providers.

The community radio project, which took place in the summer term 2003, involved young people from the school and children from local feeder primary schools (two of which were also Creative Partnerships schools), who worked together to plan, record and broadcast a five-day radio show on an FM frequency. The core aim had been to strengthen links with feeder primary schools and the local community and to introduce radio as a medium within media education. The students produced programmes containing a mixture of pre-recorded and live material and the output included music from a variety of genres and discussion topics which were relevant to the local area. In addition to the Key Stage 2 and key stage 3 students, and key stage 5 'peer tutors', four members of staff were directly involved in CPD in relation to the project. The radio project was due to be repeated in the summer term, 2004.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Discussions with senior teachers, teachers, students and creative providers revealed that participation in Creative Partnerships had had a positive impact at both individual and whole school level. Aspirations, confidence and motivation were increased and all gained from their experiences of working with creative providers on Creative Partnerships projects. The perceived impact on key groups is described below.

Impact on young people

All the staff interviewed agreed Creative Partnerships had had a wholly positive impact on the students involved. Not only had it exposed them to high standards and developed their creativity, but it had also improved their

motivation, behaviour and self-esteem, particularly in Key Stage 3, where the bulk of the Creative Partnerships projects had been focused. It was noted that, since the beginning of the school's involvement in Creative Partnerships, Key Stage 3 English and Maths results had dramatically risen. Though it was not possible to attribute this to Creative Partnerships alone it was felt that Creative Partnerships had contributed significantly to the results as it had been used by subject teachers a way of keeping 'the girls motivated and on track.' In addition, attendance levels had improved. It was known that the Poetry Slam and YALA activity had kept in school some Year 11 students who would have normally become disaffected, as the coordinator said, 'they were turned around by it'. In addition to this, it was felt that Creative Partnerships projects had developed teamwork, trust and a sense of responsibility among the students, and that their relationships with teachers had improved. The coordinator thought that the students were beginning to feel that they had an investment in the creative arts, and that the National Gallery and National Theatre were theirs to go to. This idea of ownership of cultural space was reiterated by two other teachers, who felt that Creative Partnerships gave students access to London, to people and to places, as one of them explained, 'You are trying to open doors so that the girls can remember where these doors are in the future'. This view was shared by the Chair of Governors who felt that Creative Partnerships funding had enabled students to access opportunities afforded by being in central London. This is how one teacher summed up the impact of Creative Partnerships on the students:

It has raised pupil awareness of the world around them in the art and design field. It also helps them take risks in some of their designs. It empowers them to feel more confident, which is what it's all about. It has given them confidence that they can do things, the confidence that comes with a new challenge and finding a pathway to meet that challenge. It's good that you often work in teams with them and you need a mixture of individual praise as well as group praise.

He felt that Creative Partnerships had given the students the opportunity to take on broader challenges in environments unfamiliar to them. This was reiterated by one of the creative providers interviewed who felt that Creative Partnerships had encouraged students to show 'positive commitment' and that they were 'more willing to try new things and willing to give ideas more'. In addition it was felt by teachers that students were able to see the best and know that it was possible for them to achieve that as well. It also raised students' awareness that creative providers were interesting and engaging people to work with and it gave the students role models. One of the creative providers felt that it was good for students to relate to an adult who was not a teacher, and another, that students had gained an insight into working with professionals and the process of creating an idea and a final performance.

Year 10 students felt that they had benefited from Creative Partnerships activities in a number of ways. Not only did they feel that they had developed new skills, particularly in music and IT, but they had also learnt how to work with other people, and their self-confidence had grown, as this student explained, 'Working with new people... [I am] confident... [they] bring new ideas to what you are doing'.

Impact on teachers

The headteacher described the very positive impact of Creative Partnerships on the teachers, who had given a great deal of their time to the activities and valued the opportunities for CPD and teamwork offered by Creative Partnerships. Both she and the coordinator felt that Creative Partnerships funding motivated staff to 'give more' and was also a significant factor in staff recruitment and retention. In addition to this, it was felt that Creative Partnerships had given teachers the opportunity to change their approaches to teaching, 'it has enhanced their thrust towards active teaching. It has afforded them opportunities to look at how they are delivering. It has brought a fresh impetus to their work'. The coordinator described Creative Partnerships as 'liberating' and commented that teachers 'can have their own ideas now and there is funding to do it'. Creative Partnerships had also provided teachers with the opportunity to view colleagues' work in more detail and to gain from each other professionally.

Similar views were expressed by the teachers interviewed, who reported that Creative Partnerships inspired them to be creative outside their subject areas, as one teacher explained 'It has encouraged the school to look to be creative outside the curriculum, which is hard because of time and funding. Creative Partnerships funds staff to go and do something. The freedom allows staff to be creative outside the restrictions'. Teachers also felt that Creative Partnerships had contributed to their own CPD and said that they had been inspired through working with creative providers. They had enjoyed the INSET and become more confident with the support of Creative Partnerships, as this teacher explained, 'Creative Partnerships backs you up a bit more in what you are doing and makes you feel you have really achieved something'. Several teachers noted a sense of satisfaction gained from 'doing something professional' and from working 'as an artist rather than a teacher' and it was thought good for students to see their teachers in a different light.

Similarly, one of the creative providers, who had worked on the 'Marriage à la Mode' project, felt that Creative Partnerships involvement had stimulated the staff and developed their confidence. She felt that it had given meaning to what teachers did, raised their aspirations, and extended their experience.

Impact on creative providers

The three creative providers interviewed were also very positive about their involvement in Creative Partnerships. One of them, a freelance dancer and artist, who had considerable experience of working in schools, felt that Creative Partnerships was different from other artist-in-schools initiatives because it enabled her, as a creative provider, to access funds more easily and to offer projects and activities that she felt would extend the curriculum. She felt that Creative Partnerships activity was more artist-led and had given her the opportunity to experiment with ideas and develop personally. It had impacted upon her approach to teaching and encouraged her to develop more cross-curricular approaches in her work. Another remarked that Creative Partnerships had offered her opportunities for personal development, in that she had not previously worked in schools.

Whole school impact

In addition to the impact on students and staff, the headteacher felt that Creative Partnerships had had a positive impact on the school as a whole, in terms of its culture and image, especially as Creative Partnerships funding had enabled the school to involve parents more (as in the performance at the 'Bridge') and improve relationships with the wider community and other schools (as in the case of the Radio Project). She felt that Creative Partnerships 'endorses that which we stand for, the ethos of the school' which placed strong emphasis on inclusion and high standards. This was a view shared by the Chair of Governors who felt that Creative Partnerships had brought out the best in all students, regardless of ability. It had raised their self-esteem and may improve their academic performance in the future. The headteacher felt that Creative Partnerships had enhanced the school's already strong reputation as a centre for creative arts. Furthermore, relationships with parents had improved more quickly than they would otherwise have done through their involvement in Creative Partnerships activities and it was felt that parents were beginning to perceive schooling in a slightly different way.

One of the creative providers summed up the impact of Creative Partnerships on the school as a whole, 'Arts can be used to produce more creative thinking... transferable skills to different subject areas, problem-solving, building partnerships with other people, learning confidence... schools could be much more creative across the curriculum, teachers could get ideas of delivering lessons in different ways through working with artists'.

Looking back, looking forward

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

Staff interviewed felt that the key factors in the success of Creative Partnerships were support from the School Leadership Team (SLT), the governing body and staff. Both the headteacher and the coordinator stressed the importance of the leadership team's commitment and involvement in Creative Partnerships. The headteacher had been involved in liaising with the LEA and in the setting up of the programme as an 'advocate' and 'enabler'; the coordinator's role was to keep staff abreast of what Creative Partnerships was about in terms of organisation, deadlines and available funding. She facilitated rather than organised the work, had an overview of projects and kept in regular touch with the Creative Partnerships team to discuss ideas for new projects. The coordinator stressed that Creative Partnerships funding had been invaluable as it had been used to provide her with administrative assistance on a daily basis which enabled her to put in place a large number and variety of artistic initiatives, all of which had entailed meticulous planning.

Both the headteacher and the coordinator felt that it was essential to find the right person with the status required for the post of Creative Partnerships coordinator, as the head explained:

A key factor is the status of the Creative Partnerships coordinator within the school, who the particular person is who is going to do it. There's got to be huge backing from the head and leadership team and the person who's appointed has got to be extremely well organised, used to deadlines and with an eye for detail.

As well as this it was felt by the head that the Creative Partnerships could not be done 'without drive and determination and a belief in what you are doing.'

What were the main challenges?

Staff interviewed felt there were two main challenges. These were:

- making sure that the expectations of Creative Partnerships were being met in terms of administration, contracts, deadlines and objectives
- ensuring that projects were set up not to fail and that everything was going to plan with regard to the creative providers, once the activities had begun.

The coordinator summed this up:

The bureaucracy of the contracts and the partnerships has been a little heavy going and having to meet certain deadlines in order to use a partner in a specific term. The reality is that when you are caught up in planning it takes a lot of time and there are so many other deadlines and events going on in the academic year for teachers that they have to work to, that it's maybe been a little bit prescriptive.

It is worth bearing in mind here that the school ran a considerable number of Creative Partnerships projects over the course of the Creative Partnerships programme, each of which required careful planning and organisation. But this burden was alleviated by the extra administrative support funded by Creative Partnerships. The coordinator herself agreed that the school would not have been able to contemplate such an ambitious programme without this additional resource.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

The headteacher hoped that the school would continue with successful arts projects because of the positive impact on student disaffection and the overall value to student development. The coordinator thought that the school would try to continue the approaches developed through Creative Partnerships, but it would be difficult to sustain them without employing a fundraiser.

The headteacher's advice to other schools contemplating similar arts projects was to have a clear aim, to be aware of existing talent in the school, and to take advantage of possibilities for collaborative work with other schools.

The coordinator's advice was to brainstorm ideas with other members of staff and maybe employ a facilitator to support activity. One of the creative providers felt that it was important to have a good relationship with school and staff and to work in partnership to achieve set goals.

Conclusions

It was clear from the interviews conducted for this case study that the extra funding provided through involvement in Creative Partnerships was considered to be an important factor in its success. The key reasons for this were that funding has increased the amount and quality of the enrichment activity provided by the school. But it was also felt that similar (although perhaps fewer) arts projects would have happened in any case because the creative arts were already very strongly represented, as this teacher explained:

Creative Partnerships has been heaven-sent in that they have provided some funding and some systems and some links that were very useful,

but they didn't invent the wheel. The funding has offered the opportunity to build consistent relationships with partners and it has enabled things to be planned better, but it would have happened anyway.

The difference that Creative Partnerships was perceived to make to the school lay in the opportunities it brought to work more consistently in partnership with creative providers and across the curriculum, and to establish lasting working relationships with other schools, parents and the wider community.

Case Study 10: St. Edmund's Catholic School, Kent

Introduction

This case study is based on 12 sets of interviews. These were conducted with the school's headteacher, the Creative Partnerships coordinator and four teachers from various subject areas. In addition to the school based staff, interviews were also conducted with the Chair of Governors, one creative provider and one Creative Partnerships funded Project Manager, and group interviews were conducted with four groups of young people from Years 8 and 9, (17 young people in total). The case study visit took place in July 2004 over a period of two days.

The school

St. Edmund's Catholic School is a voluntary aided, comprehensive school, in Dover, Kent. It has approximately 750 young people aged between 11 and 18 on roll. It is one of three non-selective secondary schools in the area. The percentage of students who achieve five GCSEs, grade A*-C is 51 per cent (2003/04 results), which is slightly lower than the local and national averages (56 per cent and 53 per cent respectively). Approximately 22 per cent of those on roll have Special Education Needs (SEN), this figure includes those without statements (those with statements accounts for three per cent). Of those on roll, approximately nine per cent are eligible for receive free school meals.

Approximately three years ago, the school began its bid for specialist arts status and Artsmark Gold. They were both awarded in September 2003. The headteacher, realising the potential of Creative Partnerships, was keen to support the school and complement existing specialist arts activity.

What did the school set out to achieve?

The school wanted to expand on the arts related achievements it had already made. Creative Partnerships links equally to specialist status and academic activity. The Chair of Governors described Creative Partnerships in this school as 'an expression of [the school's] specialist status rather than something separate'. The headteacher's vision was to use Creative Partnerships to move from a compartmentalised approach to creativity (based in arts subject areas only) to something more cross-curricular that would help the school meet their obligation to foster links with the wider community and other local schools. The Creative Partnerships coordinator said that the school did not see Creative

Partnerships activity as distinct from academic activity, but rather it was there to enhance what they offered.

Prior to involvement in Creative Partnerships, the headteacher had a strong belief that it was important for young people to have high levels of self-esteem. He felt that increased arts opportunities could achieve this and impact positively on their students' academic and overall performance. He also explained the importance the school attributes to meeting individual students' needs.

I wanted to introduce a wider range of subjects into the curriculum and I thought it suited this school to have more arts. It is not just about arts though, it is also about creativity and new ways for reaching every individual's learning needs.

What did the school do?

The school began the first of its Creative Partnerships activities in spring 2003. There had been three main projects at the time of the NFER visit: Box Clever; The Sound Mirrors and the Roundhouse Theatre project. The Box Clever activity was completed in the summer term 2004, whilst the others continued into the 2004/05 academic year.

Box Clever are a multi-disciplinary theatre company that worked with the school on six projects simultaneously during 2004. Each project was created collaboratively by the Box Clever artists, class teachers and students. Based initially on ideas that came from the teachers, each of these individual projects developed differently with input from the young people and creative providers. The final presentations included dances, theatrical productions, installations and multi-sensory experiences.

The Sound Mirrors project was an independent, long-term project that aims to recreate large concrete structures first designed between the two world wars to intercept the sound of enemy aircraft travelling over the English Channel. The two new 'Mirrors' will be placed on the cliffs at Folkestone and at Sangatte in France. The internationally acclaimed sound artist in charge of the project believed strongly that 'the project belongs to the people' so was keen to involve the community in its development. St. Edmund's is the only school involved in this project in England. Currently there is a core group of seven students, an extended class group, a group of Year 7 students, an international sound artist, a Creative Partnerships-funded project leader and a selection of school staff working on this project. One of the creative providers involved in the project described the purpose of it in relation to the school as:

Empowering the children and encouraging them to engage with their peers and develop education programmes themselves. It is very much about feeding into their confidence, getting them to think independently, giving them the skills, knowledge and understanding so they feel supported enough to do whatever they want.

The Roundhouse Theatre project involved sixth form students only. The young people worked with other community county and local agencies together with theatre professionals and artists to create a dedicated performing arts venue for the town of Dover. This project does not form the focus of the case study (which is based around the Box Clever and the Sound Mirrors projects), as these were the projects with the highest profile at the time of the NFER visit.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

In total, approximately 150 students have currently taken part in Creative Partnerships activity and many different subject areas have been involved. As noted, we spoke to four groups of young people. Three of these had taken part in Box Clever projects and the fourth group was made up of some of the members of the 'Sound Mirrors' core group. The latter group talked about the impact their involvement in Creative Partnerships had made to their confidence and team working. One young person said:

If I was asked to do this [the interview] before the Sound Mirrors project I would have felt a lot more unsure about speaking to people, I would be more scared and probably not speak as much as I would now.

Another added:

And what makes it easier is that you have had to do speaking, you have had to work in a team, you have had to work together so you have learnt the skills to work in a team and to speak what you think so you don't just answer questions, you can ask them too.

The young people working on the Sound Mirrors project as well as those who had worked on the Box Clever projects, felt that their relationship with the teachers had improved. They made some comments about getting to know teachers and seeing them more as 'people'. For example, one young person noted: 'we've got to know [the teacher] better and we don't see their teaching side but more of their personality. It's good because it makes it easier to talk to

them'. Others also talked about the change in their relationship with staff. Another young person had this to say:

The teacher will ask you questions and you can ask them questions. You can say "What do you think of this?" and they are not in charge; they are not telling you what to do, they are helping you instead of telling you.

Some of the young people who had participated in Box Clever projects noted an impact in terms of improved imagination, belief in the fact that they had good ideas and improved problem solving skills when working in groups.

The staff also talked about perceptions of an impact of Creative Partnerships on young people. Many of the staff had participated in Creative Partnerships activities so were well placed to make such observations. The Creative Partnerships coordinator highlighted two levels of young people's engagement with Creative Partnerships activities. The first was of the performers in the productions 'who got nothing but positive things out of Creative Partnerships.' He thought this might have a greater impact on certain individuals: 'Perhaps it will change who they are in a positive way?' Secondly, he felt that the student members of the audience were enthused by the experience: 'maybe it has whet their appetites and they will want to be more involved in other future projects'.

A creative provider described changes in language and thinking skills that she had observed in the seven young people in the Sound Mirrors core group. She noted considerable improvements in:

their language skills and their ability to reflect critically on what they are doing, to talk using appropriate language, to articulate what they are feeling and have the confidence to articulate what they are feeling.

Other members of staff thought that Creative Partnerships had helped the young people involved learn valuable lessons about social skills and cultural development that extended beyond 'book learning'. One teacher said she felt the students were more culturally aware, in two senses. First they were more aware of different forms of cultural expression: for example, they had learned that 'dance isn't just ballet'. Second, by working with artists from different cultures, they had gained a greater understanding of different cultural forms and had explored issues related to nationality and language. Overall, staff felt these developments had helped individuals to develop as well as having a positive impact on learning in general.

Impact on teachers

The Creative Partnerships coordinator viewed the Creative Partnerships activities as an opportunity for staff development and commented that the teachers who had become involved had realised how they could extend their teaching and practice. He also felt that there had been a widespread appreciation of the importance of creativity amongst staff in the school.

All the teachers we spoke to had participated in the Box Clever productions. They talked about the development of generic and specific skills that were both professional and personal. One teacher said he had learned new skills like music sampling, adding that his experience on the project had made him more confident in this area. He also felt that working with the creative providers had given him some ideas on how to change his approach to learning and had made him appreciate that 'the learning experience could be more than [students] sitting down in front of me'. Another member of staff felt she had learned the importance of not 'forcing' her ideas on to the students. In future, she would try to allow her students to discover different elements of the subject themselves, by providing them with the appropriate environment, space and time.

One of the teachers confirmed what the young people had said about improvements in relations between staff and students. She described how staff members had put themselves in the position of learners, allowing students to: 'see teachers struggle to learn lines and get nervous and they don't expect us to feel like this'.

Impact on creative providers

One of the creative providers working on the Sound Mirrors project made the following observations about what she felt she had learnt from working with the school and young people. Having worked in similar settings before, she described Creative Partnerships as having provided a 'luxury context'. It had enabled her to work with a small group of students, and she had gained a better understanding of different learning styles, as well as seeing how young people engage with professionals in a contemporary context. These insights would, she felt, prove useful in all her future work.

Whole school impact

One of Box Clever performances (Leap of Faith) was mentioned by school staff, governors and students alike because of its impact on the whole school community. This project was concerned with spiritual themes and was described by many as 'thought provoking'. This and other projects were considered to have given the school a sense of achievement and enhanced the image of school in the eyes of parents, feeder schools and others. This positive

development is something the school wants to build on in the future by widening participation in Creative Partnerships activities.

Looking back, looking forward

What are the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

The most frequent comments on the key factors of success related to support shown for the initiative by those involved. In particular, the respondents highlighted the support that had been provided by the governing body, the headteacher, the Creative Partnerships team and the Creative Partnerships coordinator.

The Creative Partnerships coordinator added that the commitment shown by staff had been fundamental. He commented that Creative Partnerships had built on the creativity of staff and had benefited from their willingness to take risks. He added that Creative Partnerships had provided space for individuals to respond differently: 'Every teacher is autonomous and every department has its own vision, the thing is to try to encourage people to see the benefit of working in a creative way.'

In relation to project planning, the teachers spoke highly of the 'creative meals' they had shared with Box Clever in the early stages of the project work. These were informal off-site meetings, with dinner provided. The purpose of these meetings was to plan and develop Creative Partnerships projects. Staff also appreciated the high quality of the inputs from creative providers and creative groups. A number of respondents talked about the importance of providing funding specifically for creative work. In particular, one person noted the importance of the willingness of Creative Partnerships to fund the creative process as well as the final product.

In addition, a number of the people we spoke to mentioned timing as a crucial factor in this school's successful engagement with Creative Partnerships. The initiative had complemented and added to the developments in the school (including the award of Artsmark gold and specialist arts status). These initiatives worked together and contributed to the school's vision of what it was aiming to achieve.

What were the main challenges?

The challenges the school faced were operational rather than strategic. 'Conflict of time' was highlighted as the main challenge. There have been occasions when demands on young people's time have conflicted (for example

Creative Partnerships activities and lessons). The same is true for teachers involved in Creative Partnerships activities. In some cases the impact on personal time of staff and pupils has been quite marked.

What is legacy of Creative Partnerships?

The headteacher felt that the staff had learned a great deal from the creative providers and that the school would always be able to benefit from the ideas that arts professionals could bring. As he said: ‘They are very very imaginative. The more [the school] can cast its net for ideas the better’. Though only 150 of the 750 young people had been involved in Creative Partnerships so far, the school planned to increase this number substantially in coming years. The activities that have already taken place have enhanced the profile of the school locally and the culmination of projects like Sound Mirrors are expected to enhance this further.

The school was planning to introduce ‘vertical tutor groups’. This would mean re-arranging tutor groups to reflect the subject area interest of students across year groups. This development, it was hoped, would provide an opportunity for Creative Partnerships activities to be targeted on students’ interests, thereby involving more of them in a cross-curricular approach.

Conclusions

The school is only in its first year of Creative Partnerships activities and has already achieved a great deal. Their approach has emphasised both final products and creative processes. In so doing, the school has offered a variety of opportunities to students via Creative Partnerships. All the activities have been in keeping with their priorities as a school and have been attuned to meeting the needs of staff and students.

Case Study 11: Glendene School, Durham and Sunderland

Introduction

This case study is based on interviews carried out at Glendene School in January 2004. Those contributing to the account include: the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, a community governor, the Creative Partnerships coordinator (a music and drama specialist), a class teacher (primary and arts coordinator), two creative providers, two special support assistants (SSAs), one Year 7 student and three Year 8 students. The school is one of two Creative Partnerships special schools in County Durham, and had been involved in the initiative for 20 months when the interviews were conducted. Prior to Creative Partnerships, the school had worked on several annual projects with creative providers, and was working towards achieving specialist school status for visual arts.

The School

Glendene is a co-educational community special school in County Durham for children and young people between the ages of two and 19 years. The 144 students on roll at the school have a wide range of learning difficulties, including profound and multiple, severe and moderate as well as students with autism and, recently, educational and behavioural difficulties. The school is situated in the former mining village of Easington, which is two miles from the coast. However, most of Glendene's students travel to the school from outside the local area, and return home in the evening. A large majority of students come from homes where English is the first language, and over two-thirds are eligible for free school meals (OFSTED 1999). The school is a member of the Easington and Seaham Education Action Zone and had been successful in achieving an Artsmark Silver Award.

What did the school set out to achieve?

The central aim of Glendene's involvement in Creative Partnerships was to challenge people's perceptions of children and young people with disabilities. In particular, the school planned to use the initiative to address the commonly held assumption that disabled students produce work of a lower standard than those with a full range of ability. Through Creative Partnerships, Glendene set out to generate high quality work that would not be dismissed as 'nice, but special school work'. In producing such work, the school aimed to challenge traditional views, while also providing students with a strong sense of achievement and self-worth. The school's Creative Partnerships coordinator

explained this was very important, because many students with disabilities are too familiar with feelings of disappointment.

To help achieve its aim of challenging stereotypes, Glendene planned to extend the opportunities of students to participate in activities outside the classroom. Engaging students in community life was seen as a way to overcome barriers that exist between people with disabilities and people without, while also developing the life-skills of students. As Glendene's headteacher commented: 'it is all too easy to wrap our youngsters in cotton wool'. Through working in partnership with creative providers, the school set out to deliver an imaginative programme that would extend access to community activities, improve networks and, ultimately, showcase the talents and abilities of its students. By involving the local community in creative work, the school also hoped to achieve Artsmark Gold in the future.

What did the school do?

At the time of the NFER visit Glendene had been involved in six Creative Partnerships activities, with 'The Hare Witch Project' being its flagship. The project was based around a piece of local folklore known as 'The Legend of the Easington Hare'. The story features a mythical creature that is persistently hunted, but can never be caught. One day, a hound manages to bite the hare's leg, just before it escapes into a nearby building. The hunters follow the hare inside, but there is no sign of it. Instead, the hunters find an old woman bandaging a wound on her own leg. By centring the project on a local legend, the school encouraged its students to connect with the surrounding community. Likewise, villagers connected with the school by being interviewed on their knowledge of the Easington Hare, as part of a spoof documentary.

With the help of a local production company, Animah, students worked towards turning the Easington Hare story into an animated film. Three artists worked with all of Glendene's students, at some level, once a week for six months, on activities such as model making, drawing, singing, puppet making and story writing. These elements were pieced together to make an eight-minute film. The Creative Partnerships coordinator highlighted some principles put in place to ensure the project achieved its aims. She described the importance of achieving 'the wow factor', in order to challenge perceptions of special school work, while also providing students with an important goal to aim for. In addition, the project needed to be student-driven, and it was crucial for students to see their ideas being taken seriously. An artist from Animah was keen to point out that the essential qualities, brought to the film making process by students, were kept to the forefront of their agenda.

Following months of hard work, the film was completed in February 2004. It premiered at the Animex International Festival of Animation at Teesside University, and went on to win an award from The Royal Television Society in 'The Young Videomakers Showcase'. In addition to these events, and a presentation of the film at Glendene, to which local residents were invited, it was shown in local shops, pubs, hospitals and during the half-time interval at a Middlesbrough football match. Local schools and Easington District Council (which uses the hare within its logo), also received copies of the film. A number of staff from the school highlighted the importance of publicising the work in this way. One SSA commented, 'seeing the Hare Witch Project on the big screen made the students feel like they had achieved something'. By displaying work like this, the school also ensured that the talents and abilities of its students were recognised by a large audience.

What has been the impact of Creative Partnerships?

Impact on young people

For students at Glendene, their experience of Creative Partnerships was seen as something that would stay with them for years to come. The deputy headteacher commented: 'Recall is quite difficult for a lot of our children, but they don't forget these sorts of projects'. The animation project captured their imagination, and from the viewpoint of school staff, served to enhance their confidence levels. The Creative Partnerships coordinator remarked that students were now keen to be included in similar activities, whereas they had previously been hesitant to participate. To a large extent, this was seen to be the result of the student-driven nature of the Animah project. One of Glendene's students described the Animah artists as 'very nice, calm, kind and relaxing people, who gave us enough time'. Time, in particular, was an important consideration for Glendene, as many students required intensive support. As the headteacher explained, while some students did not have the cognitive ability to fully understand the end result of the project, simply participating was seen to be important to their development.

The headteacher at Glendene was particularly pleased with the emphasis that had been placed on the development of new skills, both practical and emotional. An example of this was provided by the Creative Partnerships coordinator, who described how the project had transformed one of the school's more able students, who experiences severe social awareness and behaviour problems due to autism. She explained that, when this student first arrived at the school, it was difficult to for him to focus on anything and teachers used to worry about having him in their classroom. The Creative Partnerships coordinator had observed a major improvement in his ability to concentrate, collaborate and conduct himself appropriately. She felt the project had inspired this student and enabled him to find something he was successful at. As she remarked: 'He no longer feels a failure, he is a success.' More generally, some students had opted to study for GCSE Art courses after

involvement in Creative Partnerships and the head described this as a major positive development.

Another impact of the project, which was seen to have an influence on other areas of school life, was the development of better relations between students and their peers. Glendene and Animah had deliberately applied a team approach to the project, which the Creative Partnerships coordinator felt had boosted the ability of young people to share their ideas with others. The deputy headteacher at Glendene explained how different groups of students had worked together, including ‘tough 16 year-old lads who worked alongside autistic children and young multiple learning difficulty children’. The increased communication between students was also seen to have extended their vocabulary and confidence in speaking with others.

Impact on teachers

Creative Partnerships was perceived to have impacted positively on the members of staff involved. The headteacher described how working with creative providers had been a tremendous chance for staff to build on their existing skills and continue with their professional development. He was thrilled that members of staff had been able to work alongside ‘real artists’, but also that staff had been prepared to ask questions and learn alongside the students. In his opinion, the added value of working with creative providers ‘could not be quantified’. He also described how Creative Partnerships had been a huge motivator for staff and how it had ‘fired their imagination’. Through Creative Partnerships, members of staff were given the opportunity to experiment with creative approaches, which in turn created opportunities for students to develop their talents and abilities.

A number of staff spoke about the ways Creative Partnerships had impacted on them, for example greater ability to work in a team, increased motivation levels and enhanced creative awareness. The Creative Partnerships coordinator felt Creative Partnerships had helped to strengthen collaborative working within the school, as staff now felt they were part of a group with common ideals and goals. But, perhaps the most significant impact was improved self-confidence amongst staff. The headteacher was particularly delighted with the achievements made by the Creative Partnerships coordinator, who commented herself on the way Creative Partnerships had turned her confidence levels around. She described herself as ‘a different person’ as a result of attending meetings and training provided by Creative Partnerships, such as a session on cultural diversity. Whereas, five years ago, she found it difficult to speak to a group of people, she was now looking forward to using her knowledge to lead training sessions aimed at encouraging other teachers to work in creative ways.

Impact on creative providers

When asked what personal impact Creative Partnerships had had, a creative provider from Animah replied ‘a lot of personal satisfaction’. He described his Glendene experience as ‘very positive’ and one he would be happy to repeat. The provider considered the school to be welcoming, and felt students had responded very well. He described staff as ‘rising to the whole event’, and remarked how they had been prepared to ‘put up with whatever was necessary’ in order to see the project through. However, the project had been demanding, as the provider expected. In particular, he had found working to such an ambitious goal challenging, due to the severity of some students’ disabilities. But, discussions with staff, together with positive feedback and energy from students, had made the situation easier. He described it as being ‘a two-way experience of giving and receiving’. Overall, the artist felt the project had given him ‘another way of looking at working with special needs children’, and he was now interested in doing similar work in the future.

Whole school impact

Glendene was insistent that Creative Partnerships should reach everyone in the school, and this was achieved by the animation project. Even if it was just a small part, the Creative Partnerships coordinator believed that all 144 students had been included. The coordinator explained how, when working on the project, everyone had pulled together, which had created a feeling of excitement within the school. This was also noticed by the deputy headteacher, who remarked, ‘the enrichment and the buzz it [Creative Partnerships] has given the kids can’t be replaced, and you can’t buy it in a bottle’. With the help of Creative Partnerships, the deputy headteacher was confident that Glendene’s profile as a special school had been raised within the wider community. She put this down to local people seeing the achievements of students, which ‘would have been considered way beyond them at one time’. Also, through support given by its regional Creative Partnerships team, the school was successful in achieving Artsmark Gold.

Looking back, looking forward

What were the key factors in making Creative Partnerships work?

The commitment of staff was viewed as the key factor in making Creative Partnerships work at Glendene. This was seen to come from the top of the school and cascade through it. The Creative Partnerships coordinator viewed the school as fortunate, in having a headteacher who was focused on creativity and saw its value. She commented, ‘You don’t have to spend ages persuading him that some things would be a good idea’. Likewise, the deputy headteacher thought Creative Partnerships had thrived at Glendene because the

headteacher had actively encouraged projects to happen. The headteacher was also viewed to be supportive of staff, and was seen as someone who believed in taking risks. One teacher commented, 'Staff are given the opportunity to try things and nothing is regarded as a failure. If things don't work, then we have another go'.

From the headteacher's viewpoint, for Creative Partnerships to be successful, it needed to be integrated into school life. He commented, 'If you want it [Creative Partnerships] as an add-on, then forget it. It has got to become a major philosophy of your school'. He also warned against 'lip service', and advised new Creative Partnerships schools to incorporate its ideals into their vision. The headteacher also highlighted the need for enthusiastic and accommodating staff, as did the Creative Partnerships coordinator. She described the school as 'lucky' in having such flexible staff, remarking that 'Nobody makes any fuss. They just say: where do you want us?'. The headteacher expressed the view that Creative Partnerships would be less successful in schools where members of staff were unprepared to make adjustments to their normal timetable.

While the headteacher was seen to play a key role in the success of Creative Partnerships, he modestly reported that he could only take credit for appointing an excellent coordinator. He described the selection of the Creative Partnerships coordinator as 'one of the best decisions I have ever made'. Other members of staff also praised the determination and enthusiasm of the coordinator. Her management, consultation, organisation and regular up-dates were seen by staff as being crucial to the success of Creative Partnerships at Glendene. The headteacher explained that the Creative Partnerships coordinator had looked for activities that could involve every student in the school, which he described as 'quite a feat considering we have students between two and 19 years, with a full range of learning difficulties'.

What were the main challenges?

From the perspective of the coordinator, the main challenge of Creative Partnerships was the amount of management required, particularly the volume of paperwork. She described the formalities as 'quite challenging', and now considered herself able to 'write a form out for England'. However, the coordinator recognised the efforts made by the regional Creative Partnerships team to lessen bureaucracy. She also explained how her school had managed to deal with paperwork fatigue. By choosing to work on 'The Hare Witch Project', which was such a big endeavour, the school only had to submit one bid, rather than lots of small ones. Other challenges, identified by the Creative Partnerships coordinator, were seen to lie in communicating project ideas to everyone involved and ensuring that project needs were understood. There was also the challenge of identifying high-quality projects that would involve

all students, at all levels of ability, which would provide them with new skills and expertise, but a challenge that was clearly overcome.

What is the legacy of Creative Partnerships?

At Glendene, Creative Partnerships was seen as a way in which to develop skills, raise confidence and improve motivation levels, for both students and staff. The headteacher believed it had ‘fired imaginations’ within his school and facilitated the creation of networks with creative providers. In terms of the sustainability of projects, the headteacher and his deputy were insistent that creative work would continue after Creative Partnerships had come to an end. The headteacher commented ‘I will move heaven and earth to make sure they [projects] do continue because the benefits are too great to lose’. He continued by remarking, ‘We couldn’t just stop it because half of the curriculum would be lopsided’. The Creative Partnerships coordinator added to this, saying the school would ‘feel deprived’ without the creative input inspired by Creative Partnerships.

Conclusions

Glendene had embraced Creative Partnerships with great enthusiasm. Its aspirations fitted neatly with those of the Creative Partnerships initiative, as it aimed to use creative activities to extend the talents and abilities of students and staff. The school was open to innovative ideas and was not fearful of projects not always going as planned. Through Creative Partnerships, Glendene was able to take on bigger and bolder projects than it had done previously, as it was given access to a wide range of creative providers and media facilities. By working on creative activities, the school had opened up new opportunities and experiences, and the whole school community was reaping the benefits.

3. Key messages from the case studies

This section brings together the messages from the experience of Creative Partnerships in 11 schools. It is largely based on the evidence presented in the case study accounts. This is supplemented with some additional material provided by the case study interviewees in relation to the contribution of Creative Partnerships projects to the creative providers' own development and the difficulties encountered by creative providers and schools. We have drawn on additional material for two main reasons. First, the case study accounts were necessarily brief, and focused on the projects considered to have the greatest impact and potential for dissemination. Some of the creative providers we spoke to were, however, involved in other Creative Partnerships projects within the partner schools. Their insights into the impact of Creative Partnerships on themselves have been included in this overview. Second, while the main issues concerning barriers and difficulties were reported in each of the case study accounts, some issues were sensitive and participants did not wish them to be reported in a way that could be attributed to particular schools, or their partners. These issues have therefore been anonymised and are reported in the relevant section below.

3.1 What did the schools set out to achieve through Creative Partnerships?

The 11 schools had a variety of aims for their Creative Partnerships projects, envisaging impacts on young people, school staff and the school as a whole. The most common rationale for wishing to be involved was that Creative Partnerships was a means of bringing balance and coherence to the curriculum and also a way of addressing young people's diverse learning styles. The opportunity to work in a cross-curricular, thematic manner was a key aim for about half of the schools. In secondary schools, this involved teachers working together across departments. However, cross-curricular working was also highlighted as an aim in primary schools, where staff felt that the curriculum had become too compartmentalised into separate subjects. Staff regretted this segmentation because they felt that it cut across children's natural tendency to seek connections between areas of learning. They also commented that arts subjects had been 'squeezed' as a result of the emphasis placed on other subjects, as one headteacher commented: 'Teachers have lost their enthusiasm for the arts because they couldn't give their time to it because they're too focussed on literacy and numeracy'. It was felt that Creative Partnerships would provide a much-needed opportunity to redress the balance.

Most of the projects' aims focussed on outcomes for the young people involved. Staff hoped that Creative Partnerships would help to develop young

peoples' creativity. They also wanted Creative Partnerships to bring excitement and enjoyment into learning. There were a number of other aims identified for young people, relating most commonly to improving self-esteem, self-confidence and independence. Less commonly, Creative Partnerships projects aimed to improve achievement and/or to raise young people's aspirations to achieve. A few schools reported that their projects aimed to improve young people's social and/or language skills. Surprisingly, perhaps, only two Creative Partnerships projects mentioned improving young people's access to cultural resources and only one had the explicit aim of improving arts skills as a result of Creative Partnerships.

Although most of the aims focused on outcomes for young people, there was a variety of aims that related to outcomes for staff and the school as a whole. The main aspirations in this area focused on developing teachers' professional skills (mentioned in just over half of the schools). This included widening teachers' repertoire of teaching approaches, suggesting new ways to deliver the curriculum and providing opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD). Some projects had a specific commitment to involving the whole school (i.e. all staff and young people), and promoting teamwork among staff. In addition, some schools anticipated that Creative Partnerships would help them to achieve their strategic goals, especially forming working relationships with neighbouring schools. A few placed Creative Partnerships within a context of related initiatives taking place in the school, including a desire to build on previous experiences of artists-in-schools projects and the school's commitment to initiatives such as Arts Mark, Beacon, or specialist school status.

Only one of the projects (at Moor Green Infants School – Case Study Number 1) mentioned a specific aim for creative partners: to ensure that the creative partners had sufficient flexibility and openness to enable them to function well and not feel constricted by serving others' needs.

3.2 What were the outcomes of Creative Partnerships?

We asked school staff, creative partners and young people about the main impact of Creative Partnerships projects on those involved. To help organise the data we used a classification system developed by colleagues at NFER (Harland *et al.*, forthcoming). These researchers studied 15 'interventions' involving artists and teachers organised as part of the Arts Education Interface (AEI). AEI was located in two areas of England facing problems of social and economic deprivation.

At this point we should note that, although helpful as an organising framework, the AEI classification has an inherent focus on artistic aims,

whereas Creative Partnerships set out to achieve broader outcomes (including creative development and cross curricular working).

3.2.1 How did Creative Partnerships contribute to young people's development?

The participants in the 11 Creative Partnerships case studies identified a wide range of different outcomes for young people arising from their involvement in Creative Partnerships. Young people were the main focus for the projects, and therefore there were more outcomes identified for them than for any of the other participants.

Interestingly, participants identified a greater range of outcomes on young people than they had anticipated in the aims of their projects. Nevertheless a comparison between aims and outcomes showed a good degree of fit (i.e. in most cases, teachers and creative partners felt that their projects had achieved the stated aims). But the identified outcomes were both more specific and also more wide-ranging than the outcomes anticipated in the project aims.

The research by Harland *et al.*, (forthcoming) identified 11 outcome categories for young people involved in artists-in-schools projects. The categories were:

1. Affective outcomes (enjoyment, sense of achievement and physical well being)
2. Artform knowledge, appreciation and skills (including interpretive and evaluative skills related to a specific art form)
3. Social and cultural knowledge (awareness of social and moral issues, environmental issues and cultural diversity)
4. Knowledge, skills and appreciation beyond the arts (e.g. related to other areas of the curriculum)
5. Thinking skills (improved concentration, focus and clarity, problem-solving skills)
6. Creativity (including original thought, imagination, exploration and risk-taking)
7. Communication and expressive skills (artistic communication and generic communication skills)
8. Personal development (identity, self-esteem, self-confidence, artform confidence, sense of maturity, motivation and taking responsibility)

9. Social development (teamwork, social relationships and awareness of others)
10. Changes in attitudes towards/involvement in an artform (attitudes to learning the artform, positive image of artform ability, attendance and behaviour, participation in the artform beyond school and attitudes towards a career in the artform)
11. Transfer beyond the artform (transfer to other areas of learning, impact on home life, development with application to adult life in general).

Taking the above classification as a guide, it is clear that the project outcomes identified most frequently in our case studies related to five areas of young people's development. Each of the following areas was highlighted as an outcome of Creative Partnerships by at least seven of the 11 schools. They are listed in order of frequency (i.e. of the number of schools in which the outcome was identified), with the most common at the top of the list:

- creativity (including imagination, experimentation, risk-taking and generation of young people's own ideas)
- personal development (especially self confidence and self esteem, raised aspirations, motivation and persistence in learning)
- communication and expressive skills (especially oral language skills)
- social skills (especially teamwork and social relationships)
- affective outcomes (especially a sense of achievement/pride and, to a lesser extent, enjoyment and excitement).

Four outcomes were identified in some of the 11 case-study schools (between three and six). These are listed below in order of frequency:

- Transfer beyond the artform (especially more positive attitudes towards school, application of learning across subjects and ability to make connections, improvements in behaviour, attendance and achievement)
- Changes in attitudes towards/involvement in an artform (especially in relation to challenging stereotypical attitudes towards dance and opera)
- Thinking skills (especially improved concentration and conceptual development)
- Artform knowledge, appreciation and skills (especially improved understanding of the professional arts world).

Two of the 11 areas were rarely identified as outcomes for young people by the Creative Partnerships case study participants:

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- Knowledge, skills and appreciation beyond the arts (e.g. related to other areas of the curriculum)
 - Social and cultural knowledge (awareness of social and moral issues, environmental issues and cultural diversity).

The first of these two categories is a puzzling omission from the Creative Partnerships case studies. Although teachers and creative partners described the cross-curricular nature of many of their projects and identified transferable skills as one of the outcomes for young people, they rarely identified subject-specific knowledge, skills or areas of appreciation as an outcome of Creative Partnerships projects. This may be because it was, to some extent, a ‘taken for granted’ part of Creative Partnerships.

Social and cultural knowledge was rarely mentioned, except in two cases: Moor Green (case study 1) and St Edmonds School (case study 10). As noted above, this rarely featured as an aim of the projects in the 11 case study schools.

3.2.2 How did Creative Partnerships contribute to teachers and schools?

The headteachers, Creative Partnerships coordinators, teachers and creative partners we interviewed identified a number of outcomes for teachers and for schools as a whole.

The outcomes identified for teachers were in two main arenas: on professional practice and on individuals. All schools identified both types of outcome and each of the separate elements listed below was identified in between eight and four of the case study schools.

Impact on teachers’ practice

- Increased creativity in teaching (including creative ideas, experimentation, risk-taking and spontaneity)
- Wider repertoire of teaching approaches
- Cross curricular approaches to teaching
- New arts skills and techniques
- Greater reflection on practice/teacher as learner.

Impact on teachers’ personal development

- Increased confidence in teaching
- Positive impact on morale and motivation

- Closer working relationships between teachers.

The most common type of impact (noted in eight of the schools) was an increase in teachers' creativity in teaching. Teachers said that Creative Partnerships projects had enabled them to attempt 'more creative' pedagogical approaches and had made them feel more creative as a result. Teachers in six schools reported that their repertoire of teaching approaches had widened as a result of their involvement in Creative Partnerships. This included an awareness of multiple intelligences and different learning styles, as well as being 'less prescriptive' in their lesson planning (i.e. allowing more room for individual pupil responses). They reported specific influences of Creative Partnerships on their teaching, as a result of the CPD activities and observing the impact of creative providers working with their classes. They said they had incorporated more active learning activities, encouraged teamwork among young people and reduced the amount of 'teaching from the front'. They spoke of encouraging young people to develop their own ideas and being more responsive to the needs and interests of learners. For example, one teacher said she had learnt the value of: 'Not capping learning, letting them [the young people] be free and creative; not telling kids what the end result will be.' Interestingly, this echoes the findings from a recent Ofsted report (Ofsted, 2003) that suggested that the arts can provide a variety of teaching and learning styles that young people find enjoyable and motivating.

Working in a cross-curricular manner was a specific outcome reported by teachers in both primary and secondary schools (four schools in all). Similarly, four schools noted impacts on teachers' artistic skills, with teachers adopting some of the ideas and techniques introduced by creative providers. Examples included using puppetry to 'draw out' quiet children, improved dance techniques, and sampling recorded music.

There were four cases in which teachers reported that projects had placed them in a position of learners. These teachers said that Creative Partnerships projects had made them more reflective about their professional practice and the impact of their actions on learners. In addition, two schools reported that teachers had gained a new appreciation of the capabilities of young people in their class as a result of seeing them working with creative providers.

The greatest impact on teachers' personal development was an improvement in teachers' confidence (reported in seven schools). This was apparent in improved confidence in the classroom as a result of adopting less didactic teaching approaches. There were also improvements in confidence for teachers who had successfully taken on the role of Creative Partnerships coordinator. Positive impact on teachers' morale and motivation were noted in six cases, and four schools said that teachers had formed closer working relationships with their colleagues as a result of embarking on joint (cross curricular)

projects. Three other impacts relating to teachers' personal development were each mentioned in two schools. These were: enjoyment of the activities; improved relationships with young people; and improved relationships with teachers in other schools.

3.2.3 Impact on the school as a whole

Staff in the case study schools reported that their involvement in Creative Partnerships had led to six main outcomes for the school as a whole (each mentioned in between eight and four of the schools). These are listed below in order of frequency:

- Enhancing school image/profile
- Unifying the whole school in a common purpose
- Enabling the school to focus on creativity
- Forming cross-curricular links
- Broadening the school's approach to teaching and learning
- Improving provision for the arts.

The most common 'whole school' impact (reported in eight schools) was that involvement in Creative Partnerships had led to an improved image and profile for the school. As one student who took part in Creative Partnerships at Deansfield High School (case study 8) said: 'It's got to be one of the best schools around here now... Creative Partnerships has given the school a new life.'

Staff in six schools said that Creative Partnerships had brought the school together in a common purpose as a result of the 'whole school' nature of the project work. Five schools reported that Creative Partnerships had enabled the school to focus on providing for creativity (a key aim of the national curriculum) and the same number mentioned improved cross-curricular links as a result of Creative Partnerships. Two other 'whole school' outcomes were mentioned in four schools: a broader approach to teaching and learning (e.g. through providing more young person-led experiences or through addressing a wider range of learning styles) and improvements to the arts curriculum (for example, by providing improved opportunities in dance).

These outcomes are similar to the types of effect identified by Harland *et al.* (forthcoming). However, the outcomes identified in the Creative Partnerships case studies (unlike those in the AEI projects) emphasised creativity, cross curricular working and whole-school development: all of which are particular features of the Creative Partnerships initiative.

3.2.4 What was the impact on creative providers?

During our interviews with creative providers we asked for their views on the impact of Creative Partnerships on them. For this section, it seems appropriate to use the individual (rather than the school) as the unit of analysis because the impact of Creative Partnerships may well be different for each person, even among those working with the same school.

On the whole, the 23 Creatives we interviewed tended to view themselves as providing a service to young people and teachers. It is therefore not surprising that several of their comments focussed on the impact on others, rather than on themselves. The top three answers to this question (each given by between nine and six people) were:

- Satisfaction in the achievements of young people and staff
- New challenges and opportunities for development
- A chance to form a longer-term relationship with a school.

The main answer given by Creatives when asked about the impact of Creative Partnerships on themselves was that it had given them a sense of pleasure and pride in helping young people and teachers to achieve their goals. This was mentioned by nine Creatives. For example, a musician said that her satisfaction came from passing on skills to other people. She described her sense of pride when staff felt confident enough to engage with difficult material and young people greatly enjoyed the activities. A set designer working in another school said: 'My interest is to see kids be more than what I think they are – I know this will happen.'

Six Creatives said that working on Creative Partnerships had brought new challenges and development opportunities. A member of a theatre company working with five secondary schools explained the challenge involved in working on a large scale: 'When we were first approached to do it we were a bit scared because it was so big, but... being part of creating something so huge, that is the bit that excites me. It is the biggest project that I have ever been involved in.' A few Creatives said that Creative Partnerships had helped them to realise their own project ideas. For example, a visual artist/sculptor who was responsible for writing a proposal to develop a website said: 'I got the opportunity to fund projects for which it would have been difficult to find the money, because the project is risky, adventurous and ground breaking.' Similarly, a writer said: 'It's given me the chance to have my vision realised'.

The other main area of impact for creative providers came from the longer-term relationships enabled by Creative Partnerships (mentioned by six interviewees). Creatives felt they had got to know teachers and young people well and had formed closer, more equal working relationships with them as a result. Creatives said that the ability to form longer-term relationships with

schools was a feature of Creative Partnerships that most distinguished it from their previous experience of artists-in-schools projects.

A small minority of Creatives identified specific ways in which Creative Partnerships had impacted on their own knowledge and skills in relation to schools (for example by giving them a greater knowledge of the curriculum, an understanding of how schools work, or by helping develop their skills of planning and behaviour management). However, such comments were few in number, probably because most of those we interviewed were already experienced in working with schools.

3.3 Which difficulties were encountered?

Even though these case studies were selected to exemplify replicable (and therefore largely ‘successful’) projects, it would be unrealistic to expect that no difficulties had been encountered. It is now well established that there are inherent challenges involved in partnerships between Creatives and schools (see for example, Sharp and Dust, 1997; Harland *et al.*, forthcoming). It should also be borne in mind that Creative Partnerships was in its early stages of development at the time the case studies took place and that Creative Partnerships actively encouraged schools and Creatives to attempt ambitious, even ‘risky’ ventures.

The main areas of difficulty related to three main themes:

- Time commitments and bureaucracy
- Lack of clarity about the purpose of Creative Partnerships and how it was intended to work in practice
- Difficult relationships between Creatives and teachers.

Each of these is discussed in turn, below.

3.3.1 Time commitment and bureaucracy

The area of difficulty most commonly highlighted by Creative Partnerships coordinators was the time required to run Creative Partnerships. Even though Creative Partnerships did provide some funding to cover their time, most found that this was insufficient for the volume of work required. The Creative Partnerships coordinator in a secondary school described the commitment as: ‘A very big job for someone who is teaching full time and doesn’t have any office time to do the phoning, writing and the contracting of artists’ and even the coordinator in a primary school who had half of his time off timetable for Creative Partnerships and other management responsibilities, felt ‘pulled in different directions’ in trying to fulfil his responsibilities as coordinator, class teacher and deputy head.

Coordinators reported that time was taken up by various activities, including identifying potential creative partners (which had taken longer than expected) and liaising with them. But by far the greatest area of frustration was the bureaucracy and amount of paperwork that was required by Creative Partnerships. This came about during the initial bidding process to join Creative Partnerships and thereafter in applying for project funding, attending meetings with the local Creative Partnerships team, securing payment and fulfilling evaluation requirements. There was considerable strength of feeling, from Creatives as well as school staff, that these processes were unnecessarily burdensome, although several people acknowledged that processes had become more streamlined as time went on. One teacher said of the initial bidding process: 'We never seemed to get going because there was so much red tape and bureaucracy. It was constricting, constraining and incredibly time-consuming'. The Creative Partnerships coordinator in the same school commented: 'There is a lot of paperwork: project planning, staff briefing plus the evaluation forms... Then there is quite a lot of information that comes from Creative Partnerships I've got a huge file'. The coordinator at a second school said: 'There's lots of paperwork from meetings, you feel bogged down in it', and the headteacher at a third school described the amount of paperwork as simply 'horrendous'.

A few of the comments related specifically to the burden placed on schools by evaluation, which required schools to contribute to both local and national data collection. One coordinator commented that the Creative Partnerships evaluation was particularly challenging because teachers were not used to assessing the quality of educational processes: 'Schools are used to evaluating their success by the quality of the outcome. A school is judged on how well its students do in exams, not how interested students are in a particular lesson. Therefore this type of evaluation is, educationally, a very different process for schools.' Teachers in another school made a similar comment. They had not realised that they were expected to document the process of young people's learning, and therefore did not collect the necessary information as the project took place.

Several teachers and Creatives had encountered difficulties with funding and payment. It was felt that Creative Partnerships: had not always made it clear which items could and could not be reimbursed; had made arbitrary decisions concerning funding and payment; and/or that Creative Partnerships had been slow to pay. Examples of these issues included a headteacher who complained that Creative Partnerships staff had been unable to clarify who would 'pick up the bill' for hiring coaches to transport children and staff. A coordinator at another school mentioned that there was no provision for payment to staff for activities taking place outside of school hours. In this case, a theatre performance had required 12 members of staff to supervise students for a six-hour period. The coordinator was unable to offer any payment to staff in order to 'ease the way' and felt that she was imposing on her colleagues' good will.

Slow payment was mentioned in a few cases, including by Creatives (this was perceived to be a problem with the Central Creative Partnerships national office, rather than with the local Creative Partnerships teams).

A thread running through some of these comments was that Creative Partnerships did not sufficiently understand the way schools operate. For example, one headteacher commented:

It can be difficult working with the [local] Creative Partnerships team... They don't have the school experience... They don't have any depth or breadth of how schools work – budgets or school improvement planning. It is useless someone coming to me on the last day of term asking if my staff can go [abroad] next month. That only comes about because people don't understand how schools work; and all schools work like this!

3.3.2 Lack of clarity about the purpose and operation of Creative Partnerships

The school staff and Creatives we spoke to understood the main purpose of Creative Partnerships to be about enhancing young people's creativity. But there are many different ways of interpreting this in practice, and this was where participants felt less well informed.

An area of difficulty, particularly for school staff, was in gaining a clear understanding from the outset about how Creative Partnerships was intended to work. Staff in several schools commented that ideas were vague at first, and/or appeared to have changed since the inception of the initiative. For example, one headteacher said she felt the set-up of the initiative had been confusing because there had been a period of three months before a Creative Director had been appointed and information began to flow. As a result, she had found it 'Very hard to catch what this [Creative Partnerships] was, to get hold of it'. A teacher in the same school agreed, saying she felt 'in the dark' about the initiative during its early stages.

A coordinator of a school in another area described a situation in which early information from Creative Partnerships appeared to have given a false impression of how schools would access funds. The headteacher had attended a meeting at which schools had been told that each of them would receive a grant of £20,000, and that they could decide how to spend it on creative projects. But at a later meeting, the coordinator learned that the budget would be held by the Creative Partnerships area team and that schools would have to bid against one another to secure project funding. This change of emphasis was described as 'upsetting' and had led some teachers to become 'disenchanted' with Creative Partnerships, particularly when some of their

project bids had been turned down. A Creative working in the same area felt that money had been ‘wasted’ during the first year on ‘a lot of talking and going on silly trips, which alienated people’. He went on to say that, in his opinion: ‘Creative Partnerships did not know quite what it was trying to do and it has taken two years to find out’.

While most of the people we interviewed felt that they now understood what Creative Partnerships was attempting to achieve, they felt that some aspects of the initiative were still confusing and further clarification was needed. As one coordinator put it ‘I think we’re aware of what we want for our school and the general idea behind Creative Partnerships, but I wouldn’t say I’m informed’. Another felt that there was: ‘No general awareness’ about Creative Partnerships and its guiding principles and commented that other teachers in the school did not feel well informed about Creative Partnerships. In one case, interviewees felt there was some confusion between the regional and national aims of Creative Partnerships. A Creative said: ‘I feel quite well informed about what Creative Partnerships is trying to achieve nationally [but] on a regional level I don’t think I am very well informed – I don’t think they know what they are trying to achieve.’ A second Creative working with the same school echoed this remark, saying: ‘The fact that Creative Partnerships is a national scheme with regional devolvement creates a problem. I don’t think the two always meet.’

Another area of confusion, mentioned in two of the case studies, concerned the balance within Creative Partnerships between activity and research. One Creative said: ‘There seems to have been a lot of research and it almost seems that it is more important than the projects’, whereas a Creative working with another school said: ‘I was told at the beginning that it was a research project, but there hasn’t been anyone monitoring the whole process.’

Finally on the theme of clarity, the headteacher and coordinator in one school both felt that Creative Partnerships had failed to acknowledge teachers’ role in enhancing young people’s creativity, by implying that this was the exclusive domain of the Creative sector. As the coordinator said: ‘Creative Partnerships have not invented creativity in schools: it’s grown out of the work that schools have been very good at doing but we have not had the opportunity within the curriculum.’

3.3.3 Difficult relationships between Creatives and teachers

Although most of the school staff and Creatives reported positive working relationships, there were a few cases in which difficulties arose. This seemed to have stemmed from misunderstandings about each partner’s role and the extent to which Creatives were able to ‘fit in’ or ‘work around’ the constraints of the school environment.

A fundamental issue concerned the ‘ownership’ of the project and the extent to which it met the needs of the school. While some schools wanted to take the lead in designing the projects, others wanted Creatives to have an active role in suggesting project ideas. In most cases, there was considerable room for negotiation and a real sense of partnership was created, but occasionally the relationship felt one-sided. For example, one Creative who had worked with schools in two Creative Partnerships areas said:

Creative Partnerships concentrated on the schools – it was not a partnership. It was the normal relationship between schools and artists of master and servant: ‘Let’s talk to the schools, see what they want and then find an artist’. But it should have been an equal collaboration between artists and schools. Artists need to be treated equally that’s the way you get good projects.

Similarly, one school complained of a Creative who did not involve students as much as the teachers had hoped, and had simply replicated a project that he had done previously.

Some of the participants mentioned the difficulties of attempting creative projects within the school timetable. Challenges included finding time for teachers and Creatives to liaise with one another and the difficulty of fitting creative activities into timetabled lessons. As one Creative said: ‘I imagined a little bit more liaison and contact in the planning stage with staff, but they haven’t got time’. Another said: ‘Schools are frantic places. They are timed to working an hour-and-ten-minute segments. [Teachers] just seem quite harassed and the creative process can be quite a slow, ponderous thing... I don’t know whether or not we quite got to grips with that.’

There were also a few reports of unprofessional behaviour from both Creatives and teachers. One school reported that the Creatives had been ‘demanding, insistent and messy’ and another said that relationships had broken down because a Creative had been inflexible. On the other hand, Creatives felt that teachers had not always shown commitment to their projects, with one Creative saying that she had provided information for teachers that they had not bothered to read. She went on to say that teachers had not taken a CPD session seriously: ‘behaving like children’ and being ‘very resistant to learning’.

3.4 What do these case studies tell us about effective partnership working between schools and creatives?

The evaluation team asked the school staff, governors and Creatives which factors they felt had been important in helping their projects to work. There was considerable consistency in the responses across the 11 case study schools. The main factors were:

- The school coordinator's contribution
- Support from school leaders
- Willingness of school staff
- Creatives' attitudes and skills
- A genuine partnership between school staff, Creatives and young people
- Good organisation (joint planning, preparation and review)
- Creative Partnerships funding and support
- Project characteristics (including purpose, appeal, ownership, scope and quality)

The above factors centre on the importance of the key players in creating the right conditions for Creative Partnerships to thrive. The role of Creative Partnerships coordinator was pivotal. Successful Creative Partnerships coordinators were described as enthusiastic, committed, well organised and good at communicating with others. They had an ability to seek out opportunities, motivate colleagues and plan coherent programmes of work for the school. The coordinators in these schools were able to rely on support from their school leaders (especially the headteacher) who valued creativity, shared their vision for the initiative and understood that creative projects involved taking the risk that things may not work out quite as planned.

Participants felt that staff attitudes were an important contributory factor. School staff had to be willing to invest time and interest in the projects and to be flexible enough to alter their practice in order to accommodate project requirements. Similarly, Creatives needed to be committed to the projects and willing to work with the staff to ensure that projects met school needs and realised their potential.

Several of the participants spoke of the importance of 'true partnership' between all involved. This meant that everyone (school staff, young people and Creatives) had a stake in the project and a commitment to making it work. It also meant the active involvement of young people as creative individuals, not just following a formula laid down by adults.

Good organisation was identified as essential by almost all of the people we spoke to. One headteacher praised Creative Partnerships for recognising the need for comprehensive planning before the project, enabling the Creatives to meet the young people and understand how the school day works: 'I think planning is very important... We're not taking something off the shelf, we've developed the idea that it's a partnership'. One Creative working in another school commented: 'The planning stage is fundamental as to where your expertise links to activity. You can't just come in and do an activity, you have to mesh in.' Another offered the following advice to other Creatives considering working with Creative Partnerships: 'Plan well and have lots of energy – reflection and evaluation are important too.'

As mentioned earlier, it could be difficult for staff to find time to meet with Creatives to discuss their projects. Such meetings often had to take place outside of school hours and therefore relied to a large extent on the good will of school staff. Interestingly, Creatives working in two schools used the offer of food to encourage teachers to attend planning meetings. In one case, Creatives provided home-made cakes as an incentive, and in another they organised 'creative meals' (off-site meetings with dinner provided).

The resources and support provided by Creative Partnerships were acknowledged to be important in helping projects to work well. This included the level of funding (which one Creative referred to as 'a luxury context'). Creative Partnerships funding enabled schools to release coordinators to organise projects and schools to develop projects on a large scale (involving multiple Creative partners, longer-term involvements and a large number of young people and staff). This, in turn, was felt to have contributed to the depth and quality of the creative projects. As one Creative commented: 'For us the benefits have come from the luxury of working over a long period of time. ... What we've done is not new to us, but this time we've been able to build relationships with schools, pupils and parents that's given them ownership.'

Some participants acknowledged the support of Creative Partnerships staff as a contributory factor in their projects' success. For example, a Creative Partnerships development worker was considered to have contributed 'ideas and drive' to project work and the structure provided by the regional Creative Partnerships team ensured that aims and plans were in place. A Creative working in another school said that the Creative Partnerships team had helped in providing a 'vision' for projects and in 'encouraging relationships to flourish without people being bludgeoned into doing things they didn't want to do'.

Some of the participants' comments related to the nature of the projects themselves. Participants felt that the most successful projects were well planned, but not overly 'safe'. Creatives and teachers attempted to ensure that

young people's interests were built into the projects and that attention was paid to the quality of the creative process, rather than attempting to focus exclusively on achieving an acceptable final product.

Several people referred to the importance of 'taking risks'. As one Creative said: 'To be really meaningful they [creative projects] have to be a little dangerous and here they [staff] have the confidence to accept that. They are not over-controlling in the planning stages and staff are constantly asked to consider the pupils.' The Creatives who worked most successfully with young people demonstrated and shared the creative process: 'We tried to show them [young people] the whole process of how we work and think about things'. The Creative Partnerships project approach was recognised to be quite different from the normal routine of school work in that it allowed a much greater freedom for experimentation and the contribution of young people's own ideas. This is not to say that creative products were considered to be unimportant, rather that the Creatives' methods of achieving a high quality outcome relied on applying processes and responding to participants' ideas and responses, rather than on pre-determining exactly what would take place at every stage of the project.

3.5 What will be the legacy of Creative Partnerships in the case study schools?

We asked case study participants what they thought would be the legacy of Creative Partnerships in their schools. The legacy of Creative Partnerships was thought to reside in the following four areas:

- Raised awareness of creativity and creative teaching
- Higher profile for the arts
- Improved staff morale
- Networks and contacts.

The most common response to this question related to a raised awareness of creativity and creative teaching within the school. This was underpinned by the ability of staff and projects to embed creative practices within the school. It is important to note that professional development for teachers was built into most of the projects. This occurred as staff worked alongside Creatives in the classroom, but eight of the schools' projects involved separate CPD sessions in which teachers worked with Creatives. This enabled teachers to be confident in attempting creative projects themselves. One headteacher commented that teachers 'needed to develop their own creative skills if the momentum is to be sustained'. One of the Creatives who had provided CPD for teachers stressed the importance of helping teachers to develop new skills:

I think it's a joint achievement. It's an achievement to do with the children and the teachers, to do with them extending their learning in a different way. As a drama person working with the teachers it is really important because it's about sustainability. One-off workshops are just a treat and don't actually add any skill to what's going on. Achievement is extending learning for the children and new skills for the teachers.

Interestingly, although not all projects were considered to have had artistic outcomes, the schools' involvement in Creative Partnerships was considered to have raised the profile of arts subjects. For example the headteacher and Creative Partnerships coordinator at Moor Green school (case study 1) hoped that the arts would be seen as important in their own right and as vehicles for promoting cooperation, problem-solving and learning 'at a deeper level'. Another school (Glade Hill – case study 4) identified the potential of the arts to enliven areas of the curriculum that teachers found difficult to teach.

Other areas in which Creative Partnerships was thought to have a potential legacy related to the improved morale of staff, who had felt enthused by the projects and motivated to bring their own creativity and reflection to teaching. Staff also acknowledged the importance of the networks of contacts with creative partners and other schools that had been established through Creative Partnerships.

3.6 Is Creative Partnerships sustainable?

When asked about sustainability, case study participants said that the level of funding they had received from Creative Partnerships meant that this type of activity was simply not sustainable without a comparative funding source.

In some cases, it was acknowledged that the amount of effort involved meant that projects of this kind would remain infrequent in schools, as a representative of a major art gallery said: 'The level of involvement and work [involved in this project] was too much for the teachers and that is not sustainable.'

It was also apparent that the contribution of the school coordinator was particularly important. As long as the coordinator remained in the school, then they would be able to support creative initiatives, but if they changed role or left the school, there was a danger of losing focus, expertise and enthusiasm for this type of work.

The school staff we spoke to were committed to Creative Partnerships and convinced of its benefits. They felt that the spirit of Creative Partnerships would continue to be felt in their schools as long as key members of staff (such as the coordinator and the headteacher) remained. They wished to see creativity become embedded into the school curriculum, and felt that it would do so, to the extent that it was part of the school's vision and/or promoted by government. However, involving creative partners had to be viewed as desirable, rather than a necessary part of school life: the schools' ability to involve Creatives in future was therefore highly dependent on the availability of specific funding for this purpose.

3.7 Conclusion and implications for practice

This collection of case studies was intended to identify approaches that are sustainable, replicable and capable for being disseminated to inform the future development of Creative Partnerships. Although not necessarily typical of Creative Partnerships projects, they represent a wide range of different art-forms, types of school and project intentions. Nevertheless, there are some common themes and issues evident that may be important for the future development of the initiative.

The Creative Partnerships projects highlighted in this collection were considered to have been successful in achieving, if not surpassing their aims. Prior to Creative Partnerships, school staff felt that the curriculum had become somewhat narrow in focus, it was compartmentalised into separate subjects, and that young people had not been able to demonstrate the full range of their capabilities. Creative Partnerships enabled schools to provide opportunities for young people (and staff) to explore their creativity, by working on demanding and enjoyable cross-curricular projects that paid attention to the quality of the learning process as well as emphasising the importance of the end result. Through working with Creatives, teachers could explore their own creativity, gain a new insight into the learning process and adopt different approaches in their own practice.

The implications from this work for the future of Creative Partnerships are deceptively simple: Creative Partnerships should keep doing what it is doing well, and address the difficulties that stand in the way of productive partnerships between Creatives and schools. This study has shown that the conditions for success related to the aims of Creative Partnerships, the nature of the partnerships and the characteristics of the projects themselves.

Creative Partnerships should seek to involve schools where:

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- The headteacher, governors and/or members of the SMT are committed to encouraging creativity, cross-curricular projects and are tolerant of projects that entail a degree of risk
 - A member of staff has the time and commitment to take on the role of Creative Partnerships coordinator and has the appropriate qualities of enthusiasm, organisation and communication.
 - A core of staff members are willing to give time and commitment to Creative Partnerships.
 - The school has given thought to ‘succession planning’ whereby another member of staff could take on the role of coordinator.

Creative Partnerships should seek to involve Creatives who:

- Are committed to the aims of Creative Partnerships, produce work of a high standard, have good communication skills, are flexible and willing to devise projects in partnership with schools.

Creative Partnerships should continue to support projects that:

- Promote the development of young people’s creativity
- Enable Creatives and teachers to work together over a sustained period of time (at least half a term)
- Involve teachers in working alongside creative practitioners in the classroom and have an element of continuing professional development (e.g. through separate sessions with Creatives and members of staff where teachers are put in the position of learners)
- Encourage school staff to develop their own creativity
- Involve cross-curricular themes and teamwork between school staff
- Encourage staff and Creatives to include aims for all participants, including young people, Creatives, staff and the school as a whole
- Begin by identifying the projects aims and outcomes, then plan the content and process to meet the identified needs, whilst allowing flexibility to respond to learners’ individual interests and responses.
- Enable staff and Creatives to plan together, not just at the beginning but also during the project
- Involve a high proportion of the staff and young people in a school (e.g. through a series of related projects).

Creative Partnerships should ensure that:

- The core aims of the initiative are clearly articulated to all involved
- It is clear which are the core principles of Creative Partnerships (those that must be followed) and which aspects are negotiable/able to be adapted to meet regional or individual needs
- All Creative Partnerships participants have guidance on how to realise the core principles of Creative Partnerships in practice

- Attention is paid to reducing bureaucracy, clarifying and streamlining systems and giving additional guidance and support where necessary (e.g. helping schools to find suitable Creatives and supporting schools in evaluating the learning process).

Creative Partnerships regional teams have sufficient understanding of the education system and allow sufficient time for schools to respond to requests and opportunities.

Creative Partnerships should consider:

- How best to ensure that effective practice is recognised, understood and developed in future
- Whether it wishes to work only or mainly with schools and Creatives who have prior experience of partnership working. (Those who are new to such relationships may require additional support and guidance.)
- Whether it wishes to address cultural aims and, if so, which aspects of culture and how they are best developed through Creative Partnerships?
- How to help schools and Creatives to consolidate the work they have already done and continue to develop their partnerships once the core funding is no longer available.

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